

Join the Brave Little Bears Advisory Council

Volunteer Opportunities with the Council



The Brave Little Bears Foundation Advisory Council is a unique opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the lives of families with children who have developmental disabilities. As a Council member, you can contribute your time, expertise, and guidance in ways that match your interests and availability. As a Council member, you can contribute your time, expertise, and guidance in ways that match your interests and availability.

Grant Reviewer*

Assess grant applications and ensure fair funding decisions

The Grant Program is the heart of the organization, written into the mission statement that guides every decision. Reviewers ensure a fair and thoughtful grantmaking process by:

- Reviewing and scoring assigned grant applications.
- Participating in grant review meetings and voting.
- Maintaining confidentiality and impartiality in all deliberations.
- Assessing if the amount of funding requested is appropriate.
- Ensuring that funding decisions reflect both integrity and mission alignment.

**Grant reviewers must have a professional background that qualifies them to assess the content of grant applications.*

**~1-2 hours
PER QUARTER**

Advisor

Provide families with resources, guidance, and support

Advisors provide guidance to families, particularly those who may not receive funding. Based on the grant application or in coordination with a brief family interview, Advisors provide information in a short memo, which may include:

- Information related to therapy, education, insurance, or community supports.
- Connections to families to local groups, workshops, and inclusive programs.
- Practical guidance to help families navigate complex systems with greater confidence.

**~2-3 hours
PER QUARTER**

Mentor

Share experience, lead workshops, and provide mentorship

Mentors bring specialized expertise and serve as a compassionate touchpoint to support families and the community. They:

- Participate in at least two **Bear HUG** sessions per year to share knowledge and answer family questions.
- Offer pro bono or reduced-rate consultations when feasible.
- Mentor early-career professionals or graduate student volunteers.
- Lead educational sessions for families and community partners.
- Serve as thought leaders, expanding the Foundation's reach and credibility.

**~3-4 hours
PER QUARTER**

Time estimates may vary after program launch and as support cadence is established.

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Bear HUG Program

The Bear HUG Program ensures that all families feel supported—whether or not they receive grant funding. Families who apply for, but do not receive grants, may be eligible for the program during which they will benefit from a network of trusted professionals, practical guidance, emotional support, and a sense of belonging within the Brave Little Bears community.

H
helping.

Resources tailored to the family's needs, including therapy practices, medical providers, community organizations, and inclusive activities.

Insight into navigating diagnostic pathways and accessing public services.

Strategies for collaborating effectively with schools, providers, and care teams.

U
uplifting.

Emotional support from professionals familiar with developmental disabilities.

Opportunities to connect with a parent mentor for shared experiences and encouragement.

G
guiding.

Guidance navigating complex systems like health insurance, educational services, and care coordination.

Suggested questions for medical, therapy, or school appointments.

Recommendations for adaptive recreation, arts, or sports programs that foster joy and belonging.

Members typically come from a range of backgrounds, including:



Medical & Health Professionals such as pediatricians, neurologists, geneticists, rehabilitation physicians, ophthalmologists, gastroenterologists, orthopedists, and nutritionists.

Therapy & Rehabilitation Specialists such as speech-language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, feeding, aquatic, and music therapists, and assistive technology experts.



Educational Professionals including special and general education teachers, paraprofessionals, school psychologists, counselors, social workers, and IEP/504 coordinators.

Behavioral & Mental Health Experts such as BCBA's, RBTs, child psychologists, psychiatrists, play therapists, and social skills facilitators.



Family Support & Care Coordinators including case managers, early intervention coordinators, advocates, respite care providers, and nonprofit/community resource navigators.

Parents, caregivers, or other community members who are passionate about helping and have valuable knowledge that could benefit children with developmental disabilities.

