

CareFrogs*

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1 Introduction

1.1 Westpark Elementary School

CareFrogs is an opportunity for you to pair up with an elementary school student and be a Big Buddy. You will be required to complete an application and then you will be paired up with your Little Buddy. You will need to schedule a time when the two of you can get together during school hours, once per week for the duration of the TCU semester. While with your Little Buddy you can do just about anything, from shooting baskets to tutoring to just talking. This program is supervised by the Westpark Elementary School Counselor, Mrs. Diane Rowton (817-249-7150). You should be forewarned that your application will be sent to the FWISD central office to conduct a check for past criminal activity. If you have a criminal record you will not be able to participate in this program. Copies of the forms associated with this activity will be handed out in class.

You *must* be professional at all times. Neither I nor Mrs. Rowton will tolerate unprofessional conduct. Professional behavior includes your dress as well as your behavior while you are at the school. Professionalism also involves reliability, tactfulness, and sensitivity. If you cannot conduct yourself professionally, then you will be dismissed from this program and you will receive a 0 for this activity. If you have any questions regarding professionalism, please feel free to ask. If you have any doubts about your ability to act professionally, then do not sign up for this activity. This

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program has been ongoing for over ten years now and we have had very few problems, but even one problem is one too many. Remember that your behavior and dress reflects not only on yourself, but on your parents, the University, and me. Even more important, you are dealing with children, every one of whom is precious.

1.2 The Child Behavior Checklist

At the end of the semester—once you have gotten to know your little buddy well—you will be asked to complete the Child Behavior Checklist for your little buddy. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) has been developed by Thomas Achenbach to help researchers and clinicians identify children with behavior problems. There are two versions of the CBCL, one for 2–4 years and one for 4–18 years. The 4–18 version of the CBCL has been normed separately for boys and girls. The standard versions of the CBCL are designed for parents to complete, but versions are available for teachers and other professionals.

Using principal components analysis, Achenbach has empirically derived problem subscales for each age-appropriate version of the CBCL. These subscales are shown in Table 1 below. For each version, some of the subscales are used to compute an *Internalizing* subtotal and an *Externalizing* subtotal. These subtotal scores reflect underlying dimensions for childhood pathology commonly found in the literature (e.g. overcontrolled *vs* undercontrolled). Some subscales are not included in either of the Internalizing or Externalizing subtotals, but are included in the total problem score.

In addition to the problem scales, Achenbach has developed competence scales for the 4-18 years version of the CBCL. These scales can be used for school-aged children, ages 6 and above. The competence scales are designed to assess the quantity and quality of the child’s participation in three areas, as is shown in Table 2 below. It is common to report a total competence score, which is formed by summing across the three subscale scores for activities, social, and school.

Achenbach reports normative information for each of his scales—Problem and Competence—and this normative information can be used to classify children based on their CBCL profiles. For each scale, the three classifications are *normal*, *borderline clinical*, and *clinical*. The cutpoints for these classifications are empirically derived, based on referred and nonreferred populations of children. The cutpoints were chosen by Achenbach and his colleagues so as to minimize the number of children who are mistakenly classified as clinical (i.e. the false positives).

Table 1: Child Behavior Checklist Problem Scales

- Empirically-derived subscales for the CBCL 2-3 years
 1. *anxious-depressed* (internalizing subtotal)
 2. *withdrawn* (internalizing subtotal)
 3. *sleep problems*
 4. *somatic problems*
 5. *aggressive behavior* (externalizing subtotal)
 6. *destructive behavior* (externalizing subtotal)
 7. other problems (not a factor)

- Empirically-derived subscales for the CBCL 4-18 years
 1. *withdrawn* (internalizing subtotal)
 2. *somatic complaints* (internalizing subtotal)
 3. *anxious-depressed* (internalizing subtotal)
 4. *social problems*
 5. *thought problems*
 6. *attention problems*
 7. *delinquent behavior* (externalizing subtotal)
 8. *aggressive behavior* (externalizing subtotal)
 9. other problems (not a factor)

Table 2: Child Behavior Checklist Competence Scales

- *activities*
 - sports
 - activities and hobbies
 - household jobs
- *social*
 - organizations
 - friends
 - behavior alone and with others
- *school*
 - performance in school subjects
 - special classes
 - repeated grades
 - school problems

2 Requirements

2.1 Steps

1. Enroll by completing the application.
2. Schedule a time when you can meet with your little buddy, *each and every week*.
3. Confer with the counselor the teacher regarding ideal activities for your little buddy.
4. Read the associated readings for this activity.
5. Meet with your little buddy each week through the last week of classes (excepting holidays).
6. Complete the CBCL and turn it in during finals week along with a short write up of your experience.

2.2 Notes

- Do this activity alone.
- You will be able to check out instructions for the CBCL in the department office. You should do this sometime during the last half of the semester, but don't wait until the last minute!
- Your grade will be based on your professionalism while at the school and the quality of your write-up.
- Your write-up should include (a) a summary of the CBCL results, (b) your insights about the child you have mentored, and (c) a list of the dates and times you were at Westpark, including your activities while there.
- This activity is worth 20 activity points (30 if you take on a second child).

2.3 Materials

- Information sheet, including program objectives, expectations, and important school dates.
- Big Buddy Program application.

- Child Behavior Checklist—Form for Teachers and Professionals.

2.4 Readings

- Dehart, G. B., Sroufe, L. A., & Cooper, R. G. (2004). *Child Development: Its Nature and Course* (5th Ed., Ch. 15). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.
- Hartup, W. W. (1989). Social relationships and their developmental significance. *American Psychologist*, **44**, 120-126.
- Achenbach, T. M. (2006). As others see us: Clinical and research implications of cross-informant correlations for psychopathology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, **15**(2), 94-98.

2.5 Directions to Westpark

1. Get on I-20, going west (towards Abilene — it is easier if you get on I-20 from Granbury Road, and not Hulen);
2. Get off on Winscott Road, and go south (turn left — you can also stay on I-20 until you get to 377, and then go south on 377 towards Granbury);
3. Follow Winscott through Benbrook, past Benbrook Dam, and past the YMCA;
4. turn left on Highway 377 (towards Granbury);
5. the school is located on the right, across the highway from the riding stables.