

Friend 2 Friend Program Guide Trainee Qualifications

Friend 2 Friend Autism Demystification programs are designed to be carried out by a presentation team of three *Program Guides*, each having a unique role. The team consists of a **Lead Guide**, an **Assistant Guide** and a **Program Guide**.

The Lead Guide

The *Lead Guide* is central in the successful delivery of the programs. He/she is responsible for all aspects of the delivery of the programs. He/she is a professional currently working with individuals on the autism spectrum, and has a family member or close personal relationship with individuals on the autism spectrum. F2FSLs suggests the following as trainees as Lead Guides: classroom or special educators, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists etc who are parents of children on the autism spectrum. The *Lead Guide* must be professional, organized, and an excellent public speaker. This person must be able to answer questions about autism, the Friend 2 Friend Model and programs in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner using a child and family centered approach.

In summary, some of the requirements to train as a F2F *Lead Guide* are:

- Professional working in the field of education, speech and language, psychology, Occupational Therapy etc.
- Parents or close relatives of individuals on the autism spectrum
- Excellent public speaker
- Extensive experience working with children
- Expert knowledge of autism
- Excellent management/organizational skills
- Excellent class management skills
- Excellent human resource skills
- Child and family centered approach/philosophy

Assistant Guide (sometimes called Program Assistant or PA)

The *Assistant Guide* assists the *Lead Guide* in all aspects of the on-site delivery of the F2F Programs. This person must be professional and very well organized. The *Assistant Guide* is an individual working in the field of autism and/or who has a background working with children. He/she is an individual who shows exemplary skills with children and has a child and family centered approach. We suggest hiring child care workers, teacher assistants, students in the area of speech and language pathology, occupational therapists, teachers, early childhood educators, parents of children on the autism spectrum, individuals on the autism spectrum, or others who have a close personal relationship with individuals on the autism spectrum such as an aunt, uncle, grandparent etc.

Program Guide

The *Program Guide* will carry out various responsibilities under the direction of the *Lead Guide*. He/she is an individual who shows exemplary skills with children and has a child and family centered approach. We suggest recruiting volunteers such as students in the area of speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, teachers, early childhood educators, parents of children on the autism spectrum, individuals on the autism spectrum, or others who have a close personal relationship with an individual on the autism spectrum such as a sibling, aunt, uncle, grandparent etc.

Program Coordinator

One of key roles in the delivery of the Friend 2 Friend Autism Demystification Programs is that of the *Program Coordinator* (this person may or may not also train as *Program Guide*). The *Program Coordinator* is responsible for the management of the programs. They have a background in business management, are extremely organized, professional and computer literate. The duties of the *Program Coordinator* include the following:

- Booking Presentations
- Ensuring all materials are available to the presentation team
- Scheduling the presentation team's time
- Corresponding with school based personnel
- Inputting completed questionnaire data