

Fundraising underway for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel York Move for Kids' Sake

A major fundraiser has begun for the local chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel York (BBBSPY) has announced the dates of its 2023 Move For Kids' Sake fundraiser, alongside its title sponsor, Tim Hortons.

For those unfamiliar with BBBSPY, it's a non-profit organization dedicated to championing the health and wellbeing of youth. It's well-known for its mentoring programs where caring adult volunteers help youth overcome adversity.

Move For Kids' Sake is an annual team fundraising event where participants first must choose an activity they'd like to participate in.

This year, there's bowling and rock climbing events being held in Brampton, Mississauga and Newmarket. For those who can't make it to one of the events, there's the option to choose your own event and participate virtually.

Locally, bowling takes place at Stellar Lanes Newmarket from 2 to 4 p.m. on March 4. The final event is rock climbing at Toprock Climbing from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 5.

Once an event is chosen, participants can register as an individual or team online at peel.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/event/move-for-kids-sake. All participants in the event must raise a minimum of \$100, and BBBSPY's goal is to raise \$50,000 through the entire fundraiser.

Lori Plati, BBBSPY Public Relations Manager, explained Move For Kids' Sake used to be called Bowl For Kids' Sake before the pandemic hit, forcing bowling alleys to close down temporarily. BBBSPY changed the name in order to facilitate virtual events where people could move safely and do an activity of their choice.

Now that bowling alleys are back open, Plati said everyone's excited for in-person fun, and there's new excitement for the first-ever rock climbing event.

"We're still going back to bowling events, but we wanted to offer something else for people who may have different interests," said Plati. "We have a great relationship with Toprock Climbing, they've been very supportive allowing our big and little brothers and sisters to climb there for free this past year."

There's another great relationship at play for this year's event too.

Peel's Police Chief, Nishan Duraiappah, is the honorary chairperson of Move For Kids' Sake 2023. Plati explained the Peel Regional Police are an amazing supporter of the event every year, and have already booked every bowling lane for the February 26 event with 48 fundraising teams from their organization. There's now a waiting list for that event, so interested parties may want to attend one of the other two official events.

"They are an extremely strong supporter of ours and we are thrilled to have Nishan as honorary chairperson once again," said Plati. "It's really nice for him to lend his support and he's so good with the kids too."

Plati said at first, BBBSPY didn't know how the return to in-person events would go, but that so far she's been overwhelmed with the support.

"It's been really nice to see how the community has responded," said Plati. "Really helping us to raise money we need to make (mentor) matches with all the kids on our waiting list."

By Zachary Roman