This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Sat Oct 31 10:02:29 2026 / +0000 GMT

Saddle up for strikes at Bowl for Kids? Sake

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District is getting ready to roll out its largest annual fundraiser, with a Wild West?themed Wii bowling event designed to raise money for local youth mentorship programs.

Bowl for Kids' Sake 2026 will take place on Friday, April 10, in the ballroom at the Best Western in Orangeville. Instead of traditional lanes, organizers have created a virtual bowling alley using Wii bowling. Guests are encouraged to come in costume, embracing cowboy hats, boots and creative Western-inspired outfits.

Nancy Stallmach, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin & District, explained that those collecting pledges and donations will be able to battle it out on the virtual lanes, all within costume if they so choose.

?The way it works is people collect pledges, they collect donations for Big Brothers Big Sisters, and then they come out on the day and they dress up for our theme... this year [it's] Wild West,? she said. ?They come to the ballroom at the Best Western, where we have created a virtual bowling alley with 15 lanes of Wii bowling put through a projector to create the idea of actual bowling lanes.?

Music, decorations and prizes will help set the mood, with awards planned for standout costumes. Teams from workplaces, service clubs, churches and the organization's own volunteers and families are expected to participate.

The goal this year is to raise $30,000 in support of Big Brothers Big Sisters' mentoring programs.

The fundraiser supports an organization that has been part of the community for more than five decades. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District was founded in July 1972, with a mission that has remained steady even as its programs have evolved.

?At Big Brothers, Big Sisters, we match kids that are facing adversity, and that could be a variety of different things that they might be struggling with, and we match them with a caring adult mentor,? Stallmach said. ?This has a life-changing impact on them, both in the short term and throughout their whole lives.?

The Bowl for Kids' Sake event itself has a long history, originally held at a local bowling alley before being reinvented as a Wii bowling fundraiser when the alley closed. The virtual format has proven popular, with many participants returning year after year.

Stallmach said that funding from events like this is essential to keeping programs running, especially given the limited government support they receive.

?We don't receive a lot of government funding,? she said. ?To allow us to match more children with Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and to provide our mentoring programs, we do really need money that we raise during Bowl for Kids' Sake. The money goes directly to those programs.?

Current sponsors include Best Western, RBC and Boston Pizza, and the organization is actively seeking additional corporate partners.

?For corporate sponsors, it's a great way to be part of the community,? Stallmach said. ?We're anticipating having up to 200 people coming out during the day, so it's a great way to get their name out. We'll also be putting logos and sponsors' names on our website and on our social media, and it's a great way to connect with the community and with a charity that's able to make a big impact on the local community.?

Looking ahead, Big Brothers Big Sisters is also planning its annual golf tournament in June, with details still to come.

At the same time, the agency continues to call for both sponsors and new volunteers, noting there is a waiting list of children in Dufferin County hoping to be matched with a mentor.

?We're always looking for volunteers,? Stallmach said. ?We can always use more Big Brothers and Big Sisters to be matched with children. We have a waiting list of children that could really benefit, and we'd love to hear from people if they would be interested in being part of that.?

The Bowl for Kids ?Sake event promises to be a fun initiative to bring people together in the name of making a difference for children across Dufferin County. For those interested in learning more or participating, go to dufferin.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/event/bowl-for-kids-sake-2026/