

Big Buddies

Buddies are terrific for all ages. Older youth are empowered by being teachers and role models and younger kids develop confidence from the positive attention.

Age Appropriateness:

5-8, 9-12, 13 and up

Key Topics:

Mentorship,
Role-Models,
Anti-Bullying

Skills:

Writing,
Critical Thinking,
Illustrating,
Interviewing,
Collaboration

Materials:

Books and art supplies

Action Time:

1-2hrs. Per Week

Resources:

Kids Write Right? What You Need to be a Writing Powerhouse by: Jan Venolia

<http://www.wikihow.com/>

OBJECTIVES

- To teach the youth the value of being a positive role model and mentor and the importance and diversity of all people.
- To practice writing and interviewing skills.
- To develop peer relationships that will help prevent bullying.



Discussion

Pre-assign buddy pairs, try to put youth together who have no previous relationship. Before holding a Buddy Naming Ceremony, speak to each age group separately. What is a mentor? What makes a good role-model? What do you expect from your buddy and from being a buddy? Set expectations and appropriate behavior ahead of time. There are many activities that can be done with the buddies in place.

Action

1. **Interview:** Have the older students interview their younger buddy with the intention that they will be writing a story based on the interests and information expressed by their buddy in the interview.
2. **Write:** After gathering information from their buddies, the older students should synthesize the information, map out a story, and begin to write. Students should be given an hour a day for two weeks to write and illustrate their stories.
3. **Share:** Two weeks after the interview activity, have the older youth host a sharing event for the younger kids to attend. Have the buddies partner up again and ask the storywriters to share their buddy-inspired stories.

Reflection

Ask the older youth to share what they valued in learning about their younger buddy. Did they feel any extra responsibility to be a good role-model? How did this change their behavior?

Have the younger youth make thank-you cards to send to their buddies. Ask them what they learned about their older buddy, even though they didn't interview them. What made these older buddies good role-models or mentors?

BIG BUDDY