

Little Brother Andrew and Big Brother Scott

Little Brother Andrew was matched in 2003 with his Big Brother Scott, shortly after he turned 14 years old. He had lost his father three years earlier and was having difficulty adjusting. In fact, things were spiraling out of control for Andrew by the time he met Scott. He suffered from ADD and though he was bright, he was starting to really struggle in school. He had difficulty with social interactions and his grades were suffering. Andrew had been on medication for his ADD, and was now dealing with depression & something he resented. This didn't help an already low self-esteem and he was just starting his freshman year of high school.

Andrew's mom thought it would be beneficial for Andrew to have a connection with a male in his life outside of school. She could see that he needed someone else besides his mom and sister, and all of their relatives lived out of state. She called Big Brothers Big Sisters and began the enrollment process.

Andrew met Scott for the first time in August of 2003. Andrew immediately took to his Big Brother. "I felt a connection with Scott right away," Andrew recalls. "He was easy to relate to, relaxed and easygoing."

Andrew's mom also remembers feeling instantly comfortable with Scott. "He was a great listener and very understanding about what we were going through in our lives. I remember him explaining that he grew up as the youngest in his family and was looking forward to finally being the 'big' brother."

Since their match, they have enjoyed their time spent together doing a variety of activities. But besides just "hanging out," Scott has been able to make a significant impact in Andrew's life. With Scott's background in personal training he and Andrew started weightlifting together, which was difficult for Andrew at first.

"Scott was always motivational. He understood that it was hard, but instead of being critical he helped me talk through my bad days, or told jokes to lighten my mood. He encouraged me to keep going," says Andrew.

Andrew's weightlifting gave him improved confidence with his peers, which led to more respect from classmates. Meanwhile, Andrew's mom and Scott teamed up to challenge him with his grades and by his junior year, he made the decision to change - turning D's into B's and C's into A's.

"Once Andrew started to see changes in his body from working out, we applied that same concept to his grades. Andrew realized that with hard work and dedication, he would begin to see changes in his school

performance as well. And he did!” Scott proudly explains.

With the confidence gained from this complete turn-around, Andrew started thinking about his future and the possibility of attending college. By his senior year, Andrew had greatly expanded his circle of friends and even joined Capital High School’s Lacrosse team.

This month he found out that not only was he accepted at Albertson College and Montana State University, but he had also been offered substantial scholarships to both schools. He was also accepted at Boise State. Within a few days of this news, he also learned that he would be one of two students at Capital to receive the Mayor’s Youth Award for turning his life around.

“I’ve always enjoyed spending time with Andrew,” says Scott, “but if you would’ve told me when I first met him that he would be going out for the lacrosse team and receiving scholarships to college I’m not sure I would’ve believed you.” Andrew's mom credits Scott for his part in helping her son turn his life around, and Andrew himself wonders what his life would’ve been like had it not been for Scott.

“His influence on my life has definitely made me think about being a Big Brother to someone when I get a little older.”

Andrew’s mom has no doubt that the relationship between her son and his Big Brother will continue well past April when Andrew turns 18. Andrew knows they will both be busy, but plans to keep in touch. She and Andrew are thankful for the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and the difference that Scott was able to have in Andrew’s life.

“It has been a remarkable privilege to watch a boy turn into a man,” adds Scott. “If there are other men out there thinking of becoming a Big Brother, don’t hesitate. Forming this kind of friendship is a very rewarding experience.”