



# BEST BUDDIES® FRIENDSHIP WALK

# Walker Fundraising Toolkit





# BEST BUDDIES® FRIENDSHIP WALK

*You're now registered for the Best Buddies Friendship Walk! Let's spread the word about your participation and the fundraising goals you've set.*

## Let's Get Started: Customize Your Fundraising Page

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### 1.) Log into your personal fundraising page

Visit [BestBuddiesFriendshipWalk.org](https://BestBuddiesFriendshipWalk.org) and click on the event you're participating in. You will see the words "Login" in the top right corner. Click that and enter the username and password you chose when you registered.



### 2.) Set a fundraising goal

Next, enter in the fundraising goal you are aiming to raise. Choose a goal that is attainable. Remember, \$50 gets you the Friendship Walk t-shirt and incentive levels are at **\$150, \$250, \$500, \$750, \$1,000, \$1,500, \$2,500 and \$5,000!**



### 3.) Make it personal

Upload a photo of yourself and possibly one that shows why you are walking and fundraising for Best Buddies. Next, share a story about your participation in the Friendship Walk and what Best Buddies means to you.



### 4.) Kick things off

Get your fundraising page started with a donation of your own. It is not mandatory to do so, but does help get things started. It also shows your personal vested interest in the cause and your efforts.





# Social Media

*Social media has become one of the most powerful tools to help you succeed in fundraising. Below are some sample messages you can post on your social media networks.*

## A message for after you have registered:

I've registered for this year's Best Buddies Friendship Walk on (DATE). I'm walking because (REASON FOR WALKING) and I'm asking for your support. Here is a link to my personal fundraising page (LINK). Thank you for any and all support!

## During your fundraising campaign

- Did you know 81% of people with intellectual & developmental disabilities are not employed?  
● I'm raising funds to something about that! Visit my fundraising webpage (LINK) to learn more about my efforts to make our community a better place.
- I'm halfway to my fundraising goal for the Best Buddies Friendship Walk! I'm \$xx from my goal and there are xx weeks before the event. Will you help me? Visit my personal fundraising page to make your donation today. (LINK) Thank you for helping me!
- It's only xx weeks before this year's Best Buddies Friendship Walk! I'm so proud that my participation will make a difference in the lives of people living with intellectual & developmental disabilities. Please support my efforts and visit my personal fundraising page here -> (LINK)

## Remember...

- Always include a link to your personal fundraising page
- Don't be afraid to post frequently about your fundraising progress
- Publicly thank you donors and let them know they are appreciated



# Writing a Letter

*After you've set up your personal fundraising website – it's time to start fundraising! There's still power in the written word, so here are a few hints to get you started writing the perfect fundraising request letter.*

## **1.) Create a list of EVERYONE you know**

Do not hesitate to include casual acquaintances, as they will understand that you are seeking donations for a worthy cause.

## **2.) Don't be afraid to ask**

People want to help! Don't be afraid to ask them for their help. Include a personal fundraising goal in the text and suggest giving levels.

## **3.) Make it personal**

A handwritten note with a short personal message can go a long ways. It may take more time, but sending one will make potential donors feel extra special.

## **4.) Put your HEART into it**

Let them know why you are fundraising. The cause is important to you – let them know why. Including a personal story of why you have take on this challenge will go a long way!

## **5.) Make it easy to donate**

Include your personal fundraising page and encourage online donations. For those who can't make an online donation, go the extra mile and include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

## **6.) Set a deadline**

People are motivated by deadlines. Ask for donations to be made before the Walk date so that in case donations are sent in late, you're ok.

## **7.) Send a reminder**

Keep a list of those who sent in a donation. Send a reminder to those that have not yet donated. Make sure to include fundraising updates in your reminder.

## **8.) Send a THANK YOU card**

It's nice to receive a note acknowledging their donation – no matter the amount. It also helps develop a rapport with the potential for continued support in the future.

# Letter Sample

Dear XXX,

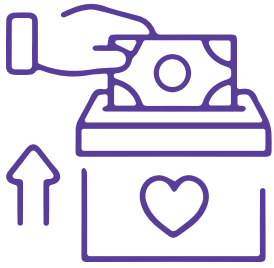
I know it's hard to do, but can you imagine what it would be like if you didn't have a single friend? Think of how isolating your world would be if the ONLY people you talked to were your family members and paid caregivers. Sadly, too many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community know exactly how that feels. They don't know what it's like to get a phone call or a birthday gift from a friend. But they do know what it's like to be bullied, ignored or excluded. That needs to change, and that's exactly why Best Buddies exists!

Best Buddies is an international, non-profit organization that provides opportunities to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through meaningful, one-to-one friendships and supported employment. I have made a commitment to serve as a student leader for the Best Buddies chapter at my school and I am raising funds for the upcoming Best Buddies Friendship Walk to support our programs throughout Middle Tennessee. I am reaching out to see if you would consider making a donation to support my efforts.

The Best Buddies Friendship Walk will take place on (DATE) from (TIME) at (LOCATION). We'll do a mile walk around the park, followed by food, games, music, face painting, and inflatables. It will be so much fun and a great way to spread awareness about our mission. We can't continue growing our programs without the funds we raise through this walk.

Will you join me in opening up a whole new world for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities? If you want to be a part of this movement, please consider sending a contribution in the enclosed envelope.

In friendship,  
(NAME)



# Fundraising Ideas

*Fundraising can be a lot of fun! The more unique you make it, the more fun you and the people who support you will have. Below are some unique ideas to help your fundraising efforts. CREATIVITY = FUN!*

## Coordinate a “Dress Down Day”

At your office, ask colleagues to donate \$5 to your fundraising efforts and then as a reward work with HR to ensure that everyone who donates can dress casually on the designated day!

## Corporate Matching Gifts

Corporations will often match gifts given to you by employees. This is a great way to double or triple your fundraising efforts. Contact your HR Department for more information. Ask each donor if their company matches charitable donations.

## Spaghetti Dinner or Potluck

Host a spaghetti dinner or potluck in conjunction with your school, work, and faith-based or neighborhood organization. Don't forget to put out a donation jar for those who stop by and don't purchase anything.

## Go Greek

Contact the local sorority/fraternity you are an alum of. Ask them if they would do one of their philanthropy/charity events for your cause. Or just ask them for help doing volunteer work for your event (have them bake cookies for your bake sale, for example.)

## Bake Sale

Get friends/colleagues to bake up some goodies to use to collect donations at the office or at sports games or other events.

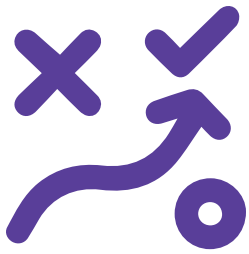
## Restaurant Night

If you have contacts at a local restaurant or bar, or even if you are just a frequent customer, see if they would let you plan an event. Maybe they donate a certain percentage of their sales, maybe their tips, or you could organize a celebrity bartending night.

## Use your passion!

Host a clothing or book swap. Baby sit. Pet sit. Proofread and edit resumes. Start a coin jar and collect and turn in all your loose change each month! Anything goes and can be turned into a powerful fundraiser!





# Make a Plan

*Making a plan will help you reach your fundraising goal. Below are a few suggestions on how you can get there. Having a plan = SUCCESS!*

## RAISE \$250

- Ask 4 relatives for \$25 each..... \$100
- Ask 5 friends for \$10 each..... \$50
- Ask 4 neighbors for \$10 each..... \$40
- Ask 4 co-workers for \$10 each... \$40
- Sponsor Yourself.....\$20



## RAISE \$500

### Email Campaign

Recruit 5 team members who will commit to sending out 25 emails asking for \$25 donations. Even with a return rate of 25%, you will have raised more than \$100 per team member.

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### Partner With A Vendor

Work with a local company (i.e. Mary Kay, Stella & Dot Jewelry, Tastefully Simple, etc.) to set up a shop in your office lobby for the day. Or host a party at home. Request that 20% of sales come back to your fundraising efforts.

### Casual For A Cause

Host a dress down day at your office – charge \$5 for everyone to participate.

### Game Watch

Invite 10 friends over to watch a game (Super Bowl, March Madness, Stanley Cup, etc..) and ask for a \$10 donation per person. Provide snacks and drinks and it will be a party everyone will remember for a great cause!



# Who Do You Know?

*Successful fundraisers gain support from friends & family – and people all around them! Here are 50 that can help you achieve your fundraising goals.*

## **Make a phone call to:**

1. Parents
2. Sisters
3. Sister-in-law
4. Brothers
5. Brother-in-law
6. Aunts/Uncles
7. Cousins
8. Children
9. Nieces/Nephews
10. Grandparents

## **Send an email to:**

11. Accountant
12. Attorney
13. Mechanic
14. Dentist
15. Chiropractor
16. Landlord
17. Real estate agent
18. Physical Therapist
19. Physician
20. Wedding planner

## **Drop a letter off to:**

21. Pet groomer/vet
22. Dry cleaners
23. Florist
24. Barber/Stylist
25. School
26. Supermarket
27. Manicurist
28. Bartender
29. Gym/Yoga instructor
30. Pharmacist

## **Others you might call or email:**

31. College friends
32. Fraternity/Sorority Friends
33. High school friends
34. Facebook friends
35. Children's friends
36. Children's teachers
37. Neighbors
38. Parent's friends
39. Former Co-workers
40. Coaches

## **Maybe you know people from:**

41. Work
42. Bowling league
43. Gym/Yoga
44. Childcare
45. Place of worship
46. Coffee house
47. Neighborhood café
48. Camp
49. Golf course
50. Favorite restaurant

## **DON'T FORGET!**

51. YOU can make a personal donation!







## FAQs

### **What is the Best Buddies Friendship Walk?**

The Best Buddies Friendship Walk is the leading walk in the country supporting inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (also known as IDD).

Since 2009, more than 200,000 participants in 70 cities have walked to raise awareness for inclusion, friendship, leadership development and integrated job opportunities for people with IDD. Funds raised at the Friendship Walks help move our mission forward by funding local Best Buddies programs. It also provides a unique opportunity to see our mission in action at the local level. Every dollar raised goes towards making the world a more inclusive, accepting place.

### **When is the Walk?**

Find your local walk information [HERE](#).

### **Where can I send a donation?**

Please make all checks payable to "Best Buddies" to mail to your local Best Buddies office with a donation form or letter stating who the gift should be credited to. If you'd like to make a cash donation, please contact your local Best Buddies office directly to arrange. (Never put cash in the mail!)

### **How are funds raised from the Walk used?**

Funds raised support local programs that support people with IDD, including school-based friendship programs, leadership development, integrated employment and inclusive living.

### **Is there a minimum amount participants must raise in order to walk?**

The Friendship Walk is (and will always be!) free to register and Best Buddies does not require individuals to raise a minimum amount to participate in the walk. With that said, individuals who register can set a fundraising goal and raise money from friends and family to support local Best Buddies programs! Individuals must raise a minimum of \$50 to receive a t-shirt on walk day.

### **Other Facts...**

- 200 million people around the world have IDD
- We have Best Buddies programs in 56 countries worldwide
- 7.5 million people in the United States have IDD
- We have almost 2,500 Best Buddies chapters around the world
- Best Buddies impact the lives of 1.2 million people
- 81% of adults with IDD do not have a job