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Local Big Brothers Big Sisters fundraiser takes on different form

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Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin & District took a different approach this year to their largest annual fundraiser, and the local group is now just shy of their fundraising goal.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin & District host the Bowl for Kids Sake event each year, with the funds raised going towards operating their programs. Originally held at the Orangeville bowling alley, the event eventually switched to a Wii bowling tournament held at the Best Western Inn and Suites in Orangeville.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the local chapter of the non-profit has held off on hosting the event in-person, but has now revamped it to a virtual event called Move For Kids Sake.

?The way it works is that people can choose their own activity, whatever they would like to do, and they have a goal, and as people pledge them they agree to do more and more of that particular activity,? said Nancy Stallmach, executive director for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin & District.

Stallmach said they've had participants do activities from sit up challenges to walking. Steve Murphy, president of the local organization, even took the Polar Plunge for the event.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin & District has been serving in the community for almost 50 years and provides their program for between 200 and 300 children from different towns, including Orangeville, Shelburne, Grand Valley, Erin and even Dundalk.

?Our core program right now is our Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program, which, when possible, we have socially distanced visits between the mentor and the mentee,? said Stallmach. ?We match an adult with a child who could just use a little bit of extra support, especially during COVID.?

While the Move For Kids Sake event helps fund the Big Brothers Big Sisters programing, it also looks to support children's mental health.

?Children in our program have better mental health and overall well-being when they have regular visits with their mentors, that's what we're providing,? said Stallmach. ?They have the support and friendship on a regular basis of a caring adult mentor or big brother, big sister.?

In 2019 the organization raised a little over $60,000 for their programs and had a similar goal for 2020.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Dufferin & District are now looking to raising $16,000 and are shy by $2,000 as eight days remain for the fundraiser.

?We're pretty committed to continuing with the programs that we provide and to the families and children we serve. We have every intention of continuing as we are.?

Donations for the Move For Kids Sake campaign can be made at the Big Brothers Big Sister Dufferin & District website: https://dufferin.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/

The fundraiser is accpeting donations until April 15.