



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 12, 2025

**HOMETOWN HERO: SMALL BUSINESS OWNER'S "MIXING WITH MENTORS"  
FUNDRAISER IGNITES LONDON COMMUNITY**

*Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area celebrate National Friendship Month with Dan Coleman, owner of Dirty Dan's dirty soda shop.*

**London, ON** — Following the kick-off event on Nov. 1, Coleman's *A Pop of Kindness* campaign will feature weekly themed soda mixers. With a fundraising goal of \$1,500, all proceeds will go towards Big Brothers Big Sister of London and Area (BBSLA).

The first fundraiser, *Mixing with Mentors*, is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 8. Londoners of all ages are invited to make their own dirty soda creation, with the chance to be featured on the official store menu. For every Friendship Soda sold, Dirty Dan's match their donation, dollar-for-dollar in support of BBBSLA. Applications for new mentors will be accepted at the mixers as well.

"Big Brothers Big Sisters are an organization very near and dear to my heart," says Coleman.

Annually, the program serves over 1,200 children and youth. Their mission is to prevent the potentially lifelong effects of an adverse childhood experience.

Lisa McIntosh, the interim director of BBBSLA, highly encourages adults to join the cause. "Right now, 84 young people are waiting, including 55 boys who need a mentor," says McIntosh. She hopes that *Mixing with Mentors* will spark the community's interest in building caring relationships that expand possibilities for youth at-risk of adversity.

Visit [www.dirtydan'slondon.ca/apopofkindness](http://www.dirtydan'slondon.ca/apopofkindness) for details of the event and BBBSLA.

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Media Advisory

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**DIRTY DAN LAUNCHES THEIR *MIXING WITH MENTORS* FUNDRAISING EVENT ON NOV. 8, IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL FRIENDSHIP MONTH**

**London, ON** – Dirty Dan launches their charitable event: *A Pop of Kindness*, with their first fundraising event in celebration of National Friendship Month.

**What:** The fundraiser, *Mixing with Mentors*, invites community members to create their own dirty soda combinations, which will be voted as the Friendship Soda. For every dollar the drink sells, Dan will match it in donations to Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area (BBBSLA).

**When:** Saturday, November 8, 2025

12:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Opening statements from founder

1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Tasting session

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Make your own soda session

3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Voting & closing remarks

**Where:** Dirty Dan's Soda Shop  
123 King Street, London, ON N8G 9J5

**Why:** The fundraiser is the first of four, which aims to raise \$1,500 to support BBBSLA's mentorship program. Their program empowers youth by helping them build confidence, develop skills and achieve goals through mentorship within the community. *Mixing with Mentors*, encourages the community to come together and build bonds while also giving back.

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## BACKGROUND

### **Dirty Dan's**

Founded by Dan Coleman in 2022, Dirty Dan's became the first dirty soda shop to open in London, Ontario. Coleman found inspiration in a reality television show which featured dirty sodas. His goal was to bring the trendy beverage to London, which offers customizable sodas with creamy add-ons and a multitude of flavour combinations. Coleman hopes to use his growing business to give back and get involved with the community through this charity initiative.

### **About the Campaign: "A Pop of Kindness"**

*A Pop of Kindness* is a community charity initiative featuring four weekly fundraising events throughout November. Each event focuses on a different theme of friendship, starting with the "Mixing with Mentors" event on Nov. 8. Youth from the community are invited to partner with mentors from BBBSLA to create their unique soda combinations, which will be voted as the Friendship Soda for the month. All sales made from this soda will go to BBBSLA. Coleman's goal is to raise \$1,500 for BBBSLA to continue to fund youth mentorship and inspire the youth to build confidence.

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area (BBBSLA)**

[BBBSLA](#) is a non-profit organization that has helped youth health and wellbeing for over 50 years. Their mentorship programs match children facing adversity (Littles) with adult volunteers (Bigs). This mentorship program encourages Bigs and Littles to meet twice a month to work on strengthening social and emotional skills, while also improving academic performance.

### **Dan Coleman's Story**

For Coleman, this partnership with BBBSLA is an opportunity for him to give back to a cause that has helped his daughter. The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges for Coleman's 13-year-old daughter, Cherry. At the time, she felt isolated, depressed and anxious about her future. After encouragement from Dan, Cherry sought mentorship with BBBSLA and was paired with Diana. As someone who has experienced depression, Diana was able to help her find avenues of mental health and wellbeing support. Their weekly meetings created bonding and helped Cherry open up, while simultaneously making her feel understood and cared for.



## FACT SHEET

### **How are children selected to enroll in BBBSLA's program?**

Children needing additional support are referred to BBBSLA through various channels. Typically, Littles become participants because they have undergone an [ACE](#): a stressful or traumatic event during a crucial time of development.

The most common ACEs include abuse (emotional, physical, or sexual), and growing up in a harmful environment with a caregiver. According to [surveys](#) conducted in 2024:

- 32 per cent of youth are close to someone who is incarcerated.
- 78 per cent of families BBBSLA work with are living with financial stress
- 71 per cent of youth are exposed to mental illness.
- 90 per cent of youth reported being bullied or have bullied others.

### **Why did Dirty Dan's decide to team up with BBBSLA?**

According to [Statistics Canada](#), positive relationships play a key role in the mental health and well-being of youth. In Grade 10, 34 per cent of girls and 25 per cent of boys reported experiencing feelings of loneliness.

The shop's founder, Dan Coleman, recognizes that a single meaningful interaction with someone has the power to change the trajectory of your day. The team at BBBSLA focuses on fostering bonds between Bigs and Littles to mitigate the effects of an adverse childhood, and to help them achieve great heights.

Through weekly or bi-weekly visits, young graduates of the program gain social and emotional competence, take care of their mental health, and learn about educational and employment engagement.

### **How will *A Pop of Kindness* support BBBSLA?**

*A Pop of Kindness* aims to fund BBBSLA's community projects including investing in the [Fred J. Watkins Scholarship Program](#), Watkin's gift dedicated to bright children with limited means to pursue a post-secondary education. Additionally, proceeds will go towards promoting volunteering initiatives, such as 1:1 in-school mentoring, the *Between Generations* (55+) mentoring, and *Go Girls!* (for girls in grades 6-8) and *Game On!* (for boys in grade 6-8).



In creating the media kit for the fundraiser of Dirty Dan's National Friendship Month campaign, we took careful consideration of balancing the promotion of the soda shop and the fundraising aspect for Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area (BBBSLA). We first identified our target audiences which includes journalists who will report on the fundraiser, adults looking for ways to get involved in the community, and caregivers who know children experiencing adversity. In this case, caregivers, parental guardians, close family members or friends, teachers and social workers were taken into consideration. With this in mind, we did our best to equally distribute a focus on statistics of children who experience adversities, Dan Coleman's shop, and BBBSLA's mission, vision, and values. We found that creating a narrative that struck a balance between both parties shared goals of preventing the effects of adverse childhoods would cater to the interests of everyone in the target audience.

Additionally, by narrowing down our target audience, we were able to come up with creative fundraising events that attract their attention. Here, the community-building aspect of *Mixing with Mentors* is key. We organized an interactive event for the fundraising initiative so that parents will be inclined to involve their children in a mentorship program. The fun names given to the event and initiative looked to entice youth to take part in the activities held by the fundraiser. Additionally, we integrated a voting system for customers who do not have children to take part in the event by making a signature drink. This piques prolonged interest and to promote the charity initiative for the rest of the month.



The publics for Dirty Dan's includes prospective customers like parents of young children and teenagers/young adults. As for BBBSLA, their focus would be on producers such as volunteers, employees, investors, and donors and stockholders. Our content met their needs by identifying circumstances in which action should be taken (i.e. community-building for Dirty Dan's and the lack of adult mentors for BBBSLA) and providing opportunities for the audience to participate. In this case, our key message is that caring relationships formed based on community involvement can unlock potential in children and adults alike.

On that note, it was our goal to structure and word the media kit so that the delivery of content did not feel too clinical but was still effective in relaying information. Furthermore, it was important that we included elements of journalistic writing like quotes and attributions to weave Dirty Dan's into the story, while being sensitive to the difficult subject matter of adverse childhoods. We also focused on a personal story that connects Dan to the organization, to create sincerity for the fundraiser. Talking about his daughter Cherry's story, allows the audience to connect and relate to Dan, while humanizing him. To add on, there was an equal balance between information regarding his soda shop and BBBSLA. We chose to exclude information regarding the product itself (i.e. flavours, prices, sizes, etc.) to again stray away from a sales pitch.

Overall, the aim of the formatting of the media release to deliver the basic information of the when and where of the event was explored here, paired with quotes from the director of BBBSLA and Dan to promote this as a human-interest project. The media advisory focused on being concise, while discussing the community engagement aspect



of the initiative. This focus gives people a reason to care for the initiative and attract interest for attendance. Additionally, the backgrounder created a storyline for the company, Dan and the charity. By creating connections between the three factors, the fundraiser becomes more meaningful. Lastly, the fact sheet emphasized the importance of community involvement, not because it looks good on paper, but because it warrants concrete change.