



BUDDY WALK® TEAM CAPTAIN TOOLKIT



DOWN SYNDROME GUILD
OF DALLAS



BUDDYWALK®

national down syndrome society®

EDUCATE | ADVOCATE | CELEBRATE

INTRODUCTION



Dear Team Captain,

Thank you so much for registering your team for the [2024 Dallas Buddy Walk®](#) benefiting the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas. We are thrilled to be returning to [Toyota Stadium in Frisco](#) on **Sunday, October 20, 2024**, from **11 am-3 pm** with the awareness walk beginning at **2 pm**.

The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas has put together this **Team Captain Toolkit** full of important information, deadlines, FAQs, and helpful tips and tricks to assist you as you fundraise and plan your celebrations this year. We encourage teams to think outside the box and use the tools provided in this toolkit as they recruit team members, raise funds, and plan their day.

Our fantastic Buddy Walk® teams never cease to amaze us, and it's all because of YOU! We know that it's not always easy to lead a Buddy Walk® team, track down t-shirt sizes, and ask for donations each year, but your efforts truly make a difference in our community day after day. The impact of the Buddy Walk® is felt year round by families from diagnosis through adulthood. Without your dedication and team fundraising, the Down Syndrome Guild could not provide vital programs and services like welcome kits for new and expectant parents, educational seminars and conferences, summer camps, annual family picnic, social activities for all ages, resources for Spanish speaking families, and so much more.

Thank you again for registering your team for the [2024 Dallas Buddy Walk®](#) on Sunday, October 20. Remember to make sure all your team members are registered in order for them to receive a commemorative event t-shirt, and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. We'll also be sending periodic emails to team captains regarding t-shirt pick up, event day schedule, tailgating details, Toyota Stadium maps, and more as we get closer to event day.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



[ABOUT DSG](#).....2

[WHERE THE MONEY GOES](#).....3

[LOOKINGAHEAD](#).....4

[5 STEP FUNDRAISING METHOD](#).....5

[HOW TO RAISE \\$1,000](#).....6

[FUNDRAISING IDEAS](#).....7

[MORE FUNDRAISING IDEAS](#).....8

[CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP LEVELS](#).....9

[TEAM INCENTIVES & DEADLINES](#).....10

[SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS](#).....11

[FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#).....12-13



ABOUT DSG



WHAT IS THE DOWN SYNDROME GUILD OF DALLAS (DSG)?

Established in 1978, the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing accurate and current information, resources, and support for people with Down syndrome, their families, and the community.

Our mission is to engage all members of the Down syndrome community—children and adults, parents, and friends—to advocate, educate, and enable the fullest lives possible. With over 250,000 people in the United States living with Down syndrome, the DSG strives to provide tools and opportunities that promote our core values of dignity, positive perception, education, community, and inclusion.

WHO DOES THE DSG SERVE?

The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas supports over 2,600 individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and community professionals primarily residing in the 13 counties that make up the DFW Metroplex and its surrounding areas.

WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE OFFERED BY THE DSG?

The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas believes in the inherent dignity of people with Down syndrome of all ages and provides a wide variety of educational and social programs, resources, referral services, and support from diagnosis through adulthood.

HOW IS THE DSG FUNDED?

The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is primarily funded by individual donations and generous supporters like you. Over 50% of the Down Syndrome Guild's annual operating budget is raised through the organization's largest fundraiser, the Buddy Walk®. The DSG receives no federal or state funding and relies on individual donations, grants, and corporate partnerships to remain operational.

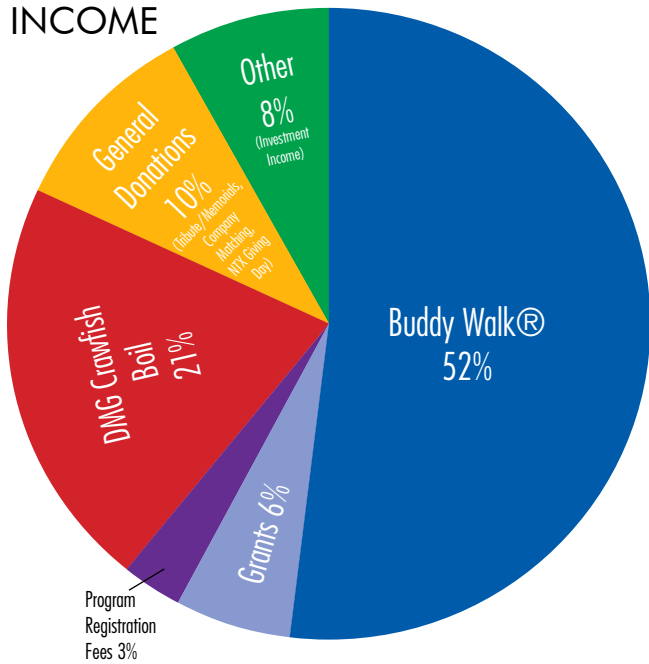
For additional information about the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas including a complete list of upcoming social and educational programs, please visit www.downsyndromedallas.org.



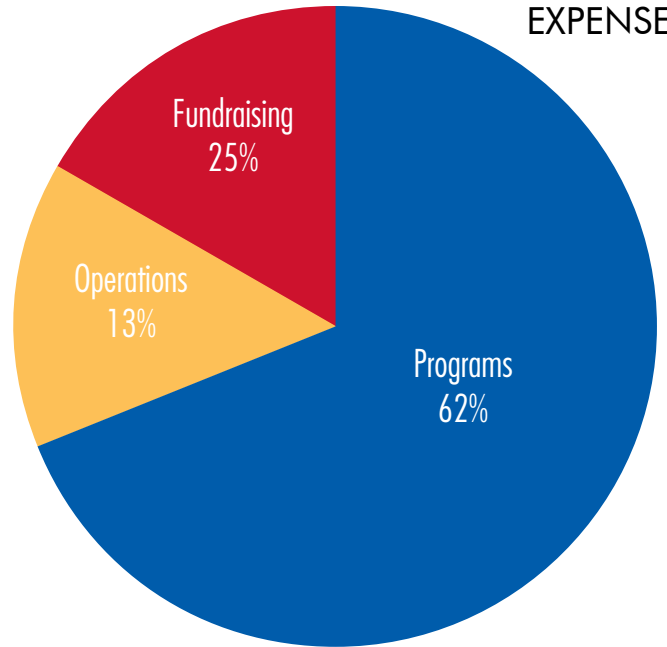
WHERE THE MONEY GOES

Proceeds from the 2024 Dallas Buddy Walk® directly benefit the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas and our local community. A small portion of the proceeds also support the National Down Syndrome Society for advocacy and public awareness initiatives that benefit all individuals with Down syndrome. Your fundraising efforts and financial contributions to the Dallas Buddy Walk® fund over 50% of our organization’s annual operating budget.

INCOME



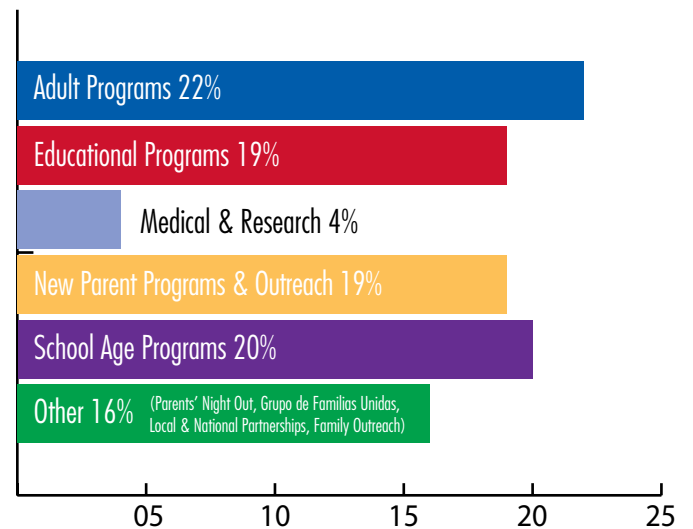
EXPENSES



The 2023 Buddy Walk® raised over \$320,000 for the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas and directly

- supported over 60 new babies and parents by providing one on one support and congratulatory welcome kits
- educated over 400 parents and professionals through the annual conference and SPRING Educational Series
- provided 500 World Down Syndrome Day classroom kits to local classrooms
- taught 30 youth and teens water safety skills through iCan Swim Camp
- helped fund a new part-time staff position solely dedicated to supporting Spanish-speaking families
- connected thousands of families through social activities for all ages
- and so much more

PROGRAM EXPENSES



*Data derived from year end December 31, 2023 unaudited financials. Additional financial data is available upon request. Strategic priorities and budget allotments vary annually.



LOOKING AHEAD

As the DSG looks ahead to the future, your financial support is imperative for the continuation of key programs and resources. Donations as little as \$10 can provide hope, resources, and support to individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and the community.



Covers **postage to send** an informational New Parent Welcome Kit

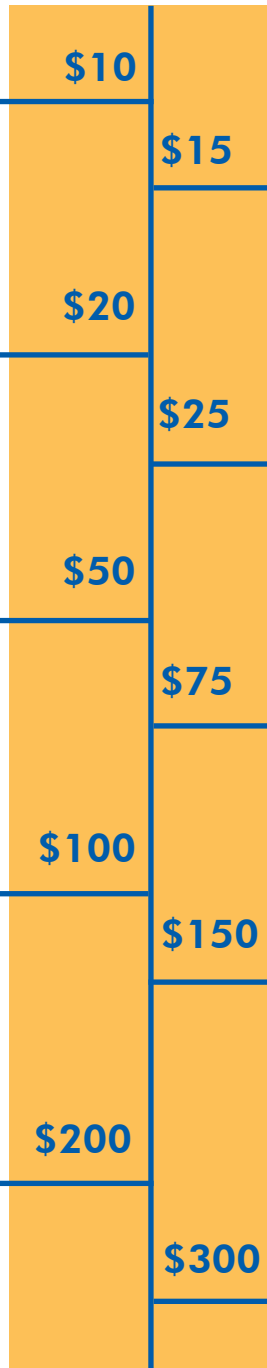
Allows respite for a **mom or dad to enjoy a planned activity out** with other DSG parents

Covers the cost of **printing materials for 75 parents** attending an educational seminar



Sends a **family of four** to the DSG Picnic with lunch and activities

Provides an entire grade level with **World Down Syndrome Day Classroom Kits** educating peers about their classmates with Down syndrome



Supplements the cost of **dinner with friends** for an adult with Down syndrome



Provides **translation for Spanish speaking families** to receive resources and support

Purchases **books, gifts and supplies** for a New Parent Welcome Kit

Funds a **scholarship to iCan Swim** for a child with Down syndrome to learn water safety skills



Purchases a **year's supply of reading material** for adult book club



5 STEP FUNDRAISING METHOD

STEP ONE: BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Make a list of people and/or businesses who may donate to your efforts this year.

- Friends and family
- Colleagues and/or business connections
- Classmates, teachers, and therapists
- Neighbors
- Church/Religious network
- Local businesses your family frequents (restaurants, retail stores, etc.)
- Social media connections

STEP TWO: TELL YOUR STORY

Each of you has a unique and personal story about why the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is so important to you, and your network wants to hear it. They want to know why they should donate and support your cause. Think through the questions below to help fine tune your story and fundraising ask. Be creative with photos and videos to help reinforce your story. Share via email and social media as well as in person.

- Why do you participate in the Dallas Buddy Walk®?
- How have the funds raised by the Dallas Buddy Walk® helped your family?
- How have certain programs impacted you and/or your family?
- How did you feel when you received a Down syndrome diagnosis? How did you feel after connecting with the DSG?
- How has Down syndrome impacted your life and why do you believe it's important to raise money for the DSG?
- What would happen if the DSG didn't exist in your community?

STEP THREE: SET YOUR GOAL AND ASK

What's the worst they can say, no? Don't be afraid to ask your network to join your team or donate to your fundraising page. Many are hesitant to ask especially in uncertain times, but do not assume someone is unable to support your goal. In fact, many donors are more generous than before because they recognize the impact of the economy on local nonprofits.

STEP FOUR: THANK YOUR DONORS

Don't forget to thank all those in your network who supported you this year. The Dallas Buddy Walk® website makes it easy to download your donor report with addresses so you can send a quick and personal thank you note. The donor will also receive a detailed donation report and letter of thanks from the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas.

STEP FIVE: HAVE FUN

Fundraising doesn't have to be complicated. Have fun and take pride in your efforts to help raise awareness and support the programs and services provided by the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas.



HOW TO RAISE \$1,000



The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas' goal for the 2024 Buddy Walk® is to register 321 teams with each team raising at least \$1,000. (321x\$1,000=\$321,000)

Raising \$1,000 may sound daunting at first, but it's easier than you think using the **5 Step Fundraising Method** and some creative fundraising ideas outlined on the following pages.

SAMPLE FUNDRAISING PLAN 1:

- \$210 RAISED** 10 people from your network join your team at \$21 each.
- \$250 RAISED** 10 people from your network donate \$25 each.
- \$150 RAISED** Host a garage sale. Ask your network to donate unwanted items you could sell.
- \$115 RAISED** Host a give back night for in person or take out orders at a local restaurant.
- \$150 RAISED** Organize a casual day or fun dress up day at work or school.
Each person pays \$ to participate.
- \$125 RAISED** Flock 5 of your neighbors/friends with plastic flamingos. Flocks are removed with a \$25 donation.

TOTAL RAISED: \$1,000



FUNDRAISING IDEAS

INVITE LOVED ONES TO JOIN YOUR TEAM AND DONATE

For every person that registers for the Buddy Walk®, their registration fee (\$21 for adults and \$3 for kids 12 and under) goes toward your fundraising total. Plus, within the registration process, teammates can add additional donations designated for your team. Donors can also donate any amount they choose without registering. Just remember that commemorative event t-shirts are available for **registered** participants only.

INQUIRE ABOUT MATCHING GIFTS

Encourage all teammates to contact their HR Department to find out how their company handles company matching gifts. Many companies will match donations dollar for dollar.

PROVIDE SERVICES IN EXCHANGE FOR DONATIONS

Think of ways you and your teammates can assist people in your neighborhood or network to raise money, such as mowing lawns, picking up groceries, helping with yard work, etc. Include younger team members too who may like to host a lemonade stand, car wash, or bake sale.

SECURE A CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP

Teams who secure a corporate sponsor can apply those funds to their team fundraising totals. Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities are detailed on [page 9](#).

CREATE A BIRTHDAY FUNDRAISER

Are you or a team member having a birthday? Consider hosting a birthday fundraiser on Facebook. Let DSG staff know in advance so donations can be applied appropriately to your Buddy Walk® team page.

DESIGN AND SELL TEAM T-SHIRTS

Team t-shirts with a design of your choosing have grown in popularity over the years. Consider charging team members a little extra and apply the proceeds to your team fundraising.

HOST A CONSULTANT PARTY OR RETAIL/RESTAURANT GIVE BACK NIGHT

Odds are you or someone on your team knows a consultant for Pampered Chef, Color Street, Thirty-One, etc. who would be willing to host a party with proceeds benefiting your team. Retail shops and restaurants like Kendra Scott, Chick-fil-A, Palio's Pizza, Mod Pizza, Buffalo Wild Wings, Chipotle, etc. also offer options for give back nights. Be sure to ask about both take out and dine in options. Advertise in your neighborhood and child's school to increase exposure.

HOST A RAFFLE OR AUCTION

Ask friends and local businesses to donate items and services that can be auctioned or raffled for donations. Many teams have had huge success with both online and in person auctions. Make sure you indicate that the raffle/auction benefits the DSG. The DSG can also provide tax exempt documentation upon request.



MORE FUNDRAISING IDEAS

ORGANIZE A COOKOUT OR LOCAL EVENT

Host a pancake breakfast, fish fry, neighborhood block party, concert, movie night, etc. and charge a per plate fee or entrance fee.

HOST A GAME NIGHT

Charge a small buy in fee and split the pot with the winner at the end of the night. Hint: Most people will donate their winnings back to your team. You could also give away donated items as prizes.

HAVE A VIRTUAL OR IN PERSON GARAGE SALE

Clean out the closets, ask neighbors and family members for items, and post them for sale. Facebook Marketplace makes it easy to post items with photos. Go contactless with Zelle or Venmo payment and then set items out for porch pick up. You could even include a note letting them know their payment was a donation to the DSG for added awareness in the community.

ORGANIZE A CASUAL DAY OR FUN DRESS UP DAY AT WORK OR SCHOOL

Talk with your place of business or child's school about allowing colleagues or classmates to make a small donation (\$1) to have a designated casual or dress up day. This could also be a fun opportunity to talk about Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October or encourage people to wear silly socks or blue and yellow.

FLOCK YOUR FRIENDS/FAMILY/NEIGHBORS

Leave a flock of plastic flamingos on their lawn and encourage a \$25+ removal fee. They also get to select the next person to be flocked. There are some great printables online if you search Flamingo Flock Fundraiser.

CREATE SOME FRIENDLY COMPETITION

Create a competition with your spouse, children, team members, or another team where the loser has to do something funny. Some examples could be a pie to the face, jumping in or pouring ice water over the loser, sharing a funny dance or song on social media, conquering a fear, etc. Team captains could also use this as an incentive for a certain fundraising milestone for their team. For example: the team captain may commit to riding a terrifying roller coaster if the team raises \$5,000.



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

PRESENTING SPONSOR - \$25,000

- **Naming rights** to event, example: Dallas Buddy Walk® presented by “Your Company”
- Recognition as Presenting Sponsor **any time** the Dallas Buddy Walk® logo is displayed
- Prime recognition with **linked logo** on Dallas Buddy Walk® website and **all** electronic promotions, **tagged** social media mentions, **logo** on all event day sponsor signage including big screens
- Prime recognition in event day audio announcements
- Prime **logo** placement on over 3,500 Dallas Buddy Walk® t-shirts
- Prime **exhibitor booth** placement at event to distribute promotional materials and engage audience of 5,000 attendees
- Inclusion in all press releases
- Opportunity for **brief sponsor remarks** from stage on event day
- Opportunity for **logo placement on event photo booth images, team incentive prizes** (as applicable), and **event area signage**
- Up to 50 Dallas Buddy Walk® registrations

GOLD SPONSOR - \$10,000

- Recognition by **linked logo** on Dallas Buddy Walk® website and **all** electronic promotions, **tagged** social media mentions, **logo** on **all** event day sponsor signage including big screens
- Recognition in event day audio announcements
- **Logo** placement on over 3,500 Dallas Buddy Walk® t-shirts
- **Exhibitor booth** at event to distribute promotional materials and engage audience of 5,000 attendees
- Opportunity for **logo placement on team incentive prizes** (as applicable) and **select event area signage** like “children’s zone”
- Up to 25 Dallas Buddy Walk® registrations

SILVER SPONSOR - \$5,000

- Recognition by **logo** on Dallas Buddy Walk® website and electronic promotions, social media mentions, **logo** on event day sponsor signage including big screens
- Recognition in event day audio announcements
- **Logo** placement on over 3,500 Dallas Buddy Walk® t-shirts
- **Exhibitor booth** at event to distribute promotional materials and engage audience of 5,000 attendees
- Opportunity for **logo placement at select event area signage** like “children’s zone”
- Up to 10 Dallas Buddy Walk® registrations

BRONZE SPONSOR - \$1,000

- Recognition by **logo** on Dallas Buddy Walk® website and electronic promotions, social media mentions, **logo** on event day sponsor signage including big screens
- **Logo** placement on over 3,500 Dallas Buddy Walk® t-shirts
- **Exhibitor booth** at event to distribute promotional materials and engage audience of 5,000 attendees
- Up to 5 Dallas Buddy Walk® registrations

FRIEND SPONSOR - \$500

- Recognition by name on Dallas Buddy Walk® website, electronic promotions, and event day sponsor signage including big screens
- Name placement on over 3,500 Dallas Buddy Walk® t-shirts
- Up to 2 Dallas Buddy Walk® registrations



TEAM INCENTIVES & DEADLINES

Leading up to the Buddy Walk®, teams will have the opportunity to participate in multiple contests to earn fun prizes and incentives. The top three fundraising teams and largest team will also be recognized on stage during the 2024 Dallas Buddy Walk® on Sunday, October 20. Additional pop up contests and competitions will be announced via email and social media leading up to the walk for more chances to win.



\$500-\$999 RAISED

- Foam Rock On Hand
- +Entered to Win a Kids Guitar and Microphone Play Set



\$1,000-\$2,499 RAISED

- Foam Rock On Hand
- Portable Bluetooth® Speaker
- +Entered to Win a Kids Music Piano Keyboard with Microphone



\$2,500-\$4,999 RAISED

- Foam Rock On Hand
- Portable Bluetooth® Speaker
- Photo featured on Jumbo Screen at Toyota Stadium
- +Entered to Win a Portable Karaoke Machine



\$5,000-\$9,999 RAISED

- Foam Rock On Hand
- Portable Bluetooth® Speaker
- Photo featured on Jumbo Screen at Toyota Stadium
- Early Access Tailgate Pass
- +Entered to Win Apple AirPods (2nd Generation)

\$10,000+ RAISED

- Foam Rock On Hand
- Portable Bluetooth® Speaker
- Photo featured on Jumbo Screen at Toyota Stadium
- Reserved Early Access Tailgate Spot
- +Entered to Win a Family Registration to the 2025 NDSC Convention



SEPTEMBER 13

Corporate Sponsorships Due

OCTOBER 1

T-Shirt Sizes Guaranteed (Registered Participants Only)

OCTOBER 11

Online Registration Closes

OCTOBER 11

Funds Due to Qualify for Incentives & Awards

OCTOBER 12

Team T-Shirt Pick Up
(Details will be Emailed to Team Captains in October)



FOAM ROCK ON HAND



BLUETOOTH® SPEAKER



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Social media is a fantastic way to share your story, link to your fundraising page, and recognize and thank donors.

LET'S GET SOCIAL

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter/X](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

- Like and follow the DSG and participate in our social media challenges
- Include a photo/video when posting
- Consider a Facebook Live video to talk about why you are raising money or how the DSG has impacted your family
- Ask a question to get friends to share in the comments of your posts
- Tag the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas in all your posts about the Buddy Walk®. We love sharing all your creative ideas and adorable kids.
- Don't forget to use **#DallasBuddyWalk** so the whole community can check out your posts



SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Our family is raising money for the #DallasBuddyWalk on October 20 to support the programs and services of the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas. The DSG has been a huge asset to us because (Insert your personal story here). Join our team and donate at (Insert your unique team page link here or use <https://www.ds-stride.org/dallasbuddywalk> and donors can search for you).

Help Team (Insert Team Name) reach our goal of (Insert Goal) for the #DallasBuddyWalk on October 20. Donate and/or join our team at (Insert your unique team page link here or use <https://www.ds-stride.org/dallasbuddywalk> and donors can search for you).



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO SHOULD REGISTER FOR THE BUDDY WALK® AND WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

ALL participants must register for the Buddy Walk®. Registration includes access to the event activities, awareness walk, and a commemorative Buddy Walk® t-shirt (while supplies last). Registration is \$21 for teens and adults and \$3 for children 12 and under. All individuals with Down syndrome are free. Please note that t-shirts are available for registered participants only, so please make sure everyone on your team wanting a commemorative t-shirt clicks the [Register](#) or [Join Team](#) button. Hint: Don't forget to include children in your registration.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR T-SHIRT SIZES, TEAM PRIZES, AND REGISTRATION?

The deadline for registered participants to be **guaranteed** their preferred t-shirt size is **October 1** due to the advance timeline required for ordering shirts. The DSG does order extras; however, sizes and quantities cannot be guaranteed after October 1. Registration and submission of fundraising dollars for overall team prizes like 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place fundraising teams closes at midnight on **October 11**. Winners will be announced at the 2024 Dallas Buddy Walk® on Sunday, October 20, at Toyota Stadium. Additional incentive deadlines and team prize opportunities will be announced in the weeks leading up to the event, so there are lots of opportunities for teams to win fun prizes.

HOW AND WHERE DO I PICK UP MY TEAM'S T-SHIRTS?

All team captains will receive additional information via email in October regarding team t-shirt pick up details on Saturday, October 12, at the Down Syndrome Guild office located at 1702. N. Collins Blvd. Suite 170, Richardson, TX 75080. **All t-shirts must be picked up in advance of the walk.**

CAN I MAKE MY OWN TEAM T-SHIRTS?

Yes, many teams make their own team t-shirts. There are no restrictions to the design and color of team t-shirts with the exception of use of the official NDSS Buddy Walk® and Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas logos. Use of the NDSS Buddy Walk® logo must be approved by the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS). If you wish to use the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas logo on your team shirt, please email your design for prior approval to jennifer@downsyndromedallas.org.

WHAT WILL THE DALLAS BUDDY WALK® EVENT INCLUDE?

The 2024 Dallas Buddy Walk® is a day of fun for the entire family. Activities will include exhibitor booths, face painting, dj, inflatables, games, food for purchase, clowns, balloon artists, photo booth, awareness walk, and more.

IS THERE A TAILGATE AREA? WHAT IS ALLOWED? HOW DO I GET A SPOT?

Yes! Many teams choose to set up a tailgate spot as a meeting/hang out space for their group. Tailgate spots are available on a first come, first served basis on event day at a designated time. Teams may choose to set up a small pop up canopy, tables, and chairs. Small coolers with snacks and drinks are also permitted. Alcohol, glass containers, grills and other open flames are **NOT** permitted. All team captains will receive additional information via email in October on specific procedures and set up times.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN I BRING MY DOG?

No! Only service animals are allowed at the Buddy Walk®. Participants arriving with pets other than service animals will be asked to take them home and will not be granted entry into Toyota Stadium.

IS THE BUDDY WALK® A FUNDRAISER? WHAT AND WHO DOES IT BENEFIT?

The Dallas Buddy Walk® is the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas' largest fundraiser funding over 50% of the organization's annual operating budget each year. Proceeds benefit the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas and help provide resources, support, and educational and social programs for more than 2,600 individuals with Down syndrome and their families in North Texas. A small portion of the proceeds also support the National Down Syndrome Society for advocacy and public awareness initiatives that benefit all individuals with Down syndrome. For more information, please see [pages 3-4](#) or visit the DSG website at www.downsyndromedallas.org.

ARE DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Your gift is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law. The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas is a registered 501(c)3 organization. Our tax ID number is 75-1508091.

WHO SHOULD CHECKS BE MADE PAYABLE TO? WHERE DO I SEND ANY CHECKS?

Please make checks payable to the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas or DSG. Checks should not be written to Buddy Walk® teams, team captains, or individual participants. Please ask donors to indicate which walk team they are supporting in the memo section of the check. Checks may be mailed to Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas, 1702 N. Collins Blvd. Suite 170, Richardson, TX 75080.

I'M HAVING PROBLEMS WITH THE REGISTRATION AND FUNDRAISING SITE. WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR SUPPORT?

For all your Buddy Walk® related questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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hannah@downsyndromedallas.org

