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explained, a lady in the back raised her hand. I asked if she had a question, and she promptly told me that she was scared to death of guns, she hated guns and that she had never had or shot a gun. I was stunned. I explained to the lady, if she would give it a try, and to participate in the events that by the end of the day she would no longer be scared of guns, but that she would probably want to buy one on the way home. I am glad to say, that by the end of the day the woman did participate in each shooting event. She did have to make several attempts at some of the activities, but she did go to and participate in all of the shooting events. At the end, she was not necessarily scared to death and wasn't right down and buying a new gun, but she did volunteer to be on the committee for the event next year.

Most of the women had at least done some shooting before coming to the shooting clinic. However there were five women that had never shot a gun and most all of the women had never shot a muzzle loader or any type of archery equipment. All of the women were glad that they got a chance to shoot the muzzle loader. They all liked the opportunity to shoot in a women's only setting and have an opportunity to learn to do it at their own pace.



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Littles Alonzo and Darrious with Big Brother Peter McIlvain, taking a break from a practice session.

Giving Littles a Shot!

The Pass It On — Outdoor Mentors program strives to provide quality outdoor opportunities to Littles expressing an interest in the traditional outdoor sports. Rather than create new programs, Pass It On — Outdoor Mentors encourages matches and Littles to get involved in existing programs that are well organized and meet the goals of providing quality outdoor experiences for the Littles.

One program that Pass It On — Outdoor Mentors encourages Littles to participate in is the 4-H Shooting Sports program. This year, the Kansas State Rifle Association stepped up with a grant to cover the expenses for 5 of our Littles to get involved in the 4-H Shotgun program, shooting trap on a weekly basis at the KTA and then allowing them to compete in the Kansas State Trap Shoot.

There were 4 boys and one girl who signed up for the program. For all of them, this was their first opportunity to participate in an organized shooting activity. Four of the Littles had been introduced to shotgun shooting through previous BBBS activities. But having the benefit of a qualified coach who worked on their shooting techniques showed great benefit after a few short weeks.

In practice, Shawn Perkins, the 4-H Shotgun Instructor for Sedgwick County, works closely with each shooter. "Several of these young folks have some natural talent", Shawn stated. "Given the opportunity to practice and develop their skills, we could have some serious trap shooters on our hands!"

Three of the Littles had the opportunity to participate in the Kansas State Trap Shoot the weekend of June 10th. When Ali arrived at the KTA that Saturday morning, her eyes were wide with surprise at seeing over 600 shooters, row after row of RV's and campers, vendor tents and all of the hub-bub that went along with the State Shoot. "I need to go home!" Ali stated, letting on that she was more than a little intimidated by all of the excitement. This being her first big shoot, she really didn't know what to expect, but her expectations were more than exceeded by all she was seeing that morning.

Thanks to the support that Pass It On — Outdoor Mentors received from the Kansas State Rifle Association, we were able to give 5 Littles a chance to learn the joys of trap shooting, to learn a healthy respect for the safe handling of firearms, and to learn that outdoor activities like target shooting can be fun and enjoyable. All good, positive lessons that will give these Littles a new perspective on the outdoors that they would not have otherwise had.

With the excitement of their first big shoot under their belt, the Littles are now preparing for the 4-H Shoot in October. And looking forward to breaking lots of clays along the way!