



Being a Buddy- Best Job By Far

I started as a **halow** Buddy supporting young people with learning disabilities in late March, on a zero hour contract. After working hard, attending match meetings and shadowing other Buddies I was really pleased to be given the job as a Supported Living Buddy. It was a wonderful opportunity to gain more experience and I am now supporting two young women in a **halow** Supported Living house.

It's tricky to describe a typical day working for **halow** as every day is different. Some days I support the ladies at college or when they go shopping or help them bake cakes or help clean the house. Take today for example; we made nachos for lunch today, they were magic, and we went bowling in the afternoon! There's so much variety to keep me on my toes but it's really fun. It's a brilliant job and I love being out and about with the young people. Half term is even more fun as no one's restricted by college time tables and we can decide what to do as a group.

Like any job there are challenges. The young people aren't always keen to do the boring jobs such as cleaning, tidying up, washing clothes etc. Some days they need extra motivation when they feel they just can't be bothered, but we can all feel like that sometimes.

As a Buddy you have to encourage them and help them see that these boring jobs come with the freedom and choice of living independently. You have to help them see both sides and think of ideas to get them motivated. It's often a case of explaining once the dull stuff is done we can do something fun or relaxing. It's important for me, and for them, that I remain positive and reassuring. After all it is their home and I'm employed to help them live a full life as independently as they can.

One of the best bits for me is supporting at the **halow** discos - seeing all the young people together, enjoying themselves and forming their own friendship groups is indescribable. I also love the challenge of being a Buddy and working out how to resolve problems or find ways around obstacles for the young people.

I recently got back from holiday, went to work and was driving home after my first day back, thinking what a brilliant day that was and how much I love my job. I'm not sure I have ever done that with any other job. To anyone thinking about applying, I'd say; do it! It's so worth it! Get on board as a Buddy and see where it takes you - you'll be glad you did.

-halow Supported Living Buddy