

BEST BUDDIES®



e-BUDDIES®

Fast Fact Sheet

FOR PARENTS

"The elation and jubilation that Ken and Kendra reveal as they receive and send e-mails to their new friends is impossible to describe. They are very motivated to learn new things about the computer and understand many terms in the computer vocabulary. Both love telling their e-Buddies about what they are doing for the weekend and sharing a happy moment with their e-Buddy."

Bobbie Quilleon

e-Buddies Parent
Florida

Best Buddies International is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. Founded in 1989 by Anthony K. Shriver, Best Buddies has grown from one chapter on one college campus to more than 1,300 middle school, high school, and college campuses across the country and internationally. Best Buddies programs engage participants in each of the 50 United States. We have accredited international programs on six continents with additional country programs under active development.

e-Buddies is the newest of Best Buddies International's friendship programs. e-Buddies seeks to fulfill the mission of Best Buddies International by facilitating e-mail friendships between people with and without intellectual disabilities.

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What is e-Buddies?

e-Buddies is an e-mail pen pal program that matches persons with an intellectual disability in one-to-one e-mail friendships with peer volunteers who do not have an intellectual disability.

How does e-Buddies work?

Your child will be matched with a peer volunteer from elsewhere in the country. Matched e-Buddies are asked to exchange e-mails once a week for one year or longer.

How are matches made?

The e-Buddies staff makes matches based on similar age, gender, geography (matches are never made between participants in the same state), and shared interests.

How do I help my child sign up for e-Buddies?

All e-Buddies participants sign up using the online application at www.ebuddies.org. Simply click on the 'Join e-Buddies!' link and follow the prompts.

When an online application is received, our staff will process the application in ~1-3 weeks.

Once an application has been approved, we will immediately seek to match that participant with an e-Buddy. Participants will be notified via e-mail.

Is e-Buddies safe?

Best Buddies is committed to doing all we can to make e-Buddies a fun, fulfilling, and safe experience. To do so, we employ a multi-layered approach to minimize risk and ensure the safety of our participants.

- All e-mails between e-Buddies are sent via ebuddies.org. This allows participants to e-mail their e-Buddy without divulging their personal e-mail address.
- E-mail content is filtered, and all e-mail exchanges are archived and available for review.
- All e-Buddies applicants are screened before they can participate in e-Buddies. Each applicant must submit to a background check, and must also provide references to be contacted by our staff.
- Your child will never be matched with an e-Buddy who lives in the same state, and e-Buddies are not permitted to meet in-person.
- To protect your child's privacy, all application data is stored on a secure server. Best Buddies NEVER shares participant information with third parties.

How much does e-Buddies cost?

e-Buddies is always 100% free of charge for all participants who have an intellectual disability.

Why should my child join e-Buddies?

e-Buddies is a fun and safe way for your son or daughter to make a new friend, and can help develop skills in the following areas:

- Computer skills
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Communication skills
- Reading and writing skills
- Social skills
- Self-esteem

What do we need to participate in e-Buddies?

- Regular access to a computer with Internet access.
- An e-mail address.
- Time to use e-mail at least once a week.

What if I have other questions?

For more information, or to sign up your students for e-Buddies, please visit our website:

www.ebuddies.org

e-Buddies is headquartered in the Washington, DC office of Best Buddies International:

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