



WALK NOW FOR AUTISM SPEAKS™ PARTICIPANT GUIDE



AUTISM SPEAKS™
It's time to listen.

www.AutismSpeaks.org

Everybody Wants to be Heard.

Welcome to Walk Now for Autism Speaks!

Thank you for joining Walk Now for Autism Speaks' event. Our grassroots autism walk program is North America's largest and our signature fundraising and awareness event.

Step 1: Done! You Have Already Registered for the Walk

You now have access to your Event Headquarters where you can:

- Build/Edit my Webpage
- Send Emails to Friends and Family
- Check Donation Report
- Edit my Login/Password
- Edit my Profile

This is your private area to check on donations you receive and email friends and family.

To start off, first go to the "My Webpage" section to edit your 'Personal Page'. This is the page your donors will see; so give it your own touch by adding a picture and information about you and your reasons for participating in the event.

Next, start your email campaign to solicit friends and family for donations and to build your team. The email message will automatically include a direct link back to your personal page to make it as easy as possible for them to make a donation or join your team.

Visit your "Reports" area often and see how you are doing! Utilize the other convenient tools to help you reach your goal!

Step 2: Write your Letter!

Letter writing and email campaigns are the easiest and most effective way to raise money!

Your personal letter/email should include:

- Your personal goal – aim high!
- Why you are walking – if you have a connection with autism, discuss how this has affected your life and the lives of your family and friends
- Provide some facts about Autism and Autism Speaks
- Ask for a specific \$\$ amount and ask everyone you know – the worst they can say is no
- Say thank you – whether someone says yes or no; either acknowledge their generosity and support, or you can leave the door open for next year

Sample Email Letter:



Please Support The Brothers Zechello! Steve, Kristen, Steven and Anthony along with many members of their circle of family and friends will be walking in Walk Now for Autism Speaks fundraising event. Please support our team, **THE BROTHERS ZECHELLO**. We would be honored if you would join our team and walk with us on Walk Day.



***Together we can make a difference by advancing and accelerating autism research.
So let's get walking for Autism Speaks!***

☐ Step 3: Turn in Your Donations

If your donors make a donation online, you will be credited through the automatic system and receive an email alerting you of the gift. Donations made online are typically 40% higher than those made by other means. If your donors give you cash or checks, please fill out the donation form for each donation. A donation form can be downloaded from your Event Headquarters. This will ensure that your Walk and/or team are credited for their donation.

Mail donations to:

Autism Speaks/Walk Now for Autism Speaks
5455 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 2250
Los Angeles, CA 90036

That’s it! Just 3 easy steps to help us reach our goal: to change the future for all who struggle with autism spectrum disorders. Please keep in mind that we are here for you every “step” of the way so please don’t hesitate to contact your local office.

Once again, thank you for your support.

Other Fundraising Ideas

Vendor Sponsorship

Walk Now for Autism Speaks provides a great opportunity for both local and national companies to support the mission of Autism Speaks in a way that promotes high visibility for the company in the local community. Partnership opportunities include: sponsoring the walk, building a corporate team, providing in-kind donations to help defray expenses or conducting promotional campaigns at your own site. Have your company send a letter to its vendors to contribute to your Walk team. Often a vendor will donate generously to a company that has purchased its products.

Wrap-Around Fundraisers

Wrap-arounds are fundraisers that you can hold to increase awareness and raise extra funds for the Walk. All expenses for wrap-arounds are incurred by the fundraiser. See some examples below. Call your local office for more information.

- **Car Washes** - Great way to include teens and kids into fundraising while staying cool in the summer heat.
- **Casual Day** – With the endorsement of your company’s management, hold a “Dress Down for Autism Speaks” day. Allow individuals the opportunity to wear jeans for a donation to the Walk.
- **Garage Sale** - Plan a garage sale to add to your fundraising efforts. Clean out your closets and get team members to donate items.
- **Sell Your Services** - Offer to clean gutters, mow lawns or run errands for neighbors for a donation.



For more ideas, go to your walk website and click on Fundraising Tools!

Matching Gifts – Double Your Donations

Matching Gifts are a great way to increase your total fundraising dollars for Autism Speaks. Find out if your employer has a matching gifts program. For a list of companies with matching gifts programs you can visit www.matchinggifts.com/autism. Some companies don't just match gifts made by employees – but gifts made by spouses and/or retirees. Some companies provide donations to 'match' the volunteer hours you have spent on your efforts for Walk Now for Autism Speaks. So, take a few minutes to find out if you can double your donations today! If your employer doesn't have an 'official' matching gifts program there are creative ways to double your impact as well...

- Ask your boss if s/he will "match" what your team or department raises for Walk Now for Autism Speaks.
- Ask your company to 'sponsor' each walker for \$25, \$50 or \$100 for their efforts
- Ask your boss for a 'challenge grant' – that if your team raises its goal – that the company will make a donation in honor of the team to Autism Speaks

How to Raise \$250 in 5 Weeks

Here are some simple steps to help you raise \$250.00 for Walk Now for Autism Speaks. Raising money should be easy and fun. This process can be done in 5 weeks, with 2 steps per week.

Week 1	Put in your own contribution of \$25.....	\$25
	Ask your significant other for \$25.....	\$50
Week 2	Ask a friend for \$25.....	\$75
	Ask a neighbor for \$25.....	\$100
Week 3	Ask a relative for \$25.....	\$125
	Ask your boss or a coworker for \$25.....	\$150
Week 4	Ask your doctor for \$25.....	\$175
	Ask your hair stylist or barber for \$25.....	\$200
Week 5	Ask your local merchant for \$25.....	\$225
	Ask your dentist for \$25.....	\$250



You just raised \$250.00 for Walk Now for Autism Speaks and it was easy. Who else can assist your Walk Now for Autism Speaks efforts?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - College roommate | - Email address book | - Holiday card list |
| - PTA/Scouts list | - Place of Worship | - Sports team |
| - Fraternity alumni | - Neighborhood | - Gym |
| - Autism Service Provider | - Dry cleaner | - Restaurants |
| - Grocer | - Parents | - Teachers |
| - Classmates | - Plumber | - Banker |
| - Lawyer | - Vendor | - Client |
| - Electrician | - Other friends | - Other relatives |
| - Alumni Association/Colleagues | | - Neighborhood organizations & clubs |

Join our Grand Club!

Be part of the prestigious group of walkers who will raise \$1,000 or more for Walk for Autism Speaks. The program was created to give extra recognition and VIP treatment on Walk Day to these top walkers. Our goal is double the number of Grand Club members in 2010. Want to join us? Start fundraising today!



Your Dollars at Work

Autism Speaks is dedicated to increasing awareness, research, advocacy and family services for all who struggle with autism spectrum disorders. Where do your dollars go?

Family Services

Additional Family Resources

- 100-Day Kit for Newly Diagnosed Families -- this free kit provides helpful, personalized information which includes local resources, support groups, where and how to find services, local conferences and recreational activities (also available in Spanish).
- School Community Toolkit -- available online to assist members of the school community in understanding and supporting students with autism.
- Family Services Resource Guide -- lists over 26,500 resources nationwide. This extensive, searchable online database brings resources to families, like early intervention to adult services, and is searchable by zip code.
- Autism Response Team (ART) -- the ART team are experienced and trained to respond to a variety of questions and concerns from families affected by autism. Call 1-800-AUTISM2 to speak with an ART representative.

Science

National Research Initiatives - Autism is a complex disease and we believe initiatives that bring together researchers in varied fields (genetics, behavioral sciences and many others) promote a collaborative approach that will help solve the mysteries of this devastating disorder as quickly as possible.

- Environmental Factors Initiative -- examines the potential involvement of toxins as well as infectious agents in our environment.
- Innovative Technology for Autism -- supports the development of products that provide real world solutions to issues faced by those with autism
- Treatment Initiative -- working towards achieving standardization of treatment, development and translation of innovative therapies, creation of assistive technologies and formation of centers with integrated multi-disciplinary medical teams
- Biomarkers -- Biological markers can also help define autism subtypes and reveal potential therapeutic targets.
- High Risk Baby Sibs -- discover the earliest behavioral and biomedical markers of autism spectrum disorder.
- Toddler Treatment Network -- focus on parent-delivered interventions.
- Autism Epidemiology Network -- international collaborative effort in autism epidemiology.
- Autism Genome Project -- the largest study ever conducted to find the genes associated with inherited risk for autism.
- Brain Development Initiative -- the creation of effective biologically-based treatments for autism will require knowledge of the underlying brain defects. Identifying what goes awry in the developing brain of children with autism is the first step.

Advocacy

Nationwide, few private insurance companies or other employee benefit plans cover autism therapies. In fact, most insurance companies designate autism as a diagnostic exclusion, meaning that no autism-specific services are covered. Autism Votes, an initiative of Autism Speaks, is working to change state insurance laws to require private health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders. Sign up to receive legislative updates at www.AutismVotes.org.

Awareness

- As a result of the award-winning Autism Speaks 'Odds' campaign in partnership with the Ad Council, there has been a 43 percentage point increase in public awareness of ASDs.
- In December 2007, the United Nations declared April 2nd World Autism Awareness Day.