

# ***Miracle Buddies***

Buddies are a vital part of the Dothan Miracle League. Buddies are assigned to a team or an individual player for the season. Buddies will be provided with a schedule so they will be aware of when their team is playing. **The buddy is there to protect the player from balls, assist the player in batting and running the bases, and to be a friend to the player.** Hopefully this will lead to a friendship off the field as well. Buddies will receive a “buddy” shirt to wear on the field. This helps everyone to identify who the buddies are. **If you are volunteering as a part of a group, you will not receive a buddy shirt. You may wear a shirt that identifies the group you are representing.** Being a buddy can earn you credit for service hour requirements for school programs, church and temple groups, and other community organizations. Once you participate, you will see that being a buddy allows you not only to make a difference in a player’s life, but also to create positive awareness in yourself. And you will find that being a buddy is lots of fun!!

Buddies can be fellow schoolmates, parents, college or high school students, athletes, business leaders, scouts, or any individual or group (12 years and older) who wishes to volunteer their time to give individuals with special needs the gift of baseball.

Being a buddy allows parents, children, and volunteers to come together to help special needs children and adults. Buddies and players alike learn valuable skills like patience, understanding, and compassion.

Buddies need to be energetic, committed, and enthusiastic for each game. Buddies are a player’s biggest supporter. We encourage our buddies to be at every game, that their team is playing, as possible. This allows for Miracle players to grow more comfortable with their new friends. Buddies are responsible for their individual player on the field. **Safety is always the biggest priority.**

Goals of the Dothan Miracle League Buddies are simple:

- Provide support and encouragement while ensuring the player’s safety.
- Step in front of the player for protection when a hard hitter is up to bat.
- Always allow the player as much freedom as possible to play his/her game and position. Focus on their abilities.
- Run around the bases with the player or provide appropriate assistance. (Example, if a player is in a wheelchair, push them around the bases)
- Demonstrate high morals and integrity on an off the field. (Especially when wearing your DML buddy shirt)
- Have fun with the player and enjoy the game.

Responsibilities of the Dothan Miracle League Buddies before, during, and after the game:

- Arrive 10 minutes before the game begins

- Be properly dressed wearing your “buddy” shirt (required - except for members of a group that is volunteering) and tennis shoes. (No cleats or hard soled shoes. We play on a special surface that is easily damaged)
- Stay with their player whether they are in the field or the dug-out.
- Know what position your player has and when they are up to bat.
- Ready your player when they are up to bat.
- Assist the player when they are at bat, when necessary. Once they hit the ball, direct them to first base (one base per hit). Beware, some players may want to continue to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and even head on to home, which is fine, just stay up with them and keep an eye on them.
- Assist your player in the field, hang out next to them, and let them do as much as possible.
- Assist your player as needed. Help keep them safe from fly balls and bats and have fun!
- At the end of the game, line up for high fives with all the players.

We also welcome groups of at least 6 people to pick a date and come out to buddy with our players. Groups may come more than one date if they wish. Contact us and we will provide you with a schedule of the dates we have available for Guest Buddies.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

- Buddies must be at least **12 years old**
- **IMPORTANT** – Adult Volunteers will need to undergo a background check for safety reasons and to abide by the law. (We do not require background checks for group volunteers)
- All Youth Volunteers must have their parent/guardian sign the Volunteer Application.

**We thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer to support the many needs of the Dothan Miracle League and the individuals we serve.**

For more information contact Clint Jones at 334-791-1377 or email [hdfxr01@gmail.com](mailto:hdfxr01@gmail.com)