

proud partner



The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation



Keeping children safe from violence

Better Buddies

Creating friendly and caring schools



What is Better Buddies?

Better Buddies, an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, helps students entering their first year of primary school to feel safe, valued and connected to the school community. The school pairs new primary school students with an older buddy.

Better Buddies is designed to help reduce bullying and create friendly and caring school environments. The Framework builds strong relationships and research shows children benefit immensely – with younger students feeling safe and cared for, and older students feeling valued and respected.

Launched in 2000, Better Buddies is now in more than 800 Australian schools, thanks to the support of NAB, trusts and foundations and other community partners.

Better Buddies has also been adopted in other countries, including Denmark, Singapore and Dubai.



Buddying up: St Charles Borromeo Primary School students bond with their buddies.

Why Better Buddies?

Bullying is a serious problem in Australia, with around one student in every four bullied over a period of several weeks¹. Being bullied can impact a child's self-esteem, behaviour, and their ability to concentrate and perform at school.

When students have the skills and understanding of how to engage in positive, respectful and inclusive relationships, then negative and violent behaviours – such as bullying – can be reduced.

That's why Better Buddies teaches students the values of caring for others, friendliness, respect, valuing difference, including others and responsibility. The Framework aims to create positive behaviour, as well as build students' self-esteem, connectedness, social skills, trust and sense of community.

¹ Cross, D., Shaw, T., Hearn, I., Epstein, M., Monks, H., Lester, L., & Thomas, L. 2009.

*Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study (ACBPS).
Child Health Promotion Research Centre, Edith Cowan University, Perth.*

Prevention in partnership with schools

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has extensive experience in school-based cultural change programs. The Foundation runs bullying prevention programs in more than 1,000 schools nationwide, including the Better Buddies Framework and eSmart, and cares for children who have witnessed or experienced violence. The Foundation leads the debate on bullying through its National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB), established in 2002.

How does Better Buddies work?

Better Buddies creates friendly and caring school communities to reduce bullying. The essential characteristic of a buddy system is that it supports students' transition during their first year of primary school.

The Better Buddies Framework is a curriculum resource for primary schools, designed to enhance existing programs, or introduce a new buddy system.

Easy to implement, the Framework allows teachers to tailor the buddy system for their school, train students to be buddies and source ideas for buddy activities.

Better Buddies key events

Schools are encouraged to conduct regular Better Buddies Activities (provided) and run four key events throughout the year:

- Better Buddies Welcome (February)
- Better Buddies Games (May)
- Better Buddies Book Week (August)
- Better Buddies Celebration (November).



Schools receive a Better Buddies Framework Kit, containing a teacher resource folder, posters, a puppet and a miniature Buddy Bear.

What support is available?

- Full access to our website at **betterbuddies.org.au**
Students and parents can access information, news and games, and teachers can access activities and support materials.
- The Better Buddies team is available between 9am-5pm (EST) Monday to Friday, to provide ongoing support and advice.
- An eNewsletter is issued four times a year containing news, case studies, information on upcoming events and suggestions for Better Buddies Activities.

Buddy Bear

Buddy Bear is the mascot of Better Buddies – a fun-loving and caring purple bear, who promotes care, security, warmth, comfort and the values of the Framework. Buddy Bear makes occasional special appearances at selected schools and events during the year.



Apply for Better Buddies today

To apply for a sponsored position or to purchase the Better Buddies Framework for your school, please visit betterbuddies.org.au or call (03) 9697 0666.



proud partner



NAB has been a proud partner of the Foundation since 2003 and is committed to teaching children the importance of looking after each other.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
PO Box 5192
South Melbourne
Vic 3205
T 03 9697 0666
F 03 9690 5644
E info@amf.org.au
W amf.org.au/betterbuddies

The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation



Keeping children safe from violence

© Copyright 2011.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this brochure was correct and up to date at the time of printing, and may be subject to change.