Volunteer Guidelines

The Buddy Program empowers youth through mentoring experiences in order to achieve their full potential.

Who are Little Buddies?
Little Buddies are local youth ages 6-18 who are referred by teachers, counselors, parents, Social Services and other agencies, or by the youth themselves. The children are from both one- and two-parent households, are wealthy and poor, minorities and majorities, and are in need of companionship, guidance, and encouragement. Some are coping with the loss of a parent or divorce, while others simply want to try new things and have fun while meeting new people.

Who are Big Buddies?
Big Buddies are responsible, 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. They understand the role of a Big Buddy and act as a friend, positive role model, nurturer of possibilities and advocate for their Little Buddy. They uphold good boundaries and do not act as a substitute parent, babysitter, financier, or disciplinarian. Big Buddies provide guidance and opportunities for their Little Buddies to learn and grow.

Goals of the Buddy Program
- To increase a child’s self-esteem
- To increase a child’s interest, attitude and attendance at school
- To increase a child’s ability to make healthy decisions
- To increase a child’s capacity for healthy relationships with peers and adults

Three Ways to Get Involved: Three Unique Mentoring Programs

1) Community Program: Big and Little Buddies spend time together after school and on weekends in the community to take part in a variety of activities.
2) School-based Program: 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) Explorer Program: One (or more) Big Buddies meet weekly at school with a group of youth. This program is only site-based and takes place during the school year.

Time Commitment
- Meet 3 – 4 times a month for a period of at least one year (Community Program)
- Meet for an hour each week throughout the academic year on the Little Buddy’s school campus (School-based, Explorer & Peer-to-Peer Programs)
Benefits

- Opportunity to make a difference in a child’s life and give back to the community
- Gain a fresh perspective on your life, improve morale and satisfaction at work
- Joint membership with Little Buddy at Snowmass Club*
- Free group activities (i.e.: Ski Day, Celebration Dinner, guided fly-fishing)
- Case Management and Counselor to support Buddy relationship
- Discount Card providing significant discounts at over 30 local businesses *
- Volunteer appreciation events and recognition in PR and marketing efforts

* These benefits apply to Buddy Pairs in the Community Program

Characteristics Displayed by Successful Big Buddies

Commitment/Consistency
Flexibility
Open-mindedness
Personal desire to mentor
Good listening skills
Ability to cope with challenging issues

Ability to set and uphold good boundaries
Sense of humor
Confidence/Maturity
Positive attitude
Desire to have fun and to MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Necessary Qualifications

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

Selection Requirements*

- Completed Big Buddy Application
- Personal interview
- New mentor training (3 hours)
- 3 letters of reference: Letters of reference must come directly to the Buddy Program either via e-mail, by regular mail or through our website.
- 3 phone references: Provide three personal references we may contact that have known you for at least 2 years. 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, a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Database search through Colorado Department of Human Services, and a national background screening through Intellicorp. We ask all volunteer applicants to make a contribution to help offset this cost. Suggested donation: $25.
- Proof and maintenance of car insurance & Colorado driver’s license
- Copy of the 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.