

Jake

And

Joey





Jake is a high school senior in a rural community in North Carolina.

As he was preparing his college applications, his guidance counselor suggested adding a volunteer project to his list of accomplishments.

Jake wasn't sure what to add since there weren't many volunteer opportunities in the small farming community.

Still, the counselor suggested he volunteer as a mentor in the school districts youth mentoring program.

The program matches graduates or current upper-level students with elementary students in need.

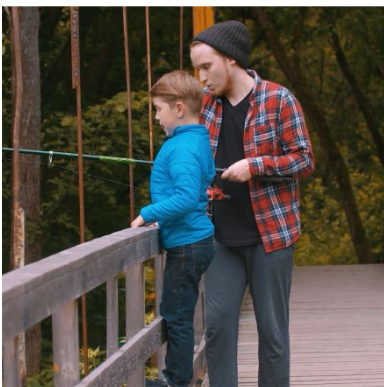
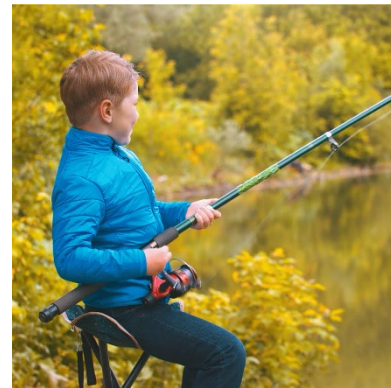
Jake, the youngest of four brothers, knew what it was like always having a brother to hang out with and agreed to try the project.

Joey is a first-grade student in the same program.

Joey is the only child of his young mother and doesn't have a solid male role model in his life.

Joey's mom signed him up for the free mentorship program hoping he would match with someone as interested in fishing and outdoor stuff as Joey was.

Luckily Jake was an avid outdoorsman, and the program paired the two together.



They began going fishing every Sunday, rain, or shine.

Jake taught Joey everything about fishing.

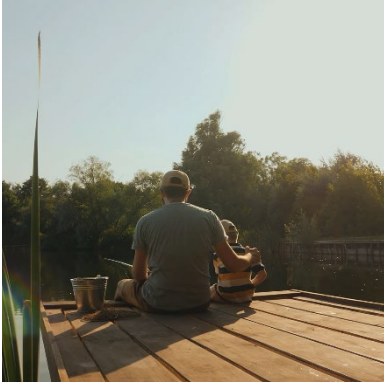
Jake taught Joey other things too like how to be a gentleman and listen when someone was upset.

As they fished Joey would tell Jake about his week at school, if anyone had bothered him, and what school assignments were hard for him.

Jake would listen and give him advice on friendships or studying for big tests.

To Jake, Joey was the little brother he never had, and Jake was the Big Brother Joey needed.

As summer approached Joey's mom started dating a man in the neighborhood, Todd.



Todd had a 3-year-old daughter he took fishing all the time.

Since Todd knew Joey liked to go fishing, he started taking him too.

Sometimes they would even have to cancel plans with Jake so that Todd could take Joey fishing instead.

Joey seemed happy since he was getting to fish anyway.

Jake started feeling replaced and instead of confronting his feelings or talking to the director about it, Jake withdrew from the program.

Jake told the director he was too busy with work and Joey didn't need him anymore anyway.

When Joey found out Jake wouldn't be mentoring him anymore, he was heartbroken.

Sure, he had Todd to hang out with, but Todd was more like a dad than a brother.

He missed hanging out with Jake and Jake missed hanging out with him too.

