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Unsung **HEROES**

The Role of an EMT

EMTs, or emergency medical technicians, play an important role as first responders to emergency situations. They are well trained and should be respected public figures in your community. It is important to understand the hectic work life of an EMT.

EMTs are applauded for their calm composure during extremely stressful situations. No matter the emergency, your local EMTs are prepared for any emergency event. They are first responders to scenes of vehicle accidents, home and industrial accidents, medical emergencies or any other situation that requires emergency service.

AVERAGE DAY

Though the length of the average shift performed by an EMT may differ depending on department, many EMTs work shifts from eight hours to two entire days. Luckily for you and your EMTs, they are allowed scheduled nap hours during these long shifts to remain sharp in administering emergency service.

EMTs also are responsible for communicating with local hospital staff to prepare for incoming patients. They deliver clear and concise information on the treatment they have already administered to a patient and explain the situation of the emergency event.

They also are responsible for keeping accurate records that explain the incident. These records may be called on for legal or medical reasons.

INCREDIBLE SET OF SKILLS

Take a minute to think of



times you or people you know have had to dial 911. The reasons may be extremely different each time, but your EMTs were still able to sufficiently administer emergency care.

This is due to the strenuous testing and training that is required of EMTs. Here are

just a few skills required by EMTs, per the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians:

- cardiac arrest management;
- patient assessment for trauma and medical; and
- oxygen administration.

THANK AN EMT

Your local EMTs do everything in their power to provide the best possible ending to an emergency. Take time to pass along your appreciation of their hard work and dedication.

Write a letter of acknowl-

edgment to your local emergency response department explaining your gratitude to the EMTs who assisted you. These letters let your local EMTs know that the long hours and stressful conditions are making a positive difference to those around them.

Appreciating Teachers

Teachers offer your children love, comfort and life lessons that go way beyond arithmetic equations. These qualities offered by your local teachers should be admired and rewarded. Your child likely considers school their second home as teachers allow you to take a sigh of relief knowing that your children are in good hands.

Most teachers get into the profession due to their desire to create successful futures for today's youth. The bond between student and teacher is an entity that is created by trust and patience by both parties.

TEACHING BEYOND THE BOOKS

Dedicated teachers provide accurate information for the classes they teach. They are expected to teach your children the curriculum required to do well in high school and enter the working world or college classes. Lesson plans go beyond what is written in textbooks.

From the very beginning of a child's academic life, they are exposed to lessons that can make an impact for years to come. Some of these lessons are as basic as learning to share and other social skills.

As they get older, a teacher can assist in teaching children how to handle conflicts with others and how to be a responsible adult. These lessons can make an impression that lasts long after graduation.

DEDICATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

A teacher's work day doesn't end when students leave for the day. Most nights include

grading and critiquing assignments. The grading process requires extreme attention as the grades can change a child's academic path.

Teachers understand the responsibility they have as role

models to their students even after the final bell rings. Whether it be on social media or in public places, they carry themselves as reputable and respectful members of the community.

ASSISTING TEACHERS

Teachers commonly pay out-of-pocket expenses to purchase useful tools to make a lesson plan more meaningful. This is especially true as teachers in many states across the

country continue to battle budgeting shortfalls.

Consider a fundraising project with other parents to raise money for your child's teacher's expenses that are not covered by the school.



Respect For Police

Teaching your children to trust and respect the police officers that keep their communities safe is extremely important. From a young age, show your children that they can call on officers in time of need and that they should always be shown respect.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF POLICE PRESENCE

Children are like sponges. They absorb knowledge by watching the behaviors of the people they trust. They then expel this knowledge by mimicking this behavior themselves.

With your child present, make a point to greet officers you pass by in a friendly and enthusiastic manner. Encourage your child to say hello and to thank the officer for his hard work.

Pointing out police vehicles on the road is another way to show children that the police are working for them. Tell them police are on the road to keep them safe. Showing excitement toward the eye-catching lights exhibited by police vehicles can create a memorable impression on your children.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF POLICE-SPONSORED EVENTS

Many police departments across the country sponsor events to excite children about the jobs they do. Check with your local police department for events in your community. A couple of events that are can make a big impact on a child are:

- **Shop with a Cop:** This event is usually held around Christmastime. Police officers take children on a shopping spree to purchase gifts for them and their families. Spots are limited and based on need, so even if your child is not one to do the shopping, make sure they know about the generosity of their local police.

- **Police car demonstrations:** Local organizations often host events where



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police, fire and EMT vehicles are put on display. Giving your child the opportunity to see the complex workings of a police vehicle can create a sense of wonder that can be compared to their favorite superhero's gadgets. Look for such events in your community.

KID-FRIENDLY RESOURCES

In 1980, McGruff the Crime Dog made his debut and told the country to "Take A Bite Out of Crime." If you're unfamiliar with McGruff, he is an animated, crime-fighting dog created by the National Crime Prevention Council to gently educate children about crime.

McGruff has been a trusted resource used by parents for decades. Today, it is easier than ever to introduce your child to these incredible learning tools. Help your child navigate to www.mcgruff.org. There they will learn important lessons on questionable behaviors and how to turn to police for help.

Keep Police Safe

Police are constantly exposed to dangerous highway conditions, especially during traffic stops that leave them vulnerable to vehicles at fast speeds. Do your part in protecting your local police by being a cautious, law-abiding citizen.

PRACTICE SAFE DRIVING

The biggest role you have in being a safe driver is following everyday traffic laws. These laws are created to keep you, other drivers and emergency workers safe.

LIMIT DISTRACTIONS

To hear incoming emergency vehicles, radio levels should be kept at reasonable levels and headphones should never be used. You need to be able to hear incoming police vehicles at all times.

Drinking and driving also puts officers at risk. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, drunk driving has caused a 30 percent increase in officer deaths in the last three decades.

REACT TO POLICE VEHICLES

Police vehicles often exceed normal speeds in order get to the scene of an emergency promptly. As soon as you notice a police vehicle using its lights or sirens, it is the law to pull over to the side of the road.

Also, whenever crossing a busy intersection, look both ways before proceeding on green lights. These vehicles travel fast and can seem to come out of nowhere if you are not giving safety your full attention. Some communities



have installed white lights at intersections that warn motorists of an approaching emergency vehicle. Be alert for these warnings and give emergency vehicles plenty of room.

WHAT TO DO WHEN PULLED OVER

There are many reasons a police officer may pull over your vehicle. There may be a registration issue, or even an

improperly working light on your vehicle that needs to be corrected. Whatever the reason, there are important safety measures you can take to ensure the safety of the vehicle.

The NLEOMF has listed some of these important measures.

- Pull over as soon as possible. Unless otherwise directed by an officer, pull your vehicle to the right on the shoulder of

the highway. Be sure the officer has ample room to maneuver to the right side of your vehicle, away from oncoming traffic.

- Put your vehicle in park. This lets the officer know that you don't have intent to drive away from the scene.

- Stay in the vehicle. Never attempt to remove yourself from your vehicle unless instructed by the officer.

- Provide documents. The

officer likely will ask for a driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. If these documents are in your glove box, do not reach for these items until the officer asks. Before reaching, tell the officer your intentions of retrieving the documents.

Following these and any additional instructions made by the officer ensure a safe traffic stop.

Honoring Firefighters

Firefighters are brave, loyal and dependable members of your community. They sacrifice themselves to a cause that benefits yourself and your family. Do your part by showing your local fire department the gratitude they deserve.

Losing your home to a fire is one of the most devastating occurrences a person can experience. Think of all the personal belongings that may be left behind while you are ensuring you and your family make a safe escape. Fires can create total losses, but firefighters do their part to diminish the amount of damage caused.

PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE

Firefighters use scientific calculations to determine the best way to contain and extinguish fires. These precise calculations can be thwarted in an instant by changing wind conditions or the introduction of precipitation. Even a small fire can grow into a widespread frenzy of destruction without much warning.

Bravery may not be a strong enough word to describe a firefighter. It is a profession that requires running into burning buildings while the rest of its occupants scurry out to safety. Ensuring that no citizens are still inside a structure fire is just one of the dangerous aspects of the job. This act of heroism is no less than amazing

PREVENTING HOME FIRES

The greatest step you can take to protect your local firefighters is to do your part in



preventing fires. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has some great tips on steps to prevent fires in your home.

- **Cooking:** When cooking, never leave the room while using a heating appliance. Don't cook while you are feeling drowsy or tired and wear

close-fitting clothing when near heating appliances.

- **Electrical safety:** Inspect your appliances for frayed wires on their power cords. Only purchase electrical appliances that are noted as UL listed, meaning they are nationally recognized by official laboratories.

- **Fireplaces:** Annually inspect and clean chimneys and check for damage every month. Never use a screen that is too small to cover the entire opening of your fireplace.

VOLUNTEERS

In the United States, many highly dangerous jobs are

rewarded with extraordinary benefits and high pay. According to the National Fire Protection Association, in 2014, 69 percent of US firefighters were unpaid volunteers. This figure should speak volumes to the fact that these special people sacrifice themselves for the lives of others.

Big Brothers, Big Sisters

A positive role model in a child's life is crucial to growth into a successful member of society. Volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America participate to show support to children who are not fortunate enough to have these positive influences in their lives.

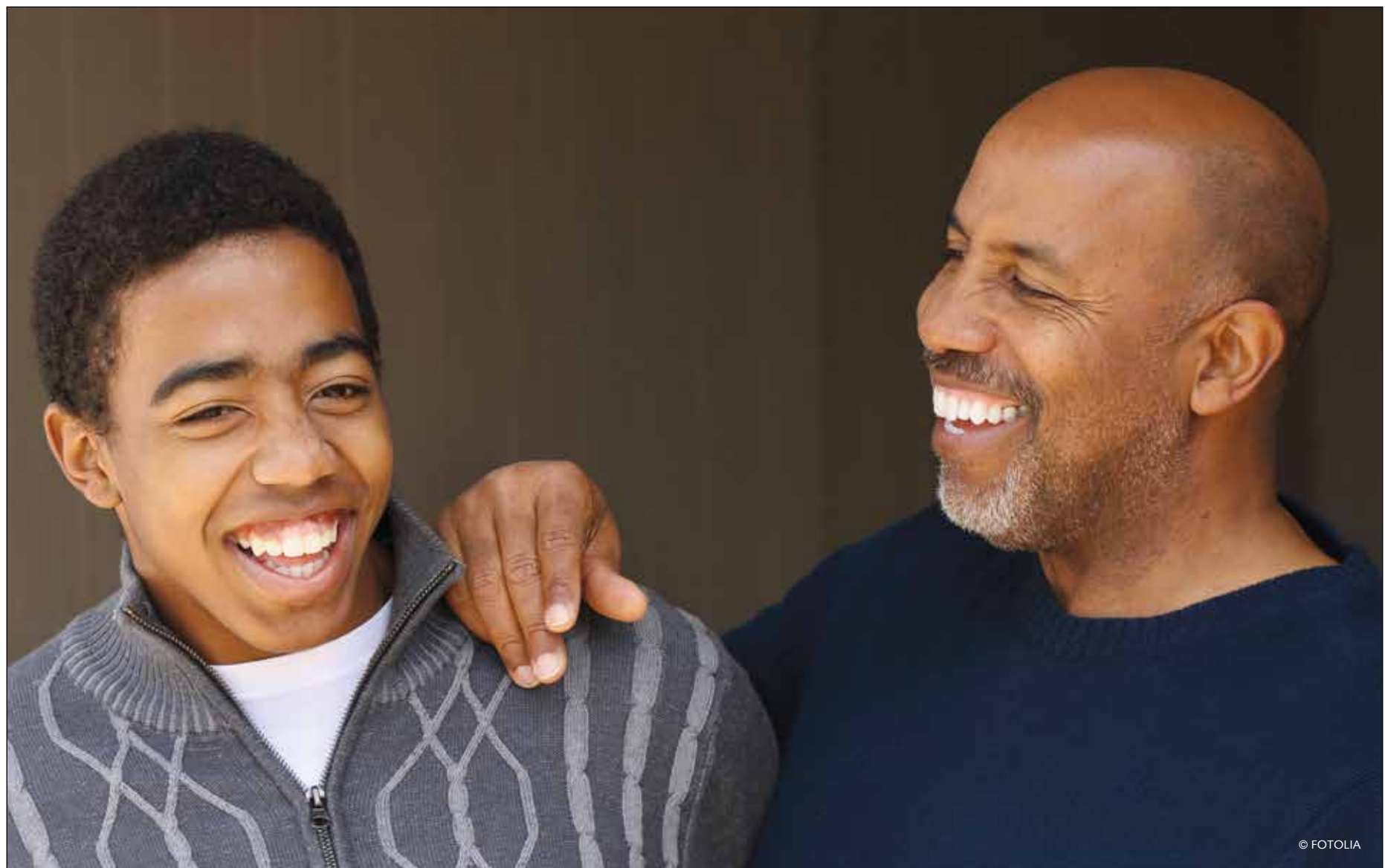
Children are impressionable, and some are not lucky enough to have supportive role models that have their best interest in mind. These children often develop negative behaviors that affect their important developmental years. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America have been pairing volunteers with troubled children for decades.

HISTORY OF BBBS

In 1904, a court clerk in NYC named Ernest Coulter began noticing a growing number of boys entering his courtroom. He realized that if these children had more supportive adults in their lives, they would be less likely to wind up in trouble.

Around the same time, a group called Ladies of Charity had begun working with young girls who wound up in court. They later took the name Catholic Big Sisters.

Though very similar, these two organizations worked independently until 1977. They then joined forces to become Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Since its inception, BBBSOA has stayed true to its founders' initial idea of the organization. Today, this amazing charity operates in all 50 states and in 12 countries around the world.



HOW TO BECOME A "BIG"

What's a Big? A "Big" is the term given to the adult who is responsible for being a positive influence in a participating child's (or "Little") life.

The only requirements to becoming a Big for BBBS is being at least 16 years of age

and the ability to dedicate a minimum of one week per year to their Little. Most Bigs enjoy their role so much that they exceed the one week minimum and become a large part of their Little's life.

If you are interested in applying, head to bbbs.org/

and [become-a-big/](http://bbbs.org/) to fill out an application and find your local office.

HOW TO DONATE

If you love the idea of the mission that BBBS has set out to accomplish but simply lack the time to volunteer, consider

making a tax-deductible donation.

BBBS typically accepts clothing such as shoes, robes and slippers. They also are looking for bedding items, such as pillow cases, bedspreads and comforters. Find your local office's website for list of needs.

Social Workers

Social workers who specialize in child welfare cases often go unnoticed. These dedicated professionals play huge roles in placing children in questionable circumstances into loving arms.

Per a study by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), there were 415,129 children in foster care in 2014. This staggering number shows how child welfare workers strive to place children in homes that encourage growth and success.

IMPORTANCE OF CHILD WELFARE WORKERS

Social workers are known to work on behalf of those who are poor or neglected. Social workers who specialize in child affairs are tasked with protecting American children by releasing them from dismal living situations. A report made by HHS shows that 1,580 children die each year due to child abuse and neglect.

Child welfare workers make a pledge to protect children from dangerous living conditions. They know children flourish best in family environments. For this reason, placing children outside of their home is typically avoided unless it is determined the only way to provide protection for them. It is up to the social worker to deem if a household is unfit for raising a child.

CHALLENGING WORK ENVIRONMENT

Child welfare workers face



hostile conditions and witness traumatizing events due to mistreated children. Many times, these experiences can cause forms of depression known as PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) or even more commonly, STS (secondary traumatic stress.) STS

is commonly known as compassion fatigue and is typically caused by the stress of witnessing a victim's firsthand account of a traumatic event.

This profession is full of unsung heroes who are willing to risk their own mental health to protect children

from unhealthy living environments.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Social workers who focus on child welfare make a point to get to know the children facing abuse. They discover the unique strengths and

skills that these children possess and make strategies to use these skills for personal growth.

It is up to a social worker to value a child's opinions and support their decision-making skills as the children get older.