



## VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

**Mission:** *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, wealthy and disenfranchised, 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.

### What are the 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

### Ways to get involved as a Big Buddy:

Program	Who	Where	What	Time Commitment
<i>Community</i>	A responsible adult member of the community and a child, ages 6-18	Out in the Community	Activities together in the community, including a variety of Buddy Program sponsored activities	3-4 times per month for at least one year
<i>School-based</i>	A responsible adult member of the community and a child, ages 6-13	In local schools during lunch	Spending time during lunch together at the Little Buddy's school	Once a week throughout the school year

## What are the benefits of being a Big Buddy?

- 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 the Snowmass Club \*
- Free group activities (Ski Day, Celebration Dinner, guided fly-fishing, etc.) \*
- Case management and coaching to support Buddy relationship
- Discount card providing significant discounts at over 30 local businesses \*
- Volunteer appreciation events and recognition in Buddy Program PR & marketing efforts

*\* These benefits apply to Buddy Pairs in the Community Program*

## Characteristics of Successful Big Buddies

Able to uphold commitment/be consistent

Flexible

Open-minded

Personal desire to mentor

A good listener

An ability to cope with challenging issues

An ability to set & uphold good boundaries

A sense of humor

Confident/mature

A positive attitude

Non Judgmental

A desire to MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

## Necessary Qualifications

- Resident of the Roaring Fork Valley for at least one year
- Ability & interest to work with a youth in need of a mentor
- Ability to keep a commitment of consistent contact for a minimum of one year
- Open & honest about personal history

## Screening & Training Steps\*:

- Completed Big Buddy Application
- Personal interview
- New mentor training
- 3 letters of reference (at least one local)
  - Link to send to your references: [www.buddyprogram.org/buddy-information/big-buddies/letter-of-reference-form-for-big-buddies](http://www.buddyprogram.org/buddy-information/big-buddies/letter-of-reference-form-for-big-buddies)
- 3 phone references (at least one local)
- 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
  - A national background screening through Intellicorp.
- We ask all volunteer applicants to make a contribution to help offset the cost of background checks. *Suggested donation: \$25.*
- Proof and maintenance of car insurance & a valid driver's license

**\*According to the Buddy Program's Policies & Procedures, all of these steps 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. Certain programs may be subject to further screenings.**