Big Brothers and Big Sisters was founded in 1904 in New York City by a court clerk who recognized that, without a stable, caring adult, the children coming into his courtroom would likely end up behind bars.

Following that belief, Big Brothers Big Sisters began serving Oklahoma in 1955. Today, the statewide agency serves seven areas across the state: Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Norman, Stillwater, Bartlesville, Shawnee and Ponca City. The organization’s mission is to provide children facing adversity with enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.

Perhaps no other time in the history of Oklahoma has the need for mentors been greater. In 2016, one in 10 Oklahoma children woke up with the frightening reality of having one or both parents sent to jail. Studies show that without positive intervention, nearly 75% of these children will end up in prison themselves.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Oklahoma (BBBSOK) is a proven mentoring program to help these children stay in school, make better decisions and stay out of prison by providing them with a stable, consistent role model and friend. “Bigs” and “Littles” meet through two programs: the community based program and the school based program.

In essence, the organization matches a volunteer (a “Big”) with a child in the program (a “Little”). With the first program, the “Big” is asked to spend time with the “Little” doing fun activities outside the school. With the second, the “Big” meets the “Little” at the school campus.

In Oklahoma, there are over 500 children, most of them boys, who have raised their hands and asked for a mentor to spend time with them. These children have the potential to succeed, if we – as a community – give them the tools. Having a Big Brother or Big Sister is proven to be a successful tool that will help them reach their full potential and defy statistics.

This summer, BBBSOK will host a fundraising event in Tulsa at the Cox Business Center on June 15.

To learn more about the organization and how you can help, visit bbsok.org.