



e-Buddies provides opportunities for computer literacy and friendship for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

What is e-Buddies?

e-Buddies is an **e-mail pen pal program** that provides safe opportunities for one-to-one e-mail friendships between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Why is e-Buddies important?

People with IDD are often left out of technology education, denying them access to the abundance of social and creative outlets that can be found using computers and the Internet. Computers are an integral part of society and by participating in e-Buddies, participants can develop the skills necessary to become technology-literate and therefore able to compete for higher-level employment and to communicate using a variety of sources.

*"Because of e-Buddies, e-mail has become something I look forward to, and the computer has become a way for me to make friends."
—Joshua, e-Buddy since 2000*

How does e-Buddies Work?

e-Buddies matches a person with IDD in an online friendship with a person without IDD. Participants are matched based on age, gender and similar interests. Anyone over the age of 10 can participate in e-Buddies. Students are matched with other students and adults are matched with adults.

e-Buddies agree to e-mail each other once a week for the duration of one year.



Accessibility through learning

People with disabilities often do not use computers or the Internet because of a lack of digital literacy and technology education. The e-Buddies program provides an interactive medium that users can utilize to develop and perfect online social skills.

Accessibility through motivation

e-Buddies helps motivate participants to learn. People that are involved in e-Buddies are more interested in spelling and typing correctly. Additionally, participating in e-Buddies while learning assistive software programs encourages users to become more proficient with technology.

Accessibility through friendship

An inclusive world is possible with accessibility. Incorporating assistive technology with social outlets produces inclusion in the online community. e-Buddies provides opportunities for social accessibility online. Participants develop computer skills, all while making a lifelong friend.

*"Our students enjoy [e-Buddies] so much and it has been a big help to them. They have increased their skills on the computer, sentence structure, punctuation, [and] thinking ability."
— Pam, Special Education Teacher*

Visit www.ebuddies.org for more information.