

## Literacy Buddies Make a Difference !

Children in the Literacy Buddy Program are better prepared to start kindergarten. These children have the greatest need for a strong foundation for their continued educational success!



### Our Buddies say...

"I think this program is wonderful and I enjoy going into the children's area of the bookstores -- selecting just the right book for my buddy"

"Thank you for the opportunity. We have 3 grandchildren and on their birthdays we donate their favorite book at that time to their libraries in their honor. We are strong believers that children need to read well and enjoy reading."

"I am glad to be a part of this organization. I love the letters and pictures from my buddy and look forward to a new year."

"Please call me in September and if God willing I would like to help you. My reading buddy's name was Hope and it greatly helped me when I needed it.

Hope was perfect. Thank you."

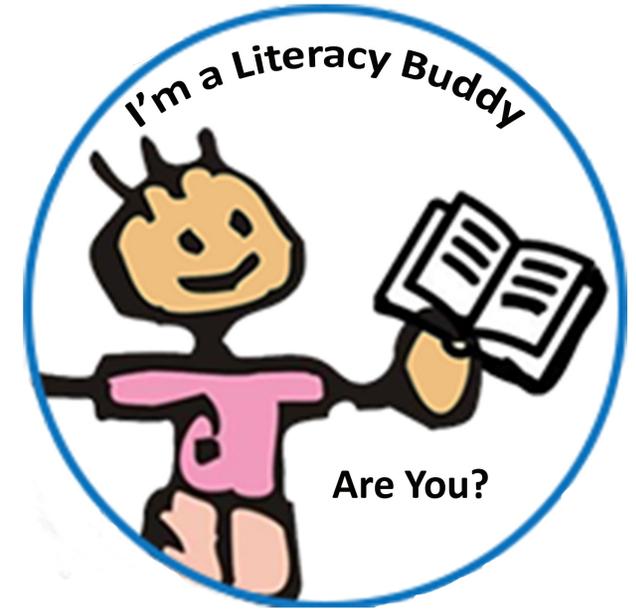


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# Literacy Buddy Program



EARLY LEARNING  
COALITION  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

2675 Winkler Ave  
Suite 300  
Fort Myers, FL 33901



# Early Literacy

Encourage a child's first steps toward reading & writing.

Early language and literacy development begin at birth, and are closely linked to a child's earliest experiences with books and stories.

The interactions that young children have with the adults in their lives, as well as with materials such as books, paper and crayons, are the building blocks of language, reading, and writing development.

This understanding of early literacy development aligns with current research and identifies the critical role of early experiences. Some children in pre-school classrooms do not have enough interaction with literacy materials and interactions with adults that increase literacy knowledge.

Early experiences are significantly enhanced when they enter childcare. When children get a good start with literacy, they enter the school system more prepared to learn and are less likely to have problems that require intervention.



# Reading Aloud

Research shows that an adult reading aloud to a child is the single most important activity in building a foundation for learning to read. Children need to be read to frequently using storybooks, informational books, and poetry.

For low-income families, obtaining these books is financially difficult. Many parents/guardians underestimate the importance of their role in helping children become ready to read and write. The Literacy Buddy Program helps teachers involve the parents as partners in the development of early reading and writing skills.

After the children receive their books from their Literacy Buddies, teachers provide parents with information about how to talk with their children about books and print. They also receive information regarding how to talk about letters and words with children.



## What is A Literacy Buddy?

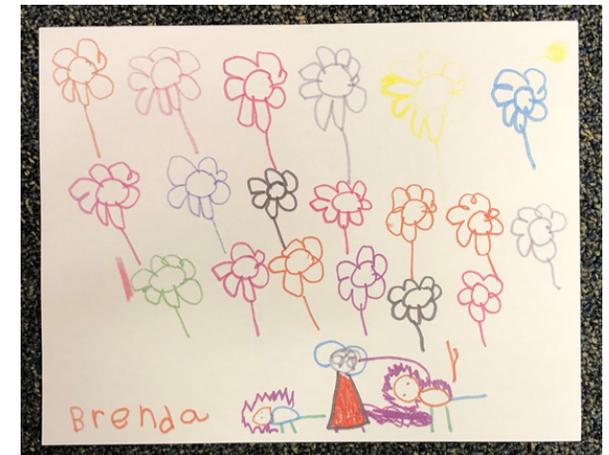
Children in child care in Lee, Collier, Hendry, and Glades counties are paired with a volunteer who agrees to receive letters from a child. In turn, the volunteer sends a letter and a book to this child in response to the child's letter. This exchange takes place three times during the school year. The child indicates a specific book or interest that they would like to explore. The purpose of this program is to teach children about correspondence, communication, and to provide them with quality books. For many children, the Literacy Buddy Program provides an opportunity for them to have books of their own at home.

# Volunteer

Anyone, any age, anywhere can become a Literacy Buddy. We have Literacy Buddies living all over the world. Many Literacy Buddies are winter residents of Florida. Since exchanges are done by mail, time commitments are minimal.

## Additional Volunteer Opportunities

- Classroom Book Reading
- Letter Writing Activities
- Classroom Library Donations
- Classroom Material Donations
- Spanish Mentoring



## How Do I Volunteer?

Applications are available at [www.ELCofSWFL.org](http://www.ELCofSWFL.org).

Click on the Big Buddy Button!  
(239) 935 - 6186 for more information

