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Last modified: Tuesday, May 29, 2007 1:26 PM EDT

### Big Brothers providing role models in Lynn

By Thor Jourgensen / The Daily Item

LYNN -- Shane McCarthy and Shadel Seri are brothers, but they are not related.

How's that again? The answer is that the pair are one of 34 pairs of Big Brothers and Little Brothers in Lynn.

McCarthy and Seri met through the Big Brother Big Sisters program in August, 2001. Since then, Seri, a Breed Junior High School student, has had McCarthy's help with homework, sports and, perhaps most important, as a male role model.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest and largest youth mentoring organization in the United States. Trained professionals recruit, screen, match and support Big and Little Brothers and Sisters through a network of 470 agencies throughout the country.

These one-to-one mentoring relationships between caring adults and children have documented positive outcomes for the children. Big Brother Big Sister spokeswoman Pamela Sullivan said the organization is seeking adults to pair with 43 children waiting for a grownup role model.

Today, Big Brothers Big Sisters serves more than 220,000 children, ages six through 18, in 5,000 communities across all 50 states.

Research and anecdotal evidence show that Little Brothers and Sisters are less likely to do drugs, drink alcohol, skip school or engage in acts of violence.

They have greater self-esteem, more success at school and better relationships with their friends and families than their peers who are not in the program.

Relative to the other 484 agencies in the country, Big Brother maintains the largest corps of male volunteers, among the longest length of match (2.6 years) and first year retention rates (74%) and one of the shortest lengths of waiting time for its Littles (less than 9 months on average).



Shane McCarthy, right, and his 'Little Brother' Shadel Seri of Lynn are shown in this courtesy photo.