

# Best Buds Hope Ann Phillips: A Shining Example of Compassion and Advocacy

Hope Ann Phillips, a young woman from Kansas City, Missouri, has captured the hearts of countless individuals with her unwavering spirit and dedication to spreading kindness. As a young child, Hope was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition that affects her physical and cognitive abilities. Despite the challenges she faces, Hope has never let her circumstances dim her light, inspiring others with her infectious joy and determination. Through her involvement with Best Buddies, an organization dedicated to fostering friendship and inclusion for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), Hope has become a beacon of hope and a symbol of the power of human connection.

## Hope's Journey

Hope was born in 1993, and from birth, she displayed symptoms of a developmental delay. After extensive testing, she was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition known as Sotos syndrome. This condition is characterized by distinctive physical features, intellectual disabilities, and developmental delays. Despite the challenges she faced, Hope's parents, David and Tracy Phillips, were determined to provide her with the best possible care and support.



## Best Buds by Hope Ann Phillips

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled

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Throughout her childhood, Hope attended special education classes and participated in various therapies to help her develop her skills. While she faced challenges with communication and learning, Hope's determination and unwavering spirit shone through. She excelled in art and music, finding joy in expressing herself creatively.

## **Discovering Best Buddies**

In 2009, Hope's life took a transformative turn when she was introduced to Best Buddies. Best Buddies is a global organization that creates opportunities for one-on-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with IDD. Through Best Buddies, Hope was paired with a peer mentor named Megan Van Gundy.

Megan and Hope quickly formed an unbreakable bond, spending countless hours together participating in activities such as attending concerts, going to the movies, and simply enjoying each other's company. Megan became Hope's biggest cheerleader, supporting her through challenges and celebrating her triumphs.

## **Becoming a Best Buddies Ambassador**

Hope's involvement with Best Buddies ignited a passion within her to advocate for others with IDD. She realized that she had a unique voice and a platform to make a positive impact in the world. In 2014, Hope was

selected to be a Best Buddies Ambassador, a prestigious role that empowers individuals with IDD to share their stories and inspire others.

As an Ambassador, Hope has traveled extensively, speaking at conferences, schools, and community events. She uses her platform to raise awareness about the importance of inclusion, dispel common misconceptions about IDD, and advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities.

## **Hope's Impact**

Hope's unwavering spirit and dedication to spreading kindness have had a profound impact on countless individuals. She has inspired others to embrace diversity, challenge stereotypes, and see the true potential in everyone. Through her advocacy work, Hope has helped to break down barriers and create a more inclusive society for all.

In 2019, Hope was honored with the prestigious Jefferson Award for her outstanding contributions to her community. This award recognizes individuals who go above and beyond to make a positive impact on others. Hope's tireless efforts have earned her widespread recognition and admiration, making her a true role model for people of all abilities.

Hope Ann Phillips is not just a young woman with IDD; she is a shining example of courage, compassion, and advocacy. Through her involvement with Best Buddies, she has touched countless lives, inspiring others to embrace inclusion and see the true potential in everyone. As a Best Buddies Ambassador, Hope continues to use her platform to raise awareness, dispel misconceptions, and advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities. Through her unwavering spirit and infectious

joy, Hope Ann Phillips continues to make the world a more inclusive and compassionate place.

May her story serve as a reminder that we all have something unique to contribute, and that together, we can create a world where everyone is valued and celebrated for their differences.



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