



DESIGNER GENES BUDDY WALK QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Whether it is your first or fifth Buddy Walk, there are always some questions before the big day. Here's a listing of our most frequently asked questions to help you prepare for the big day. Feel free to make some copies and share them with family and friends! You can also tell them to check out the Buddy Walk section of our web site in the works at www.designergenesnd.com.

WHEN IS THE BUDDY WALK?

The walk is on Saturday, September 26th, 2009

WHERE IS THE BUDDY WALK?

It's on the front (south) grounds of the state Capitol.

WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE BUDDY WALK?

The main purpose of the Bismarck-Mandan Buddy Walk is to raise awareness of the potential of individuals with Down syndrome to live, learn, work, and contribute to their community. Our main effort is not fundraising, which is why our walk is structured different than some of the other walks.

WHAT TIME SHOULD I GET TO THE BUDDY WALK?

You can come to the Buddy Walk as early as 10:00 a.m. (CST). There fun things to do starting at 10:00 —children's artist - Kitty Ko singing and entertaining, join Mandan Junior Girl Scout troop to learn more about disabilities, Buddy Walk tattoos, hang out with Meddy Bear and Alex the Cat, or check out the resources tent.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. is the time to register. We want to make sure that we've recorded everyone's name that is there to walk with us so please make sure everyone that's in your party gets to the registration area to record their name. If you have lots of people coming to support your family, tell them ahead of time about registration. The registration area will be in the large tented area just south of the steps.

CAN I REGISTER AHEAD OF TIME?

At this time, we are only taking registrations onsite the day of the Buddy Walk.

CAN I RAISE FUNDS AHEAD OF TIME FOR THE BUDDY WALK?

We do not ask walkers to raise a certain amount of money to participate in the Buddy Walk and we welcome everyone and anyone who wants to walk with us. If you'd like to ask for donations for the National Down Syndrome Society or Designer Genes beforehand, please contact Sandy McMerty (255-2959) or Roxane Romanick (258-7421) and we will give you further information on how to do so.

Designer Genes also asks for Buddy Walk sponsors (businesses in the community, and companies that are friends of our Designer Genes families) in the months and weeks before the walk to assist with expenses. If you know of a business or a sponsor, please let Sandy or Roxane know at the numbers above.

CAN PEOPLE MAKE DONATIONS AT THE WALK?

Walkers who have decided to join us on the day of the walk can make a donation when they register. People who donate \$10.00 or more will receive an official Buddy Walk t-shirt.



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WHAT IS THE MONEY USED FOR?

A percentage of the money raised is sent to the National Down Syndrome Society for research and public policy. The majority of the funds are retained locally and are used for supplying information to new parents of babies with Down syndrome, library materials, Designer Genes activities and events.

WHEN DOES THE ACTUAL WALK START?

At 11:00, there will be a special program to kick off the walk. This will take place on the front Capitol steps. The walk will start shortly thereafter.

HOW FAR DO PEOPLE WALK AND DOES EVERYONE WALK AT THE SAME TIME?

Everyone that's there for the Buddy Walk starts and stops at roughly the same time. The walk is one mile long, which is three loops around the south grounds of the Capitol. The three loops are symbolic of Trisomy 21, which is the chromosomal diagnosis for Down syndrome. Our goal has been to have enough people at the Buddy Walk to completely loop the grounds – we're getting closer every year.

ARE STROLLER, PETS, AND WAGONS ALLOWED?

Yes. Also, motorized carts or wheelchairs are also easily accommodated on the walk. It would be hard to have bikes, scooters, or any other motorized devices on the walk as we walk on the sidewalk, but if it's a device that's needed to make sure an individual can participate, we're open to it. Pets must be on a leash.

IS THERE A BATHROOM AVAILABLE AT THE CAPITOL?

We have a port-a-potty at the Capitol and the Heritage Center bathrooms are also available and accessible.

IS THERE WATER AVAILABLE OR SHOULD I BRING MY OWN?

We will have bottled water on hand at the walk.

I'M INVITING A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE TO WALK WITH OUR FAMILY THIS YEAR, HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT THEY CAN FIND OUR FAMILY?

You can get to the Capitol grounds early and stake out a spot. Decide ahead of time and tell your invited folks that you'll be on the west or east side of the steps or in the middle of the south grounds. Feel free to set up a tent or cabana of your own on the south grounds to designate a spot. Bring some type of flag or bunches of balloons.

WHAT DO FAMILIES DO TO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES AS TEAMS?

Lots of family teams wear something to distinguish themselves such as their own brightly color t-shirts, hats, visors, bandanas. Some families pass out balloons, pins, or ribbons to all their team members. If you know who you're inviting, you may want to pass these out to your invited team before the walk.

DO I HAVE TO HAVE A TEAM OR BE ON A TEAM TO ENTER THE WALK?

Not at all – please come no matter what!! Your presence and your support is what matters the most.

WHAT DO WE DO AFTER THE WALK IS OVER?

This year, we will be serving lunch at the Capitol grounds and families and teams are invited to stay and continue to visit, play frisbee, whiffle ball, etc. right at the Capitol grounds. There is no extra charge for the meal and we would love it if everyone could stay.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? Contact Sandy McMerty (255-2959) or Roxane Romanick (258-7421).