Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Mission

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society.

Who We Serve

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

Programs

Best Buddies programs sit on the four key mission pillars below:

One-To-One Friendships  Integrated Employment  Leadership Development  Inclusive Living
One-To-One Friendships
Builds friendships between people with and without IDD, offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded.

**BEST BUDDIES, Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Citizens**
Creates an inclusive community for students and adults with IDD, helping them become socially integrated with their peers at every age.

**e-BUDDIES**
Offers an e-mail program, in which a participant with IDD communicates online with a friend without IDD.

Integrated Employment
Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves.

**BEST BUDDIES, Jobs**
Matches skilled, qualified individuals with IDD with businesses seeking enthusiastic and dedicated employees. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer.

An estimated 81% of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities do not have a paid job in the community. The Best Buddies Jobs program strives to place participants with IDD in supported employment, with the potential to receive benefits and earn a total income upwards of $900K over 30 years. In turn, these individuals will contribute $153K in taxes back into the economy, rather than receive nearly $895K in Federal SSI and Medicaid benefits during that time period.

Leadership Development
Educates and empowers people with and without IDD to become leaders, public speakers and advocates.

**BEST BUDDIES, Ambassadors**
Offers people with IDD the opportunity to gain the public speaking skills, self-esteem and confidence needed to successfully advocate for themselves, their peers and Best Buddies in communities, workplaces and government.

**BEST BUDDIES, Promoters**
Empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD and help open new Best Buddies chapters and programs by organizing special events that promote awareness to the disability rights movement.

Inclusive Living
Provides an integrated experience in which people with and without IDD are active, contributing citizens – living independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

**BEST BUDDIES, Living**
Provides individuals with and without IDD an opportunity to live together in a vibrant, educational community that supports all residents in advancing their employment, financial literacy, continued education, and life skills as they work to achieve their personal goals.