

Our Vision

Communities where people of all abilities belong and are connected through meaningful relationships.

Our Mission

We engage with you to be empowered and express your gifts, together with your loved ones, to build a network of support that honours your choices for the life you want in Waterloo Region.

Our Values

Diversity

Experienced as appreciation, acceptance, accommodation and inclusion of all people as valued citizens

Community

Experienced as being a valued contributing member within a network of supportive and meaningful relationships

Belonging

Experienced through a sense of connection, acceptance, value, safety, and being cared about

Respect

Experienced as kindness, consideration and regard for the rights, needs, wishes and well-being of others

Empowerment

Experienced as autonomy through the ability to exercise choice, advocate and self-direct

Gifts and Strengths

Experienced as opportunities to develop and use talents and abilities in service to one's self, others, and the community



Connect with Us



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Embracing Possibilities - Enriching Lives

BE-Friends

Volunteer Matching Program



Building Bridges to Belonging" through authentic friendships

Meaningful Relationship
Trusted Caring Friends
Fun Community Activities
Enjoying Shared Interest & Passions
Explore New Experiences
Meeting New People
Experiencing Belonging



About The BE-Friends Program

People with disabilities experience an increased risk of isolation, stigma, and exclusion from community: barriers to developing meaningful friendships.

The Be Friends Program aims to provide community members with a platform to develop friendships, where people feel valued and know they belong.



Time Commitment

We would like the Buddy to be committed to this program for one year or more. How often the Buddy and Friend meet and at what times is dependent on their individual schedules/availability.

Friendship A Bridge to Belonging

We, humans, are all hardwired for connection and belonging. We want and need people in our lives that we can trust, that we know genuinely care about us and who "get us" and accept up for who we are ... and as we are.

For many people with disabilities, their only relationships are with family, support workers, or other people with disabilities they meet at segregated programs or in congregated residential settings.

Genuine friendships with others without a disability can open new doors and experiences in community.



A Friend, a person with a disability, is paired with a volunteer Buddy, a person with or without a disability. You will decide how often you want to meet, the things you do together, and the new places you explore in the community together.

The Be Friend's program differs from a traditional volunteer program's defined roles: the roles of 'volunteer buddy,' and 'friend' can shift as friendships grow. We hope to break down barriers that exist to making friends in our community.

How To Get Involved

If you are 17yrs. or older with ANY type of disability you can be matched with a Buddy.

Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/UQDTCMz8jzNsdpUk9>

If you are 19 years of older you can be matched with a Friend. The Volunteer Buddy will engage in a 1HR interview and if selected, a 2-3HR Orientation before they are matched with a Friend.

Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/WjrBuqDRonRnLNkS7>

For more information contact info@bridgestobelonging.ca