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School-Based Mentoring: The Jack in the Box Foundation Sponsors Pilot Program for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

SAN DIEGO - A national, school-based mentoring program to help children at risk achieve their full potential will be piloted in five U.S. cities by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America® (BBBSA) and sponsored by The Jack in the Box Foundation. The cities are Houston, Dallas, St. Louis, Phoenix and Boise.

At least 15 million U.S. children are considered at risk from drugs, violence and academic failure, according to BBBSA, the nation's largest and oldest children's mentoring program. Although BBBSA currently provides about 160,000 new adult mentors to children at risk each year, many other children who need additional support do not receive it. Through a school-based program in which older students mentor younger students, substantially more children can receive the benefits of a mentoring relationship, including improved academic and social skills.

Said Judy Vredenburg, president and CEO of BBBSA, "With so many children in need, our goal is to serve one million children annually by 2010. Growing our school-based mentoring program enables us to tap into far more volunteers. Plus, it offers an option for people who have time constraints, but would still like to volunteer."

BBBSA is just one of nearly 1,000 partners of "America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth," a national crusade focused on meeting the needs of young people. Retired Gen. Colin L. Powell leads the non-profit organization.

"By teaching young people the joy of service, we're making good citizenship a vital, transforming and continuing aspect of our national character," said Powell. "Mentoring programs have proven to be highly effective in helping young people face life's challenges. We commend organizations like The Jack in the Box Foundation and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America for proactively making a difference in the lives of America's youth by supporting mentoring within their communities."

The five-city pilot program will enable BBBSA agencies to recruit high school students, known as "Bigs," and match them with elementary school students, known as "Littles." Through the program, Bigs and Littles will meet at least once a week to work on homework assignments, play sports or just talk. High school Bigs will be carefully selected to ensure that they will be responsible and committed role models.

The Jack in the Box Foundation, a national BBBSA sponsor since 1998, has provided more than \$1 million in financial support and services through contributions from Jack in the Box Inc. (NYSE: JBX) and its employees, community fund-raising activities, and volunteer efforts. In addition, the Jack in the Box "First Meal" program provides all new Big and Little matches with a free meal at any Jack in the Box® restaurant.

Karen Bachmann, president of The Jack in the Box Foundation, said the pilot program is an important addition to the BBBSA/Jack in the Box partnership: "The goal of the Foundation is to effectively support the communities in which Jack in the Box restaurants operate. Through our relationship with BBBSA, we are able to make a difference in the lives of children most in need. The BBBSA school-based mentoring program impacts not just immediate lives, but whole lifetimes."

According to a BBBSA study, elementary students who participate in school-based mentoring show measurable improvement in key areas of their lives:

- Almost two-thirds of those studied develop more positive attitudes toward school;
- Nearly three in five students achieve higher grades in math, languages and social studies;
- About 60 percent improve relationships with adults, and nearly as many show improved relationships with peers;
- Some 55 percent are better able to express their feelings;
- Nearly two out of three students develop higher levels of self-confidence; and
- More than three in five students are more likely to trust their teachers.

BBBSA has been the nationally recognized leader in youth mentoring for almost 100 years. BBBSA provides meaningful community and school-based mentoring relationships to millions of children through its more than 500 affiliated agencies reaching 5,000 communities. National research studies prove that children with a Big Brother or Big Sister have more positive attitudes towards school, achieve higher grades and have better school attendance. In addition, these children are less likely to use drugs and alcohol and exhibit violent behavior. For more information, visit BBBSA's website at [www.bbbsa.org](http://www.bbbsa.org).

The Jack in the Box Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the communities where Jack in the Box Inc. employees and guests work and live. Jack in the Box operates and franchises more than 1,600 quick-serve restaurants in 15 states. With headquarters in San Diego, the company has 42,000 employees and systemwide sales of nearly \$2 billion.

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