



 **AUTISM SPEAKS®**

**WALK**

SPONSORED BY ALPHA XI DELTA

*powered by love™*

2017 PARTICIPANT GUIDE



# WHY WE WALK FOR AUTISM SPEAKS

"I Walk for my twin autistic sons, Oliver and Xavier, and raise funds to help them have the best future possible." Jason



"We Walk for Jake and to raise funds in support of all the other amazing children like him." Jake-Man Team

"We Walk because we know the funds raised help improve the lives of individuals with autism, not only for my daughter - but for everyone.  
Stanley & BNY Mellon Pershing Walk Team



"I Walk for our son, Hudson and to raise funds because research, advocacy, services, and acceptance are key in the lives of families with autism. Lisa



"We Walk and fundraise so that other families who have loved ones on the spectrum will have the courage to seek early diagnosis and to ensure their loved one a bright future, that is filled with abundant progress."

Janet



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**AUTISM SPEAKS IS ENHANCING LIVES TODAY AND ACCELERATING A SPECTRUM OF SOLUTIONS FOR TOMORROW**

## ABOUT AUTISM

**Autism or autism spectrum disorder (ASD),** refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. We now know that there is not one autism but many subtypes, and each person with autism can have unique strengths and challenges. Most are caused by a combination of genetic and environmental influences, and many are accompanied by medical issues such as GI disorders, seizures and sleep disturbances. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates **1 in 68 children is on the autism spectrum.**

## ABOUT AUTISM SPEAKS

Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of autism spectrum disorder; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions. Through partnerships and collaboration, we are committed to:

- **Increasing global understanding and acceptance of autism**
- **Being a catalyst for research breakthroughs**
- **Increasing early-childhood screening and timely interventions**
- **Improving the transition to adulthood**
- **Ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span**





# INTRODUCTION



## WHAT IS AUTISM SPEAKS WALK?

**Autism Speaks Walk** is powered by the love of parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, relatives and support providers for people with autism. With every step you take and every dollar you raise, you help enhance lives today and accelerate a spectrum of solutions for tomorrow.

## HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT

- 1. Planning begins well before Walk day.** To have a successful Walk, we ask all of our participants to register online and begin fundraising as early as possible to fuel the mission of Autism Speaks. Register at [AutismSpeakWalk.org](https://www.autismspeakswalk.org)
- 2. Arriving at Walk Day** you will go through our registration area. Here you can check in or register, receive your "Mission Moment" pom pom and pick up your *T-Shirt, Tribute Medallion* and/or *Grand Club Pin* (based on fundraising level attained). At this time, you have an opportunity to make/turn in any additional donations.
- 3. As you enter the Walk,** you will notice that the staging area leading up to the *Opening Ceremonies* is festive yet sensory friendly. Light music will be playing, there will be announcements from the stage, small sensory friendly activities, an *Autism Speaks Resource Tent* and *Corporate Sponsor* area. This is really a time for you and your team members to join together and celebrate the reason you are walking with Autism Speaks!
- 4. Opening Ceremonies** will begin exactly one hour after registration opens. It is a short, 15-minute program in which we host a very special **Mission Moment** that unites us all in the *Power of Love*. You will want to have the blue pom pom you received at registration handy to use during the opening ceremony.
- 5. After our special Mission Moment Ceremony** there will be a sensory friendly countdown and the Walk will begin. Most Walk routes are 2-3 miles and all are family-friendly and noncompetitive so you can walk as little or as much as you wish!
- 6. When you return from walking** there will be additional special family activities in a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

# GETTING STARTED

## YOUR ONLINE PARTICIPATION CENTER



### WHAT'S NEW?

Our 2017 fundraising website is new and improved and will allow you to have your most successful year yet! Experience all the new updates yourself and sign up for your local walk at [act.autismspeaks.org/walk](http://act.autismspeaks.org/walk)!

Here are some of our most exciting improvements!

## REGISTRATION MADE EASY



### Quick Start

We've made registration simple.



Start a Team



Join a Team



Register as an Individual

### Fewer Questions

Complete your registration faster with fewer steps and fewer questions.

#### My Connection to Autism

Help us tailor your Autism Speaks Walk experience.

\*Choose your connection to autism:



My child has autism



I have autism



I support the autism community for another reason

#### My Personal Donation for Walk

Take the first step toward your fundraising goal.

Choose your personal donation amount:

\$25.00

\$50.00

\$150.00

\$500.00

\$1,000.00

None

# GETTING STARTED

YOUR ONLINE PARTICIPATION CENTER

## YOUR FUNDRAISING CENTER REDESIGNED

We heard your feedback loud and clear and have taken great strides to improve the fundraising center. From the moment you first log in, you'll be able to navigate more easily, and take the actions you want to take with fewer clicks. Your new dashboard makes it simple to update your personal page, manage your contacts and team, ask for donations, and invite friends and family to join your team.

The screenshot shows the 'My Fundraising Center' dashboard. At the top, there are navigation tabs: HOME, EMAIL, PROGRESS, PERSONAL PAGE, TEAM PAGE, and FUNDRAISING TOOLS. Below this, the 'My Progress' section features three progress bars. The first is 'My Goal' with a goal of \$150 and a 'CHANGE MY GOAL' button. The second is 'My Progress to Earning a T-shirt' with a goal of \$150 and a 'SHARE ON FACEBOOK: SUPPORT MY FUNDRAISING' button. The third is 'My Progress to the Grand Club' with a goal of \$1000 and a 'SHARE ON FACEBOOK: HELP ME REACH THE GRAND CLUB!' button. The 'My Next Steps' section below contains four icons: a computer monitor for 'Personalize My Public Page', a hand dropping a coin for 'Make a Donation', an envelope for 'Email to Spread the Word', and a share icon for 'Share My Page on Social Media'. The amount raised is shown as '\$0'.

## Fundraising Simplified



Important tasks are highlighted.

## Next Steps



Quick Start Checklist aids your fundraising success.

## FUNDRAISING BADGES: Show your achievements

### My Achievements



- ✓ Make a Personal Donation
- ✓ Post on Social Media
- ✓ Send an Email
- ✓ Raise \$150 for a Commemorative T-Shirt
- ✓ Raise \$500 for a Tribute Medallion
- ✓ Raise \$1000 for Grand Club

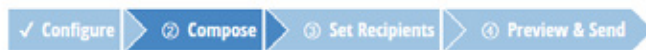
# GETTING STARTED

YOUR ONLINE PARTICIPATION CENTER

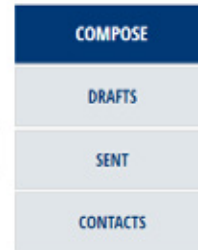
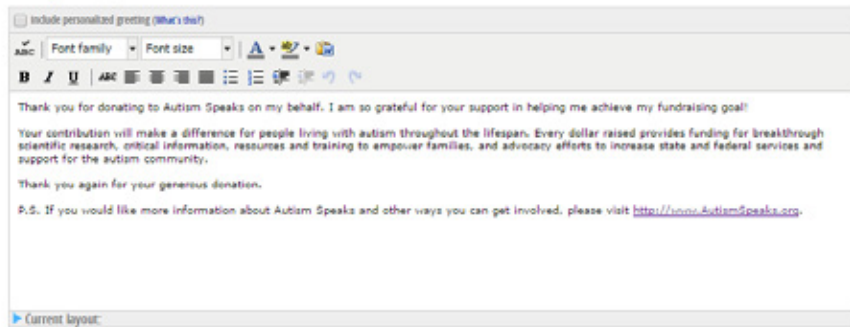
## EMAIL FUNDRAISING AS EASY AS 1-2-3

Sending emails to family and friends is one of the most successful ways to fundraise. Pick from one of our new email templates (or create your own), select your recipients, and send. Selecting a sleek, new template and sending an email through your email center is faster, so you'll be able to send more emails (and raise more money!) than ever.

### COMPOSE MESSAGE



**Subject:** Thank You for Your Gift to Autism Speaks!



**Emailing friends and family is as easy as 1-2-3!**

## FUNDRAISE ON THE GO!



**I'm Mobile Friendly!**

Every task you can perform on the website can be done from your phone. Want to sign up? Simply visit your local Walk event from your smart phone or tablet. Want to send a fundraising email to friends and family? Just log into your dashboard from your smart phone and have the same experience on mobile that you would from your desktop. Now it's easier than ever to fundraise...on the GO!



# SETTING GOALS

Make your goals meaningful. Perhaps it's a birthday or personal milestone in honor of the person you are walking for. For past walkers your goal might be to exceed your past fundraising. There are lots of different ways to have fun setting your goal. We encourage each person to strive for a minimum of \$150 which earns you our limited edition Autism Speaks Walk t-shirt designed exclusively for our Walk fundraisers by Tommy Hilfger.

## *Here are some tips for setting goals:*

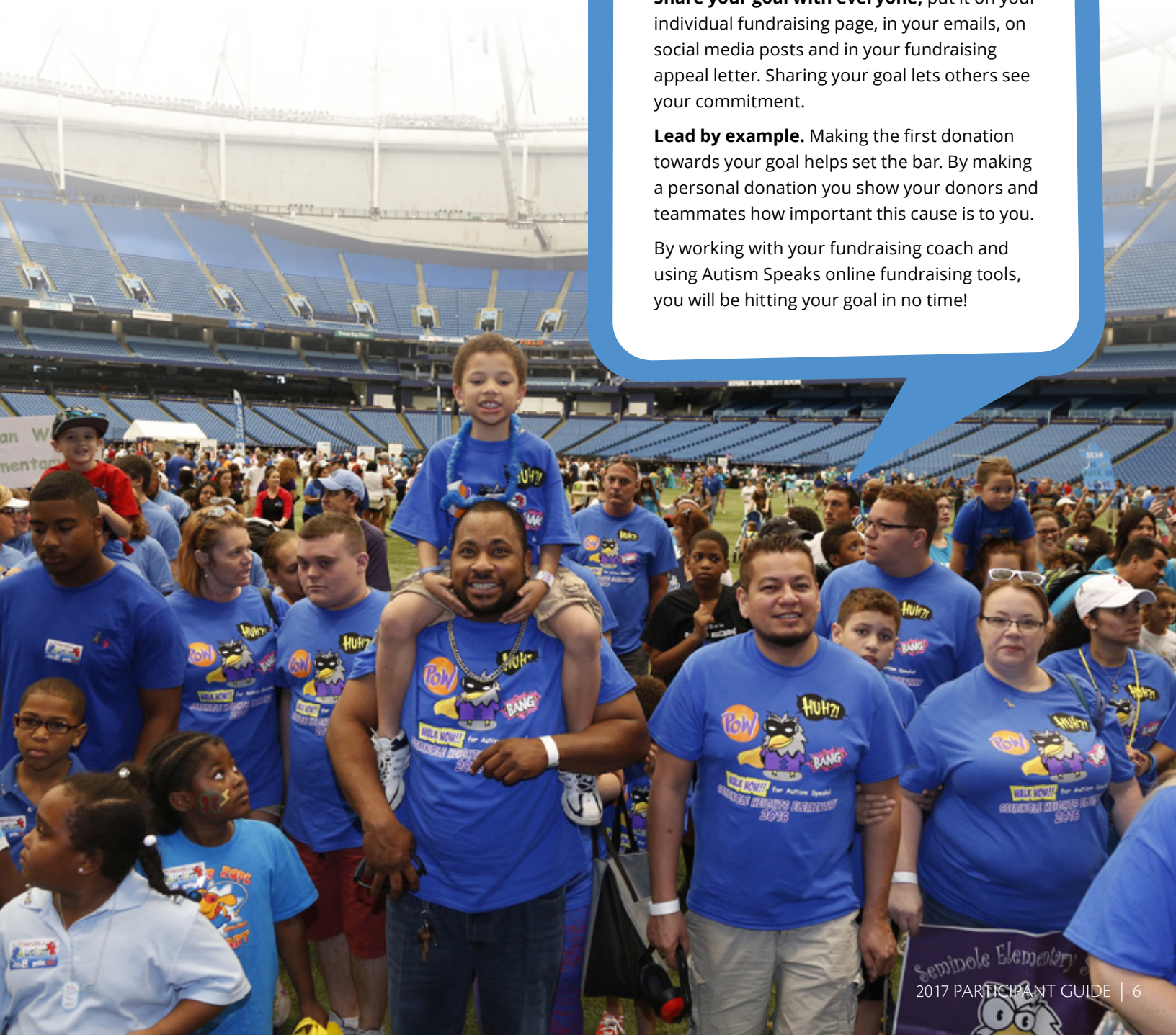
### **Your goal should be realistic but significant.**

When people work hard to reach a strong goal they feel a real sense of pride and accomplishment when they succeed!

**Share your goal with everyone,** put it on your individual fundraising page, in your emails, on social media posts and in your fundraising appeal letter. Sharing your goal lets others see your commitment.

**Lead by example.** Making the first donation towards your goal helps set the bar. By making a personal donation you show your donors and teammates how important this cause is to you.

By working with your fundraising coach and using Autism Speaks online fundraising tools, you will be hitting your goal in no time!





# FUNDRAISING



## Using Social Media to Promote Your Fundraising Efforts

Talk about your fundraising on social platforms like *Facebook* and *Twitter*. Use our downloadable social media tools to help promote the Walk and your fundraising as well.

## Other Fundraising Ideas

Autism Speaks has created a variety of fundraising resources to help you to outreach to your employer, your child's school, local restaurants and businesses. If you are interested in any of the following fundraising campaigns, contact your local Autism Speaks representative for more details.

**Pay Green to Wear Blue Tool Kit** offers all the resources you need to engage in a fun and "comfortable" way for businesses and employees to raise funds for autism and wear jeans to work!

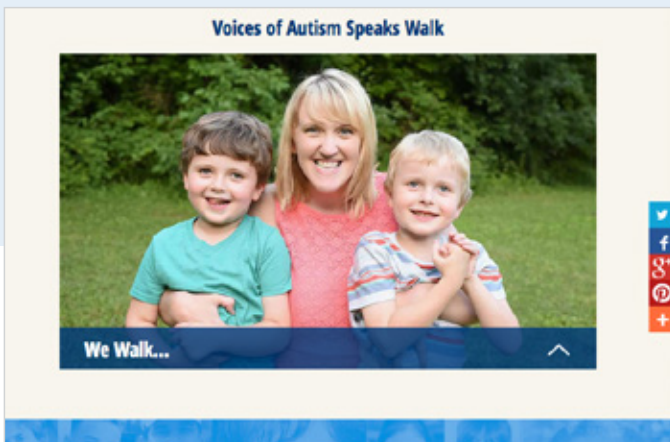
**Kids and Coins for Autism Tool Kit** is full of creative fundraising ideas and free downloadable resources for students and teachers from K through 12.

**Puzzle Piece Promotion** is a point of purchase program that can be a great fundraiser for your team by reaching out to businesses in your community.

**Dine Out for Autism** has raised more than \$2 million dollars since its inception and encourages restaurants to be creative through fundraising or cause marketing events.

## Ideas to Support Your Online Fundraising Efforts

- Personalize your fundraising page in the *Participant Center*.
- Share why you are raising money for Autism Speaks through social media and by using the *#AutismSpeaks*.
- Add a photo of yourself or the person you are honoring.
- Share a video talking about why you are walking.
- Email friends and family to ask for donations.





# ADDITIONAL FUNDRAISING IDEAS

**Corporate Matching Gift** – Ask your company to match the amount of pledges you receive from your co-workers.

**Garage Sale** – Spring and Fall are great times to clean out all those unwanted items and host a garage sale for your Walk team.

**Bake Sale** - Host a bake sale with your friends or at your child's school.

**Keep the Change** – Turn your small change into additional dollars for your fundraising efforts.

**Office Fundraising Challenge** – Challenge your office colleagues to raise funds for your team. Hand out fundraising envelopes and provide an award or incentive to the top fundraiser.

**Return Address Labels or Email Signature** – Print return address labels for your outgoing mail or add a tagline to your personal email with *"I'm Walking for Autism Speaks: Join or Donate Today"* and include your team link.

**Business Support** – Ask local restaurants or other local businesses to place a money jar at the front of their establishment.

**Happy Hour Party** – Invite all your friends (and their friends) to a happy hour and charge a small cover fee. Invite them to join your team or give additional donations. Host a raffle or a 50/50.

**Birthday for a Cause** – Instead of gifts have your friends and family write a check to Autism Speaks on your behalf.

**Fundraising Business Cards** – Download our walk business cards and hand them out to perspective donors.

**The Bill Collectors** – Ask your doctor, dentist, insurance agents, hair stylist, etc to write a check for you instead of the other way around!

**Gym** – Ask your gym to place a pledge jar at the front desk! Leave a stack of donation forms at the counter as well.

**Neighborhood Love** – Stick a flyer in their mailboxes explaining why you're raising money and ask them to donate.

**Karaoke Night** – Host a Karaoke night at your local bar and have people give donations to sing.

**PTO Days** – Ask your HR Dept. if you can donate your PTO time to your fundraising efforts – and consider providing an company match!

**Proceeds Benefit** – Ask a local store manager what the hot-selling item is and then ask if he or she would be willing to donate a percent of the sales from that particular item to your team.

**Curse Jar** – Always a favorite! Place a curse jar in the office and whenever someone says a bad word they have to open up their wallet, grab a dollar and put it in the jar.

**Company Grants** – Find out if your company offers grants to employees who volunteer their time for charitable causes. You may need a letter from us confirming any volunteer activities, which we would be happy to provide.

**Church Bulletin** – Place an advertisement in your church newsletter letting the congregation know what you're up to! Or better yet, invite them to join you at the Walk.

**Schools** – Get your child's classroom or school to help you fundraise. Check out our Kids and Coins Tool Kit.

**Alumni Organizations** – Ask your own college or university to make a donation or place an ad in their alumni newsletter about your philanthropic efforts.

**Ask for the Right Amount** – Don't miss the opportunity to increase your "ask" to a larger pledge when you think it is doable.

**Clubs and Organizations** – Send a solicitation letter to your local Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, etc. They support individuals in their communities.

**Get an article in your local paper** – Contact your local media outlet to share your human interest story about why you are walking. You can put in information about how people can contribute. And have a photo ready to go!

*\*Be sure to obtain necessary approvals prior to implementation when appropriate.*

# SPECIAL INCENTIVES FOR YOU



**We're proud to recognize our great fundraisers every step of the way -**

### *\$150 Commemorative Walk T-Shirt*

Every walker who raises or contributes \$150 or more will receive a one-of-a-kind Autism Speaks Walk commemorative t-shirt on the day of the walk. New this year – an exclusive design by Tommy Hilfiger! Limited time only – don't miss this one.

### *\$500 Tribute Medallion Member*

Every individual who raises \$500 will receive a Tribute Medallion to wear with pride in recognition of fundraising efforts! You're half way to being a Grand Club Member.

### *\$1,000 Grand Club Member*

Autism Speaks recognizes those individuals who go above and beyond by raising \$1,000 or more for Autism Speaks Walk by inviting them to join the Grand Club. Each year a new commemorative pin will be issued. Add this year's to your collection!



## Start your fundraising today!

1. Show your commitment and contribute	\$100	
2. Ask spouse/friend to match your donation	\$100	▶ You've just earned your Walk T-shirt!
3. Ask your boss	\$100	
4. Ask vendors/suppliers	\$100	
5. Ask someone who has been affected by autism	\$ 50	
6. Ask someone who has asked for your support in the past	\$ 50	▶ You've just become a Tribute Member!
7. Ask everyone in a club or organization to donate (10 x \$20 each)	\$200	
8. Send a letter to your holiday card mailing list inviting friends to contribute	\$200	
9. Ask your five best friends for \$20 each	\$100	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>You've reached Grand Club! Congratulations!</b>



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Do I have to send in my donations? Can I bring them with me to the Walk?**

**A:** While you can always bring your donations to the Walk, it is preferable that you mail them in prior to Walk day:

**Autism Speaks**

**INSERT YOUR WALK CITY HERE**

**Walk Donations Department**

**1060 State Road, 2nd Floor**

**Princeton, NJ 08540**

Please submit the donation forms with corresponding checks to ensure proper credit.

**Q: What if people want to give me cash?**

**A:** It is safest and best for record-keeping that you convert all cash received to checks or money orders. If you're able, send a personal check covering the full amount, along with the corresponding donation forms, to Autism Speaks. We will credit your friends and family for their generosity. If this is not possible, you can always bring the cash donations and appropriate donation forms to the Walk.

**Q: What if my donors don't want to donate online?**

**A:** You can always have your donors mail their donations directly to our Princeton, NJ address above. Please have them submit the corresponding donation forms with their checks so you will be credited for your fundraising efforts.

**Q: Do I have to fill out one donation form for each check?**

**A:** Yes. This is the best way to ensure you receive credit for all your fundraising efforts.

**Q: What happens if it rains on the day of the Walk?**

**A:** All Walks will be held on the date scheduled "rain or shine".

**Q: Will the money turned in before the Walk, at the Walk and after the Walk, show up on my webpage and my donation report? How long will it take?**

**A:** Absolutely. If the corresponding donation forms were filled out and submitted along with your donations, then you should see your fundraising efforts reflected on your webpage and donation report within four weeks.

**Q: Where do I get donation forms?**

**A:** Donation forms can be printed from each participant's individual webpage. The link "make a donation offline" is just under your goals.

**Q: Who should checks be made payable to?**

**A:** Please ask your supporters to make checks payable to Autism Speaks.

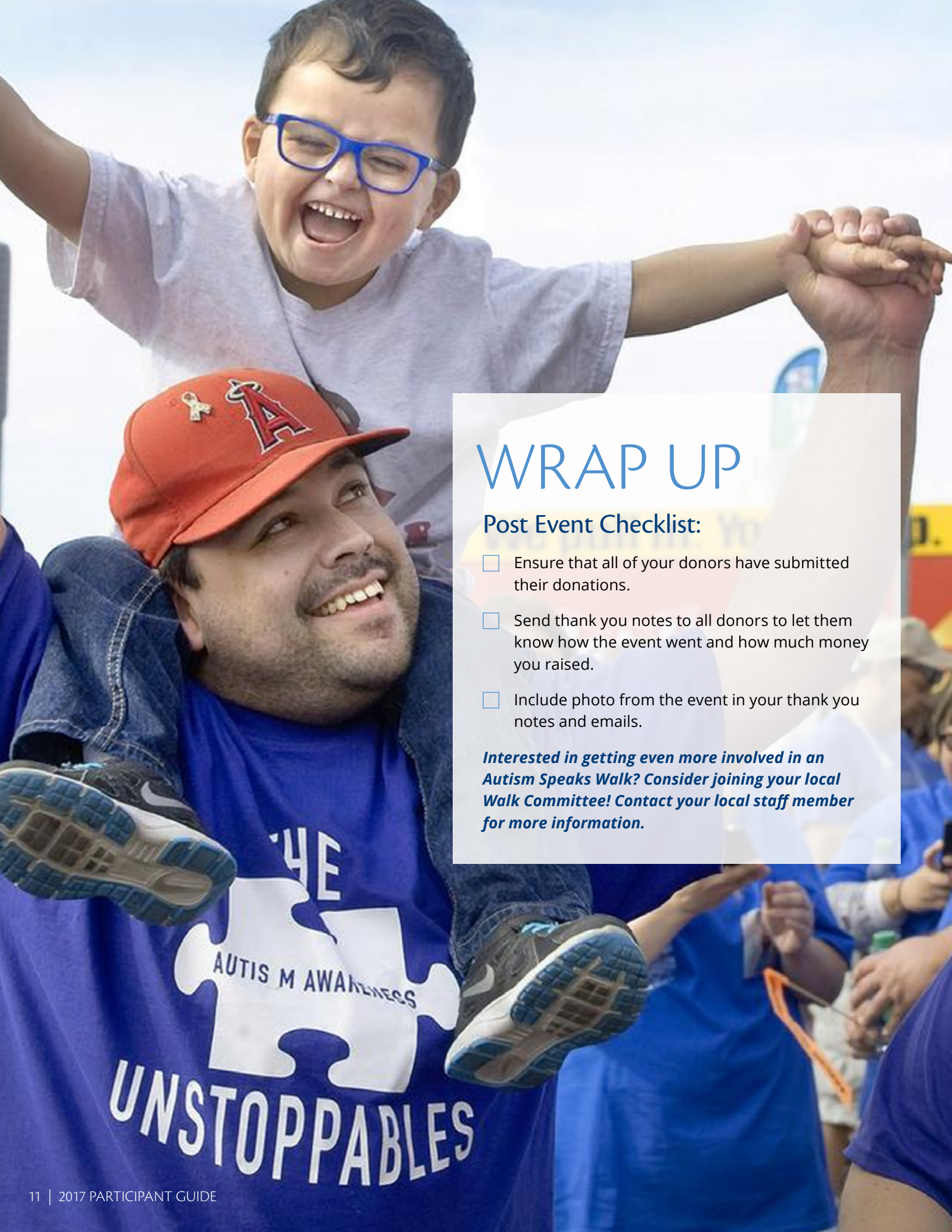
**Q: Is there a fee to participate?**

**A:** All participants are encouraged to fundraise a minimum of \$150.

**Q: How do I find my supporter ID number?**

**A:** There are a few ways to find supporter ID numbers for yourself or for your registered family members. If the suggestions below do not help, please contact us at Walks@AutismSpeaks.org.

You will receive an email confirmation after you register with your supporter ID number. From your webpage - click to open the Offline Donation link. (This is listed just under goals.) The ID number is listed in the top corner under the participant's name. On your personal webpage - your ID number is at the end of the URL.



# WRAP UP

## Post Event Checklist:

- Ensure that all of your donors have submitted their donations.
- Send thank you notes to all donors to let them know how the event went and how much money you raised.
- Include photo from the event in your thank you notes and emails.

***Interested in getting even more involved in an Autism Speaks Walk? Consider joining your local Walk Committee! Contact your local staff member for more information.***



## WHILE YOU AND YOUR TEAM ARE FUNDRAISING FOR YOUR WALK YOU MAY MEET PEOPLE WITH QUESTIONS, REMEMBER...

### **The Autism Speaks Autism Response Team (ART)**

is specially trained to connect people with autism, their families, and caregivers to information, tools, and resources.

#### **Newly Diagnosed:**

Contact ART to learn how to make the best use of the first 100 days after receiving an ASD diagnosis.

#### **School Support:**

ART can provide resources and tools to help you support a student's individual needs.

#### **Transition to Adulthood:**

ART can connect you to resources to start planning for your adolescent child's future.

#### **Local Referrals:**

ART can help you find autism service providers in your area.

#### ***FOR INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE CONTACT:***

***The Autism Speaks Autism Response Team (ART)***

**888-288-4762 en Español 888-772-9050**

**FamilyServices@AutismSpeaks.org**





Autism Speaks Walk is the world's largest autism fundraising event dedicated to improving the lives of people with autism. Powered by the love of parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, relatives, and supporters, the funds raised help ensure people of all abilities have access to the tools needed to lead "their best lives".

The commitment of individuals like you plays a critical role in raising the funding needed to fuel innovative research and lifelong supports and services. Working together, there is no limit to what we can achieve. Please register and fundraise for an Autism Speaks Walk near you.

**To learn more about autism, visit [AutismSpeaks.org](http://AutismSpeaks.org) or contact our Autism Response Team at 888-288-4762 or en Español 888-772-9050, or email [familyservices@autismspeaks.org](mailto:familyservices@autismspeaks.org).**