

# Host Site Partnership Guide

## *Best Buddies International*



### Host Sites

Host Sites are organizations that serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and partner with Best Buddies chapters so that the individuals they serve can participate as chapter members. Best Buddies College chapters and Promoter chapters that wish to engage individuals with IDD in group activities and one to one matching must be affiliated with a Host Site to do so. All members must either be affiliated with the chapter's school or the Host Site organization in order to participate in Best Buddies activities. These affiliations provide an infrastructure of support and responsibility for all members.

### Host Site Coordinators (HSC)

A Host Site Coordinator acts as a liaison between the chapter and the members of the Host Site organization. This individual serves as the primary point of contact for chapter leaders and Best Buddies staff on behalf of their organization and supports the program involvement of the individuals they serve. Below are some examples of ways in which Host Site Coordinators can support a Best Buddies chapter:

- Recruit individuals with IDD to join the program.
- Communicate about program opportunities to individuals and their families/caregivers.
- Provide insight about the individuals they serve to aid in the matching process.
- Maintain communication with chapter leaders and Best Buddies staff.
- Share knowledge and expertise from the disability field with chapter leaders.
- Provide support to chapter leaders in managing incidents that involve individuals served by the Host Site.

### Establishing New Host Sites

There are a variety of reasons that chapters may seek to establish new Host Site partnerships. New chapters, chapters with inactive or underperforming Host Sites or chapters with high student interest in matching, may all find themselves in need of a new Host Site partner. In these cases, chapter leaders should work with their local Best Buddies staff to identify organizations that may be a good fit. This can be done by exploring the disability service providers in the chapter's surrounding community and researching the organizations' websites to determine the structure of the services they provide. There are a wide range of service providers that can act as Host Sites including but not limited to: Support Coordination Agencies, Residential facilities, Employment Service Providers, Recreational Programs, Training/Day Programs or Advocacy Organizations. Visit your state's office of disability services website to find a directory of service providers and learn more about what is available in your community. Once you have found a potential partner, work with your Best Buddies staff to make a connection and discuss partnership opportunities. To make things official, ensure that a Host Site Agreement is signed and the HSC completes a membership application in BB360.

### Host Site Tips

Chapter leaders should strive to keep Host Sites engaged in the following ways:

- Keep consistent communication with the HSC: send flyers and newsletters
- Meet with HSC to identify new members from the Host Site
- Consult HSC on potential matches
- Invite HSC to chapter events and meetings
- Keep HSC informed of any issues, concerns or incidents relating to the individuals they serve
- Explore collaborative opportunities such as hosting events at Host Site or sharing presentation opportunities
- Promote the partnership – it's something to celebrate!