



Team Captain Packet

29th Annual Indianapolis Buddy Walk®

Saturday, October 3rd, 2026

Celebration Plaza at White River State Park





**Together we can make it
happen!**

29th Buddy Walk[®] Indianapolis

2026 Fundraising Goal

\$200,000



Welcome, Team Captain!

Thank you for stepping up to lead a team for the Buddy Walk Indianapolis. You are an extremely important part of this event. Because of you, families feel supported, awareness grows, and our community becomes stronger and more inclusive.

Because of you, teams will feel welcomed and informed.

Whether this is your first year or you've been walking with us for years, please know how much we appreciate you.

We're here to support you every step of the way.

This packet contains:

Important Dates to Remember

List of Team Captain Responsibilities

List of fundraising incentives

Fundraising Tips

Sponsorship Form (sponsorship info also available here:

<https://charity.pledgeit.org/c/ve0p1zc5dn/pages/sponsors2026>

Exhibitor Information and Form (in case you know of an agency or business that would like to be in our information tent)

Marketing Tips

Permission to fundraise document.

Information about Down Syndrome Indiana



2026 Important Dates to Remember

Friday, April 3rd Buddy Walk Indianapolis Kickoff!

6 months to plan = 6 months of making a difference.

Saturday, July 11th



DSI Summer Picnic- register at register@dsindiana.org Come and get your Buddy Walk Sign, a fundraising kit and other Buddy Walk items! Can't attend? No problem! Contact Marni and she will get you your kit! (317)490-1720

Saturday, Aug 22nd



Cutoff for "Team Billboard Challenge" if your team raises \$5000 by this date you will earn a billboard with your loved one's picture.



Saturday, Sept 5th



Cutoff for your team earn a personalized "Why I Walk sign" by your team raising \$700 by this date.



Saturday, Sept 19th



Cutoff for your team earn your team name sign. Your team must be created by this date in order to receive your sign with your team name printed on it. Never fear, we will have blank signs you can decorate!

GET INVOLVED, BE INSPIRED

Responsibilities of a Team Captain

Design



Register at <https://charity.pledgeit.org/BuddyWalkIndy>



Customize your team page with your own story. Pledge IT has enhanced your design options!



Look for a customized graphic from the @buddywalk email!



Upload photos of your buddy and supporters!



Set a fundraising goal—aim HIGH!

Publish



Email link of your team page to friends & family



Spread the word on social media



Email your team on a regular basis. Consider starting a group chat!



Host a Facebook fundraiser—Marni will add it to your team page!



Send the sponsorship information to all businesses you can! This is the very best way to climb the leader board!

Manage



Maintain team member information, t-shirt sizes, and fundraising efforts.



Encourage all supporters to sign up online



Push all team members to find sponsorships. Let Marni know if you need a sponsorship / fundraising graphic for any teammate!



Host a Facebook fundraiser—Marni will add it to your team page!



Understand the fundraising incentives and make teammates aware!

Fundraising Incentives

For Team Captains and Individuals

For every \$50 raised, a team will receive one T-shirt. (The captain is responsible for distributing the shirts to individuals who raise \$50)

Each team that raises \$5,000 by August 22nd will be showcased on a billboard on an Indiana Roadway. Please note that we have limited say in the location. The company works hard to put it as close to the individual's home as possible.

Each team that raises \$1,000 by October 4th, 2026 will receive a DSI branded mini-cooler. (Marni will contact the captain directly)







Each team that raises \$700 by September 5th will be receive a Why We Walk Sign. (Captain must provide a photo and statement by 10:00am on September 7th to ensure the sign is printed on time.)

More fundraising incentives will be announced in July!

2025 First Place Team- Rae of Sunshine \$36,000



Fundraising Tips

-  Put out a collection bin or jar at school, church, local business
-  “Dimes for Down Syndrome” – 1 roll of dimes = \$5.00
-  Use incentives to encourage your team to raise money (i.e. gift cards, artwork by your buddy, gas cards, etc.)
-  Encourage all teammates to contact their HR director on how their company handles company matching gifts.
-  Hold car washes, bake sales, Dress Down for Down syndrome days
-  Include information in company newsletters, intranets & bulletin boards. Let Marni know if you need any graphics or flyers!
-  Work with local stores or restaurants to see if they would donate a portion of the proceeds to your team “Dine Out For Down Syndrome” (i.e. BW3, Bob Evans, Culvers etc.)
-  Organize a neighborhood block party, spaghetti dinner, or local celebration.
-  Use schools, businesses and religious organizations to do raffles and participate in other fundraising efforts for your team
-  Have a consultant party (i.e. Pampered Chef, Avon, etc.) and have a portion of the proceeds go to your team
-  Have a school do a “Dress Down for Down Syndrome Day” or an “End the “r” Word” banner signing event.

GET INVOLVED, BE INSPIRED



29TH ANNUAL BUDDY WALK®

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Incentives	Programming Partner	Title Sponsor	Corporate Sponsor	Tent Sponsor	Community Sponsor	First Steps Sponsor	Awareness Sponsor
One sign along the walk promoting a fact about Down syndrome that says company name	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Five complimentary T-shirts for team walkers at the walk	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Company table at exhibitor / info tent if desired (please specify on application)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Company logo and link on DSI Buddy Walk website & social media	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Company logo sent to over 1,000 DSI E-News subscribers	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Three signs promoting a fact about Down syndrome that says company name	X	X	X	X	X		
Company logo/name featured on signage at the walk	X	X	X	X	X		
Company name on walk T-shirts	X	X	X	X			
Company name and logo on event posters and banner	X	X	X				
Top Prominent logo/name placement on walk T-shirts	X	X					
Top Prominent logo/name placement on event brochures and posters	X	X					
Ten complimentary T-shirts for team walkers at the walk	X	X					
Company highlighted throughout the year when advertising our other events (such as DSI Summer Picnic)	X						
Sponsor award on day of walk	X						
Sponsorship Value	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$500	\$250

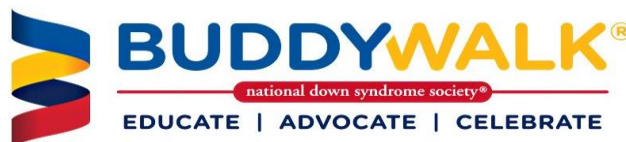
Special Notes

- All contributions and Buddy Walk® sponsorships benefit Down Syndrome Indiana.
- Down syndrome Indiana is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.
- Federal Tax ID #80-0732286
- All Sponsorship forms must be received by **September 7th, 2026**, to be included on Buddy Walk promotional materials & t-shirts.

Buddy Walk® is on Saturday, October 3rd, 2026

Please send attached confirmation form to:

Down Syndrome Indiana, 615 N. Alabama Street, STE 205 Indianapolis, IN 46204 or fax the completed form to 317-925-7619, or scan and email the completed form to buddywalk@dsindiana.org.



I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THE BUDDY WALK® INDIANAPOLIS!

Name: _____

Agency Name (if applicable): _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Would you like to exhibit at our information tent? (Our policy states that exhibitors refrain from engaging in any monetary transactions)

(Please circle one) Yes No

Name of Person exhibiting: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Are you interested in volunteering for DSI? (Please circle one): Yes No

Relationship to an individual with Down syndrome: (Please circle all that apply)

Parent Grandparent Professional Educator Self Advocate
Sibling No Relation Loved one of an individual who is now deceased Other

I would like to support Down Syndrome Indiana's mission to serve as a helpful resource providing information, support and activities that, combined or individually, promote growth and participation of people with Down syndrome in their communities. I

would like to make the following contribution: ___ \$10,000 ___ \$5,000 ___ \$2,500 ___ \$1,500 ___ \$1,000
___ \$500 ___ \$250 ___ Other (Please write in amount) _____

Please place a check mark next to the method of payment below:

___ Check: Please make check payable to Down Syndrome Indiana and mail to:
Down Syndrome Indiana, 615 N. Alabama Street, STE 205 Indianapolis, IN 46204

___ Charge Card: Please fill in additional information

___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ Other, please write card type here: _____

Account #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Authorized Signature: _____



TOGETHER FOR
DOWN SYNDROME

Please join us for the 29th Annual Buddy Walk® Information Expo!

On Saturday, October 3rd, 2026, Down Syndrome Indiana will be celebrating our 29th annual Buddy Walk® in Celebration Plaza of White River State Park. The Buddy Walk® was established by the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) in 1995 to celebrate acceptance and inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome in their communities. Nationally, Buddy Walk® is the most widely recognized public awareness program for the Down syndrome community. Locally, it is currently the largest fundraising and awareness event for Down Syndrome Indiana.

The Buddy Walk® will be a unique opportunity for vendors and other not-for-profit organizations to explain the services they provide to our community. The Information Expo will be open from 9:00am to 12:00pm for families and their guests to explore. This year, we are expecting more than 3,000 participants, most of whom will at least walk through the tent once! We ask that vendors, who are not already sponsors, make a \$100 donation to the Buddy Walk® general fund in exchange for space in the Information Expo. Not-for-profit organizations with missions directly aligned with that of Down Syndrome Indiana are welcome to exhibit, at a reduced rate of \$50. Our policy states that all exhibitors refrain from engaging in any monetary transactions of any type at the event. The information tent is our largest tent on site, and we provide a table and two chairs for all exhibitors.

Attached you will find a Contact Information form. If you would like to be a part of the 29th Annual Buddy Walk® Information Expo, presented by Down Syndrome Indiana, please return the completed form, with payment, to the Down Syndrome Indiana office so that we can reserve your space and prepare for your needs.

Down Syndrome Indiana
c/o Buddy Walk® Info Tent
615 N. Alabama Street Ste 205
Indianapolis, IN 46204

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the Buddy Walk® Coordinator at 317-490-1720 or by email at buddywalk@dsindiana.org.

Warmest regards,

Marni Meunier
Buddy Walk Coordinator, Down Syndrome Indiana



TOGETHER FOR
DOWN SYNDROME

Indianapolis Buddy Walk Information Exhibitor Contact Information

ORGANIZATION

Organization name: _____

Contact name and title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip code: _____

PERSON TO EXHIBIT

Name and title: _____

Email: _____

**One Table (Banquet Table 8' Rectangle) and two chairs will be provided for each Exhibitor*

PAYMENT INFORMATION

_____ My organization is **not-for-profit**, with a mission to serve the disability community.
There is \$50 fee to exhibit at the Annual Buddy Walk® Information Expo.

_____ My organizations operates **for profit**.
*There is a \$100 fee to exhibit at the Annual Buddy Walk® Information Expo.
Please include payment with your completed Contact Information Sheet. Thank you.*

_____ Check (Please make check payable to Down Syndrome Indiana)

_____ Charge Card (please circle): Visa / MasterCard / American Express / Other _____

Cardholder: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

***Please return Contact Information sheet and Payment to: Down Syndrome Indiana c/o Buddy Walk®
Mail: 615 N. Alabama St. Suite 205, Indianapolis, In 46204 / Email: buddywalk@dsindiana.org / Fax: 317-925-7619***

Using Social Media for Buddy Walk® Fundraising and Spreading Awareness

Be involved on Social Media

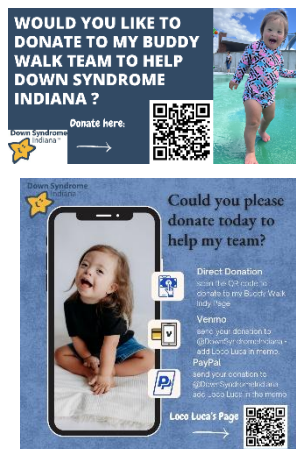
- ★ “Like” Down Syndrome Indiana on Facebook
- ★ Follow Down Syndrome Indiana on Instagram
- ★ Repost/retweet Down Syndrome Indiana’s page posts and tweets to generate excitement
- ★ Enhance your fundraising by launching a Facebook fundraiser. This is a great way to feature your team on Facebook and allow individuals to directly donate through social media.
- ★ Follow #buddywalk on Tik Tok or Reels for inspiration!

Use social media to:

- ★ Provide a link directly to your team page, state your purpose!
- ★ Create buzz and excitement about WHY WE WALK!
- ★ Post pictures of last year, your buddy, preparation for day-of, etc.

GET INVOLVED, BE INSPIRED

Below are a few samples of individual graphics we can make for you!





**Permission to Fundraise on behalf of
Down Syndrome Indiana**

This document gives _____ permission to serve as an “agent” to solicit donations on behalf of Down Syndrome Indiana in conjunction with their 29th Annual Buddy Walk® Indianapolis held on October 3rd, 2026 at White River State Park’s Celebration Plaza.

Down Syndrome Indiana is a 501(c)(3) organization with the tax ID #80-0732286 you may request a W-9 from our office at 317-925-7617 or email buddywalk@dsindiana.org

Prohibited Fundraising Practices

The policies of Down Syndrome Indiana prohibit the following solicitation practices:

- Use of Down Syndrome Indiana or Buddy Walk® name at the direct point-of-purchase sale of alcoholic or tobacco products.
- Use of Down Syndrome Indiana or Buddy Walk® name in relation to any business activity that cannot guarantee full accounting for funds generated, such as vending machines and candy boxes.
- Customer prospect campaigns conducted by independent contractors.
- Promotions to attract new patients to any form of medical treatment.
- Promotions related to the delivery of professional services.

Down syndrome Indiana’s Mission Statement:

We enhance the lives of individuals with Down syndrome and their families. We advise, educate, encourage, connect, include, and advocate.

Down Syndrome Indiana’s Vision Statement:

We envision a future in which each person enjoys a happy, healthy, and productive daily life. We make this future possible through family guidance, comprehensive resources, community outreach, and public leadership.

Sincerely,

Marni Mooney Meunier
Buddy Walk Coordinator
Down Syndrome Indiana

GET INVOLVED, BE INSPIRED

What does the Down Syndrome Indiana's Buddy Walk® Fund?

Funds will provide critically needed family support and services through DSI including:

Support

First Call Training and Support
Information and Resource Referrals
New & Expectant Parent Support
Helping Hands Program
Community Support Groups
Virtual and Physical New Parent Packets

Education

Educators Resources
Conferences
E-Newsletter
One-day Conferences
The Learning Program™

Advocacy

Buddy Walk®
Community Awareness Presentations
Medical Outreach
Public Policy Advocacy
End the "R" word cards
Law enforcement training

Community

Family and Community Events
Mom's Night Out
Self-Advocates Activities
D.A.D.S. Group



What your donation to DSI provides:

\$1,000	Provides the funding for 1 community support group for 1 year;
\$569	Provides the funding for 1 student in the Learning Program™ for 10 months;
\$100	Helps reduce the cost of camp for 1 student with Down syndrome;
\$75	Provides e-resources to 1,000 individuals;
\$60	Provides a family in the hospital with a care package and personal visit;
	Or
	Covers the cost of 1 student in the Learning Program™ for 1 month;
\$39	Provides a new parent with the comfort and warmth of a New Parent Packet;
\$25	Provides a scholarship to annual conference;
\$13.29	Provides basic services to 1 individual;
\$0.23	The cost to bring a presentation on Down syndrome awareness and inclusion to 1 student.

Down Syndrome Indiana's Buddy Walk in Indianapolis®

History of Buddy Walk

The Buddy Walk® was established in 1995 by the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October and to promote the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome.

What & Why

Buddy Walk® is a family-friendly event open to all children and adults with Down syndrome, their families, friends and local supporters. There is no fee to participate in Buddy Walk®. Down Syndrome Indiana has coordinated the Buddy Walk® in Indianapolis for over a decade. Nationally, Buddy Walk® is the most widely recognized public awareness program for the Down syndrome community. Locally, Buddy Walk® is the largest fundraising and awareness event for Down Syndrome Indiana. As a direct result of event sponsorships, team fundraising, and generous public donations, Down Syndrome Indiana is able to continue providing educational resources, informational programs, parent support networks, and social events for individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

How to Get Involved

- Register as a team or walk as an individual
- Volunteer on the planning committee(s) or day-of walk
- Donate/ Sponsor
- Spread the Word
 - Display save the date cards or a poster at your desk or cube at work, in a local coffee shop, in your own business, through your social media outlets, etc.

Join Down Syndrome Indiana in enhancing the lives of individuals with Down syndrome.

Saturday, October 3rd at Celebration Plaza in White Rive State Park in downtown Indianapolis.

<https://dsindiana.org/buddywalkindy/>