Big Brothers give leadership

"There are nearly 2.5 million boys between the ages of 6 and 18 residing in fatherless homes in the US."

"Taking care of some of those kids is why we're Big Brothers," Ed Michelson '78 said.

Michelson is one of about a dozen MIT students who are members of the Big Brothers Association of Boston. Each Big Brother accepts responsibility for helping one "Little Brother" by providing a "positive male image" for boys from homes where they might not get that kind of guidance.

"The MIT Big Brothers are 'on the lookout' this week and next," Michelson said, for MIT students who wish to become Big Brothers. Their drive, he said, will help the Boston association in matching Big Brothers with fatherless boys in the community.

"I've never found that being a Big Brother is all that trying or time-consuming," Jim Torma '77, another Big Brother, said.

Torma explained that he usually takes Saturday afternoon off to take his Little Brother Scott out for some activities.

"Usually, we come to MIT, and use the facilities here," Torma explained. "There's bowling, swimming, air hockey, basketball, and all sorts of activities here.

"Scott gives me a chance to get away from MIT's drudgery," Torma added. "He also makes a good excuse to get out and do things I normally wouldn't do, like going to the Colonn gym, watching kayak meets, and so forth."

Big Brothers, Michelson explained, are important in helping to keep boys out of trouble. Statistics from the Boston Association back this view - a child from a single parent home, these figures say, is six times more likely to be entered into the criminal justice system as a child from a two-parent home.

Torma, however, said he does not believe in statistics. "I see the results for myself," he said.