



Irresistible Church Training

For Disability Ministry

Presented by



What is Buddy Ministry?

3 Things a Buddy Provides

Buddy ministry invites participation in the life of the church

A buddy ministry is a program of the church that provides someone with a disability with a one-on-one support person during church services and events so they can better participate in the mainstream programs of the local church.

A buddy is a means of facilitating access and removing barriers that might otherwise keep someone from participating in church life. Not every person with a disability will need a buddy, nor will every buddy provide the exact same thing. Buddies provide individualized support that is as unique as the individual they are serving. *How* a buddy serves may vary, but *what* a buddy provides is straightforward.

1. A buddy provides discipleship

Discipleship is the process of learning to follow Christ. A buddy proves in word and deed that people with disabilities are loved by Christ and essential to the body of Christ—they reflect Christ's heart for people of all abilities! And more than that, they provide access to teaching, worship, and fellowship: a vital part of any believer's walk.

Buddies also allow parents, caregivers, and sibling to relax and be discipled themselves! Instead of having to stay with their child (or worry about being called every couple of minutes about their child's behavior), parents can trust their child is loved and cared for. A buddy serves the whole family.

2. A buddy provides friendship

Whether a buddy is a peer or an older adult depends on the needs of the person with the disability. Though a peer buddy more easily provides friendship, an older adult will provide access to peers. Friendship isn't automatic, but a buddy provides the opportunity for someone with a disability to spend time with their peers. The buddy models how to act around their friends and can be a bridge to further relationships.

3. A buddy provides safety

Safety can mean a lot of things. Certainly, physical safety is a major consideration. But buddies also provide a safety net for people who might be ignored and marginalized. A buddy serves as an advocate and bridge, bringing people with disabilities from the fringes into the center of church life. If someone is out of sight, they're out of mind. A buddy helps the person with a disability become a part of church life.