



MILESTONES

Year One

Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on January 19, 1989, Best Buddies® becomes America's first national, unified, social, and recreational program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

1989 – 1993

- The *Best Buddies Fine Art Collection* is developed, featuring masterpieces by Keith Haring, Roy Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg.
- Best Buddies hosts the first *Leadership Conference*, training both college student leaders and people with disabilities by providing intensive lessons in public speaking, management, team building, problem solving and leadership skills.
- Best Buddies launches *Best Buddies Citizens* with the goal of pairing adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with their non-disabled working peers.

1994 – 1998

- Best Buddies launches *Best Buddies Jobs*, a supported employment program, targeting high-paying, white-collar jobs for people with disabilities in Florida, California and Massachusetts.
- Best Buddies establishes *Best Buddies High Schools* with the goal of pairing special education students in one-to-one friendships with high school volunteers.
- The *Best Buddies Middle Schools* pilot program is launched, reaching out to an even younger age group with the hope that inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have a lasting effect on societal norms for the next generation.

1999 – 2006

- *e-Buddies®* is launched as a cutting-edge online friendship program.
- Maria Shriver writes a landmark book about friendships with people with disabilities titled, *What's Wrong with Timmy?* Proceeds benefit Best Buddies.
- Best Buddies launches the most successful fundraising event in its history, the nationally televised inaugural *Volvo Hearst Castle Challenge*, a 100-mile bike ride along the Pacific Coast Highway chaired by California First Lady Maria Shriver.
- Volvo signs deal through 2007 as title sponsor of the *Volvo Hyannis Port Challenge* and *Volvo Hearst Castle Challenge* and becomes the "Official Vehicle of Best Buddies."
- For the first time, Best Buddies has programs in all 50 of the United States and on six continents.



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2007 – 2011

- In 2007, Best Buddies International and German luxury car manufacturer Audi launch a five-year, international partnership. In 2011, the deal is extended for another three years
- Best Buddies celebrates 20 years of friendships and jobs in 2009.
- In honor of its 20th anniversary, **Best Buddies updates its mission statement to:** *“To establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).”*
- For the first time, Best Buddies has programs in 50 countries around the world.
- Best Buddies Ambassadors becomes Best Buddies’ **seventh formal program.**

2012-Present

- Best Buddies Jobs expands to Washington D.C. and San Francisco, CA.
- **Best Buddies Promoters officially launches as the organization’s eighth program for the 2012-2013 school year.** It is the first Best Buddies program open to elementary schools.
- Best Buddies celebrates its 25th anniversary.
- Best Buddies launches its ***I’m in to hire*** campaign in 2014, to promote the business benefits of hiring people with intellectual and development disabilities (IDD) and motivate employers to create a more inclusive workforce.
- In October 2015 A&E Network partnered with Best Buddies and premiered a new docu-series, *Born This Way*, which chronicles the lives of seven young-adults with Down syndrome, several of whom are Best Buddies participants.
- In April 2016, Best Buddies Global Ambassador, Katie Meade becomes the first woman with Down syndrome to become the face of a major beauty campaign, *Fearless*. The campaign is a partnership between Best Buddies and Beauty & Pin-ups.
- In September 2016, the hit A&E docu-series *Born This Way* **wins an Emmy award for “Outstanding Unstructured Reality Program.”**