

# e-Beat

September 2002

**September  
2002**

Dear Friend,

Back to school! For me, those words conjure the feeling of a fresh start, a new adventure, new skills to learn.

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In light of the new school year, this issue is dedicated to the e-Buddies Curriculum in schools. To learn more go to [www.ebuddies.org](http://www.ebuddies.org)



For all of you heading back to school, please take a look at *The e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy*. The guide is a tool to help special education teachers teach e-mail skills to their students, using e-Buddies as a weekly classroom activity.

What does the guide have to do with you? Well, you could:

- tell the special education teachers in your school about it.
- use it to teach someone you know who has an intellectual disability how to use e-mail.
- if you are a special education teacher, use it to introduce your Students to the joys of e-mail

This guide is available at no cost. Just contact us at [eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org](mailto:eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org) to request yours, or download it at <http://www.ebuddies.org/teach/guide/index.html>.

Happy learning!

Best,

Lisa Derx  
e-Buddies Director



**Students checking their e-mail from St. Coletta School in Alexandria, VA**

The e-Beat is published online monthly at [www.ebuddies.org](http://www.ebuddies.org). We welcome your contributions. Please send them to [eBuddiesNews@aol.com](mailto:eBuddiesNews@aol.com).



# Ask Emerson

All of your e-Buddies questions answered here!

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “The only way to have a friend is to be one.” In the spirit of those inspiring words, Ask Emerson is a feature designed to help you be the best friend you can be. Each month, we will select a question or two for responses. Send your questions to [eBuddiesComments@bestbuddies.org](mailto:eBuddiesComments@bestbuddies.org).

Dear Emerson,

School is starting, and I'd like to get more people in my high school involved in e-Buddies. How should I do this?

Signed,

e-Buddies for Everyone

Dear Everyone,

That is great that you want to get more people involved in e-Buddies at your school!

The best way for you to help is to talk to the Special Education teachers at your school about e-Buddies. We have even developed a guide to help Special Education teachers use e-Buddies in their classrooms! For more information about the e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy, click here: <http://www.ebuddies.org/teach/guide/index.html>.

If the Special Education teachers in your school would like more information about e-Buddies, they can contact us at [eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org](mailto:eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org), or (202) 266-2293.

Signing off,

*Emerson*

# Conversation Starters



The summer is just about over, and autumn is approaching quickly. The days are getting shorter, and the weather is cooling down. For many of us, that means that it's time to go back to school.

Here at e-Buddies, we're really excited about the coming school year. This semester marks the official launch of *The e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy*. *The e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy* is a tool to help special education teachers incorporate e-mail, Internet, and e-Buddies into their classrooms. Is your school or your e-Buddy's school participating in *The e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy*?

You could ask:

Do you send e-mail from school? Do you want to help other people with disabilities from your school get involved? Does your school use *The e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy*?

Have you had a great conversation with your e-Buddy about something? Have some ideas for questions that get the talk going? Send you ideas for Conversation Starters to Bill Maurer at [BillMaurer@bestbuddies.org](mailto:BillMaurer@bestbuddies.org)

# Online with...



This month the e-Beat interviews Jeanne Sabol, a Special Education teacher from Ohio. Jeanne has been using e-Buddies as a teaching tool in her classroom for over four years and was more than happy to tell the e-Beat what she thinks of e-Buddies.

**e-Buddies:** How did you discover the e-Buddies program?

**Jeanne:** About four years ago, an article about the formation of e-Buddies appeared on the Special Olympics website. I called Lisa Derx, the e-Buddies director, for more information about e-Buddies.

**e-Buddies:** Why did you decide that e-Buddies was the right program for your students?

**Jeanne:** As a Special Education teacher, I look beyond the disabilities of my students. I see my students as individuals not labels. e-Buddies allows others to see my students as I see them.

**e-Buddies:** How has e-Buddies helped you in teaching computer skills to your students?

**Jeanne:** I have been teaching computers for over five years. I was looking for a new way to teach keyboarding skills. I grew tired of students always doing keyboarding drills. e-Buddies was the perfect solution. e-Buddies allows my students to practice keyboarding skills for a purpose. Students also learn how to access and send e-mail.

**e-Buddies:** What do you like best about e-Buddies?

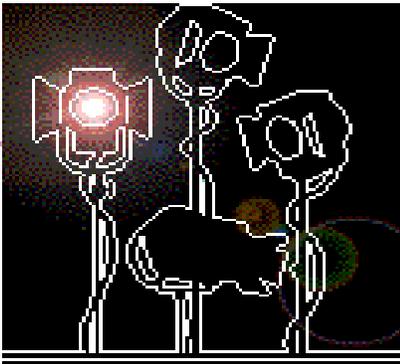
**Jeanne:** There are many things that I like about the e-Buddies. I like watching students' reactions when they receive a letter from their e-Buddies. Shouts of "I got a letter!" resound in the classroom. I like when students want to share their letters with the class. I enjoy seeing my students' and their e-Buddies' personalities emerge from letters. It is rewarding to see how each friendship develops over time. When two people really "click" that is exciting to me!

**e-Buddies:** What have your students gained while participating in e-Buddies?

**Jeanne:** Students have not only gained academic skills in computers and English, they have also gained social skills. They want to do things such as going to school dances, going to the prom, or going to concerts so that they have something interesting to tell their e-Buddies. Since e-Buddies is a nation-wide program, my students correspond with people from all over the country. Sometimes students do not understand references that are made in letters from people in different parts of the country. For instance, an e-Buddy from Maryland wrote about working in a restaurant where crabs are served. We live in Ohio and crabs are not a common seafood. So, as a class we learned what a crab looks like, made crab cakes, and learned how expensive crabs are in Ohio.

**e-Buddies:** Would you recommend e-Buddies to other Special Education teachers who are wondering if e-Buddies would be a good program to implement into their classroom?

**Jeanne:** I would highly recommend e-Buddies to other Special Education teachers. I have learned so much in the past two years.



# Best Buddies Spotlight

It's time to once again sharpen those pencils and pack your lunchbox....school is back in session!!! The piercing sound of the alarm clock at 6 am replaces the comfort of sleeping in until noon everyday. Gone are the lazy days spent lounging by the pool, perfecting your tan, while enjoying a delicious Rita's Italian Ice. Instead, routine settles in and days revolve around calculus problems, chemistry equations, Spanish class, football games, and school dances. As summer officially draws to a close, and in the spirit of academia, this month we would like to spotlight Wayland High School in Wayland, Massachusetts.

As one of only six high school recipients of an Outstanding Chapter Award at this year's Best Buddies Leadership Conference, Wayland High School exemplifies what Best Buddies is all about. During their four-year involvement in Best Buddies, Wayland High School has fostered many high quality one-to-one friendships. In addition, they have strong chapter leaders, great communication, enthusiastic peer buddies, unique and wonderful buddies, and frequent, yet creative chapter events. Member attendance was always high, as they participated in such enjoyable events as an ice cream social, a frame decorating party, a scavenger hunt, and a field trip to Drumlin Farm. Wayland High School was also successful in fundraising and looks forward to continuing efforts to raise money.

This past school year, Wayland High School had 19 buddy matches, with 48 total participants in the Best Buddies Chapter. Meg Bergan and Kim Plant demonstrated a quality match and what friendship is truly about. Meg and Kim talked on the phone at least once a week and ate lunch together at school. They attended chapter meetings together and often met outside of school. They enjoyed shopping and had a great time at Build A Bear, where they were able to make their own teddy bear piece by piece. Meg also took great pleasure in attending all of Kim's plays.

Meg Bergan and Kim Plant demonstrated a quality match and what friendship is truly about.

Wayland High School, in addition to having a strong Best Buddies Chapter, was also very involved in the e-Buddies program. Caitlan Doran, who held the position of e-Buddies Coordinator last year and will be Chapter President this year, did a wonderful job implementing e-Buddies into the school. She was able to sign up 14 students for e-Buddies, and even accompanied them to the library every few days to assist them in checking their email. On several occasions, they were allowed to miss math or English to go to the library...how exciting! Instead of the usual grammar lesson, they were able to hear "You've got mail!"

Wayland High School is truly an outstanding chapter, one that does Best Buddies proud. Here at e-Buddies, we'd like to congratulate Wayland High School on their previous successes and to wish them well in the future. Keep up the good work! Good luck to all of the Best Buddies chapters as you embark on a brand new, exciting school year!!

If you have any questions or ideas for future articles, please contact Lauren Taintor at [LaurenTaintor@bestbuddies.org](mailto:LaurenTaintor@bestbuddies.org)

# Featuring...

## *e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy*

Are you a special education teacher interested in using e-mail in your classroom?  
Are you uncertain of the best, most effective way to teach your students valuable computer and e-mail skills?

e-Buddies® has developed an amazing guide just for you – The **e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy!**

The **e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy** was created by special education professionals, and was tested by a select group of special education teachers in the spring of 2002.

Recognizing that lack of time is one of the biggest obstacles for teachers trying to incorporate e-mail into their curriculum, e-Buddies has done the work for you! The **e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy** contains complete lesson plans, a student workbook, and a teacher's manual.

e-Buddies matches people with and without developmental disabilities in on-line friendships. Participation in e-Buddies will not only give your students the opportunity to make new friends, but will also build reading and writing abilities, social skills, and computer proficiency.

E-mail is fast becoming a standard method of communication, and there is no reason why students with developmental disabilities should be left behind the technology revolution.

There is no charge for special education teachers to use the **e-Buddies Guide to Internet Literacy**, but space is limited, so don't hesitate to contact us!

For more information, call Rachel Kolliopoulos at (202) 266-2293, or e-mail [eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org](mailto:eBuddiesGuide@bestbuddies.org). To download the field test version of the Guide, and for more resources for Special Education teachers, visit our web site at [www.ebuddies.org](http://www.ebuddies.org).

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