



**New Brothers  
Section C**

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# **GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A BIG BROTHER PROGRAM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The role of the Big Brother in the education, assimilation and participation of a new Brother in the day-to-day life of the Chapter is perhaps the most important aspect of a successful Brotherhood Program.

The custom of having an older Brother act as a guide, tutor, friend, and confidant is a fine tradition in fraternity life and has many equivalents in our society. AGR' Brotherhood Program stresses the relationship between Big and Little Brothers as the most effective method of teaching new Brothers.

The selection, training and supervising of dedicated and talented Big Brothers is the best guarantee that a VNR-Membership Development has to ensure the highest standard of quality in all Brothers at his Chapter.

## **SELECTING BIG BROTHER CANDIDATES MATCHING BIG BROTHERS AND LITTLE BROTHERS**

### **Selecting:**

The selection of a Big Brother candidate and the process of matching him to a Little Brother is very important to guarantee the success of not only the Brotherhood Program but also the success of the new Brother in your Chapter.

Care should be taken to determine first if a Brother is capable of being a Big Brother at all, rather than worrying about creating a "perfect match". In other words, if a man has the right qualifications to be a good Big Brother, he will match well, for the purpose of a Big Brother/Little Brother program, with anyone. We're not looking for "social buddies" as Big Brothers but rather true mentors. Applications and an explanatory brochure are available, on request, from the AGP Headquarters.

The selection process for Big Brothers should not be a hasty or random one nor should too much time be taken.

Big Brothers should be assigned before the Orientation Meeting. Special care should be taken to insure the compatibility of the individuals paired together.

The following are guidelines that should be used in selecting Big Brothers:

1. A Brother wishing to become a Big Brother should Submit to the VNR-Membership Development a copy of the Big Brother Application (at the end of this Section), describing his experience and his reasons for wanting to be a Big Brother.

The VNR-Membership Development should judge these applications by each Brother's record: which Order has he achieved, willingness and desire to be involved, his track record in the Chapter, his availability to be involved and his record of Chapter and campus achievement.

The VNR-membership development should look at the following as negative characteristics and avoid selecting individuals with these characteristics as Big Brothers: those who have filed as a Big Brother before, those who are chronic complainers or negative personalities or who have a record of being irresponsible (not paying dues, not attending meetings, etc.)

Do not honor someone by selection as a Big Brother only because he does not have another job in the Fraternity or because he did not get some other job he sought. Doing so is not fair to the new Brother.

2. Juniors and senior are generally better candidates for Big Brother because of their greater maturity and experience. They will generally set a better example for the new Brothers than younger Brothers.

In addition, this honor serves as a method of maintaining a high level of interest by older Brothers.

### **Matching:**

Once you have a list of qualified potential Big Brothers and their Little Brothers, explain the role of the Big Brother to the Candidates. Have each candidate for initiation prepare a list of five Brothers, in rank order, that he would like as a Big Brother. Have him submit this list to the VNR-Membership Development.

Be sure to explain to each candidate that he may not get his first choice but he will get a Big Brother with whom he is compatible.

Armed with both lists, match big and little Brothers in a “best fit” fashion, according to personality, talents and personal preference.

### **Some Guidelines on Matching:**

1. Leadership Ability Levels:

Both demonstrate similarly high levels of leadership involvement and skills.

2. Background:

Individuals from the same hometown or school or from towns or schools in close proximity often tend to be compatible.

3. Academic Major:

If men are pursuing the same course of study, they will often work well together. This can contribute to the scholarship of the Little Brother because the Big Brother can provide guidance in selecting courses and tutor the Little Brother in courses he has taken in the past.

4. Interests:

Brothers that enjoy the same kind of activities generally get along well with each other.

## **EDUCATION FOR BIG BROTHERS**

The VNR-Membership Development is directly responsible for ensuring that Big Brothers receive proper training to handle the responsibility of their position.

While there is not necessarily a need for an extensive formal program, the VNR-Membership Development should be sensitive to programming offered either on campus (counseling department) or by the Chapter itself which may lend itself to the involvement of the Big Brothers.

Indeed, a great way to gauge the true interest of a Brother to be a Big Brother is by making several of these sessions required for those men who want to be Big Brothers.

Examples of such programs include:

- ★ Peer Counseling Training
- ★ Fraternity related topics – risk management, hazing, etc.
- ★ Substance abuse prevention training
- ★ Tutoring Skills
- ★ Goal Setting
- ★ Time Management
- ★ Study Skills
- ★ Campus/IFC Greek Leadership Conferences

Perhaps the most positive education that can be provided for Big Brothers is regular sessions that allow Big Brothers to discuss problems.

## **PAYMENT OF INITIATION FEES**

From time to time, there is a need to remove a Big Brother from that role. Reasons may include: Failing out of school; expulsion or suspension from the Chapter; incompatibility; or not fulfilling the duties of a Big Brother.

If the VNR-Membership Development feels that the relationship between Big and Little Brother must be changed, he should have a meeting with the Big and Little Brothers and the Chapter Noble Ruler to discuss the reasons for the problem and to indicate that the change doesn't necessarily mean that the former Big Brother is not a good Brother but rather that the relationship did not work out.

If the change is due to expulsion, etc., the Little Brother will have to receive a briefing from the Chapter Noble Ruler on why the expulsion occurred. In either case, a new Big Brother must be selected for the Little Brother as soon as possible.

This decision should be made by the VNR-Membership Development consulting with the Chapter Noble Ruler.