

The Buddy Program

The Buddy Program strengthens our community by guiding and inspiring youth through mentoring.

Who are Little Buddies?

Little Buddies are youth ages 6-18 who are recommended for participation in the program by school professionals, social service agencies, law enforcement agencies, therapists, parents, or by the youth themselves. The youth are referred because of their need for companionship, guidance, and encouragement. The youth may be from both one and two parent households. They are wealthy and poor, minorities and majorities, and most just need a little extra push and direction in their lives. Some have had conflicts with teachers, parents, peers or law enforcement, while others simply want to try new things, meet new people and share daily experiences.

Who are Big Buddies?

Big Buddies are responsible and caring individuals who are committed to making a difference in the life of a child. They volunteer initially for one year with options for continuation throughout the years. The role of Big Buddies is to be a friend, positive role model, nurturer and advocate for their Little Buddy. Their role is NOT to be a parent, babysitter, probation officer, financier, chauffeur or disciplinarian. As friends, they provide guidance and opportunities for children to learn and grow.

Goals of the Buddy Program

- To increase youth's sense of self-worth, well being, and self-respect
- To increase youth's interest and attendance at school
- To help youth build better relationships with peers and adults

Three Ways to Get Involved

The Buddy Program offers three different Mentoring Programs:

- 1) **Community Mentoring:** Big and Little Buddies spend time together, meeting in the community at the discretion of the mentor and mentee
- 2) **School-based Mentoring:** Big and Little Buddies meet weekly at the youth's school. This program is only site-based and takes place during the school year
- 3) **Peer-to-Peer Mentoring:** High school youth serve as mentors for younger students. This program is only site-based and takes place during the school year

Big Buddy Volunteer Guidelines and Expectations

- Act as a positive, non-judgmental role model at all times
- Be a trustworthy adult. Observe strict confidentiality. Only discuss sensitive and personal information concerning Little Buddy with involved professionals
- Maintain realistic expectations with regards to Little Buddy behavior and accountability. Set fair but clear boundaries for how the Little Buddy should behave
- Avoid making unrealistic promises. Remember simple plans can go a long way
- Maintain contact 3-4 times a month with Little Buddy (Community Program), or weekly (School-based Programs)

- Utilize support services provided by the Buddy Program staff and other involved professionals
- Provide positive reinforcement and support by being there during tough times and celebrating successes
- Believe in young people and their ability to make a difference in the world
- Foster Little Buddy's commitment to learning. Connect Little Buddy's real-world interests to academics
- Help Little Buddy hone positive values and social competencies, such as honesty, integrity, and respecting people who are different from him/her
- Attend Buddy Program activities whenever possible
- Empower Little Buddy to be a full partner in the relationship by sharing responsibility for choosing activities you do together
- Engage Little Buddy in a rich array of one-on-one activities, from just hanging out to trying creative new experiences
- Remind Little Buddy of his/her purpose, worth, and promise

Characteristics of Successful Big Buddies

Commitment

Flexibility

Open-mindedness

Personal desire to mentor

Good listening skills

Ability to cope with challenging issues

Ability to set boundaries

Sense of humor

Confidence / Maturity

Optimism

Consistency

Desire to have fun and to MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Benefits

- Opportunity to make a difference in a child's life
- Become involved in the community on a higher-level
- Assist a child in making critical, healthy life choices
- Joint membership with Little Buddy at Snowmass Lodge and Club.
- Free group activities (i.e.: Ski Day, Celebration Dinner, fly-fishing)
- Case Management and Counselor to support Buddy relationship
- Discount Card providing significant discounts at over 30 local businesses

Time Commitment

- Meet 3 to 4 times a month, for a minimum of one year (Community Program)
- Meet weekly, for a minimum of one school year (School-based Programs)

Necessary Qualifications

- Local resident for one year; ability & interest to work with youth in need
- Ability to keep commitment and consistent contact for a minimum of one year
- No illegal drug use

Selection Requirements*

- Application, orientation and initial mandatory training
- Follow-up training one year after match occurs
- Personal interview
- 3 letters of reference
- 3 phone references: these can be from other volunteer organizations, no more than one family member, employer- previous or current, co-workers- previous or current, neighbors or others that know you well. We ask that two of these references are local
- Background checks: We conduct 3 criminal background checks: a fingerprint and name search with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (\$32.50), a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Database search through CDHS (\$33.00), and a national background screening through Intellicorp (\$14.65). Total amount: \$80.15. We ask all volunteer applicants to make a contribution to help offset the cost of this screening process. Suggested donation: \$25
- Proof and maintenance of car insurance & Colorado driver's license
- Copy of declarations page for car insurance

****According to the Buddy Program's Policies & Procedures, all of these requirements must be completed before an applicant is selected as a Big Buddy. The Buddy Program, Inc. staff accepts or declines volunteers based on the information gathered and for reasons of confidentiality will not share this information or reasons of denial with any applicant***