



MODEL BIG BROTHER PROGRAM

CHOOSING MENTORS FOR THE NEW MEMBERS

The traditional part of the Phikeia Program, Big Brothers are also very useful to the Phikeia educator in establishing meaningful ties between the chapter and its newest members: the Phikeias. Big Brothers provide a closer, less intimidating relationship for the Phikeias. The Big Brother serves as a mentor, counselor, advisor and, most importantly, as a friend. He can make the difficult transition to college life easier for the Phikeia. Not only can he transmit his knowledge of the campus, he can also introduce the Phikeia to people, new campus activities, and resources.

The Big Brother-Little Brother relationship can be a very close and promising one, but Big Brothers must also realize that it is an important responsibility.

PURPOSE OF BIG BROTHERS

The purpose of the Big Brother is to help the Phikeia make the difficult transition to college life. The Big Brothers can remember what it was like when they first joined the Fraternity. With a new group of friends, a new environment, and rigorous study schedule, adjusting to college life is intimidating. The Big Brother should answer the Phikeia's questions, help him meet the demands of The Phikeia program, introduce him to the campus, and make him feel at ease.

ASSIGNMENT OF BIG BROTHERS

Selecting members as Big Brothers is a task that warrants thoughtful consideration. Having involved, responsive, and enthusiastic Big Brothers can make the job of the Phikeia Educator much easier, and they can make a Phikeia's experience much more rewarding.

The following factors should be considered in selecting and assigning a Big Brother:

1. **Members in good standing:** Do not select any brothers who are financially delinquent to the chapter nor who earned a deficient GPA in the previous term.
2. **The member wants to participate:** Ask the member if he wants the responsibility of being a Big Brother. Show him the expectations and the benefits and ask him to make a commitment to the program for eight weeks. Big Brothers should be enthusiastic about the program, and they should also realize that their commitment lasts after the Little Brother's initiation.
3. **Personality and Leadership:** Personality conflicts should be avoided if they can be predicted. Members with outstanding leadership ability should be encouraged to participate. A leader will often be more able to schedule the time demands of a Big Brother and will be responsible enough to be a good role model.

Once the Phikeia Education Committee has compiled a list of members eligible to be Big Brothers, the Phikeia, at their first formal meeting, should write their name and the names of their top three preferences for a Big Brother on a piece of paper. Limit the Phikeia to the list of members previously established as eligible to be a Big Brother.

After you collect the preferences, the Phikeia Education Committee has the task of matching the Phikeia with their Big Brothers. The Big Brothers may be involved in the selection process, but it is not necessary. If a Big Brother and the Phikeia have similar interests they will ordinarily work better together. Men with similar majors are good combinations, because the Big Brother can better assist the Phikeia in his studies.

BIG BROTHER ORIENTATION

After the Big Brothers are selected, the Phikeia educator should meet with them to review the Phikeia Program and discuss the expectations of a Big Brother. Schedule this meeting right after Big Brothers are selected and before the Big Brother Ceremony. You should make copies of this section as well as the schedule of the Phikeia Program for each of them. Suggest that they each get a daily planner to mark all the scheduled Phikeia events they will need to attend.

1. Hand out and review the Phikeia Program schedule (10 min.)
2. Have the Big Brothers set expectations and standards for themselves as a group (20 min.)
3. Hand out copies of this section and discuss expectations and responsibilities of Big Brothers (15 min.)
4. Hand out copies of the Phikeia requirements for initiation and discuss them (10 min.)
5. Have the Pallas Committee chairman discuss the Pallas Committee and disciplinary procedures (15 min.)
6. Discuss ideas for Big Brother/Little Brother activities (20 min.)
7. Review the Little Brother Report (5 min.)
8. Have the scholarship chairman review the Phikeia scholarship program (5 min.)
9. Discuss the FEA Statement of Position on Hazing (10 min.)
10. Discuss potential concerns of Phikeias (ie grades) and how the group of Big Brothers can help support the Phikeias (10 mins.)
11. Questions and wrap-up

THE BIG BROTHER CEREMONY

The announcement of Big Brothers occurs as a separate event, ideally in Week Two of the Phikeia Education period. It can also take place during the Phikeia retreat if the retreat occurs early in the process. Big Brothers should bring a gift of some sort for their Little Brother (i.e., sportswear with ΦΔΘ letters, a Big Brother family tree, or other Fraternity-related item).

When should the Big Brother Ceremony take place?

The ceremony should take place soon after the recruitment process is complete. Waiting too long after “Bidding” to induct the new Phikeias and starting the education program will leave them hanging. Chapters may also hold as many induction ceremonies as is necessary to accommodate recruitment timelines, etc. The chapter treasurer should also be sure to collect the Phikeia dues up front and in full before the ceremony to avoid confusion and collection problems later.

Who is responsible for the Big Brother Ceremony?

The Phikeia educator and the Phikeia Education Committee should be responsible for preparing and coordinating the ceremony. Be sure to read this section thoroughly to properly prepare the chapter and the new members for the ceremony.

Preparing for the Ceremony

The Phikeia educator must choose an appropriate location (a chapel, the chapter house, or other solemn location), then he should pick a specific date and time well in advance and notify all those involved, especially the Phikeias.

Appropriate Attire

Dress for all Phikeias and members should be coat and tie, and all chapter members should be present.

Who can Attend?

The Big Brother ceremony is an open ceremony. Chapter Advisory Board members, alumni, University administration, and non-members are more than welcome to attend.

Supplies to bring to the ceremony:

-  Six blue or white tapered candles
 - Six of one color, or three of each are appropriate

-  The Fraternity flag or coat-of-arms as a backdrop

PHIKEIA EDUCATOR:

“Big Brothers, when I call your name, please step forward and take your place behind your Little Brother.”

The Phikeia educator should read the pairings one at a time.

PRESIDENT:

“To formally induct you to the position of a Big Brother of the *(your chapter designation)* Chapter of Phi Delta Theta, you will please stand and repeat the Big Brother Creed after me.

“I (state their names) understand that as a Big Brother... it is my personal responsibility to act... as a mentor,... advisor,... and friend... to my Little Brother,... and that I will share with him... my knowledge of Phi Delta Theta.

I promise to help my Little Brother... become the greatest version of himself,... worthy of being initiated into our great Fraternity... I will pass on to him... the principles of friendship,... sound learning,... and rectitude,... and I will instill in him... a sense of personal responsibility,... not only through the wisdom of my words,... but through the integrity of my actions... I am my brother’s keeper.”

Slight Pause.

PRESIDENT:

“Brothers, you have heard these men recite the Big Brother Creed, committing their knowledge and guidance to the success Phikeias. What say you?”

CHAPTER MEMBERS RESPOND:

“We are witnesses”

PRESIDENT:

“Phikeias of the *(your Chapter designation)* Chapter of Phi Delta Theta, throughout your journey, your Big Brothers will not only aid and assist you in fraternal and scholarly matters, but they will also celebrate the joys and bonds of brotherhood with you. Let their guidance and experience be a resource as you continue on the path to full membership in Phi Delta Theta.

The chorister leads the chapter in a song, followed by individual congratulations to each new Phikeia and Big Brother. Big Brothers may now present the Phikeias with their gifts.

Once the ceremony has concluded you may choose the end the evening with a ‘Pass the Gavel’ or ‘Proud to Be’.

After the ceremony, the group should go to a pre-scheduled activity like a varsity sports event or a social event just for the Big Brothers and Little Brothers.

IDEAS FOR BIG BROTHER NIGHT

Big brother night can be an exciting time for the Phikeias and the Chapter. The safety of respect of the Phikeias, the Chapter, and Phi Delta Theta as a whole should be considered to be the most important aspect of planning a Big Brother night. Thus, all policies and procedures for Risk Management and event registration for both Phi Delta Theta and your campus should be strictly followed.

Shared Meal

It is not uncommon for a Chapter to plan a large meal for the entire Chapter, or for just the Big Brothers and Little Brothers immediately following the Big Brother Ceremony. Whether at the Chapter facility, in a room on campus, or at an area restaurant, a fellowship meal can easily illustrate the bonds of friendship and family environment that we all enjoy as Phi Delta Theta men.

Keynote Speaker

Prominent alumni, campus administrators, community leaders, and even Chapter members can make excellent keynote speakers. Their stories and experiences can offer wisdom to the new Phikeia class. Having a keynote speaker after the ceremony or during a meal is a great way to set the tone for the Phikeia Program, and show the new members that they made the right decision in joining Phi Delta Theta.

Group Builders

Group builders, games, and brotherhood activities can immediately build a sense of trust and camaraderie between Big Brothers and Little Brothers. A comprehensive list of activities and exercises can be found in the Appendix of the Phikeia Educator Facilitator Guide.

Service Events

If your campus and Chapter cultures have a strong focus on service to others, then planning a community service event for Big Brothers and Little Brothers can be a great way to begin their experience in the Chapter.

Trivia Night

Looking for something fun to do? Why not plan a trivia night during a meal after the Big Brother Ceremony. To prepare for a trivia night, collect all kinds of background information on Big Brothers, Little Brothers, Campus facts, and Phi Delt facts, and create a list of questions for trivia night. Be creative with point values, rounds of questions, types of questions, and have prizes ready for the winning teams.

Guided Reflection

Don't let the title fool you. Creating a list of questions and talking points for Big Brother and Little Brother pairs can set expectations and provide a great foundation for future conversations. Your focus can be on personal information, goals for the pair, or just a list of talking points for the Big Brothers to formally welcome the Little Brothers and get to know them better. Have each pair take a walk around campus, eat a meal together, or go hang out somewhere as a pair to complete this activity.

REMOVING BIG BROTHERS

Do not be adverse to reassigning or switching Big Brothers. Be mindful that the Phikeia are our most important asset. The Phikeias are the future of our organization and they deserve attention, time, and effort. If a Big Brother is not meeting the required expectations, you should have him meet with the Pallas Committee to discuss his performance.

If the committee agrees that the member is not performing up to expectations, he should be removed. The Phikeia should be asked for his input regarding a replacement.

BEING A BIG BROTHER

Being a Big Brother is an exciting part of fraternity life, but it is also an important responsibility. The Big Brother serves as a mentor, counselor, advisor, and friend to the Phikeia. It is not a relationship for the freshman year alone. It is a special friendship that lasts throughout the undergraduate years and beyond.

Big Brothers have the following responsibilities:

1. Attend an orientation meeting with the Phikeia educator
2. Attend the Big Brother ceremony
3. Attend all scheduled Big Brother activities
4. Meet with the Phikeia's professors once during the Phikeia period (if this is possible)
5. Attend Pallas Committee with your Little Brother
6. Ensure the Phikeia is fulfilling his financial obligations
7. Monitor the Phikeia's progress in his studies and encourage him
8. Spend time one-on-one with your Little Brother at least once a week
9. Ensure that the Phikeia is meeting the requirements of The Phikeia Program so that he may be initiated.

BIG BROTHER RESOURCES

Big Brothers should read:

- The Phikeia Manual
- Chapter's bylaws
- The Code of Phi Delta Theta
- Risk Management Policies
- The chapter history

These are documents the Phikeia will be reading, and the Big Brothers should be familiar with them. In addition, Big Brothers should be knowledgeable of the campus, especially where campus security, the health center, and administrative buildings are located. They should know emergency numbers for the health center or crisis center, first aid, campus police, campus Greek Official and the dean of students.