

The Objectives of Best Buddies

The objective of the programme is to give students an opportunity to understand what an intellectual disability is and to help break down the existing barriers/stigmas which may prevent them from meeting and getting involved in the life of a peer who has an intellectual disability.

Commitments

- Communicate once a week with your Buddy via phone, email, etc.
- Spend time with your Buddy twice a month
- Attend group meetings
- Assist Committee in fundraising and other activities
- Attend two group events per semester

Ability West is a voluntary organisation based in Galway which provides a range of person-centred, high quality, community-based services to people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Is eagríocht deonach é Érim an Iarthair. Bunaithe i gcathair na Gaillimhe solátharaímid réimse seirbhísí pobalbhunaithe, pearsanta ardchaighdeánach do dhaoine atá faoi mhíchumas intleachta agus a dteaghlach.

Best Buddies is a wonderful example of how modern college students look beyond themselves to help others and by helping others the students themselves also grow as people and as citizens.

This is your opportunity to be part of a global volunteer movement which is...

“Changing lives one friendship at a time”



Providing Services and Supports to People with an Intellectual Disability

**Ability West
Blackrock House
Salthill
Galway**

**Tel: (091) 540900
Email: volunteers@abilitywest.ie
Web: www.abilitywest.ie
Facebook: www.facebook.com/abilitywest**



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BEST BUDDIES®



COLLEGES

Welcome to a new kind of friendship

What is Best Buddies?

Best Buddies is a non-profit organisation, founded in America in 1989 by Anthony Kennedy Shriver, which is dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities.

Best Buddies Colleges is the premise upon which the international organisation of Best Buddies began.

The Best Buddies College Programme pairs college students in fun, enriching, one-to-one friendships with a peer who has an intellectual disability. In the past, individuals with intellectual disabilities have not had the opportunity to have friends outside their own environment. By becoming a College Buddy you can offer a person with an intellectual disability a chance to explore a new way of life.

Not just a Vision, our Mission

Through mutually enriching friendships, Best Buddies volunteers gain a greater understanding of themselves and those with intellectual disabilities. Through Best Buddies people with intellectual disabilities make life-changing friendships. Together Best Buddies participants build a more inclusive world, one friendship at a time.

The Best Buddies Programme

Who can take part?

Any student interested in making a difference to the lives of others. He/she will undergo screening, training and matching in order to ensure that they are well prepared, committed and confident in their role of befriending a peer with an intellectual disability.

The Best Buddies Committee

A Committee will be established in the College. The Committee will consist of students who are matched in one-to-one friendships and others who will take the lead in fundraising and organising social events around friendship building such as bowling or eating out.

The benefits of becoming a Best Buddy

- You will make new friends.
- You will gain a better understanding of the needs and abilities of people with an intellectual disability.
- You will gain a heightened awareness of issues that people with an intellectual disability experience.
- You will have the ability to make a difference in someone else's life and your own.
- You will take part in a variety of fun activities.

Best Buddies Student Opportunities

There are many opportunities for students who participate in this programme. By becoming a College Buddy you will not only befriend someone with an intellectual disability but you will also learn about yourself in the process.

Students experience team-building at its best, are challenged to explore their full potential, tap into their power to motivate and encourage others and translate awareness into quality friendships between students with and without intellectual disabilities.

Students will receive information and learn about intellectual disability, the importance of treating others with dignity and respect and as an equal.

As one gets to know a person with an intellectual disability, there is an inevitable realisation that there are more similarities with people with disabilities than there are differences.

Genuine friendships will be established thus enriching the lives of both Buddies and Peer Buddies.

