

WHY FORM A TEAM?

A “team” is a group of 2 or more individuals that “team up” to support DSSMC’s cause (promote awareness, acceptance and advocacy for individuals with Down syndrome) or an individual with Down syndrome or a company in support of all individuals with Down syndrome. Teams are instrumental to the success of the Buddy Walk.

Raise Awareness

Down syndrome is a genetic condition that occurs in approximately one in every 733 live births, affecting more than 350,000 people in the United States alone. Recent advances in the understanding of Down syndrome have resulted in dramatic improvements in life span, and individuals with Down syndrome are becoming active participants in our communities. Forming a Buddy Walk team helps us raise awareness about Down syndrome and the contributions these individuals make to our communities!

Enhance the quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome

Your efforts will allow us to increase the activities and programs which will enhance the quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome throughout Mobile county and surrounding areas. The money raised is applied directly to local programs and services and part of the proceeds go to the National Down Syndrome Society. You can make a difference!

WHY FORM A BUDDY WALK TEAM?

To honor a loved one with Down syndrome and to help DSSMC provide programs to help enhance the lives of individuals with Down syndrome and their families. Teams help spread the message of awareness, acceptance and advocacy for all individuals, of all ages with Down syndrome. By recruiting and gathering walkers and donors teams celebrate and support their honoree and teams bring together a group that stands unified for a person and a cause. We encourage you to carry signs or banners with the name of the individual with Down syndrome being honored. The team that raises the most will have their picture on next year’s Buddy Walk brochure, serve as our Grand Marshalls, and receive a prize.

WHY FORM A COMPANY TEAM?

The Buddy Walk draws people together in a healthy activity for a worthy cause. Forming a company team is a great way to build morale, team spirit and a sense of camaraderie among employees, as well as increase your visibility in the community. It sends a strong signal that you and your employees care about the health and welfare of your neighbors. In short, it’s good for public and community relations! Team participation costs your company very little since funds are raised through individual donations gathered by team members from co-workers, families and friends. Of course, the best reason for your team to participate in the Down Syndrome Society of Mobile County Buddy Walk is the satisfaction you and your teammates will have from knowing that the dollars you raise will help fund programs for people with Down syndrome in your community. Company teams may be allowed to bring company banners or posters with your company name to show support of all individuals with Down syndrome. We also have vendor space available for a nominal fee.

HOW DO I FORM A TEAM?

- 1. Submit a Team Captain Commitment Form either by mail, fax or hand deliver and start recruiting members**
- 2. Copy and distribute Registration Forms to each team member or you may choose to use the Team Member Sign-up Sheet. All available on-line.**
- 3. Modify Donation Request Letter Sample to fit your team; E-mail to friends & family. You can also use Facebook or Twiter if you are able to.**
- 5. For company teams, ask your employer about matching your donation.**
- 6. Fax/mail your team’s registration forms and submit donations collected to DSSMC by September 24th in order to guarantee T-shirts before the day of the walk. T-shirts will be available at the walk on a first come first serve basis.**
- 7. Deadline for team collections (to be counted toward competition totals) is Friday, October 2nd by 4 pm.**

TEAM REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Each team will have a designated TEAM CAPTAIN. This person will be responsible for all registration procedures.
2. Complete a TEAM CAPTAIN COMMITMENT FORM either by mail or fax. This form will allow us to contact you with important details regarding competitions, deadlines and updates on the walk itself.
3. Make sure that each team member and any walkers recruited by your team have filled out a walker registration form. A signature on the registration form is required for each adult (18 years old or older) in attendance. Entire families can register on one form. Registration forms are located in the brochure or as a single sheet. Brochures and registration forms can be downloaded from the website (www.dssmc.org) or requested by mail by contacting DSSMC.
4. Provide each member with a registration form or a brochure (can be duplicated as needed by the team member) in order to recruit additional walkers and obtain shirt orders from donors. Registration is \$10 per person and a T-shirt will be given. Donations in excess of \$10 will be considered a donation.
5. Provide each member with a Donation Log for collecting money prior to the walk. This is a tool that can also be used as a form of registration. Please make sure it is signed and include amount donated. Donations can be submitted by cash, check or money order. Checks should be made out to DSSMC. Credit card donations are now accepted on-line through our website via PayPal.
6. To receive a T-shirt prior to the walk, forms and corresponding money must be turned in by Thursday, September 24th, 2009 at 4 pm. **This deadline is only to guarantee a T-shirt before the walk.** Walkers will be contacted to pick up their T-shirts at the GWES Child Development Center by October 8th.
7. The TEAM CAPTAIN is responsible for submitting all donations and registration forms on **Friday, October 2nd no later than 4 pm** at GWES Child Development Center at 10 Westminster Way, Mobile, AL to assure monies are counted toward TEAM COMPETITION totals.
8. The TEAM CAPTAIN is responsible for submitting all remaining team money raised on the day of the walk. However, it will not be counted toward TEAM COMPETITION totals.

Please feel free to contact Dora Harding with any questions you may have at 776-6861 or 442-1128 or by e-mail at dora@dssmc.org

HOW TO RECRUIT MEMBERS FOR YOUR TEAM

START WITH THE PEOPLE WHO ARE NEAREST AND DEAREST TO YOU, THEN WORK OUTWARD TO OTHERS. Consider family members, friends, neighbors, business associates, others in the community (your hairdresser, grocer, florist, etc.)

CONTACT POTENTIAL TEAMMATES IN PERSON OR BY PHONE. Send e-mail and letter to any you can't reach directly. Personalize your approach by asking them to help you support this important cause. Explain to them why it is important to you, and how you've become involved. Never forget the power of the face-to-face meeting. People will walk because you asked them. You speaking directly to a potential walker or donor will show that you are dedicated to the cause. And remember to follow up!

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEAMMATES TO SPREAD THE WORD. Invite others to join your team or start a Buddy Walk team of their own.

HOLD A TEAM GET-TOGETHER. Get everyone involved and excited. See how everyone's donation drive is progressing and use the materials in this packet to give them advice and encouragement.

HOW TO PROMOTE FRIENDLY COMPETITION AMONG WALKERS

- Coach walkers to raise at least \$250 each or other amount as you see fit.
- Have a Team Name! It shows unity and interest! (ie: Charlie's Angels, Steele's Stars, Panther Power, etc.) Have team members offer suggestions or vote on their favorite name.
- Incorporate pictures of your "Buddy" in creative ways (ie: buttons for team members, 8 1/2 x 11 signs to carry when soliciting pledges, thank-you letters, poster for day of the walk)

HOW TO RAISE \$250 IN ONLY TEN DAYS!

Remember your “sphere of influence”

CONSIDER: exercise/work-out buddies, your child’s sports team coaches (or other parents), friends, neighbors, work, daycare, etc. Don’t hesitate to contact your neighbor down the street who is also the CEO of a company and may want to become a major sponsor for the walk.

HOW CAN YOUR COMPANY GET INVOLVED? A district manager of a national retail chain encouraged her company to participate. The employees of each store challenged one another to form at least one team per store and raise money for Down syndrome. They had fun while increasing morale!

GET YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL INVOLVED! (Remind the school that October is also Down Syndrome Awareness Month). A teacher at a private school implemented “dress down” day for the entire student body and faculty. For a \$5 donation, a student or teacher could dress in jeans or other casual clothes for the day, instead of the uniform. (ie: out of uniform day)

GET YOUR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION INVOLVED! Ask to put a poster on the bulletin board. (Posters are available to all Team Captains or by calling Dora at 776-6861 leave your name and address and amount of posters needed.) See if any announcement can be made during services. Leave a donation envelope in the fellowship hall or foyer.

CONTACT YOUR CHILD’S GIRL/BOY SCOUT TROOP. Scouts are encouraged to be involved in their community and participate in the “Do a Good Turn” campaign.

SOME ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU AND YOUR KIDS CAN RAISE MONEY FOR THE BUDDY WALK:

Car washes, Garage sales, Hold a Dog Wash (like a car wash) and ask for \$5 to \$10 a dog. Have a lemonade stand; during your neighborhood garage sales. Have a day where you ask all co-workers to “empty their pockets” for the Buddy Walk and collect everyone’s spare change.

Day #	Details	Total
1	Make a \$25 Personal Contribution	\$25
2	Ask Your Significant Other For \$15	\$40
3	Ask Your Mom or Dad For \$15	\$55
4	Ask A Friend For \$15	\$70
5	Ask Your Boss For \$25 (Ask if your company has a matching gifts program!)	\$95
6	Ask 3 Co-Workers For \$15 Each	\$140
7	Ask Your Sister or Brother For \$15	\$155
8	Ask Your In-Laws For \$15	\$170
9	Ask Your Neighbors For \$15 Each	\$200
10	Ask a Business Owner For \$50 (Dry Cleaner, favorite Restaurant, Grocer, Etc.)	\$250

LETTER-WRITING OR E-MAIL CAMPAIGN

The most effective way of raising money is to conduct a letter-writing or e-mail campaign:

- All you have to do is ASK.
- Walkers who conduct a letter-writing campaign raise an average of 5 to 10 times more money than those who do not. The average walker raises \$100. The average letter-writer raises \$500 to \$1,000 and above!
- You'll have so much fun going to your mailbox or in-box each day to see the responses roll in!!!

Just follow the steps and watch the donations pour in!

1. WRITE THE LETTER

You can download the sample letters to edit and use in your campaign from our website (www.dssmc.org). If you do not have internet access, please call Dora at 776-6861.

The letter should explain your reason for participating in the walk and you can send the letter to friends and family across the country or to your neighbors and classmates. Perhaps you or someone you know is directly influenced by Down syndrome. Your letter should reflect your genuine desire to help raise funds for programs and services of DSSMC. Including a photo works! So does including a self-addressed, stamped envelope to return donations. Include a line in your letter asking that donations be mailed directly to you. We want to make sure that you/your team receive proper credit for all donations collected. **All checks should be made payable to: DSSMC.**

When writing your letters, invite people and give them the option of walking with you as a member of your team, in addition to just making a contribution. One Team Captain wrote a letter to everyone who supported her in a walk the previous year and asked them to not only sponsor her again this year, but for them to ask at least one new person to donate. She doubled her fundraising efforts with just one letter!!!

2. DUPLICATE THE LETTER

Photocopy your letter. Sign each letter individually, perhaps with a personal note like "Thank you in advance for your support."

3. MAIL THE LETTER VIA MAIL OR EMAIL

Look over your address book, holiday card list, rolodex, neighborhood directory and wedding guest list. Mail to your family and extended family, friends, neighbors, business associates, vendors, the temp agency your company uses, the office supply company, your accounting and law firms, clubs or organizations that you and your family are involved with throughout the year. It's also a great excuse to catch up with friends you haven't heard from in a while! Ask for a specific amount. And, remember to enclose a self addressed envelope.

4. WATCH AS THE RESPONSES ROLL IN

It will be exciting to get the mail when donations start arriving! You will be surprised how quickly you can surpass your \$250 goal!

5. GIVE THANKS!

As always, remember to sincerely thank everyone who supported you. Take pride in knowing you did your best to support the Down Syndrome Society of Mobile County.