

BRIEF

Recruitment is over, and the chapter has just installed an enthusiastic group of new associate members. As the Big Brother Coordinator, you are responsible for organizing the big brother-little brother matching process, assuring that the individuals honored for past performance by their selection as big brothers are actively performing their jobs in the best interest of both their little brothers and the chapter, educating the associate members on the purposes of a big brother, educating the big brothers on their responsibilities and conducting periodic conversations with each of the big brothers on his involvement with, and evaluation of, his little brother.

In the *New Member Education BRIEF* we have developed a suggested outline for the purpose of educating men into the brotherhood of Delta Chi. The purpose of the membership education program is to assist the associate members in their efforts to achieve productive lives not only as fraternity brothers but, ultimately, as citizens. Membership education should prepare one to accept not only the responsibilities of an undergraduate and alumnus member in Delta Chi, but to develop one's best potential and meet the challenges of life. A well-run associate member program can be one of the most educational and rewarding experiences a young man will experience.

A big brother can play a significant role in the overall success of a membership education program. When a big brother program functions properly, the chapter's results are highly encouraging, especially in terms of the percentage of associate members initiated. In fact, the big brother can be the single most important person in shaping the fraternal development of an associate member.

It is important to realize that the mere existence of big brothers does not guarantee that the associate member or chapter will benefit. To be successful, a big brother program requires thorough planning, organization, clear goals, and follow-through.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BIG BROTHER COORDINATOR:

1. Provide big brother applications to members wishing to play a vital role in developing the future leaders of the chapter.
2. Work with the associate member education committee in selecting the big brothers.
3. Assure that the associate member education committee makes a good effort to match big brothers and little brothers.
4. Hold scheduled meetings with each big brother to discuss the membership education program, the responsibilities of a big brother and the progress of his little brother.
5. Work with big brothers to organize activities designed to develop the friendship among them into a tight fraternal bond - The Bond of Delta Chi.
6. When there is a big brother who is not fulfilling his responsibility, the coordinator should sit down in private with the individual and discuss the situation. If you can help get the situation back on track, do so. If the individual is either unable or unwilling to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, give him an honorable way out. Then, working with the little brother, quickly find a new big brother who can handle the situation.

SECTION I: SELECTING & MATCHING CANDIDATES

The Big Brother Coordinator and Associate Member Education Committee play an important role in the process of matching associate members and brothers as little brothers and big brothers. While more care should be taken to determine if a member is capable of being a big brother at all, rather than worrying about a “perfect match,” the actual selection process for big brothers should not be a hasty or random one. Care should be taken to insure the compatibility of the individuals paired. On the other hand, if the big brother coordinator wait until everyone gets to know each other, he has deprived the associates of their key support during the critical early stage of assimilation when they need it the most!

The following factors play an important role in selecting big brothers:

1. Each initiated member wishing to become a big brother and meeting the standards determined by the chapter should submit to the coordinator a copy of the big brother application (see **Section IV**). This application should describe his experience, relate why he believes he would be a good big brother, and list four associate members (in rank order of preference) he would like as a little brother.
2. A chapter should consider the benefits of requiring upperclass standing in order to be a big brother. Juniors and seniors generally are more mature and more experienced and, therefore, set a better example than sophomores. In addition, this honor can serve as a method of maintaining a high level of interest by older members, particularly seniors, who often tend to become less involved in the chapter.
3. Consider the personalities and backgrounds of the associate members so that matching big brothers and little brothers may lead to close relationships between similar individuals.

Once the list of potential big brothers has been compiled, have each associate prepare a rank order preference (three or four will be sufficient). The Coordinator and Associate Member Education Committee should then review the lists of brothers and associate members and match as many of the first choices as possible. At the outset, it is essential that the associate member is paired with someone with whom he feels comfortable. Through the course of the associate member program, the new men will come to know all the brothers.

In order to improve the possibility of a close relationship between an associate member and his big brother, care should be taken to match similar people. Remember, men with something in common will naturally be more compatible. Some of the factors to consider include:

1. **Affinity** - Someone wishes to be teamed together. While there are advantages to expanding their acquaintances, if it is mutually meaningful to be paired, try to accommodate their wishes.
2. **Personality and Leadership Ability** - Avoid personality conflicts if they are predictable. Do not honor a brother by selection as a big brother simply because he does not have a job in the fraternity. Also, be careful to avoid “social experiments” with pairings. If a pairing seems to be too much of a stretch, it probably is.
3. **Backgrounds** - Individuals from the same hometown, school, towns and schools within close proximity, or similar upbringings usually tend to be compatible.
4. **Academic Major** - If men are pursuing the same course of study, they will usually work well together. This can contribute to the scholarship of the little brother, because the big brother can provide guidance in selecting courses and tutor the associate member in courses he has taken in the past, not only during the Membership Education Program, but in the future as well.
5. **Interests** - Individuals who enjoy the same kind of activities, be they athletic, musical, etc., generally get along with each other well.

SECTION II: BIG BROTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The big brother should take steps to help guide his little brother through the associate member education program. At the same time, he must acknowledge that his actions and behavior are closely observed by his little brother. Therefore, he should take extra precautions to set a good example at all times, particularly in meetings, work sessions and social activities and should also make efforts to set an appropriate standard with academics, classwork, class attendance, homework, and overall behavior.

The big brother can promote healthy attitudes and personal leadership in the associate member by taking several actions. The following are some of the actions or standards he should live up to if he hopes to facilitate his little brother's becoming an active participant and leader in the chapter.

1. Express his dedication and genuine interest in helping his little brother and in improving the chapter and Delta Chi as a whole. **A brother should not accept the honor of being a big brother if he does not intend to make a total commitment to helping the little brother achieve his fullest potential.**
2. Be able to explain the associate member education program and discuss its purpose. In addition, discuss the *Cornerstone* and explain the roles of the officers and committees, as well as the history of the chapter and Delta Chi.
3. Meet weekly, or more often, with little brother to discuss the fraternity, house activities, school or his personal life within the comfort level of both men. Cultivate a spirit of trust and understanding necessary for a close relationship.
4. Maintain a cumulative grade point average in excess of the all men's average.
5. See his little brother initiated from beginning to end. See that the little brother makes his grades as well as fulfills the remaining expectations of the Membership Education Program.
6. Work in close cooperation with the Membership Education Committee in accomplishing the goals of the program.
7. Write the little brother's parents and explain to them the purpose of the fraternity and your purpose as his big brother (see Section IV). If possible, meet with his parents for similar reasons. Invite him home for dinner or a weekend.
8. Develop and maintain a strong friendship during the associate member education program and following initiation to guarantee the continued existence of your family tree.
9. Periodically report to the Membership Education Committee as to the progress of your little brother. If the associate member is not performing to the standards necessary for initiation, work with him to help improve his performance. Tactfully and constructively critique him when appropriate, but avoid public ridicule of his performance. On the other hand, publicly compliment him when praise is deserved.
10. Know the little brother's background and interests (i.e., family, hometown, high school, major, sports, medical history if appropriate, etc.). Cultivate and develop an area of common interest.
11. Contribute to the planning of, and participate in, all big/little brother activities and related events, including the chapter project, associate member meetings and chapter functions.
12. Discuss the little brother's present and future courses as well as academic objectives and his goals. If he has not established any, suggest that he might do so. Monitor his progress and counsel him in his schoolwork.

SECTION III: ACTIVITIES

It is important for the little brother /big brother pair to develop a lasting relationship. Providing activities, particularly early in the program, can contribute to the development of a close friendship. Several suggested activities are listed as follows:

1. Big brothers spend one night a week with their little brothers. During this night, the two can study, work out, watch TV, etc.
2. A group of associates and their big brothers fix dinner on a certain night.
3. Encourage each other to attend and participate in as many chapter functions as appropriate.
4. Each big brother can purchase a fraternity badge for his little brother and pin it on him at his initiation.
5. Have an annual big brother-little brother football, basketball, softball or volleyball game. As the game proceeds, gradually switch little brothers with big brothers to symbolically represent the integration into the chapter of the associate member class.
6. Big brothers share all work duties with their little brothers.
7. Big brothers observe the weekly associate member meetings.
8. Ask all big brothers to be at any associate class activity.
9. Big brothers can assist their little brothers in community service and chapter fund-raising projects.
10. Room together for one quarter or one semester.
11. Keep a family tree in the chapter scrapbook.
12. Big brothers should teach their little brothers Fraternity songs.
13. The little brothers stay overnight at the big brother's room within the first two weeks of the program.
14. The big brothers can take their little brothers to at least one other student organizational meeting during their associate membership.
15. Camp out.
16. Canoe trip.
17. Take a trip to another Delta Chi Chapter.
18. Variety show.
19. Big brothers join in any work sessions with the associate members.
20. Barbecue cookout.

21. Video game, foosball, pool, ping pong or pinball tournaments. This also could be incorporated into backgammon, bridge or other games.
22. Blind date night. Each little brother will fix up his big brother and vice versa.
23. College Bowl or Family Feud type quiz game with teams of big brothers and little brothers. The questions would be based on fraternity, chapter and University history.
24. Newlywed type game with each pair making up the teams. The questions are geared to find out which pair has gotten to know each other the best.
25. Compete for the highest pairing GPA.
26. Big brothers attend associate class study halls every other week.
27. Big brothers keep a grade report on their little brothers and vice versa!
28. Steak and beans dinner. The member of the team who gets the highest GPA eats steak and the other eats hot dogs and baked beans. To be fair, use an active member's previous term GPA as a standard instead of his cumulative GPA, as it will likely be higher and more stable than an incoming freshman GPA. The point is not to degrade those who might have struggled academically, but to reward those who did well.

SECTION IV: FORMS

BIG BROTHER APPLICATION

Name: _____ Year in School: _____

Address: _____

_____ Telephone: _____

Offices held: _____

Committees: _____

Number of hours this semester: _____ Major: _____

Cumulative GPA (MUST meet minimum required): _____

Extracurricular activities: _____

Have you been a big brother before? _____

Was (were) he (they) initiated? _____

What is (are) your little brother's(s') name(s)? _____

Why do you believe you can benefit a little brother and the chapter as a big brother?
(use separate sheet)

Reasons for wanting a little brother (use separate sheet, if necessary): _____

How many hours a week would you reasonably be able to devote to your little brother? _____

Are you able to spend two hours one evening per week studying with your little brother? _____

Have you met all of your financial obligations? _____

Do you attend chapter meetings regularly? _____

List four prospective members (in rank order) who are presently going through recruitment who you would like to have as a little brother: _____

SAMPLE LETTER FROM BIG BROTHER TO THE ASSOCIATE MEMBER'S PARENTS

Often parents are concerned when their son associates with a fraternity because of their misunderstanding of fraternities. Parents frequently believe that fraternities are elitist and expensive organizations that are involved in hazing rituals and detract from scholastic endeavors.

It is suggested that the big brothers address these concerns and assure the parents that the fraternity is indeed a positive experience. Oftentimes a letter to the parents will win the support of the questioning parent. With the blessing and understanding of his parents, the associate member will be much more secure, determined and enthusiastic about his decision to join Delta Chi.

A simple letter can go a long way in promoting good relations with the parents. A sample letter that is designed to serve as a guide for correspondence follows.

NOTE: The following letter should be handwritten by the big brother unless his penmanship dictates typing. Appearance is critical! The Big Brother Coordinator should collect all the letters and mail them himself. This permits him to be sure all the letters are written and mailed.

It is also an excellent idea to include a separate page detailing the costs of membership in Delta Chi. Parents appreciate honesty and openness. This page should be signed by the "D", and a paragraph noting its inclusion should be inserted in the above letter.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____,

As a member of the _____ Chapter of The Delta Chi Fraternity and _____'s recently appointed big brother, I am pleased to introduce you to the fraternity your son has joined.

Your son, by joining Delta Chi, has taken the first step toward an experience that will last a lifetime. _____ is following in the footsteps of one President, one Vice-President, four cabinet members, numerous Senators, numerous Congressmen, and eight Governors. That's not to mention Football Hall of Famers, Pulitzer Prize winners, Fortune Five Hundred Presidents and many more!

The Delta Chi Fraternity was founded in 1890 by a group of law students at Cornell University. Originally we were specifically a law fraternity; however in 1922 we became a general fraternity, open to all male students. Although we are no longer a law fraternity, we still maintain many of the standards set by our Founders.

In our chapters, we see the future leaders of our country. Through scholarship programs and leadership workshops, we try to impress upon the members the importance of their education and leadership potential. As _____'s big brother, I will encourage him to strive towards fulfilling his personal potential.

Finances of the fraternity are worked on and developed by the treasurer and local alumni. Their objective is to keep costs to a minimum; the rest is up to the members. Everyone must be responsible for staying current with his financial obligation!

Delta Chi is proud of its stance against hazing. We were the first fraternity to abolish it (1929) and continue to take a strong position against hazing in any form. If you have any questions or concerns in this or any other area of fraternity, I will gladly try to answer them for you.

Your son will learn many things his first year as a Delta Chi. His education will include the fraternity, the school, and most importantly, living and working with others. The fraternity is a place to grow, gain responsibility and achieve a level of self-confidence that will prevail long after college is over.

Delta Chi is proud to have your son as a member.

Sincerely yours,

And the Brothers of Delta Chi