

**Extending A Hand in Friendship:
Assisting Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities Build New Relationships**

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By Andrea Ieropoli

Host Organization: Heads Up For Inclusion

Host Supervisors: Christa McCorquodale and Wanda Prince

Faculty Supervisor: Sharon Beaucage-Johnson

Trent Community Research Centre Project Coordinator: John Marris

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Abstract

The purpose of this investigation is to identify best practices for facilitating programs that pair young adults with intellectual disabilities with another member of the community in order to develop a meaningful relationship between the two participants. In order to determine these best practices, seven interviews were conducted with organizations who currently facilitate such programs and an academic and grey literature search was conducted. The collected data was then compared to the current *Amigos in the Community* program facilitated by a local Peterborough not-for-profit agency, Heads Up For Inclusion. This comparison highlights the similarities and differences between this program and those of other established programs. Moreover, a list of suggested recommendations for the *Amigos in the Community* program has been developed for Heads Up for Inclusion in order to improve its' current program. One recommendation is to host more community events so as to recruit new volunteers, increase community awareness of the programs available, raise funds for the program and offer pairs an opportunity to spend more time together. Another significant recommendation is to identify barriers to inclusion for participants such as access to reliable, accessible transportation. These recommendations along with others identified throughout this report are intended to assist Heads Up for Inclusion in improving their current program and ensuring it meets the needs and interests of their clients.

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Key Terms:

HUI: Heads Up for Inclusion – A not-for-profit agency located in Peterborough, ON who works with people with intellectual disabilities to build relationships in the community. HUI is also the host for this project.

Barriers to inclusion – any reason that makes it more difficult or challenging for an individual to interact with the people in their community.

Young disabled adults: Adults aged 19-30 who experience physical or intellectual disabilities.

ID: Intellectual disabilities or developmental disability – When individuals have limitations with their intellectual functioning that affects their abilities to learn, problem solve and reason. It also affects their ability to adapt to situations and therefore affects a number of everyday social and practical skills.

CBR – Community Based Research

Meaningful Relationships – When two individuals genuinely want to spend time together and value each other because of their strengths and skills.

Community Connectors: Volunteers who are paired up with individuals with intellectual disabilities for the *Amigos in the Community* program.

Amigo: An individual with an intellectual disability who is paired with a volunteer in the *Amigos in the Community* program.*

*Note: Different programs use different terms to refer to the member of a pair in a friending program with intellectual disabilities. For simplicity of understanding in all areas of this paper the member of the pair with intellectual disabilities will be referred to as an amigo.

Introduction:

Most scholars agree that friendship can have a positive impact on people's lives even though they cannot agree on one common definition of friendship (Hutchison, Lord, & Lord, 2010, p. ii). One possible definition of friendship consists of two people who genuinely care for one another, have common interests and want to spend time together (Hutchison, Lord, & Lord, 2010, p. ii). Friends support one another and in doing so help the other gain self-esteem, confidence and the desire to try new things by providing security and support (Amado, 2013, p. 24 & Hutchison et al., 2010, p. 3). Likewise, research shows that having strong friendships can be a direct positive determinant of overall health and longevity (Amado, 2013, p. 9 & Hutchison et al., 2010, p. 4). Through friendships, people are connecting to another person on an emotional level. This provides intimacy, support and new knowledge about oneself (Hutchison et al., 2010, p. 4).

Even though the value of friendship is a well understood and researched concept, many minorities in our society are still isolated and thus do not flourish in the abovementioned ways (Sense, 2015, p. 9). One such group is adults with disabilities as they commonly have fewer friends and reduced social networks than their peers without disabilities (Sense, 2015, p. 9). The "We All Need Friends" campaign conducted by Sense, a national charity in the United Kingdom, discovered that 53% of people with disabilities feel lonely all, some, or most of the time (Sense, 2015, p. 5). Correspondingly, 23% of people with disabilities admit to feeling lonely on a typical day and 6% admit to having no friends at all (Sense, 2015, p. 5). As a result, people with disabilities tend to rely heavily on their relationships with family members, others with disabilities and individuals who are paid to interact with them such as personal support workers (Sense, 2015, p. 9).

There has been recent shift in efforts towards the integration of people with disabilities into society. This attempt at integration has occurred through physical integration which is the encouragement of the physical presence of an individual in situations or events (Amado, 2013, p. i). However, physical integration of people with disabilities does not always result in them being socially accepted and therefore can result in social exclusion (Amado, 2013, p. i). One factor that prevents people with intellectual disabilities from forming genuine friendships is the presence of “helper-helpee” relationships. These relationships develop when an individual without intellectual disabilities feels the need to take care of the person with intellectual disabilities as a kind gesture (Rossetti, 2011, p. 24). This does not allow for a bond to be formed and thus is not an adequate substitute to a true friendship in which both partner’s strengths and skills are valued. Therefore neither partner in a “helper-helpee” relationship receives the benefits of friendship as by definition was previously discussed. Overall, these types of relationships still leave many individuals with intellectual disabilities longing to feel more connected with people (Rossetti, 2011, p. 24). Since a “helper-helpee” relationship still results in the member of the pair with intellectual disabilities feeling lonely, demonstrates the importance that more than physical integration of people with intellectual disabilities is required to form genuine relationships. Therefore, by uncovering the causes of social exclusion for people with intellectual disabilities, new programs can avoid these obstacles in the future when assisting them in building new meaningful relationships.

Moreover, social service organizations are becoming more aware of the need to assist people with intellectual disabilities in obtaining friendships and are creating new programs accordingly. One such group is the host organization for this project, Heads Up for Inclusion (HUI). They are an agency that works with people in the City and County of Peterborough with

intellectual disabilities to help them develop meaningful relationships and feel more connected to their community. HUI pairs individuals with disabilities with members of the Peterborough community without disabilities, typically with someone who has shared interests such as baking, completing crafts or participating in sports. These pairs are encouraged to spend time together one-on-one and at group events hosted by HUI in order to foster a meaningful long-term relationship. The current program model builds on the progress of the original *Amigos in the Community* program which ran in 2010, but was discontinued in 2012 due to a lack of funding. The objective of the *Amigos in the Community* program is to support young adults who are out of school, aged 19-30, with barriers to inclusion make connections in their communities and develop new meaningful relationships.

Ultimately, this research project seeks to provide HUI with a best practices guide for the facilitation of the *Amigos in the Community* program. In order to provide these recommendations, the researcher located and studied the best practices currently being utilized by similar programs through interviews of agency leaders who are facilitating these programs and through a literature review including information from both academic and grey literature sources. Some specific areas that were investigated include how these programs have evaluated their success, created a budget and gained funding. Results from this investigation were compared with the practices currently utilized by the *Amigos in the Community* program and specific recommendations are provided. Additionally, this research study identified new barriers and techniques that could better support people with intellectual disabilities build new relationships.

Methods:

Firstly, an in-person interview was conducted with Christa McCorquodale and Wanda Prince, members of HUI and hosts of this research project. This interview outlined the current practices for the management of the *Amigos in the Community* program at Heads Up for Inclusion. Next, a literature review was conducted to gather information from both grey and academic literature. Academic literature consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature included information available in the form of websites, reports, evaluations of pre-existing programs and slide shows. Information gathered through the literature included a discussion on social inclusion, barriers to inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities, best practices for administrating programs whose goals are to build relationships between people with and without intellectual disabilities and the benefits to the community when there is greater social inclusion. Literature sources were located using Google and Google scholar as search engines.

Search terms utilized included:

- helping people with disabilities make friends
- helping people with disabilities make friends Canada
- agencies in Ontario working with people with intellectual disabilities
- agencies in Ontario working with people with intellectual disabilities to build new friendships
- agencies in Ontario working with people with intellectual disabilities mentoring programs
- mentoring programs for people with intellectual disabilities
- activities for adults with developmental disabilities

Research was then conducted to identify programs similar to HUI's *Amigos in the Community* program. These programs ideally were to be located within Ontario and involve the pairing of an individual with intellectual disabilities with another member of the community that did not have intellectual disabilities. As part of these programs, the pairs should be encouraged to spend time together for a couple of hours a few times a month in order to foster a genuine friendship. However, programs that support friendship building between people with and without intellectual disabilities are currently rare in the local Peterborough area as well as world-wide. As a result, the search for programs was expanded to include programs world-wide that involve the interaction of people with and without disabilities in any type of program that met often and encouraged relationships between these two groups. Programs that focused on friendship building through pairing individuals with and without intellectual disabilities were inputted into a database and the programs that were closest in structure to HUI's current adult program were chosen to be part of this study.

Agency leaders from the selected programs were contacted and five participated in this study. Two additional interviews were performed with organizers of the original *Amigos in the Community* program. The interviews were approximately 40 minutes in length and were conducted over the phone or through skype. Hand written notes, recordings and partial transcriptions were made for each interview (see Appendix A). Questions asked during these interviews focused on topics such as recruitment of volunteers and amigos, training of volunteers, funding opportunities, evaluation methods and strategies as well as challenges and strengths of each program (see Appendix B). Another important idea discussed was that of the relationship between pairs: how these pairs were formed, length of the subsequent relationships, budget for activities, and time commitment required of partners.

Interviews were the chosen method of data gathering as HUI was interested in collecting information from other established programs. The information collected through interviews provides in-depth qualitative data. By performing semi-structured interviews one can ask more follow up questions and ask about terms or concepts that are unfamiliar to ensure clear, applicable answers are attained. The method of using surveys was considered but rejected, as it would allow more programs to be part of the study but the data generated would have been more limited and lack detail compared to interview data.

After the interviews were completed, they were each analyzed to identify the best practices of each as well as the effectiveness of the strategies at deriving the desired results. The data collected from these interviews was then merged with the information gathered in the literature review. The accumulated ideas from the literature review and interviews were then used to determine the most effective methods for facilitating a friendship program at HUI. These best practices were then compared with HUI's current best practices in order to examine how the strategies of the *Amigos in the Community* program may be improved to help further the success of this program.

Previous Knowledge

Transitions for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

The transition from childhood to adulthood is stressful for all individuals but is especially difficult for people with disabilities. For traditionally developing youth this typically involves leaving home, gaining independence, and employment but this is less common for youth with ID (Dyke, Bourke, Llewellyn, & Leonard, 2013, p. 149). Instead for youth with ID during this transition their parents are aging and their siblings may be moving out therefore they are losing these family supports (Dyke, Bourke, Llewellyn, & Leonard, 2013, p. 149). They are also leaving school thus leaving friends and supports provided in educational settings. As a result, youth with disabilities tend to only interact with family, paid workers and other individuals with intellectual disabilities as part of day placements thus generally lack friends (Dyke, Bourke, Llewellyn, & Leonard, 2013, p. 154). Additionally, the services these youth are receiving tend to be modeled for the needs of adults with intellectual disabilities which may not be applicable for them yet and neglect some of the common needs of this age group (Dyke, Bourke, Llewellyn, & Leonard, 2013, p. 149).

Although just like young traditionally developing adults, young adults with intellectual disabilities want more independence but they may not be able to cope with all the requirements of everyday life (Pavlicevic, O'Neil, Powell, Jones, & Sampathianaki, 2014, p. 12). In order to achieve this emotional independence in this transition from youth to adulthood requires an individual to feel confident, motivated and have positive feelings of self-worth (Pavlicevic, O'Neil, Powell, Jones, & Sampathianaki, 2014, p. 15). It also requires that people have the ability to make choices and communicate those choices to people in their lives (Pavlicevic, O'Neil, Powell, Jones, & Sampathianaki, 2014, p. 12). Unfortunately, these traits required for

independence are typically found lacking in individuals with intellectual disabilities (Pavlicevic, O'Neil, Powell, Jones, & Sampathianaki, 2014, p. 12). Lack of inclusion in their communities can continually perpetuate these factors by preventing them from gaining the qualities required for the independence that they crave.

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion occurs when an individual is accepted by their peers and is able to interact with those peers in a positive way during recreational activities (O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante, & Snow). Social inclusion is not about liking everyone or seeing everyone as being the same but instead recognizing differences in each other and either embracing those differences or at least learning to accept them in disliked people (O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante, & Snow). Inclusion involves allowing all people to live full lives and teaches people to focus on others abilities and how they can be used to help one another (O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante, & Snow). It is important to note that social inclusion is not just an issue experienced by people with disabilities but can be based on other factors such as differences in race, culture, nationality, gender, class, ability, and personality (O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante, & Snow). For example it is acceptable for people to be divided on differences of opinion but that is differences in ideas not based on characteristics of a person which they have no control over (O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante, & Snow). Some current barriers of social inclusion for individuals with intellectual disabilities can include being unable to access community centres or reliable transportation because of their disabilities (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 38). Even though inclusion of people with disabilities into community life is mandated as a part of legislation this has not yet resulted in social acceptance (Sense, 2015, p. 11).

Importance of Relationships

Relationships can have a different meaning and effect on different people but for some, relationships are their cause of happiness and can be considered a way that they define themselves (Amado, 2013, p. 7). A person who has a larger social network has more people in their lives who care about them and therefore more people to have an input into how their life will unfold (Amado, 2013, p. 10). If a person has a small social network, which is common of people with intellectual disabilities, then they may have considerably less control over how their life unfolds since it can be very difficult for a person alone to speak up for themselves. Individuals with intellectual disabilities also commonly have difficulties with communication which can make speaking up for themselves even more of a challenge (Amado, 2013, p. 10). When people entirely lack relationships then they can only be spoken for by professionals who may not be as dedicated to them as a family member or friend would be (Amado, 2013, p. 10). Therefore the size of your social network can help determine the power and control that one can have on their life (Amado, 2013, p. 10). Ultimately, since individuals with intellectual disabilities are known to have smaller social networks then resultantly they have less control of the path their life shall take and less power to make positive changes to improve their quality of life. Therefore through participating in these programs that help individuals with intellectual disabilities expand their social networks can help them gain greater control over their lives.

Community Involvement Benefits

Benefits that a mentor can have on an individual with intellectual disabilities include assisting people with ID improve their social communication and behaviour skills such that they are more in line with what is socially acceptable (“Supporting students with intellectual

disabilities in higher education through mentoring”, 8). Mentors can also help encourage a person with ID to become more physically active and maintain a diet. This is an important finding as research has shown that people with intellectual disabilities do not participate in an adequate amount of exercise and commonly become obese resulting in further health problems (“Supporting students with intellectual disabilities in higher education through mentoring”, 9). Furthermore, interaction between people with intellectual disabilities and those without, allows community members to learn more about people with ID which helps in disproving myths and assumptions about them allowing for greater social inclusion of people with ID (L’Arche Canada, 2005, p. 32). Additionally, interaction between people with and without intellectual disabilities helps community members view the abilities and gifts of people with ID which then can subsequently help them become integrated into the workforce through networking in these types of programs (“About We all need friends campaign”, 2015). People with disabilities can also have a positive effect on the community as they tend to be very accepting of people who are different and display a more open perspective on how to interact with these people (L’Arche Canada, 2005, p. 33). For example the residents at an L’arche home in Quebec invite the homeless men at a nearby shelter to share meals with them and after the meals singing and dancing sessions (L’Arche Canada, 2005, p. 33). The residents at this home enjoy the company and display their compassion for the homeless men by sharing what they can with them (L’Arche Canada, 2005, p. 33).

Results

Research Question #1: What is the research on the best practices for assisting youth between the ages of 19-30 with intellectual disabilities in building new meaningful relationships with community members?

Information Gathered through Literature Review Creation

Barriers to Inclusion

Barriers to inclusion are defined as any reason that makes it more difficult or challenging for an individual to interact with the people in their community (Christa McCorquodale and Wanda Prince, personal communication, October 13, 2016). These barriers can be different for each individual with intellectual disabilities depending on their needs.

Communication

Some individuals with intellectual disabilities may struggle with communication, initiating conversation or planning events with friends (Rossetti, 2011, p. 27). When a shy amigo is paired with an individual who is outgoing the shy individual tends to find it easy to initiate conversations and plan outings (Sense, 2015, p. 12). Some volunteers may lack understanding on how to communicate effectively with their amigo especially when working with individuals with multiple disabilities (“About We all need friends campaign”, 2015). Therefore, part of the training that volunteers receive should include a section on different communication styles and techniques as well as ways of working with people with communication barriers (“About We all need friends campaign”, 2015). Depending on the communication difficulty experienced by the individual with disabilities, would dictate the form of training required but could include a one-on-one session with the facilitator and volunteer or group session with both partners and the facilitator and possibly the personal support worker of the amigo.

Transportation

Some amigos may have transportation difficulties. There are two possible solutions to this issue identified in the literature which could be applied effectively depending on the needs of the amigos and resources available to the programs.

Possible Solutions Identified:

A. Teaching individuals with intellectual disabilities how to use public transit

This could involve teaching amigos how to take the bus and how to evaluate bus routes when choosing which one to reach a specific destination. This life skill could not only help them with meeting their partners, but also with other everyday tasks (Dingle, Brander, Ballantyne, & Baker, 2013, p. 9).

B. Provide Free Transportation

An agency could provide free transportation such as free “pick-up and drop off” services by using a regular vehicle or if required a specially equipped vehicle to bring amigos to events. By providing accessible transportation, an individual with disabilities may gain an extra opportunity for relationship building by getting to spend more time with their partner (Dingle, Brander, Ballantyne, & Baker, 2013, p. 9).

Extra Support for Pairs with Mental Health Issues

It is also possible that either or both partners could be dealing with mental health issues, which can make building a new relationship even more of a challenge (Rossetti, 2011, p. 27). A common example of a possible mental health issue is social anxiety which when considered in the context of these programs can limit the types of events attended by the pair or possibly the size of group in which they feel comfortable interacting with (Rossetti, 2011, p. 27). As with any

mental health issue what an individual is or is not comfortable with will depend on the individual and their particular needs. Therefore a recommendation would be for the facilitator of the program to meet with both partners and discuss what situations they are comfortable with and then assist the pair in identifying events or locations that both feel comfortable and safe attending.

Connect Amigos with Additional Services in the Community

Many people with disabilities live on a tight budget as typically their only source of financial support is provided in the form of a small income from the government. Therefore, many people with disabilities have difficulty acquiring their basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing and therefore do not have the time or resources to spend on acquiring and retaining friendships (Hutchison, Lord, & Lord, 2010, p. i). So, these friending programs could help these individuals by connecting them with local supports available in the community such that their needs would be met and then they could participate in the program (Dusseljee, Rijken, Cardol, Curfs, & Groenewegen, 2011, p. 16). Local services that would be applicable to assist with these needs include: rent supplement programs, low income housing options, free meal programs, food banks, clothing and hygiene product donation centers, programs in the community that could help them develop skills applicable for the workplace and agencies that complete applications for other funding available.

Volunteer Recruitment

Methods of Student Recruitment

Specific and effective methods that can help with the recruitment of volunteers between the ages of 19-30 in the Peterborough City and County region include: at Trent University and

Fleming College through promotions to join the program at the student job fairs and on the student job boards (Brailey, 2011). Furthermore, getting in touch with the different heads of departments at the schools to gain the opportunity to present about the program to specific applicable classes of students (Brailey, 2011). Some programs that have already been deemed applicable at Fleming College include: Social Service Worker, Police Foundations, Recreation and Leisure, Educational Assistant and Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist Assistant. These programs were selected either due to the fact that being part of an initiative working with individuals with intellectual disabilities would benefit these students in gaining applicable experience to help in gaining employment after they graduate or because the students need to complete volunteer hours prior to graduation which they could complete by being a part of these programs. Once the schools permission has been gained then one could advertise with posters throughout the school and send out mass emails to students about the program. Organizers could also reach out to the high school graduates in the area by completing presentations with them as well to inform them of this opportunity in their area. Overall, when presenting to young adults in the various schools one should adjust the presentation to apply to each particular audience and promote the program as a way to build up their resumes and gain skills that are applicable to their future careers (K. Brailey, personal communication, February 9, 2017). However, the disadvantage of recruiting university and college students as volunteers for these programs is the fact that many graduate and move away resulting in the loss of the relationships developed in the program.

Recruitment through Employment Agencies

Contact employment agencies or employment resource centers and advertise the program there with posters and have the employees at those locations promote the program to clients highlighting that it is an opportunity to gain experience in their field (Brailey, 2011).

Internet Advertising

Internet postings are an additional effective tool to utilize to locate new volunteers including adding volunteer information to Kijiji at www.kijiji.ca, creating a Facebook group about the program, events and how to become involved, posting information and an application process available on the agencies website, volunteer positions on student job boards and posting on local volunteer websites such as in Peterborough, the Four Info website at <https://www.fourinfo.com/> (Brailey, 2009).

Gain Attention through a Media Release

Doing a media release such as on the local radio or paper on a successful Amigo pair or a group event may encourage others to join as Community Connectors, especially for older young adults or any young adults that are not currently attending any post-secondary education institutions or job searching (Brailey, 2011).

Volunteer Appraisal

Individuals with intellectual disabilities interact with ever changing support workers coming in and out of their life and not providing the emotional connection they need. Therefore, it is important to have people in their lives who genuinely want to spend time with them and commit to a long term relationship (Amado, 2013, p. 10). For these reasons it is important to

ensure volunteers are ready, able and willing to commit to a long term relationship with their partner since if they are not then the relationship will do more harm than good for their amigo.

Volunteer Training

Amigo Documentation

Amigos also need to submit documentation before joining the program including diagnosis of intellectual disability and indication of potential triggers (Brailey, 2009). Then they will have an interview with the facilitator to further consider them for the program (Brailey, 2009).

Attributes of a Good Connector

At the training sessions the facilitator can discuss attributes that make a good connector such as: focusing on the amigos' gifts and how they can use those gifts to contribute to the relationship, try to think of opportunities instead of limitations when choosing or participating in activities and when discussing activities to do, consider what type of people you could possibly interact with in those scenarios (Amado, 2013, p. 64). Through considering these ideas an individual can help build a better relationship with their amigo and introduce them to new people which expands their social network.

Communication Training

Some volunteers may lack the understanding of how to communicate effectively with their amigos especially when working with individuals with multiple disabilities ("About We all need friends campaign", 2015). Therefore, as part of the volunteer training, facilitators should attempt to teach or give advice on how the volunteers can communicate with their amigo ("About We all need friends campaign", 2015).

Topics that need to be addressed

The orientation can also be an effective place to ensure the volunteers understand the need to commit to a long-term relationship as the relationship needs time to develop and needs time to be worthwhile (“About We all need friends campaign”, 2015). Moreover, the facilitator can discuss the possibility of certain situations that may arise and how they will be dealt with such as: unacceptable behavior, development of intimate relationships between members of a pair, what to do in case of a serious situation and policy on giving or lending money (Brailey, 2009). Another topic that could be discussed is the requirement for pairs to report on the activities that they are completing by filing in a Tracking Sheet that needs to be handed in at the end of the month, each month to ensure pairs are meeting up every two weeks (Brailey, 2011). Overall, through this increased interaction with the volunteers the facilitators can hopefully determine whether or not an individual genuinely wants to be a part of the program as this is essential for a meaningful relationship to form (Rossetti, 2011, p. 24).

Facilitator Role

Facilitator Considerations when Choosing Events

When choosing events, facilitators should seek advice from someone, such from the amigos support staff, who knows and understands the amigos’ disability and can help in adjusting an activity such that the amigo can participate as fully as possible (Sense, 2015, p. 10). Another consideration when choosing events is not only what events are open to this group but what are the community events that will allow them to interact with the same people in a meaningful way on a regular basis in order to build new relationships (Amado, 2013, p. 17).

Additionally, when choosing activities for group or one-on-one events amigos may be unwilling to share ideas about what events to attend as they may not wish to upset their friends. This behavior is acceptable but prevents the amigos from becoming more comfortable with activities and locations in the community based on their interests. This issue prevents these amigos from gaining an understanding of what interests them most and any new potential relationships that could have been built out of that interest such as meeting someone at the location or event (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 45). Therefore, facilitators should attempt to encourage and help amigos feel comfortable honestly sharing their opinions on what activities they want to participate in. Facilitators of similar programs could consider pooling their resources to provide more opportunities for people with disabilities to come together and enjoy a variety of experiences and activities and the opportunity to interact with new people (“About We all need friends campaign”, 2015).

Amigo Traits to Help Gain a More Beneficial Experience

The young adults benefit more from the advantages of the program if they are committed, motivated and willing to attend the events and meet new people (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 44). Likewise a valuable skill that organizers could help amigos develop is the ability to be an “asker” which is a person who asks others that they meet at events to get together outside of these events, allowing for new relationships to develop (Amado, 2013, p. 17). Some individuals will feel most comfortable building a relationship with facilitators or additional volunteers. This decision acts as both a barrier and enhancement of social inclusion as these individuals are still building new relationships in which they feel comfortable and have a sense of belonging and intimacy, but this prevents them from developing the meaningful relationships

that could occur with their amigos as the pairs are expected to spend more time together outside of group events (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 45).

Matching Process

Matching Based on Skills and Interests

Most facilitators consider skill level and similar interests of volunteers and amigos as this allows each person to contribute equally to the relationship, which is essential for a true friendship (Sense, 2015, p. 13). When there is an unbalance and one partner is always teaching the other then the relationship changes from one of mutual interest to one of obligation (Sense, 2015, p. 13). In addition, people with intellectual disabilities sometimes have trouble identifying their interests and thus a way to help them identify their interests can be by participating in new experiences (Amado, 2013, p. 26). Once interests are identified then pairs should attempt to locate clubs and groups that involve those interests or hobbies (Amado, 2013, p. 26).

Strategic Matching

Organizers of friending programs should try and pair people together whom they think will form positive relationships. Such as a shy person with an outgoing or popular person such that that person may act as a “gatekeeper” in helping the shy person participate more fully in activities and as a result expand their friendship circle (Sense, 2015, p. 11). Once a shy person becomes accepted by a group then they can begin to feel confident in sharing their unique gifts and abilities with others to help build new bonds (Sense, 2015, p. 12). Additionally, sometimes amigos and volunteers will naturally form relationships and in that case those individuals should become a pair (Sense, 2015, p. 11).

Choosing Activities

Pick Activities that Utilize Amigos Strengths

When possible, programs should attempt to find activities that require the specific strengths and skills of the individuals with intellectual disabilities (Amado, 2013, p. 31). Utilizing people's strengths to complete tasks can be a way to allow them to feel confident, express positive feelings of self-worth and encourage them to interact more in social situations (Amado, 2013, p. 31). Furthermore, highlighting people's strengths will help both partners to gain respect for each other and to help them see each other as equals. Additionally, utilizing individual's strengths and displaying them for others to see is an effective way to help individuals become more integrated within the community (Schleien, Brake, Miller & Walton, 2013, p. 220).

Consider Methods of Transportation

In choosing locations, methods of transportation to that area should be taken into account. If transportation is an issue for members of a pair they should use easily accessible locations such as public community spaces and common settings like parks, shopping malls and cinemas (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 39). This allows individuals to spend more time in their local area which is beneficial in assisting them begin to feel more connected to their communities (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 39). Therefore, when facilitators are undergoing program planning, it is essential that they consider young adults' access to reliable and available transportation, their experience and confidence in travelling using public transport on their own, and/or their level of reliance on family members for transportation (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 38).

Increasing Amigos Involvement in the Community

An additional goal of these programs could be to help the amigos expand their friendship circles, have places in the community they feel comfortable at unsupported and the possibility of new friends even after the program finishes. One way to complete this goal would be to encourage the pairs to join a club (Amado, 2013, p. 38). Methods to find clubs in the local area could be by going to the local Chamber of Commerce or city offices and requesting lists of groups in the local area (Amado, 2013, p. 38). One could also choose to become part of an informal group such as: a group of people at a nursing home that get together to play cards or quilting clubs (Amado, 2013, p. 38). In any group contemplated, an attempt should be made to only have one person with disabilities joining a group at a time so as not to overwhelm the group and so that the person with disabilities is forced in a way to interact with new people, not only the other people with disabilities (Amado, 2013, p. 38). Another similar option is urging the pairs to volunteer in the community by completing tasks that allows them to meet new people as this can be another great way to make new friends with similar interests (Amado, 2013, p. 40). Also, a pair should consider attending the same locations to allow individuals for a greater sense of belonging there and trying different locations when they want to try something new (Van Asselt, Buchanan, & Peterson, 2014, p. 38).

Research Question #2: How are other organizations and communities working with those who are facing barriers to inclusion, and who are over the age of 19? What are the best practices employed in similar mentoring programs?

Volunteer Recruitment

Traditional Methods

Volunteer recruitment and retainment is an area of great struggle and importance for the facilitators of friending programs. Current methods being utilized by the facilitators in locating volunteers included word of mouth, posters or other databases and clubs and groups' day at local universities and colleges (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Targeting Specific Locations and Audiences

Another brilliant idea currently utilized by the Stay Up Late program in volunteer recruitment is considering locations where people with specific interests and hobbies will spend their time (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). The specific interests that facilitators focus on is the interests and characteristics of the amigos on the wait list (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Then facilitators should promote their friending programs at these locations by hanging posters in places sure to gain the attention of people at these events such as in the washrooms or by talking to the group before their event begins. Some examples of venues that could be applicable include at music events or with local religious groups depending on the interests of the amigos (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Utilising Fundraising Events

Hosting fundraising events are effective methods at recruiting new volunteers as people who did not previously know about the programs may attend and become inspired to join (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017).

Volunteer Appraisal

Time Commitment Requirements

When meeting with new potential volunteers there are some characteristics that should be considered as they have been proven beneficial traits of volunteers in these programs. As these programs are attempting to help individuals build new friendships and since friendships need time to develop then volunteers will be asked to commit to a certain time period. Best Buddies at Trent University asks for at least an eight month commitment depending when people join the program as their volunteers are university students at Trent University and this is the length of a school year for students (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Whereas programs like the Stay Up Late program that utilize volunteers not entirely composed of students ask for a longer commitment of 18 months for the same reasons (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). If some volunteers cannot commit to the required amount of time or to a consistent time every week then it can be valuable to have some volunteers that can be called upon as needed for things like special events or instances when extra support is required for amigos (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Withdrawing from Ones Volunteer Commitment

Sometimes people need to drop out of the program once they have joined because of personal reasons (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). There is not much anyone can do to prevent that from happening other than ensuring upon sign up that volunteers understand that if they do drop out then they will disappoint their amigo and their amigo will probably not be able to pair with a new individual for the duration of this year of the program (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Volunteer Traits

Some characteristics that facilitators could consider when evaluating a volunteer for the program includes: are they kind, genuinely interested in sharing their time with someone, what are their hobbies and interests (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Additionally, are they effective communicators indicated by their ability to carry a conversation and respond to texts and emails from facilitators efficiently (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Volunteer Screening:

Documentation

In order for volunteers and amigos to be considered for a friending program they must provide the required documentation for safety and insurance purposes. Documentation required for both volunteers and amigos can include providing a list of medical issues and allergies, emergency contact information, application form including their interests and availability, release of information consent form, confidentiality consent form, references, police check with vulnerable sector screening, consent on a photo release form (Brailey, 2011 & Christa McCorquodale and Wanda Prince, personal communication, October 13, 2016 & L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017 & P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Sometimes someone has had a past offence and the facilitator can address this offence with the individual to decide whether or not it deems this individual unsafe for involvement in the program or not (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Volunteer Additional Documentation

Volunteers may be required to submit additional documentation such as proof of first aid training (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). As well as a pledge of confidentiality, which is a promise not to reveal private information about their amigo with other people, and a pledge of friendship, which is promising not to do drugs, drink alcohol or gamble while with their amigo (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). If the volunteer would like to use their car to transport their amigo then they will need to submit: proof of car insurance, a clean driver's abstract and a copy of their license (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017 & L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Information Gained in Entrance Interview

After the documents are submitted then for the Best Buddies program at Trent University an approximately 20 minute long interview will occur with the new volunteers (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). This interview will evaluate their comfort level when working with individuals with different intellectual disabilities, such as potentially working with an individual who is non-verbal (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Volunteer Training

Training Methods

Some training is required of the volunteers before they can be matched to an amigo and begin their involvement with the program. Training for the Friendly Visiting program is completed one-on-one with the facilitator and volunteer as it is tailored on a case by case basis

depending on the needs of the amigo and the situation (K. Frey, personal communication, February 28, 2017). On the other hand, training for the Best Buddies program at Trent University can take place in groups or one-on-one with the facilitator and can be considered more of an orientation as these volunteers are expected to be friends and friends do not need formal training to know their roles (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Similarly, the training for facilitators of the Adult Respite Fun Groups is a 3-4 hour inclusion workshop which they also view as more of an orientation to go over some key ideas and to get to know the facilitators better such as their likes and dislikes (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). In contrast, the Stay Up Late program utilizes a slightly longer orientation session for volunteers which is one day long and a group training session (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Another unique idea utilized by the Stay Up Late program is to have an individual with intellectual disabilities co-facilitate the volunteer training sessions as they bring a unique and valuable perspective to each of the aspects discussed (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Topics Discussed in Training

The initial training session for most organizations is used to provide an overview of the program, the agency and the role of the volunteer (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Training facilitators for the Adult Respite Fun Groups program includes a review of ways to deal with conflicts that may arise and methods that have worked in the past to deescalate them (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). This program also instructs the facilitators to allow their amigos as much independence as possible and to treat them like the adults that they are (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Moreover, in the Friendly Visiting program the volunteers are trained in the Accessibility for Ontarians with

Disability Act (K. Frey, personal communication, February 28, 2017).

Recruitment of Amigos

Contact Other Organizations Working with People with ID

Methods of amigo recruitment also need to be considered in order to locate individuals who could benefit from this type of program. Advertising the program on social media outlets such as Facebook is always a beneficial way to gain the attention of young adults. Other effective methods to recruit amigos includes: contacting other organizations that work with individuals with intellectual disabilities and gaining permission to promote your program to this population of individuals (A. Lee, personal communication, February 17, 2017). In Peterborough this could involve doing presentations with: the Electric City hockey team, the Kawartha Komets, Special Olympics, current graduates at local high schools and the Five-Counties Children's Centre. Furthermore, contacting any other local children's organizations would be useful as youth would be graduating from these programs and be in need of services (A. Lee, personal communication, February 17, 2017 & K. Brailey, personal communication, February 9, 2017). Additionally, organizers should contact the outcome facilitators at Community Living as it is their job to help their clients find opportunities to become more involved in the community (A. Lee, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Furthermore, the Stay Up Late program contacts social workers, support staff, parents and friends of individuals with disabilities who are already in the program to recruit more amigos (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Hosting Extra Events

To recruit new amigos the Creative Connections program hosts events in honour of the start of a new program or the new year of a program and invites the community to celebrate with them (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). They also hosting extra events during the year and invite the community to attend (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Overall, hosting extra events and inviting the community to be involved allows new people to hear about the program and gives individuals who want to experience the program before committing to it to have that opportunity (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017).

Facilitator Role

Support for Pairs

Facilitators of friending programs need to complete many diverse tasks to increase the probability of building successful bonds between pairs. One important task for the success of a pair is to support them in their first few weeks together as they are beginning to get to know each other (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Ongoing support and support in difficult situations is still necessary as it provides assistance in situations of conflict in order to resolve them and preserve the developing bond between the pair (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Stay Up Late provides ongoing support by having mandatory meetings every 6 months, to meet with volunteers one-on-one to discuss any issues and to resolve them (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Facilitators should have pairs report on the activities that they are completing. Then the facilitator should give the pairs feedback on their progress as this encourages the members of the pairs to stay motivated.

Likewise, when pairs receive positive feedback they then feel valued and appreciated (K. Brailey, personal communication, February 9, 2017).

Assisting Pairs Choose Activities

Organizers should urge the pairs to become more involved in the community through the activities they choose to complete and through the chosen group events (K. Brailey, personal communication, February 9, 2017). Programs should be amigo centered by allowing the amigo to decide what activities they want to do (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). The facilitators of the Adult Respite Fun Groups role are to organize the group events by budgeting, making reservations, ensuring everyone is safe and aware of any changes to the planned activities (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Facilitators of the Adult Respite Fun Groups work to ensure that the events are not overly expensive for the amigos who wish to attend as some amigos are on a fixed income and may not be able to attend unless the events are free or inexpensive (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Organizers can also assist pairs in finding local venues in their area that would be accessible for the amigo, are free or inexpensive and within their realm of interests (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Hiring Support Staff

Justification for Avoiding the Hiring of Support Staff

Whether or not to hire support staff is an important consideration for facilitators of friending programs. In speaking with Paul Richards, a facilitator of the Stay Up Late program in the UK, he noted important points to consider whether hiring support staff. The Stay Up Late program pairs individuals with intellectual disabilities with other members of the community

who then participate in activities together such as attending local music events, concerts or going clubbing. Paul Richards, when asked whether they would consider hiring support staff stated that “we think there is so much strength in having people in your lives who aren’t paid to be there, so we’ve kept it completely, deliberately unpaid” (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). In addition, the local Best Buddies program in Peterborough facilitated by Lauren Maudsley, prides itself on being a self-sufficient program and finds that it would be too expensive to hire support staff (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Alternative to Hiring Support Staff

Instead of hiring support workers for events the Best Buddies program at Trent University instead gathers more student event helpers to assist amigos in need of more attention at the events (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Matching Process

Characteristics to Consider When Forming Matches

The matching process utilized in these programs is the pairing of an individual with intellectual disabilities with a volunteer of the program based on criteria deemed important by the facilitator. Facilitators gain access to information used to make matches by asking the amigos and volunteers to complete questionnaires and asking specific questions in interviews with each person (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Some characteristics considered by the Stay Up Late program when completing the matching process are people’s geographic area, whether or not they possess the ability to navigate public transport with or without support, opportunity for the volunteer to drive and the sex, age, and sexuality of both individuals (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). For most agencies the

ultimate pairing consideration is whether or not the amigo likes their assigned partner (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). If the partnership is not satisfactory to one or both of the individuals in a pair then a facilitator should be contacted and the individuals re-matched (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Another factor to consider is the comfort level of the volunteer (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). In order to assess comfort some factors that an organizer should ask a new volunteer is whether they would be comfortable pairing with either a male or female, a person with intellectual and/or physical disabilities and individuals with limited to no verbal skills (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Matching Meetings

As the matching process is so complex and challenging some agencies have started to host matching meetings in which a team of employees spend time at a meeting looking at all data available on amigos and deciding together what possible pairings would result in potential bonds such that this process is not only one person's role (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Communication with People on the Wait List

If a program has gained popularity in an area, then there is potential for an extensive wait list to join the program to form. It is important to stay in contact with these people and communicate to them about their position on the wait list as time passes (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). This system can prevent people from feeling like they have been forgotten and help reassures them that the organizers are still working hard to help find them a match (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). One possible solution

would be to create a database that can help identify how long each individual has been on the waiting list (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Then use that information to decide where to advertise for more buddies to help get more buddies with the right set of characteristics signed up and joined with those individuals who have been on the waiting list the longest.

Engage People on Waitlist

Organizers of programs with long waitlists should attempt to host regular socials for people on the waiting list to help these people still feel engaged and invite the pairs already formed to attend as well allowing the pairs an opportunity to meet each other and talk about their experiences (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Choosing Events or Activities

When choosing activities for one-on-one interaction and group events some careful consideration of other factors that could benefit the amigo in those settings should be considered. Once buddies have been formed then they should first exchange contact information possibly through a contact exchange form that outlines an individual's contact information, availability, likes and dislikes and what their interested in doing with their time with their amigo (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Pairs should choose what they want to do together and therefore must pick activities that they can perform within their personal budget (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). The pairs should also focus on activities that both can perform on their own and choose locations that are accessible to both of their needs as this will allow them to maintain their independence and feel normal and accepted.

One can ensure a location is accessible to their amigo by calling the organization and asking about its accessibility features (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Research Question #3: How have other programs similar to HUI's current adult program evaluated their success?

Internal Evaluations throughout Course of Program

Evaluations can be used for a variety of purposes to gain information that can be important to the future of programs. During the facilitation of some programs, organizers contact amigos and volunteers to check in with them to ensure everything is working smoothly and people are enjoying the program (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017 & P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). At Stay Up Late these evaluations are performed over the phone or in person as interviews or as surveys at various times of the year such as at the 3, 6 and 12 month points in the relationship (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Another valuable method utilized by the Stay Up Late program is the hiring an individual with intellectual disabilities to work one day a week as a quality checker for the program (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). As a quality checker this individual's role would be to contact amigos in the program with intellectual disabilities to ensure they are enjoying the program and to discuss any issues they are currently experiencing with it (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). This has been a benefit for the Stay Up Late program as individuals are more willing to share information with a peer than with someone who is not a peer (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Internal Evaluations at the End of the Chapter of the Program

Evaluations can also be used in order to plan programs for the next chapter year. Facilitators of the Best Buddies program at Trent University commonly send out anonymous surveys at the end of the year to all amigos and ask what they liked, what they did not like and what events they want for next year (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Other assessments completed at the Stay up Late program are with the volunteers through running an extra meeting or an event and having an outside organization come in and obtain the volunteers' perspective on different aspects of their experience with the program.

External Evaluations

Organizations complete formal evaluations as well, which are performed by external bodies for various reasons including for grant applications such as for the national lottery (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). A formal evaluation of McKim House was completed and outlined the goals and objectives of the agency and the program and the perspectives from the community (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). In order to complete these assessments, the evaluators required concrete data of what occurs at the agency every week through documents provided by the facilitators and through interviews over the phone or in person with amigos and their families (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). They also sent out surveys to the volunteers and other staff members of the program and the board members of the agency (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Required records included written records from team meetings, planning sheets, written reports, board reports, and all other physical data available that they could draw from (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Ultimately, assessments can be tailored to evaluate specific areas of the program or the effects of the program on the community, which

again could be beneficial to include on future grant applications (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Research Question #4: How is the management of funding and expenses evaluated at programs similar to HUI's current adult program?

Funding

Traditional Funding Ideas

To ensure a program can continue long-term funding needs to be secured (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017). Different not-for-profit agencies gain access to their funding using different and typically multiple methods. Some utilize government grant applications while others apply for grants through other organizations such as the national lottery which sets aside a certain amount of the lottery money generated to be redistributed to charities (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Still others like the Creative Connections and Best Buddies program plan regular fundraising events such as monthly or annual events and receive donations to fund a large portion of their programs (J. Worster, personal communication, February 24, 2017 & L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Franchising Program Plans

The Stay Up Late program franchises their program concepts by helping other organizations set up their program ideas in their areas and then provide ongoing support to the new programs (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). The newly developed programs then pay a fee to the original program which helps keep it continuously funded (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Funding through Local Health Integrated Network

The Friendly Visiting program is funded by their local health integrated network, also called a LHIN, as this organization is facilitated by the Ministry of Health and their job is to fund local not-for-profit volunteer based agencies (K. Frey, personal communication, February 28, 2017).

Passport and Respite Funding

Adult Respite Fun Groups program is funded through passport or respite funding programs (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Respite dollars are funding provided by the Ontario government through the Ministry of Community and Social Services to organizations to provide to their clients who may be in need of extra financial support (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). It was originally created to help parents with children with intellectual disabilities in order to give them some support through an occasional break from caring for their child. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are also entitled to passport funding which is also provided by the government (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Overall, respite money can be used to enhance people's passport funding if it is not enough to cover costs (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Additionally, respite money can also be used towards supporting groups considered respite groups (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Budgeting

Budget Outline

Budgeting in the not-for-profit sector is essential for the running of programs to ensure all activities can be completed using the money currently available. The Best Buddies program at Trent University completes chapter budgets that outline all activities that they want to host that

year, how much they each cost and approximately how more funding they will require based on how much they plan to make at their fundraising events (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). Other programs such as the Stay Up Late program also sets aside money in their budgets for reimbursement of the volunteers (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Although, most programs interviewed expect the persons with intellectual disabilities to pay for themselves in the activities they participate in (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017 & L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017 & P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). These agencies believe this method makes sense because when individuals get together with friends they need to pay for themselves (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Other agencies such as the Best Buddies program at Trent University utilize this same principle applied to both the volunteers and participants and therefore do not reimburse either group (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). In contrast, for low income amigos in the Friendly Visiting and Adult Respite Fun Groups programs there are attempts made to connect them with more funding to help pay for activities with their partner (K. Frey, personal communication, February 28, 2017 & B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Reimbursement Methods

Reimbursement of volunteers typically covers costs for expenses generated through one-on-one outings for the pairs such as: on transport, car mileage, cost of an entry ticket to an event or for food or drinks at events (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Generally, budgets per pair provided by the organizing agency is modest such as 10 pounds or \$30 a month to cover approximately 6-8 hours per month of one-on-one time spent between the pair (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017 & Brailey, 2011). This helps to

encourage the pair to find free or inexpensive events to participate in, which can really benefit individuals with intellectual disabilities who may be working within a tight budgeted income.

Cost Saving Methods for Pairs

The Best Buddies program attempts to keep costs low for members of the program by hosting free or inexpensive group events by instead using program money generated through fundraising events (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). At Stay Up Late facilitators help keep costs down by creating contacts at local venues in order to attempt to receive free or subsidized tickets to events for members of their programs (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). Some venues are willing to give free tickets on a regular basis as they feel including people with disabilities in their audiences helps to diversify them and therefore is a mutually beneficial act (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017).

Research Question #5: How do other similar programs compare to what is planned for the HUI adult program?

Recommendations for Improvement of the *Amigos in the Community* Program

Best Practices of <i>Amigos in the Community</i> Program	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>General Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not discriminate people from joining the program based on race, gender, ethnicity, geography excreta • As a facilitator anticipate potential issues with accountability and commitment and avoid them by supporting the pairs and helping them to see the negative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young adults with ID are currently not receiving enough attention and support from social service initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ So these friending programs could be used to connect them with additional applicable services in the community

consequences of their actions	
<p>Volunteer Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Word of mouth ○ People viewing agency websites and becoming interested ○ Posters ○ Clubs and groups day at local universities and colleges • Method of recruitment in Peterborough specifically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At Trent University and Fleming College <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend and promote program at student job fairs and job boards ▪ Contact different department heads at the schools to gain permission to present about the program to specific applicable classes of students ▪ Programs already deemed applicable at Fleming College include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Service Worker • Police Foundations • Recreation and Leisure • Educational Assistant • Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertisements on social media such as making a Facebook page about the program ○ Volunteer positions on student job boards or other databases ○ Identifying specific locations where the type of people you want, based on the interest and characteristics of the amigos, will spend their free time and promote program their by hanging posters in the washrooms or talking to the group before their event begins. ○ Contact local employment agencies and gain permission to advertise their with posters and promotions to their clients about the program highlighting that is an opportunity to gain experience in their field ○ Internet postings on local volunteer websites such as the Four Info website or websites like Kijiji ○ Making an application process available on the agencies website ○ Hosting fundraising events to introduce more people to the program ○ Have a press release on a successful aspect of program • Gain permission to advertise with posters

<p style="text-align: center;">Assistant programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present similarly to local current high school graduating classes 	<p>throughout the school year and send out mass emails to students about the program at the local universities, colleges and high schools</p>
<p>Volunteer Appraisal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for at least an 8 month commitment from volunteers (length of a school year for students) • Ensure volunteers genuinely want to spend time with amigos and understand that if they drop out then they will disappoint their amigo and their amigo will probably not gain a new partner for the duration of this chapter of the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For volunteers who cannot commit for 8 months then allow them to help with special events or instances when extra support is required for amigos • Characteristics to consider in potential connectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are they kind ○ Genuinely interested in sharing their time with someone ○ What are their hobbies/interests ○ Are they effective communicators ie can they carry a conversation and respond to texts and emails from facilitators efficiently
<p>Volunteer and Amigo Screening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation required from both volunteers and amigos should include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A list of medical issues and allergies ○ Emergency contact information ○ Application form including their interests and availability ○ Release of information consent form ○ Confidentiality consent form ○ References 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Documentation required for volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proof of first aid training ○ Pledge of Confidentiality → do not reveal private information about amigo to others ○ Pledge of Friendship → promising not to do drugs, drink alcohol or gamble while with their amigo

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Police check with vulnerable sector screening ○ Consent on a photo release form ● Volunteer extra documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If driving amigo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proof of car insurance ▪ A clean driver's abstract ▪ A copy of their license ● Identify comfort level of volunteers when working with individuals with different intellectual disabilities through interviews ● Amigos extra documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ diagnosis of intellectual disability ○ indication of potential triggers ● Then interview with facilitator to further consider them for the program 	
<p>Volunteer Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide overview of program, agency and role of the volunteer ● Review ways to deal with conflicts that may arise ● Facilitator should discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Acceptable behavior ○ Development of intimate relationships between members of a pair ○ What to do in case of a serious situation ○ Giving or lending money ○ Requirement for regular reports to the coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can be tailored to each volunteer based on the needs of their partner ● Can take place in groups or one-on-one with a facilitator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can have an individual with intellectual disabilities co-facilitates the training sessions bringing a unique and valuable perspective to each of the aspects discussed ● Discuss attributes that make a good connector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focusing on the amigos gifts and how they can use those gifts to contribute to

	<p>the relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Think of opportunities instead of limitations when choosing activities ○ When discussing activities to do consider what type of people you could possibly interact with in those scenarios ● Instruct volunteers to allow their amigos as much independence as possible and treat them like the adults that they are ● Teach or give advice to volunteers on effective methods of communication with their amigos ● Reinforce the importance of a long-term relationship with amigo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationship needs time to develop and needs time be worthwhile
<p>Recruitment of Amigos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To gain more amigo's in Peterborough contact the outcome facilitators at Community Living as it is their job to help their clients find opportunities to become more involved in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact other organizations that work with individuals with intellectual disabilities and gain permission to promote your program to this population of individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Peterborough this could involve doing presentations with the electric city hockey team, the Kawartha Comets, Special Olympics, current graduates at local high schools, the Five-Counties Children's Center and any other children's organizations as youth would be graduating from their programs and be in need of services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact social workers, support staff, parents and friends of individuals with disabilities who are already in the program • Host events in honour of the start of a new program or the new year of a program and inviting the community to celebrate with them • Advertise on social media outlets such as Facebook • Host extra events during the year and invite the community to attend → allows individuals who want to experience the program before committing to it that opportunity
<p>Facilitator Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support pairs in their first few weeks together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Then provide ongoing support and support in difficult situations for the pairs • Get advice from support staff on how to adjust an activity for each individual with disabilities • Allow amigos to decide what activities they want to do in the programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitator's organize the group events by budgeting, making reservations, making sure everyone is safe and aware of any changes to that events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for pairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If either or both amigos have a mental health issue then facilitator can meet with them to determine situations they both feel comfortable in and which ones they do not <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Then assist the pair in identifying events or locations that both feel comfortable and safe attending ○ Can have mandatory meetings after a certain amount of time, such as every 6 months, to meet with volunteers one-on-one to discuss any issues and to resolve them

<p>activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attempt to host events that are free or inexpensive for amigos ● Assist pairs if required in finding local venues in their area that would be accessible for the amigo, free or inexpensive and within their realm of interests ● Encourage amigos to honestly share their opinions on what activities they want to participate in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Require pairs to report on the activities that they are completing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Then facilitator provides pairs feedback on their progress to encourages pairs to stay motivated as they are held accountable to someone ○ Positive feedback from facilitators help pairs feel valued and appreciated ● Urge the pairs to become more involved in the community ● Pool resources with other local agencies to provide more opportunities for disabled people to come together and enjoy a variety of experiences, activities and opportunities meet new people ● Help amigos learn to be an “asker” → someone who asks others to get together allowing for new relationships to develop ● Choose events that will allow amigos to interact with the same people in a meaningful way on a regular basis in order to build new relationships
<p>Hiring Support Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If an individual decides they need a support worker then typically they will provide that themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some organizations do not want paid staff to attend their events at all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instead of hiring support staff consider gathering more volunteer’s as event helpers to assist amigos in need of one-to-one attention ○ Benefits of bringing in extra volunteers

	<p>for extra support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expanding a amigo’s social network by helping them build new relationships with other volunteers ▪ Allows additional members of the community to participate in the programs and potentially take on greater roles in the future ▪ Volunteers learn about the gifts and abilities of people with intellectual disabilities which can help decrease the stigma in the community making a more inclusive community.
<p>Matching Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data on amigos and volunteers by getting them to complete questionnaires and by asking specific questions in interviews with them • Factors to consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interests ○ Sex ○ Age ○ Consider the comfort level of the volunteer → assess by asking if they are comfortable with either male or female, a person with intellectual and/or physical disabilities and individuals with limited to no verbal skills • The ultimate pairing consideration is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors to consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Skill level → allows for equal contribution to relationship in these areas ○ Geographic area → where do they live ○ Ability to navigate public transport with or without support ○ Does the volunteer drive ○ Sexuality • When an individual has difficulty identifying their interests participate in new experiences to help them identify them • Host matching meetings → team of individuals spend time at a meeting looking at all data available on amigos and deciding together the pairings

<p>whether or not the amigo likes their assigned partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can re-matched individuals if either partner is not happy in the relationship • Pair a shy person with an outgoing person such that the outgoing person can help the shy person participate more fully in activities and as a result expand their friendship circle • When natural relationships form keep those individuals together • When facilitators locate an ideal match arrange a meeting between the members of the potential pair, help them choose their first event and then let them build the relationship themselves from their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host regular socials for people on the waiting lists to help them still feel engaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can invite the pairs already formed to attend as well allowing the pairs an opportunity to meet and talk about their experiences
<p>Communication with People on the Wait List</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in contact with these people on waitlist and communicate to them their position on the list as time passes • Could create a database that can help identify how long each individual has been on the waiting list • Use this information to decide where to advertise for more partners based on characteristics of individuals who have been on the wait list the longest
<p>Choosing Events or Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First have pairs exchange contact information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First have pairs exchange contact information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pairs should pick activities that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They can perform within their personal budget ○ Both can perform on their own ○ At locations that are accessible → can call or visit location to ensure it is accessible for amigo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could be through a contact exchange form that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual's contact information ▪ Availability ▪ Likes and dislikes ▪ What their interested in doing with their time with their amigo • Pairs should pick activities that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attempt to find activities that require the specific strengths and skills of the individuals with intellectual disabilities • Consider methods of transportation to locations chosen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If transportation is an issue for members of the pair consider easily accessible locations such as public community spaces and common settings like parks, shopping malls and cinemas • Attempt to use the pair's time together to help expand the social networks of people with intellectual disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can complete this goal by locating places that are welcoming to both members of a pair and places where an individual with intellectual disabilities could participate in on their own ○ Encourage pairs to join a club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methods to find clubs in the local area could be by going to the local Chamber of Commerce or city
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	<p>offices and requesting lists of groups in the local area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Or become part of an informal group such as a group of people at a nursing home that get together to play cards or quilting clubs ▪ Only have one person with disabilities joining a group at a time so as not to over whelm the group and so that the person with disabilities is forced in a way to interact with new people not only the other people with disabilities ▪ Or pairs could volunteer in the community as another great way to make new friends with similar interests
<p>Evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the facilitation of program organizers can contact amigos and volunteers to check in with them to ensure everything is working smoothly and people are enjoying the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations can be performed using interviews or surveys at various times of the year such as at the 3, 6 and 12 month point in the relationship • Could hire an individual with intellectual disabilities to work or volunteer as a quality checker for the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A quality checker would contact amigos in the program with intellectual disabilities to ensure they are enjoying it and to discuss any issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefits the program as people are more willing to share information with a peer then with someone who

	<p>is not a peer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Contact local school or employment agencies or any other agencies that work with people with ID and see if there is a required amount of volunteer hours or placements required for individuals with disabilities and hire them on for their allotted time to be quality checkers• Assessments can be used to plan programs for the next year<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Can send out anonymous surveys at the end of the year to all amigos and ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What they liked▪ What they disliked▪ What events they want to see for next year• Can run an extra meeting or event just with volunteers and have an outside organization come in and gather data on the volunteers perspective on different aspects of their experience with the program• Can complete formal evaluations with external agencies<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ For different reasons including required or beneficial on some grant applications such as for the national lottery• In these evaluations goals and objectives
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	<p>of the agency and program and perspectives from the community can be gathered and considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluators may also require concrete data including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Written records from team meetings, planning sheets, written reports, board reports, and all other physical data available ○ Through interviews with amigos and their families ○ Data from surveys completed by volunteers, staff members of the program and the board members of the agency • Assessments can be tailored to evaluate specific areas of the program or even to evaluate the outcomes and effects on the community that a program has, which again could be beneficial on future grant applications.
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Elaborated Recommendation Ideas

Potential Funding through Local LHIN

Most not-for-profit agencies struggle with attaining new funding continuously to allow for the continuation of their offered programs. One method of new funding that could be utilized by the HUI program is through contact with the local Peterborough LHIN, which is the local health integrated network, through the Ministry of Health as they provide funding for local not-

for-profit volunteer based agencies (K. Frey, personal communication, February 28, 2017). One idea could be for HUI to present evidence through a formal evaluation focusing on an audience of clinicians and government staff that this program is beneficial to people's physical and mental health as it reduces social isolation. This evaluation could also show how this program has increased amigos happiness and activity which has reduced the strain they put or could in the future put on the health care system (P. Richards, personal communication, January 27, 2017). This evaluation could also be used in other grant applications as it shows the positive impact of the program on the community.

Possibility of Becoming a Transfer Payment Agency

Another funding body to consider is passport and respite funding both provided by the government. The question is whether or not HUI as an organization could become a transfer payment agency and therefore a location that people can use their passport funding at. Likewise, respite money can also go towards the respite fun groups so HUI could consider the requirements to become a respite fun group and determine if that is possible within the confines of their pre-existing program plans (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Pooling Resources between Local Programs

Facilitators should consider pooling resources to have group events with other programs completing similar work as this can decrease the funding required to host events and allow the individuals in the programs to expand their networks and meet new people from different programs. This is also an effective way to introduce individuals to other programs in their area that they may be interested in being a part of. Some organizations that Heads Up For Inclusion could consider collaborating with for events include the Best Buddies programs at Trent University and Fleming College, the Kawartha Komets, the Challenger Baseball leagues, Electric

city hockey team, and Special Olympics. The facilitators could also consider organizing an event in which the pairs of the *Amigos in the Community* program attend one of the sporting events hosted by one of these other agencies. This would be beneficial for both programs as it could be a cheap and fun event for the pairs and a method of support and encouragement to athletes with intellectual disabilities.

Discussion

Need to Connect Young Adults with ID with More Services

The social support provided to young adults with IDs are either adult supports which are not always appropriate for them or they receive minimal assistance. There appears to be a lack of supports for transitional aged youth (A. Lee, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Therefore, there is a need to connect young adults with ID with more services that can benefit them such as these friending programs; but these friending programs could also be used to connect them with more applicable services in the community. Some ideas posed in this research report for connecting young adults with ID with more services is social support services that can help provide them with their basic needs and hopefully additional funding to allow them to complete inexpensive activities with their partners. Another idea mentioned throughout this paper is the need to use this program to help amigos connect to more people in the community. By becoming more connected to the community allows amigos to have additional friends and locations they feel comfortable at which they can visit outside of their involvement with the program.

Conflict Prevention and Treatment of Members of the Program

Since volunteers and amigos will be between the ages of 19-30 years old then the facilitators should anticipate potential issues with accountability and commitment from members of these pairs. A facilitator should try to avoid these conflicts by supporting the pairs and helping them to see the negative consequences to their relationships when either or both individuals are not reliable and dedicated to their partner (K. Brailey, personal communication, February 9, 2017). Furthermore, in the past, adults with intellectual disabilities were treated like children; however, nowadays there is consensus that “Adults, no matter their cognitive ability, should be treated like adults” in all contexts (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). This approach encourages individuals with intellectual disabilities to empower themselves to begin

their transition into adulthood to gain the independence that many desire (B. Sauder, personal communication, February 22, 2017). By treating all members like the adults they are with the expectations that they will behave as adults is another potential way to avoid conflicts with accountability and commitment from these young adults. Examples of ways to treat them like adults could be through asking their opinion on what activities they want to participate in, letting them help plan and organize the logistics of the activity and navigate their transportation to the event. Then at the end of the program chapter ask for their opinion on methods of improvement of the program for future chapters.

Potential Benefits of Fundraising Events

For starters, fundraising events are a great way to raise money to help pay for the costs of running programs. Next, for friending programs fundraising events can be another opportunity for pairs to interact and build their relationship. As well, if more students or community members volunteer to provide assistance at these events instead of hiring support staff then the amigos social network can be expanded through their interaction with these other volunteers (L. Maudsley, personal communication, February 22, 2017). This method of support also allows additional members of the community to participate in the programs and potentially take on greater roles in the future either as volunteers or amigos, expanding the program. Likewise, event volunteers will learn about the gifts and abilities of people with intellectual disabilities which can help decrease the stigma in the community made about them and hopefully result in a more inclusive community.

Benefits of Matching Meetings

By hosting matching meetings then the pressure of forming the pairs is no longer one person's duty and therefore can decrease the burnout rate for a person in this position. Matching meetings also result in more beneficial bond formation as these meetings are a method to pool the knowledge of each individual who applies their own experiences to help decide what characteristics pair together effectively to create the best bonds.

Maintaining Relationships through Technology and Social Media

Relationships can end between members of a pair for many different reasons. Some common explanations for the termination of a relationship is one or both members of the program no longer has the time to dedicate to the program or they move away. These are both valid reasons as to why individuals can no longer meet in person or as often as they used to as part of the program. But, the possibility is still present for the relationship to exist in a different format. The easiest and fastest way to communicate and keep in contact with people in today's world is through the use of technology such as social media. Therefore, friendships that would have been terminated due to someone moving away can continue by talking on the phone or via skype, texting on a cellular device or messaging by being friends on social media outlets like Facebook. Even if the relationship had to be terminated due to lack of time to maintain it simply being friends on a website like Facebook allows pairs to keep track of what the other is up to from time to time and message each other when time is available such that the pair still maintain some contact and the benefits of their friendship. Through encouraging pairs to utilize these methods when a relationship previously would have been terminated can result in much longer relationships and therefore increase the benefits of the relationship for both members of the pair.

Tailor Volunteer Recruitment Methods

A method for volunteer recruitment completed by the program Stay Up Late that was previously discussed was considering hobbies and interests of amigos on the wait list and using those to dictate locations to advertise the program to gain volunteers with these same interests. This method benefits the programs as it could diversity the members of their program and advertise to groups of people that may have been missed with all other advertising methods used previously as they were not tailored to this audience. This is a great advertising tool to help make more members of the community aware of the program which can help expand the program but also make other initiatives such as fundraisers more successful. Ultimately, through tailoring the search for new volunteers to the pre-existing interests of the amigos they are to be paired with could allow for the creation of better bonds.

Final Thoughts

Overall, more funding needs to be allocated to these types of friending programs as they are very rare in Canada which became evident through the attempt to locate them for this research study. In addition, many of the best practices identified through this study were present in the current *Amigo's in the Community* program which indicates that many of these types of programs work on a similar model. Furthermore, this study helped identify that much can be learned through contacting organizations from other countries to learn from their programs. In this investigation an organization from England was interviewed and demonstrated their overall advancement in this field when compared with the current practices of most organizations with similar goals in Canada.

Recommendations for Future Research

Areas identified for future research based on the findings of this study include the need for a formal evaluation of the *Amigo's in the Community* program offered at Heads Up For Inclusion from the perspective of the programs overall effects on the community. Another area of research building from this study would be having a researcher conduct interviews or create and distribute surveys to volunteers and amigos of the program and similar programs to obtain the perspectives from members of the program. The researcher could also complete an evaluation of Peterborough by investigating what the barriers to inclusion are for young adults in Peterborough. This evaluation could include identifying accessibility barriers and the stigma that is currently present in the Peterborough community about people with intellectual disabilities. Then the researcher could create recommendations on methods to decrease these beliefs in the community to allow for greater social inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Another potential study could investigate the accessibility of Peterborough businesses and help to identify what locations are inaccessible for people with disabilities and then research methods on how to make them accessible. Additionally, as Heads Up For Inclusion is looking to expand their services offered by the *Amigo's in the Community* program to other minority groups such as newcomers to Canada, individuals with mental health issues, and individuals in the LGBTQ+ community, then research could be done on how to recruit these other groups to the program. Likewise, a researcher could adjust the best practices guide presented in this study to better fit the needs of these new groups and identify new funding bodies accessible through the expansion of this program.

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Appendix A - Best Practices Guide

General Considerations

- Do not discriminate people from joining the program based on race, gender, ethnicity, geography excreta
- “Adults, no matter their cognitive ability, should be treated like adults” in all contexts
- Young adults with ID are currently not receiving enough attention and support from social service initiatives
 - So these friending programs could be used to connect them with additional applicable services in the community
- These programs are learning experiences for both the volunteers and amigos as the pairs learn the importance of accountability and commitment
 - As a facilitator one may anticipate potential issues in these areas and try to avoid them by supporting the pairs and helping them to see the negative consequences of their actions
- These programs need to emphasis people’s gifts and unique value to help in creating a more compassionate and inclusive society

Volunteer Recruitment

- Methods of recruitment
 - Word of mouth
 - People viewing agency websites and becoming interested
 - Advertisements on social media such as making a Facebook page about the program
 - Posters
 - Volunteer positions on student job boards or other databases
 - Clubs and groups day at local universities and colleges
 - Identifying specific locations where the type of people you want, based on the interest and characteristics of the amigos, will spend their free time and promote program their by hanging posters in the washrooms or talking to the group before their event begins.
 - Contact local employment agencies and gain permission to advertise their with posters and promotions to their clients about the program highlighting that is an opportunity to gain experience in their field

- Internet postings on local volunteer websites such as the Four Info website or websites like Kijiji
- Making an application process available on the agencies website
- Hosting fundraising events to introduce more people to the program
- Have a press release on a successful aspect of program
- Method of recruitment in Peterborough specifically
 - At Trent University and Fleming College
 - Attend and promote program at student job fairs and job boards
 - Contact different department heads at the schools to gain permission to present about the program to specific applicable classes of students
 - Programs already deemed applicable at Fleming College include
 - Social Service Worker
 - Police Foundations
 - Recreation and Leisure
 - Educational Assistant
 - Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist Assistant programs
- Present similarly to local current high school graduating classes
- Gain permission to advertise with posters throughout the school and send out mass emails to students about the program

Volunteer Appraisal

- Ask for at least an 8 month commitment from volunteers (length of a school year for students)
- Ensure volunteers genuinely want to spend time with amigos and understand that if they drop out then they will disappoint their amigo and their amigo will probably not gain a new partner for the duration of this chapter of the program
- For volunteers who cannot commit for 8 months then allow them to help with special events or instances when extra support is required for amigos
- Characteristics that may make a good connector

- Are they kind
- Genuinely interested in sharing their time with someone
- What are their hobbies/interests
- Are they effective communicators ie can they carry a conversation and respond to texts and emails from facilitators efficiently

Volunteer and Amigo Screening:

- Documentation required from both volunteers and amigos should include
 - A list of medical issues and allergies
 - Emergency contact information
 - Application form including their interests and availability
 - Release of information consent form
 - Confidentiality consent form
 - References
 - Police check with vulnerable sector screening
 - Consent on a photo release form
- Volunteer extra documentation
 - Proof of first aid training
 - Pledge of Confidentiality → do not reveal private information about amigo to others
 - Pledge of Friendship → promising not to do drugs, drink alcohol or gamble while with their amigo
 - If driving amigo
 - Proof of car insurance
 - A clean driver's abstract
 - A copy of their license
- Identify comfort level of volunteers when working with individuals with different intellectual disabilities through interviews
- Amigos extra documentation
 - diagnosis of intellectual disability
 - indication of potential triggers
- Then interview with facilitator to further consider them for the program

Volunteer Training

- Can be tailored to each volunteer based on the needs of their partner
- Can take place in groups or one-on-one with a facilitator
- Can have an individual with intellectual disabilities co-facilitates the training sessions bringing a unique and valuable perspective to each of the aspects discussed
- Provide overview of program, agency and role of the volunteer
- Review ways to deal with conflicts that may arise
- Discuss attributes that make a good connector
 - Focusing on the amigos gifts and how they can use those gifts to contribute to the relationship
 - Think of opportunities instead of limitations when choosing activities
 - When discussing activities to do consider what type of people you could possibly interact with in those scenarios
- Instruct volunteers to allow their amigos as much independence as possible and treat them like the adults that they are
- Teach or give advice to volunteers on effective methods of communication with their amigos
- Reinforce the importance of a long-term relationship with amigo
 - Relationship needs time to develop and needs time be worthwhile
- Facilitator should discuss
 - Acceptable behavior
 - Development of intimate relationships between members of a pair
 - What to do in case of a serious situation
 - Giving or lending money
 - Requirement for regular reports to the coordinator
 - The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Recruitment of Amigos

- Contact other organizations that work with individuals with intellectual disabilities and gain permission to promote your program to this population of individuals

- In Peterborough this could involve doing presentations with the electric city hockey team, the Kawartha Comets, Special Olympics, current graduates at local high schools, the Five-Counties Children's Center and any other children's organizations as youth would be graduating from their programs and be in need of services
- Facilitators in Peterborough should contact the outcome facilitators at Community Living as it is their job to help their clients find opportunities to become more involved in the community (A. Lee, personal communication, February 17, 2017).
- Contact social workers, support staff, parents and friends of individuals with disabilities who are already in the program
- Host events in honour of the start of a new program or the new year of a program and inviting the community to celebrate with them
- Advertise on social media outlets such as Facebook
- Host extra events during the year and invite the community to attend → allows individuals who want to experience the program before committing to it that opportunity

Amigo involvement

- Amigos with intellectual disabilities should help in choosing the pair activities as they then can choose activities that they deem interesting or meaningful and potentially gain a role in their community through their involvement.
 - Helps people with ID identify new interests and what activities and locations in the community interest them most and increase their social inclusion at those locations
- Amigos will benefit from these programs if they are committed, motivated and willing to attend the events and meet new people
- For amigos struggling to acquire basic needs first help them connect with local services in the community to meet those needs then help them join the program

Facilitator Role

- Support pairs in their first few weeks together
 - Then provide ongoing support and support in difficult situations for the pairs

- If either or both amigos have a mental health issue then facilitator can meet with them to determine situations they both feel comfortable in and which ones they do not
 - Then assist the pair in identifying events or locations that both feel comfortable and safe attending
- Can have mandatory meetings after a certain amount of time, such as every 6 months, to meet with volunteers one-on-one to discuss any issues and to resolve them
- Require pairs to report on the activities that they are completing
 - Then facilitator provides pairs feedback on their progress to encourages pairs to stay motivated as they are held accountable to someone
 - Positive feedback from facilitators help pairs feel valued and appreciated
- Urge the pairs to become more involved in the community
- Pool resources with other local agencies to provide more opportunities for disabled people to come together and enjoy a variety of experiences, activities and opportunities meet new people
- Get advice from support staff on how to adjust an activity for each individual with disabilities
- Allow amigos to decide what activities they want to do in the programs
 - Facilitator's organize the group events by budgeting, making reservations, making sure everyone is safe and aware of any changes to that events activities
 - Attempt to host events that are free or inexpensive for amigos
- Assist pairs if required in finding local venues in their area that would be accessible for the amigo, free or inexpensive and within their realm of interests
- Encourage amigos to honestly share their opinions on what activities they want to participate in
- Help amigos learn to be an “asker” → someone who asks others to get together allowing for new relationships to develop
- Choose events that will allow amigos to interact with the same people in a meaningful way on a regular basis in order to build new relationships

Hiring Support Staff

- Some organizations do not want paid staff to attend their events at all
 - Instead of hiring support staff consider gathering more volunteer's as event helpers to assist amigos in need of one-to-one attention
 - Benefits of bringing in extra volunteers for extra support include:
 - Expanding a amigo's social network by helping them build new relationships with other volunteers
 - Allows additional members of the community to participate in the programs and potentially take on greater roles in the future
 - Volunteers learn about the gifts and abilities of people with intellectual disabilities which can help decrease the stigma in the community making a more inclusive community.
- If an individual decides they need a support worker then typically they will provide that themselves

Matching Process

- Gather data on amigos and volunteers by getting them to complete questionnaires and by asking specific questions in interviews with them
- Factors to consider
 - Skill level → allows for equal contribution to relationship in these areas
 - Interests
 - Geographic area → where do they live
 - Ability to navigate public transport with or without support
 - Does the volunteer drive
 - Sex
 - Age
 - Sexuality
 - Consider the comfort level of the volunteer → assess by asking if they are comfortable with either male or female, a person with intellectual and/or physical disabilities and individuals with limited to no verbal skills
- When an individual has difficulty identifying their interests participate in new experiences to help them identify them

- The ultimate pairing consideration is whether or not the amigo likes their assigned partner
- Can re-matched individuals if either partner is not happy in the relationship
- Pair a shy person with an outgoing person such that the outgoing person can help the shy person participate more fully in activities and as a result expand their friendship circle
- When natural relationships form keep those individuals together
- Host matching meetings → team of individuals spend time at a meeting looking at all data available on amigos and deciding together the pairings
- When facilitators locate an ideal match arrange a meeting between the members of the potential pair, help them choose their first event and then let them build the relationship themselves from their
- Host regular socials for people on the waiting lists to help them still feel engaged
 - Can invite the pairs already formed to attend as well allowing the pairs an opportunity to meet and talk about their experiences

Communication with People on the Wait List

- Stay in contact with these people on waitlist and communicate to them their position on the list as time passes
- Could create a database that can help identify how long each individual has been on the waiting list
 - Use this information to decide where to advertise for more partners based on characteristics of individuals who have been on the wait list the longest

Choosing Events or Activities

- First have pairs exchange contact information
 - Could be through a contact exchange form that includes:
 - Individual's contact information
 - Availability
 - Likes and dislikes
 - What their interested in doing with their time with their amigo
- Pairs should pick activities that

- They can perform within their personal budget
- Both can perform on their own
- At locations that are accessible → can call or visit location to ensure it is accessible for amigo
- Attempt to find activities that require the specific strengths and skills of the individuals with intellectual disabilities
- Consider methods of transportation to locations chosen
 - If transportation is an issue for members of the pair consider easily accessible locations such as public community spaces and common settings like parks, shopping malls and cinemas
- Attempt to use the pair's time together to help expand the social networks of people with intellectual disabilities
 - Can complete this goal by locating places that are welcoming to both members of a pair and places where an individual with intellectual disabilities could participate in on their own
 - Encourage pairs to join a club
 - Methods to find clubs in the local area could be by going to the local Chamber of Commerce or city offices and requesting lists of groups in the local area
 - Or become part of an informal group such as a group of people at a nursing home that get together to play cards or quilting clubs
 - Only have one person with disabilities joining a group at a time so as not to overwhelm the group and so that the person with disabilities is forced in a way to interact with new people not only the other people with disabilities
 - Or pairs could volunteer in the community as another great way to make new friends with similar interests

Evaluations

- During the facilitation of program organizers can contact amigos and volunteers to check in with them to ensure everything is working smoothly and people are enjoying the program
- Evaluations can be performed using interviews or surveys at various times of the year such as at the 3, 6 and 12 month point in the relationship

- Could hire an individual with intellectual disabilities to work or volunteer as a quality checker for the program
 - A quality checker would contact amigos in the program with intellectual disabilities to ensure they are enjoying it and to discuss any issues
 - Benefits the program as people are more willing to share information with a peer than with someone who is not a peer
- Assessments can be used to plan programs for the next year
 - Can send out anonymous surveys at the end of the year to all amigos and ask:
 - What they liked
 - What they disliked
 - What events they want to see for next year
- Can run an extra meeting or event just with volunteers and have an outside organization come in and gather data on the volunteers perspective on different aspects of their experience with the program
- Can complete formal evaluations with external agencies
 - For different reasons including required or beneficial on some grant applications such as for the national lottery
- In these evaluations goals and objectives of the agency and program and perspectives from the community can be gathered and considered
- Evaluators may also require concrete data including
 - Written records from team meetings, planning sheets, written reports, board reports, and all other physical data available
 - Through interviews with amigos and their families
 - Data from surveys completed by volunteers, staff members of the program and the board members of the agency
- Assessments can be tailored to evaluate specific areas of the program or even to evaluate the outcomes and effects on the community that a program has, which again could be beneficial on future grant applications.

Appendix B - Interview Questions

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?
2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?
3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)
4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
5. What do you see as the strengths of your program?
6. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
7. Do you provide volunteers with training?
 - a. What is the nature of this training?
 - b. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
8. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
 - a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding is available?
 - f. Typically how long do pairings last?
 - g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
9. How is your program funded?
10. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
 - a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?

- a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?
12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

Adjusted Interview Questions for Anna Lee and Krista Brailey solely based on their past interaction with the HUI organization as part of the original Amigo's in the Community Program

1. I am talking to you today because of your past involvement with the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. Could you give me a quick summary of your past involvement with the program?
2. How did you recruit volunteers for the Amigo's in the Community Program? Amigos?
3. When did the Amigos in the Community program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)
4. Did you have a guiding philosophy behind the program?
5. What do you see as the strengths of the program?
6. Did you face accessibility issues with events you organised, how did you address these?
 - a. Did you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could have arisen when you would have considered it?
7. Did you provide volunteers with training?
 - a. What was the nature of this training?
 - b. Did you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
8. How did you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
 - a. Was this based on shared interests?
 - b. Did you give the pairings a budget?
 - c. Was this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What was the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Was there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding was available?
 - f. Typically how long did pairings last?
 - g. Did you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?

9. How was your program funded?
10. Did you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
 - a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with the Amigos in the Community program?
 - a. What would you have liked to improve, how would you have addressed these challenges?
12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

Appendix C - Transcriptions

Interviewed Ben Sauder Facilitator of Adult Respite Fun Groups Offered at Extend-a-Family In Waterloo Region on February 22

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?
 - Adult respite fun groups
 - High functioning individuals don't always need a one-to-one facilitator
 - Therefore decided to pool their funding only have 2 facilitators and use the money to instead attend cool events in the community
 - Amigo driven → contribute ideas for the events
 - Facilitators make sure things don't cost a lot
 - Such as do some low cost things during the week and a few things that cost more money
 - As some amigos are on a fixed income and they need to bring their own money for admission to events and such
2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?
 - The program has been around for a long time so Ben did not have to recruit many of the members
 - Most people have been in the group for 10-15 years
 - Ben has been supervising the room for 6 years
 - If there is a vacancy in one of the groups then Ben will contact (email) his coordinator team and each coordinator is in contact with upward of 100 families
 - They are a transfer payment agency therefore a location that people can use their passport funding at → fun group is one way they can use their funding
 - People use their passport funding to participate in the program
 - Interview interested amigos and see if they would be a good fit for one of the groups
3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your

program started in...)

- About 15 years
4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
- Agency philosophy is the group philosophy
 - Program is amigo centered – they decide what they want to do, what kind of group they want to be a part of
 - The facilitators make decisions in the group – help with budgeting, making reservations, making sure everyone is safe, any changes in plans
5. What do you see as the strengths of your program?
- People stick around
 - Building a good group culture
 - Amigo driven → facilitators challenging them to try new things
6. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
- People call the location and make sure the place is accessible
 - One mini gulf course that was not accessible
 - Our area is very accessible
 - If one bowling alley isn't accessible then choose another one that is
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
 - Amigos involved don't need one-to-one support
 - Paying for a support worker is not cost effective for them
 - Facilitators are qualified support workers themselves but in their role as support staff they do not work in that capacity

Do you provide volunteers with training?

b. What is the nature of this training?

- Direct support workers need training
- First aid training
- Inclusion workshop → 3 to 4 hours session with recruitment coordinators, what makes a good support person, experimental exercises to get them thinking what is a good support person, go over philosophy of the agency

- Don't provide one-to-one support so don't require as much training
 - More of an orientation get to know people and their likes and dislikes
 - Go over ways to deal with conflicts that may arise and methods that have worked in the past
 - Some specific participants may behave more like siblings having been in the group so long so specific methods for dealing with conflict between them
 - c. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
7. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - Each group has developed a group focus such as one group really likes sports so wouldn't put someone who doesn't like sports in that group
 - Put new amigos in groups based on their interests
 - b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding is available?
 - Ask an individual to commit to a full year of the services
 - They break it into 3 sections with a break in the summer for 8-10 weeks
 - A lot of people are busy over the summer so the group is not as necessary and have to pay for the 2 months but not using the services to the full capacity which is a waste for them
 - People see the program as more of an evening programming thing but want to get away from that idea
 - But can be hard to change when people are comfortable with the way they've been using the services for such a long time
 - f. Typically how long do pairings last?
 - Ask for a one year commitment but many members have been a part of it for 10-15 years
 - g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
 - N/A

8. How is your program funded?
 - Shared funding
 - Some people use respite dollars
 - Respite ministry of community and social services funding
 - If the individual does not have a lot of funding through passport funding can tap into respite dollars
 - Can also try to get enhancements to their passport funding
 - Program used to be used to give parents a break and now the philosophy is its to help people live a fuller life and have a good time
 - Respite is provided by the Ontario government to help give parents break and stuff like that
 - Passport funding originated from child funding
 - Peoples funding can be supplemented with respite dollars or to the help fund individuals who need a little more help but want to be a part of the group
 - Special services at home and passport dollars are designed to each individual by the government
 - Respite dollars are provided by the government to agencies to help supplement money given to individuals who are perhaps low income or people going through a difficult time and perhaps need a little more support such as when a parent is sick
 - Respite money can also go towards the respite fun groups
9. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
 - a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - No formal evaluation
 - Call families to check in with them
 - Year-end meeting with facilitators to talk about how they felt that they did, any training that they didn't like, what they want to see from Ben,
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
 - More internally applicable
10. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?
 - Choosing activities that fun for everyone in the group
 - Everyone being ok with doing things that other people like and may not be their first

choice

a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?

- Would like to see the groups find the activities that individuals can do on their own
- Because a lot of people in this group are very independent, like take the bus on their own
- Therefore it would be great if they could connect with people in the community in a way that the amigos would then feel comfortable completing activities on their own
 - Such as connecting a amigo with someone at the bowling alley then they would feel comfortable going there on their own → long term goal
- Hard to break a routine for people who have been in the group for a long time and for individuals who find routine very important
 - Takes a lot of planning to make changes to the group activities
- Plan is to make small changes, gradual changes
 - Make smaller groups and start having the groups do some different activities
 - Such as one facilitator to 3 amigos give opportunity to hang out with different groups and try different things
- Before adults were treated like children “Adults, no matter their cognitive ability, should be treated like adults”
- Encourages them to empower themselves to step into their adulthood

11. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?

- Yes

12. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

- Unique → in the way that programs are allowed to choose their own activities

Interviewed Karla Frey Facilitator of the Friendly Visiting Program Offered at Community Care Concepts on February 28

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo’s in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?

- Funded by the local LHIN → ministry of health –local health integrated network
 - Fund agencies not-for-profit and volunteer based

- They are fully funded by the government
- Help people who are living on their own
- Volunteer based → screen, train and match volunteers with clients
- Then they visit and build a relationship → depending on person, once a week, once a day, once a month, telephone talks/reminders

2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?

- Word of mouth, community engagement service clubs
- More difficult to recruit volunteers for the program
- Believes it may be due to the vulnerability of it as people are going into a strangers home and interacting with people with all different practices and situations such as smokers and people with mental health issues
- To avoid a wait lists paid employees will complete the visits that are not covered by the volunteers

Amigos

- Self-referral, doctor referrals, clients, contacted by CCAC – community care access center which helps people who have just recently left the hospital

3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)

- Agency for 30 years
- This program 15 years

4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?

- Make sure people are not isolated or vulnerable
- Don't discriminate by age, race, gender, ethnicity, geography etc
- Base assistance provided based on each client and their needs

What do you see as the strengths of your program?

- Objective of the program reduce isolation in aging adults
- Give people a sense of community
- Combat loneliness as this can lead to a number of mental health illnesses and physical illnesses
- Matching really helps to allow for a lot better retention for the service

- Could consider factors other than just interests such as similar past jobs → both farmers
5. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
 - A barrier is distance between pairs → rural program and volunteers don't get paid so mileage can add up
 - Do hire support workers when there are not enough volunteers available
 6. Do you provide volunteers with training?
 - a. What is the nature of this training?
 - Trained in Accessibility for Ontario with disability act
 - Police check and vulnerable sector screening
 - Unique to volunteer - people with sensitivity training then not as intensive
 - Case by case training
 - b. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
 - Doesn't recommend driving clients around because of liability issues
 7. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
 - a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - Background on client medical history, social history then identify what a good volunteer would look like
 - Look at the current volunteers and see if any would be a good fit, if not then front-line staff
 - Could consider factors other than just interests such as similar past jobs → both farmers
 - b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - Some like to go walking or go get groceries
 - Volunteer and amigo pay for any costs they incur in the program
 - Exceptions can be for people who are low income or on social assistance
 - c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as

funding is available?

- Budget operation has no timeline
 - f. Typically how long do pairings last?
 - Varies but mostly they stick unless people pass away, move away
 - g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
 - Verbal contract of 6 months → not binding contract because their volunteers
8. How is your program funded?
- Fully funded by the government
9. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
- a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - Surveys
 - Just internal to improve the program
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
10. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?
- Challenges are recruiting volunteers as it can be intimidating for both the client and the volunteer
 - People are not always willing to reach out and have someone coordinate a friendship because of social stigma
 - Cost of travel can be difficult as many individuals are retired and therefore on fixed incomes
 - Facilitator meets with both partners first in a neutral location
 - May meet with them again depending on how comfortable everyone was at the first meeting then they meet just one on one after that
 - a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?
 - In a community support services network
 - They talk about the challenges and ways to improve it
 - Have to be someone who is able to carry a conversation which can take a lot of effort
11. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
- Yes
12. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

Interviewed Paul Richards Facilitator of the Gig Buddies Program Offered at Stay Up Late on January 27

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?
 - Goal was to change support systems so people could be supported to stay up late
 - their charity is to support people to stay up late
 - their program is gig buddies → allows people to go out and be apart of their local communities – mostly though music and cultural events
 - but peoples gigs can be different – going for a walk or going to a punk concert
 - not trying to make people fit into their programs → do what they want
 - grassroots → communities identifying issues and solving them without government interference
2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?
 - Volunteers
 - Online database or volunteers, Social media, run stalls at venues (music events) stick posters in venue washrooms, try to find the places where the people you want for the amigos will hang out and then advertise there, ie → want someone religious contact the religious groups in the area, word of mouth
 - Amigos
 - Through parents, social workers and support staff, other people's friends who are already in the program,
3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)
 - Heavy Load band started in 1997
 - Stay up late campaign started in 2006
 - Became charity in 2011
 - 2013 started gig buddies program
4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
 - (one page of what they believe in)

- Want to change the power balance so that people with disabilities can be in control of living the lives they want
 - Consider peoples learning disabilities first and think of ways that can put them in the driver's seat
 - Keep it punk, keep to our roots → make stuff happen
 - DIY (do it yourself) approach try and make stuff happen and don't sit around and plan stuff
 - Thinking through doing
 - What could possibly go wrong
5. What do you see as the strengths of your program?
- Very accessible and easy for people to understand what we are doing
 - “You go out and you can do what you enjoy doing anyway but support someone else to do that as well”
 - A lot of people see the problems in this area and so people want to help
 - Utilize what people like and what their good at as well to help benefit the charity in other ways
 - Also if people are active and happy then it reduces demands on the health care system
6. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
- A lot of staff try to accommodate amigos
 - A lot of festivals make efforts to make it accommodating for people with physical or intellectual disabilities
 - Volunteer does research and Stay Up Late organizers let the volunteers know of some local venues in their area that would be accessible to their buddies
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
 - “No, ... we think there is so much strength in having people in your lives who aren't paid to be there, so we've kept it completely, deliberately unpaid”
 - We can't ever see hiring people, it goes against one of the principles of the program
7. Do you provide volunteers with training?
- a. What is the nature of this training?
 - All volunteers attend a one day training session that they run

- “Always one of our amigos with a learning disabilities co-facilitates that with us as well because it’s important to us that we set the tone and also they bring a valuable perspective to it”
 - But ongoing support and support in difficult situation → keep people supported
 - Mandatory every 6 months meet with volunteers one on one to check in on things
 - Keep people involved in the program
 - b. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
 - Everybody has to have a police check because they are working with adults at risk
 - Eventually you find someone who’s done something naughty in the past, often when they were drunk as a student
 - We don’t automatically eliminate them but will meet with them to talk about it to find out what’s going on → only once we had to eliminate someone because of past offences because there were many of them and they had been recent
 - Take references as well
8. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- Look for in a volunteer → got to be nice and got to like something
 - Interested in pursuing communication, difficult to get volunteers to respond to texts
 - Generally just want someone who’s nice and willing to share their time with someone
 - a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - Consider peoples geographic area (location, where are they from)
 - Can they take public transport with or without support
 - Does the volunteer drive
 - Sex,, age, sexuality
 - Does the amigo like them? Ultimate pairing consideration
 - When they interview each person they gather their personality information and personal characteristics
 - When we think we have a good match, we facilitate a meeting between them and talk about what would make this a good budding relationship

- Help them choose and book their first event then let them build the relationships themselves from their
- Also have regular socials for people on the waiting list because the matching process can take a while
 - So it helps those people still feel engaged
 - Everyone on the waiting list invited, run in multiple towns to prevent the events from getting huge
 - Let's pairs meet each other and talk about their experiences as well
- b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - Cover volunteer expenses → transport, mileage
 - They will reimburse tickets up to 10 pounds for volunteers → covers a lot of local gigs
 - Many venues provide free tickets to our carers and amigos → cuts down on cost (recommendation)
 - Get in touch with local venues and build up contacts/relationships → people see it as a very positive way to diversify their audience and therefore are very supportive
 - Amigos are expected to pay for things themselves → in the real world when you meet with friends you have to pay
- c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - Can use it for gigs, festivals, clubbing events
 - Can also use their budget to go to sports matches, museums, plays, go out and eat cake
- d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - 2 things a month → Generally one gig and one coffee
 - At the coffee can look at what's coming up and plan their next gig
 - About 6 hours a month
 - About 10 pounds a month for tickets but then also travel and drinks and such
- e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding is available?
 - Planning to run indefinitely but is based on grants
 - Grant through the national lottery
 - A certain amount of the lottery is redistributed to good causes (charities)
 - Some through local government

- Starting to fund through social franchise → other organizations run the program in their area and they pay Stay Up Late a fee → helps fund them
 - f. Typically how long do pairings last?
 - Want to last at least 18 months
 - Hopefully longer
 - But peoples lives changes
 - g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
9. How is your program funded?
10. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
- a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - In order to apply to be considered for the lottery grants they had to be evaluated which they did themselves
 - They then did a larger evaluation stemming off of this one with an external organization
 - Research practices for adults, asked them to tailor it to the audience of clinicians and local government commissioners because we think it easy to see everyone is having fun but we hope people will see the serious positive impact as well because these people can fund it in other areas as well
 - 2 or 3 months an initial questionnaire by amigos and volunteers
 - Then at 6 months and 12 months
 - Hire a young woman with a learning disability and works at Stay Up Late one day a week as a quality checker
 - Her job is to phone people and see how things are going
 - “We know people respond differently when their talking to a peer”
 - Ran a meal for the volunteers with an outside organization to find out what their experiences are
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
 - Their results will be published in the autumn
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?
- The matching is the biggest headache
 - To solve that → Monthly matching meetings, lets all spend a team meeting looking at everything and trying to work it out such that it’s not one person

problem

- Don't communicate well enough to people about where they are on the waiting list
 - Created a new database to help identify people who have been waiting a long time
 - You've been on the waiting list for this long, we've not forgotten you, we are working at it, do you still want to be involved
 - At least check in with people
- A lot of people want to be involved but it's hard to make sure all people are involved
 - a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?

12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?

Yes → email it

13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

- Other franchised locations one in sportsmith and one in Halifax
- You'll never watch alone → support fans to go and watch wicket together

Interviewed Anna Lee Interim Project Manager from Council for Persons with Disabilities on February 17

1. I am talking to you today because of your past involvement with the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. Could you give me a quick summary of your past involvement with the program?

- Over seeing but not directly running it
- Helped with grant applications and such

2. How did you recruit volunteers for the Amigos in the Community program? Amigos?

- 16 amigos (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and 16 connectors
- Recruited connectors by delivering presentations to police foundations course and other similar programs
 - As many courses had volunteer requirements
- Also delivered presentations at Trent
- Presentations at local post-secondary education intuitions because this was the age group

Amigos

- Would liaise with the outcome facilitators at community living as it was a win-win situation for the outcome facilitators job was to help people that they serve opportunities

- to become more involved in the community
 - Especially as it was a social group
 - Young adults fall through the cracks for supports as they either get catapulted into using adult supports which are not always appropriate for them or no supports
 - Almost all amigos came from community living, people first maybe as well
 - It would be good to contact other organizations that work with individuals with intellectual disabilities
 - Could do presentations with the electric city hockey team, the Kwartha comets, with special Olympics, with the five-counties children's center as youth would be graduating from their children programs and need services
3. When did Amigos in the Community program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)
- 2010 – 2011 got it up and running and starting to make some connections
 - Went until 2012
 - Ran about a year and a half
 - First 8 months was building a developmental model
 - [This information was provided from Anna Lee's memory as well as from documents created by Krista Brailey during their work with HUI and the original Amigos in the Community program. These documents were also cited in this paper as (Brailey, 2009) and (Brailey, 2011).]
4. Did you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
5. What do you see as the strengths of the program?
- It was goal orientated
 - What are some goals that this specific amigo has
 - Relationship was built around succeeding in their goals not just built on making a relationship
 - Also wanted to focus on activities that were out in the community that would expand an individual's network/support
 - Being able to follow up with the connectors and amigos if they missed a meeting and how to trouble shoot that
 - This helped lead to the success of pairs, having the support lead to success,

- Keeping it goal orientated to help the amigo's reach their goals
 - the hope was that even when the program ended the amigo's would still have connections in the community
6. Did you face accessibility issues with events you organised, how did you address these?
- It wasn't an issue because Krista know the accessibility issues of the group and plan around that
 - By making sure the locations were accessible for all that wanted to attend
 - Not a problem just a consideration when choosing events → choose events based on accessibility needs
 - a. Did you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could have arisen when you would have considered it?
 - If support required the individual would be responsible for that themselves
 - Would have a meeting at an the individuals house if that's where the pairs would be meeting to ensure it was safe
7. Did you provide volunteers with training?
- a. What was the nature of this training?
 - Outline in program manual
 - b. Did you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
8. How did you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- a. Was this based on shared interests?
 - Krista completed this task
 - Krista was a great match maker and would complete this task alone
 - b. Did you give pairings a budget?
 - c. Was this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What was the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Was there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding was available?
 - f. Typically how long did pairings last?
 - g. Did you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
9. How was your program funded?

- Comart Family Foundation
 - Tried to get more funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to continue the program
10. Did you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
- a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - It was not formally evaluated
 - Don't think the amigos or connectors were given an exit survey
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with the Amigos in the Community program?
- a. What would you have liked to improve, how would you have addressed these challenges?
 - Connector issues
 - There wasn't enough of a push to get funding to keep the program running
 - When the program was running it was running really well, the intake process was good the support for the pairs really helped at the time there was too much push back from the board on group activities being held. Too much worry about money being spent for volunteer events even though there was money allotted in the budget for that.
 - Like team building activities helping to bring the connectors together
12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
- Yes
13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?
- Best buddies – don't want to duplicate something that's already working

Interviewed Jocelyn Worster Community Leader of L'Arche Saint John on February 24

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?
 - McKim house opened in 2005
 - People with and without intellectual disabilities live together
 - 5 people with intellectual disabilities and 3 assistants

- Volunteers come in and help in various ways → helping someone gather the weekly groceries
- The motto of l'arche is helping the community see the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities
- Creative connections in September they moved to a new location in uptown St. John such that they could provide full time opportunity for people with and without intellectual disabilities to come and work on art together
- Helps change the stigma around intellectual disabilities
- Can display the art

2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?

Volunteers

- 6 regular volunteers at creative connections
- Some volunteers that can be called upon as needed
- Through word of mouth, through people viewing their website
- Online application on their websites for people to fill out
- Have been registered with the St. John volunteer center → listed for people who want to volunteer
- Lots of fundraising events that can be good to have help fund the program, need volunteers to facilitate them and then are able to recruit new volunteers through new people participating in the events

Amigos

- Had events to raise awareness and invite new people in such as the grand opening of creative connections
- Advertise on social media → Facebook
- Monthly community art afternoon that's advertise to make people aware of the program → very accessible for people who want to try it out
- Some Saturday afternoon sessions so if people have a schedule Monday to Friday and don't want to change that then they have the opportunity to try it out → then be more willing to change their schedule to be involved

3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)

- September 2016 → full time
 - One a month activity of creative events for a few years
 - Then went to one day then one and a half then their own location
4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
- L'arche's motto
 - A place where people with and without disabilities are brought together
 - People with different abilities who are interested in building friendships through their creativity can come together
 - The emphasis on people gifts, unique value, in order to help create a more compassionate society
5. What do you see as the strengths of your program?
- Central location
 - Be in the center of the city
 - Helps with outreach and easy for people can come in and buy art
 - Central, welcoming environment “joyful inclusion”
 - Can help change the way that people view people with disabilities
 - “Oasis of joyfulness in the center of the city”
6. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
- Building they rent is pretty accessible → They rent the main floor
 - Very open to the public and easy to check it out
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
 - Hire 2 full time program assistants that run the program
 - Some people bring their own support staff
7. Do you provide volunteers with training?
- a. What is the nature of this training?
 - Initial orientation chance to come in, meet people, tour the house, overview of program, what a typical day would look like, program overview, agency overview,
 - Would depend on when and in what capacity they are volunteering → tailored to specific situation

- Would support them their first few weeks of volunteering and getting to know the individual they are working with
 - Outline budget for the activity
 - b. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?
 - All volunteers who interact with people with intellectual disabilities are expected to get a criminal record check, department of social development record check → additional record check,
 - If volunteer works with individual with intellectual disabilities on their own then they will need first aid training, food handlers training → if working with food, minimum liability insurance → if driving individuals around
8. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - Can pair based on their interests, availability and what help/support is needed currently at McKim house
 - Look at skills and interests of volunteers and the needs of the house to make a best match
 - Most often with l'arche volunteer relationships become friendships → get invited to birthday parties, hockey games
 - b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - Track each month the budget
 - What you're thinking you will spend and what you think you will bring in
 - Planning to continue and getting funding to make sure that's possible
 - e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding is available?
 - f. Typically how long do pairings last?
 - g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
 - If people can commit to a regular time every week that's ideal
 - Some people volunteer for the year → students
 - Some for many years

9. How is your program funded?
 - Half funding for house comes from department of social development and 20% for the creative connections program
 - Remainder is through grant applications, donations, planned fundraising events
10. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?
 - a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - Not for creative connections
 - McKim house was evaluated → goals and objectives and perspectives from the community
 - Concrete data of what was happening each week, volunteers, and family members
 - Surveys and interviews → 2 individuals from the St. John Volunteer center who conducted the evaluation and they met with individual member of the house, their family members
 - Mostly over the phone or in person interviews
 - Surveys for volunteers and other members, board members of the program
 - Studied records → team meetings, planning sheets, written reports, board reports, hard data to draw from
 - Was something they found useful when applying for grant applications
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?
 - Challenge is to get word out to people who could benefit
 - Making that transition as easy as possible
 - Some people have distinct schedules already in place and either they or their parents don't want to mess up that routine by joining a new program
 - Transportation → don't have access to a way to get to the program
 - a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?
 - Ways to connect with more amigos
12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
 - Yes
13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

- 4 l'arche programs in nova scotia with art programs

Interviewed Lauren Maudsley Facilitator of the Best Buddies Program Offered at Trent University on February 22

1. I am talking to you today because my research suggests that your program has some similarities to the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. I have reviewed your website, but could you give me a quick summary of how your program works and who it is created for?

- Friendship program – to create one on one friendships between a student (in elementary, high school or university) and a person with an intellectual disabilities
- Allows people with intellectual disabilities to have experiences that they may never have had or have the chance to have – ex going out for a coffee, hanging out with a friend

2. How do you recruit volunteers? Amigos?

Volunteers (Student amigos)

- Posters, word of mouth, volunteer position on student job board, clubs and groups day at Trent

Amigos

- Lauren works at community living Peterborough
 - Can post online about the program so staff can see and tell people on their case load about it and sign them up that way
 - Newsletters to parents

3. When did your program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)

- Best Buddies – the overall program began in 1993 and as a charity in 1995
- Have been doing since 2012 but was going on for years before that since Lauren took it over from someone else

4. Do you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?

- Philosophy of best buddies (it's an international program)
 - "To establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one on one friendships and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities"

5. What do you see as the strengths of your program?
 - A really good opportunity for friendships to develop
 - A lot of month events and fundraisers
 - A lot of fun and goofy behaviour from students and people with intellectual disabilities
 - Allows people to have a better quality of life → people might not be able to go to the movies or out for a coffee twice a month without best buddies
 - A good experience for students as well → anyone who wants to go forward and work with people (teachers, nurses, etc) gives them extra understanding of people with disabilities, different populations, increased knowledge and patience
6. Do you face accessibility issues with events you organise, how do you address these?
 - Ask everybody what they want to do for events
 - Always want to go bowling → no accessible bowling allies in Peterborough
 - Limited to where events can be
 - Depending on if locations have elevators and the size of elevators
 - Have to change locations a lot to accommodate
 - a. Do you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could arise when you would consider it?
 - Self-sufficient program
 - Student run program – all volunteers
 - So instead of hiring support workers for events → get more student event helpers to attend events
 - If certain buddies aren't going to come then can contact group and ask if their will be extra volunteers to help that amigo → not all but some buddies need one-to-one attention
 - If amigo needs a support worker typically they will provide that themselves
 - Not normally an issue
7. Do you provide volunteers with training?
 - a. What is the nature of this training?
 - Not really a training process as they are considered friends
 - They sign up on line and undergo a 20 minute interview with the student presidents to go over their comfort level and how would they handle a situation that they were unsure of
 - b. Do you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers

abstracts?

- A police check
 - Pledge of confidentiality
 - Pledge of friendship → won't do drugs, alcohol, or gambling with amigo
 - If student has car then photo copy of licence and insurance policy
8. How do you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- a. Is this based on shared interests?
 - Like a dating service → matched based on interest
 - Everyone has to fill out an online survey of their likes and dislikes when they sign up
 - Then they are interviewed → do best buddies questionnaire → what are you comfortable with
 - Either male or female, intellectual and/or physical disabilities, limited to no verbal skills, what activities are you really interested in doing with a amigo
 - Lauren knows both members of a pair and make matches based on interest and comfort
 - If does not work out → contact Lauren and they are re-matched
 - b. Do you give pairings a budget?
 - Best buddies typically have free events
 - One or 2 events are year they have to pay for → let them know ahead of time
 - Run fundraisers and get some money from best buddies organization to use to pay for events
 - c. Is this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - Contact exchange form → buddies contact info, availability, likes and dislikes, what their interested in
 - Choose what they want do together
 - Pick events based on everyone's personal budget
 - Buddies choose what they want to do together
 - d. What is the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - e. Is there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding is available?
 - October 15 → chapter budget – outline all activities you want to have that year, how

much they cost and how much you think you'll raise at fundraiser

f. Typically how long do pairings last?

- Depends on when buddies sign up -- in their first year → might last 4 years, may sign up in fourth year and only last one year, just depends on person

g. Do you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?

- Tell them you are signing up for the year
- Life happens → If you drop out then you are disappointing your amigo

9. How is your program funded?

- Through money from best buddies international and through their fundraisers

10. Do you, or have you, done any evaluation on your programme?

a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?

- Send out a survey at the end of the year send it to all amigos, they do it online so it's anonymous
- What they liked, what they didn't like, what they want to see next year, what events their interested in

b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation

11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with your current program?

- Way more buddies than students sign up
- Larger chapter at Trent → 27 matches typically about 10 matches
- Try lots of avenues → struggle to get students to join and students drop out
- A few people with intellectual disabilities without buddies → their always is
 - Welcome to attend group events if they want
- a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?
- Working constantly to try to recruit more students, friends of current students
- Put it up on the job board increased the students joining but not necessarily following through

12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?

Yes → email

13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?

- Amigo's

Interviewed Krista Brailey Facilitator at Community Living Peterborough February 9

1. I am talking to you today because of your past involvement with the Amigo's in the Community program run by Heads Up For Inclusion. Could you give me a quick summary of how your past involvement with the program?

- guideline was already created
- Development started
- Made a work plan on how to engage volunteers

2. How did you recruit volunteers for the Amigos in the Community program? Amigos?

Connectors

- Recruited mainly through Fleming college and talked to programs like police foundations, PSW, and Social work as they need volunteers hours to get their diplomas
 - Developed presentation on how it is to live as a person with intellectual disabilities
 - How important it is to have people in your life who are unpaid
 - What the requirements for the program was
 - Was able to get a lot of students from the presentations
 - A lot of students wanted to be involved
 - She tweaked each presentation to the particular audience of students she was presenting to
 - Helped them understand how being a part of the program could help them develop skills to be used in their future careers
- Also attempted to talk to graduate students from the high schools → especially those who had already been a part of amigo's in school

Amigos

- Gathered through community living mostly based on peoples interest in being part of the program
- Also attempted to talk to graduate students from the high schools → especially those who had already been a part of amigo's in school

3. When did the Amigos in the Community program start? (if you know this from website: Can I confirm that your program started in...)

- About a year in half to 2 years
 - Women started on the program before Krista
 - Krista ran with what was started
 - Takes a lot of creativity to start
 - Funding ran out therefore the program had to be canceled
4. Did you have a guiding philosophy behind your program?
 5. What did you see as the strengths of your program?
 - Gave people with intellectual disabilities the chance to connect
 - Was a learning curve for the volunteers as well
 - They learned about the importance of accountability, commitment and this allowed them to grow as people
 - Allowed both amigos and connectors to try new things in their communities
 - A lot of mediation between partners
 6. Did you face accessibility issues with events you organised, how did you address these?
 - Pairs could meet up for coffee for the first time and then depending on how comfortable they were together to then just plan their own get together
 - Support them in connecting
 - Also had some events throughout the year
 - Tried to have the pairs become more involved in the community
 - No one had accessibility issues therefore did not have a problem and never hired or considered hiring support people
 - If someone needed more assistance they could let Krista know but a support worker would not be hired to help out
 - Or they would bring their own support people
 - a. Did you ever hire support workers? Or are their circumstances that could have arisen when you would have considered it?
 7. Did you provide volunteers with training?
 - a. What was the nature of this training?
 - 1 hour – 1 hour and half talk to them, what to expect, policy,
 - b. Did you require any type of documentation such as police checks and drivers abstracts?

- Police checks
 - Drivers abstracts
 - Checklist of everything they needed before they could begin
 - Give them feedback on their progress and this helped to keep people motivated and feel valued and appreciated
8. How did you go about forming pairs and effective relationships?
- a. Was this based on shared interests?
 - Interests
 - Personality → shy person paired with an outgoing person to help draw them out and get more involved
 - Hobbies → things they like to do
 - b. Did you give pairings a budget?
 - Yes → budget for volunteer
 - Person with disabilities would pay for themselves
 - c. Was this budget designated for specific activities or events?
 - Free to use it for whatever they wanted to do
 - Small budget for group event
 - d. What was the timeframe for this budget, weekly, monthly (etc)?
 - Just ran out of funding then had to stop
 - e. Was there a budget timeline for your specific program such as one year or as long as funding was available?
 - f. Typically how long did pairings last?
 - Some were 1 year some were 2 years some still kept seeing each other after the program ended
 - g. Did you ask for a particular time and duration commitment from volunteers?
 - Yes, minimum of probably 8 months → school year for a student
 - Some took a break over the summer then came back and started back again
9. How was your program funded?
- Not sure
10. Did you, or have you, done any evaluation on the programme?

- a. Can you tell me more about how you evaluated your program?
 - No
 - b. Would it be possible to get a copy of this evaluation
11. Would you be willing to share any perceived challenges with the Amigos in the Community program?
- Conflict resolution to help people to see both sides of any issues
 - Having to rely on people to do what they say they will do
 - Issues with volunteers or amigos following through
 - a. What would you like to improve, how would you address these challenges?
 - It was a great program just more regular funding
12. Would you like to receive a copy of my final report?
- Yes
13. Do you know of any other agencies that complete similar work to that of your program?
- Best Buddies