



Mentoring Matters: Program Helps Duo Form Real Brotherly Love

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MIAMI (CBSMiami) – Rob Collins and Keiliel Jones were matched by the Big Brothers Big Sisters program eight years ago. CBS4 caught up with them recently when they were playing in a basketball game. It's just one of the many things they do together.

“It’s been a long time since we’ve played basketball,” Rob explained. “Yeah, which is funny because we both like sports, but we don’t play together. We do everything else together.”

They are so close they consider one another real brothers.

“He’s just part of my life and I’m a part of his, and you can’t quantify it,” Rob said. “I wouldn’t even try. I can’t imagine who I would be without him and vice versa. I mean we’ve been together half of his life.”

“He’s like my real brother. I consider him my real brother,” Keiliel said.

Rob was introduced to Keiliel shortly after he moved to Miami as a law student and started volunteering at Keiliel’s elementary school.

And though they have a lot of fun together at sports events and theme parks, school has very much remained the priority.

“When it comes down to school, he doesn’t play, so I have to get good grades or we don’t do anything,” Keiliel said. “He picks me up every week, and if he says my grades are bad, we’ll go to the library and study.”

The time they spend together every week, and the strides they’ve made, earned Rob the Mentor of the Year Award with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

And he’s gotten another big reward out of their relationship as well.

“My 15-month-old daughter indirectly only exists because of him because I met my wife because that school administrative assistant said, ‘Oh you should be this kid’s big brother.’ So when I finally gave in, I had to do an interview to become a big. And that person who did my interview, she’s now my wife.

The pair also volunteers at the Miami Rescue Mission every month.

“I wanted him to volunteer and not have it be a novelty. Not have it be something you do to get credit hours. Not have it be something you do to get attention and to get recognized for it. Just second nature, and it has been that,” Rob explained.

They've left indelible marks on each other – lessons they carry with them every day.

“Sometimes it's just fun, it's rollicking. You do what you want to do and everyone is having a great time,” Rob said. “But sometimes it's not fun, and you have to have hard conversations, and there are consequences.”

“If he didn't come into my life, I would still be getting in trouble, I guess. He taught me more about manners and the way I carry myself in public,” Keiliel said.

Keiliel is a sophomore at Coral Gables High School [📍](#) and continues to make big strides toward a very bright future.