

Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin

Team Toolkit



Our Mission

The Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin's mission is to provide support to Wisconsin families and individuals with Down syndrome and related disabilities through awareness, education, information, programs, services, and the exchange of ideas and experiences.

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Welcome to the Team Toolkit!

Thank you for stepping up as a Team Captain for your chapter's Awareness Walk! You are a vital part of making this event a success—not only by fundraising but also by helping to create a community of support, celebration, and inclusion for individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

This toolkit is your one-stop resource for everything you need to build and lead your team. Whether you're a first-time captain or a seasoned pro, this guide will walk you through each step of the journey—from forming your team and setting goals, to fundraising tips, social media strategies, and day-of logistics.

Here's how to use this guide:

- Start with the FAQ section to answer common questions and ease into your role.
- Check out the Fundraising section for creative ideas, sample email templates, and tips on securing business donations or company matches.
- Visit the Team Resources section for inspiring stories, team incentives, and printable materials you can use to promote your team.
- Dive into the Social Media section to boost awareness and donations with shareable posts and templates.
- Use the Team Information pages to guide your planning, organize team members, and celebrate your efforts!

Our Awareness Walks are more than just fundraisers—they are joyful celebrations of ability, hope, and community. We are so grateful to have you leading the charge. With your passion and leadership, we know this year will be unforgettable.

Let's make a difference—together.

With gratitude,

The DSAW Team

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Isn't it hard to form a team for DSAW's Fundraisers?

A: Most of your friends and family want to support what's important to you. Asking via an email, letter, short video, text, personal phone call, Facebook or in person all work - using photos and your story will go a long way. Just getting a few people to join is a team. The more the merrier, but start small and grow.

Q: Who should I invite to be on my team?

A: Family members, friends, neighbors, teachers, church group, your social network. Start making a list as you go through a normal day or week. Look at your contact list on your phone, your address book, who you send birthday and holiday cards to.



Q: What is the money used for?

A: All money that is raised for our Fundraisers, stays local. This allows chapters to be able to offer awesome free and low-cost events and programs.

Q: How do some teams raise so much money?

A: Everyone has different strategies and different networks. Play on your strengths and set a goal that feels comfortable to you. Here are some ways to get larger amounts of money:

1. Ask at your workplace (and your spouse, brother, mother, etc's) if they will donate and sometimes they will do a match. Meaning if you can raise \$1,000, they give you \$1,000.
2. Ask a business you frequent a lot and know the owners or manager.
3. Do you know someone on the Elks, American Legion, Kiwanis Club, or Rotary Club? Sometimes they have money set aside for deserving non-profits.
4. Host an event that the proceeds go to your walk team, such as: a rummage sale, lemonade sale, or bake sale, be creative - the sky's the limit.

Q: I don't want to be a nuisance and bother people. How many times do I reach out or ask?

A: In marketing they say you have to ask or expose people 8 times to get someone to take action. Hopefully, your parents, best friend, etc. will respond the first time you ask, but others will need reminding. They can ignore your posts, but don't look at it like you are bugging people. You are reminding them about a great opportunity to make a difference in something you are passionate about - DSAW.

Final suggestion: Find a great photo of your loved one with Down syndrome or a family photo and share your story. Take the time to write about why you are asking and the hopes and dreams you have for your loved one. Focus on what's important to you and why DSAW has been supportive to you and your family.



Thank you for considering forming a team. Our Awareness Walks are a CELEBRATION AND PARTY. Everyone needs more fun in their lives! And everyone has something to give if you ask.

If you have other questions, please contact your Outreach and Event Coordinator.

down Syndrome awareness Walk

Team Captain Information

Starting your Team

By creating a team, QGiv has created a fundraising page for you. This page is specific for your team. QGiv will guide you through setting up your page. Feel free to share this with friends, family, coworkers, and/or teachers!



Forming your Team

Anyone can join your team! Think about the people that your self-advocate interacts with. These people would be perfect to join your team. Once they join your team, they can use the same fundraising page that you've created!

Fundraising for your Team

There are many different ways to fundraise for your team. Review the Team Toolkit to learn more about how to engage with your community. With your QGiv page, you can also connect to Facebook and fundraise through there.



Get Creative

Try doing a brat fry or garage sale to help fundraise. Some families have even done lemonade stands. The options are endless. If you have a large team, you could create your own shirts or plan for a special theme.

Day of

Try to remind your team so that you have a high attendance. You can also encourage friends and family to attend if they didn't join your team.



Thanking your Donors

Don't forget to thank the people who donated to your team! There are templates that you can email, located in the toolkit. Try to make it unique to help your donors feel special!

Company Match

What is a company match?

A company match refers to a corporate policy in which a company pledges to match, either fully or partially, any charitable donations made by its employees. Sometimes a generous friend or relative will also do a match!

Example

If you donate \$100 to DSAW, the company you work for will match that donation with an additional \$100, effectively doubling the impact of the employee's contribution.

How to find out if your employer has a company match program?

Contact your Human Resources Department and ask for their policy on donations to local non-profits.

* Don't forget to ask if they allow employees to volunteer their time with local non-profit organizations. Some companies such as DSAW offer paid time off to staff when they volunteer with an organization in their community. DSAW would love to have you volunteer your time to help us organize our Awareness Walk and other local events.

* If your company asks for our Tax ID #, please reach out to Erika Pankratz (epankratz@dsaw.org).

What if my employer doesn't have a company match program?

That's okay! Try asking your employer for a donation towards your team's fundraising goal instead. There are multiple ways to do so! Consider writing an email, asking in person, or over the phone.

See below for an email template to send to your company

Email Example:

Dear **(Insert Name)**,

As a proud member of the ***(Insert Company Name)*** team, I am writing to you with a heartfelt request for your support. This year, I am honored to be a part of a fundraising team dedicated to raising awareness and support for the Down Syndrome Association of WI-***(Insert Chapter Name)*** Chapter.

(Insert story about loved one with a photo)

As you may know, the Down Syndrome Association of WI is crucial in advocating for individuals with Down syndrome and their families, providing invaluable resources, support services, and educational opportunities. Their work positively impacts countless lives, empowering individuals with Down syndrome to thrive and succeed.

To contribute to DSAW, our fundraising team has set an ambitious goal to raise **(insert chapter walk goal)**, that will directly benefit the programs and initiatives of the Down Syndrome Association of WI ***(Insert Chapter Name)*** Chapter. To help us reach our target and make a meaningful difference, I am asking for **(Insert Company Name)**'s support through a donation towards our fundraising efforts.

I understand the demands on **(Insert Company Name)**'s resources and appreciate any assistance you can provide towards our cause. Your generosity will be acknowledged and deeply appreciated by our fundraising team, The Down Syndrome Association of WI ***(Insert Chapter Name)*** Chapter, and the individuals whose lives you will touch through your kindness.

Please let me know if you require any further information or clarification regarding our fundraising efforts. Thank you for considering my request, and I look forward to your positive response.

Warm Regards,
(Insert Your Name)

Email Template #1- Invitation

Dear Friends,

This year, my family has formed a team for the **(insert year ex: 2nd)** Annual Down Syndrome Awareness Walk, which will be celebrated on **(enter date and location)**. The goal of our Awareness Walk is to spread awareness and acceptance of Down syndrome throughout Wisconsin and to raise funds for the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin's life-changing programs and services. As you may know, this cause is very important to us.

(insert personal story and photo of your loved one w/ Down syndrome)

Would you consider joining our team and/or making a donation to support our team and **(insert name of loved one with Down syndrome)**? Your donation will have a large impact on thousands of lives in Wisconsin. Please forward this email to your friends and family, too! In addition, if your business would be interested in sponsoring the Walk, the funds will count towards our team's total! Visit **(insert Qgiv link to sponsorship benefits)**

Did you know that \$21 can fund job skills training sessions for a person with Down syndrome or related disabilities?

Use this link to join our team and make a donation: **(insert personal link)**

Thank you for supporting Down syndrome awareness!

Warmly,

(Your name)

Email Template #2- Invitation

Dear Friends,

I hope this email finds you well. As you may know, our team is gearing up for the upcoming Down Syndrome Awareness Walk, and we would be honored to have you join us in this meaningful event.
(insert personal statement about your loved one w/ Down syndrome and a photo)

The Down syndrome Awareness Walk is not only an opportunity to raise awareness about Down syndrome but also a chance to celebrate the unique abilities and accomplishments of individuals with Down syndrome. By participating, you'll be making a tangible difference in the lives of individuals who have Down syndrome and their families.

Joining our team is easy! Simply click on the registration link **(insert team link here)** and join team **(insert team name)**! Whether you're walking with us in person or participating virtually, your support means the world to us.

In addition to joining our team, we invite you to consider making a donation to support our cause. Your generous contribution will help fund essential programs and services for individuals with Down syndrome and their families. No donation is too small, and every dollar counts towards making a positive impact.

Did you know that \$50 will provide a New Parent Basket to a family that has just received a Down syndrome diagnosis?

To donate, please visit our team fundraising page **(insert Qgiv team link)**. Your support will help us reach our fundraising goal and make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals with Down syndrome.

Thank you for considering joining our team and supporting this important cause. Together, we can raise awareness, promote acceptance, and create a more inclusive world for individuals with Down syndrome.

Warm regards,
(insert your name)

Email Template #3- Follow-up email

Hello Friends!

I am reaching out with a friendly reminder about joining our team **(insert team name)** for the upcoming Down Syndrome Awareness Walk on **(insert date and location)**.

(add a picture of your family and maybe one statement from you or a loved one with Down syndrome such as “It’s such a fun and empowering event to see so many families celebrating!”)

Your participation in the walk would mean a lot to us and the entire Down syndrome community. Whether you’re able to walk with us in person or join us virtually, your support will help raise awareness and promote acceptance for individuals with Down syndrome.

If you haven’t already done so, please consider registering for our team by clicking on the registration link **(insert team registration link)**. Every participant makes a difference, and we would love to have you on board.

A \$100 donation will support a self-advocate through an entire week of DSAW Connects (virtually) Classes!

Additionally, I want to express our gratitude to those who have already joined our team or who have made donations to support our cause. Your generosity is truly appreciated, and it will help us provide essential programs and services for individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

If you haven’t had a chance to donate, there’s still time to contribute. You can donate by visiting our team fundraising page **(insert Qgiv team link)**. Every donation, no matter the size, will help us reach our fundraising goal and make a positive impact.

Thank you once again for considering joining our team and supporting this important cause. Together, we can make a difference and create a more inclusive world for individuals with Down syndrome.

Warm regards.
(insert name)

Email Template #4-Follow-up Email

Hi **(insert name)**,

Just a quick follow-up to remind you about our team's participation in the Down Syndrome Awareness Walk on **(insert date and location)**. We'd love to have you join us! Whether you walk with us or support us virtually, your participation makes a difference.

(insert picture and some fun fact about your loved one with Down syndrome).

You can register for our team here: **(insert Qgiv team link)**. And if you're able, please consider donating to support our cause and team via the same link above.

Thanks for considering, and let me know if you have any questions!

Warmly,
(insert name)

Email Template #5- Thank you for joining our team

Dear **(insert name)**,

I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for joining our team, **(insert team name)**, for the upcoming Down Syndrome Awareness Walk **(insert date, time & location)**. Your decision to participate means a great deal to us and to the entire Down syndrome community. But most of all to **(insert loved one's name who had Down syndrome and photo)**!

Your commitment to raising awareness and funds for individuals with Down syndrome is truly commendable. Your presence on our team makes a significant impact! If you could share our team's fundraising link **(insert Qgiv team link)** with your friends and family it certainly would help our team and give us a leg up in reaching our fundraising goals.

If you have any questions or need assistance as we prepare for the Walk, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to support you every step of the way.

Once again, thank you for joining our team and for your dedication to making a positive difference in the world. We're honored to have you with us!

Warm Regards,

(Insert Name)

Email Template #6- Thank you to the sponsors

Dear **(insert name or company name)**,

I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for sponsoring **(Insert chapters name)** Awareness Walk, for the Down Syndrome Association of WI. Your decision to sponsor of team means a great deal to us and to the entire Down syndrome community. But most of all to **(insert loved one's name who had Down syndrome and a photo)!**

Your sponsorship will help fund programming and events for individuals with Down syndrome and their families right here in **(Insert city name)**.

Your generosity will be acknowledged and deeply appreciated by our fundraising team, The Down Syndrome Association of WI **(Insert Chapter Name)**Chapter, and the individuals whose lives you will touch through your kindness.

Once again, thank you for your sponsorship of our team and for your dedication to making a positive difference in the world. We're honored to have you with us!

Warm Regards,

(Insert Name)

Fundraising *Ideas*

Host a Trivia
Night

Host a
Rummage
Sale

Denim Day at
work

Donations at
work

Pool/cribbage/
darts
tournament

Restaurant
Tip Night

Bingo

Special
T-Shirt
sale

Facebook
fundraiser
linked to
your QGiv
team



How to get your loved one

Involved

Record and post
a video of your
loved one
inviting them to
join your team

Ask friends and
family for small
jobs as a way to
raise money

Sell homemade
items:
bracelets, baked
goods, art...

Take a day to enter
and approach local
businesses with a
letter asking for
support

Help your loved
one host a
lemonade stand.

Have them write
thank you cards to
people who donate



Goal Setting

Setting goals and expectations for our fundraising efforts for the Down Syndrome Association of WI is important to keep things realistic and achievable. We are all competitive as well and love to exceed our goals! Start by looking at how much your team can realistically raise based on your past experiences and the size of your network. Aim for a specific, measurable goal, like "raising \$321 in two months," rather than a vague target. If this is your first walk, make your best guess. A fun first goal is \$321 (which ties into Trisomy 21.)



Break this down into smaller steps, such as weekly or bi-weekly targets, and share these with your team to keep everyone motivated. Remember, it's about setting achievable milestones and celebrating each success along the way. Stay flexible and adjust your plans, based on the feedback and progress you observe. Together, we can make a meaningful impact!

How to Ask a Business for a Donation/Sponsor

- Start by asking for a manager or someone you know. Try to choose a time that is not busy, (i.e. lunchtime at a fast food restaurant is not ideal).
- If you have your loved one with Down syndrome, practice a little before you go. Bring along a one-sheet or sponsorship packet that you can get from your Outreach and Event Coordinator or print from the Walk website.
- Start by introducing yourself and ask if they have a few minutes. If they seem rushed, offer to come back another time - and get a firm date/time. If they have a few minutes, get right to the point about how you are raising money for the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin - XXXX (your chapter's name) and why. Ask if they would consider giving a xxxxx (come up with a few suggestions, such as \$100 donation, \$100 Gift Card, etc.) They may need to consider or ask someone else. Sometimes they are the decision maker.
- Your loved one with Down syndrome can share something that they like about DSAW or an event that was funded by generous donors. Or just ask them to say their name and how old they are. And if it's somewhere they like to go to, perhaps they can say, my favorite thing about your business is xxxx. (Keep it simple)
- Before you leave, identify the next steps. ("Ok, so I'll call you next week and your direct line is XXXXXXXX", or "You will email me in a week" or "I'll wait while you get the gift card.")
- Thank them for their time. If you brought your loved one w/ DS, encourage them to say Thank you and shake their hand.

Follow up. You may have to follow up more than once. Keep following up until they say no. And if they say no this year, just remember a no is usually not forever.

Annual Appeal Stories

Think Independence

Meet Matt

Matt is a 43-year-old young man who enjoys working, having fun, and participating in social and community events. He lives in DeForest (in DSAW's South Central chapter) with his parents and twin brother. He is very proud and happy when he is working in a job that is right for him, and he enjoys cleaning and helping people. He is very active in his church and loves fishing, 4-wheeling, pontoon rides, bowling, making crafts, mowing grass in the summer months, and snowmobiling in the winter.

Currently, Matt participates in DSAW's daily living skills twice a week, attends Self Advocate Adventures events and vocational training/job coaching, and is in search of a job right now! DSAW's HCBS Small Groups allow self-advocates to join with 2-4 peers and explore their communities and interests! This is a terrific way for them to make wonderful friendships and learn about their communities. DSAW has provided him with something to do during the day while he is in search of a job. Matt's favorite things at DSAW are the social events through the Self Advocate Adventures program. Programs that DSAW offers help Matt feel social and more connected with his community of friends. He has created wonderful relationships with other self-advocates and has become more Independent!

Think College

Meet Hendrik Steenepoorte

Hendrik is a 19-year-old freshman attending Shephard's College in Union Grove, Wisconsin. Shepherds College boasts it's the "nation's leading post-secondary school created with the learning needs of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in mind."

Having older siblings who went away to college and several college visiting events Hendrik attended, he knew at the beginning of his senior year that *he was supposed to visit college campuses*. His mother, Maria, arranged for Hendrik to tour several colleges. They decided Shephard's College was a great fit for Hendrik. Hendrik shared he wanted to go to college "to meet new friends, have fun, learn about Culinary Arts as a career, and make a difference in the world." So far, he has many new friends, is having fun, is taking classes in Culinary Arts, and has already volunteered at Feed My Starving Children in the community. And he's only been in college for a few months!

Currently, his favorite class behind lunch is Personal and Professional Development taught by Mr. H. In his culinary class, he's learning all kinds of safety protocols around using knives, cleanliness, and cooking new healthy and even gluten-free recipes. As part of daily living skills, all students at Shephard's College learn to prepare meals, grocery shop and make their own for breakfasts and dinners in the dorm kitchens.

In addition to starting college this fall, Hendrik was honored to be chosen as the Fox Cities Chapter's Awareness Walk Ambassador. He got to come home in October for the weekend to attend the event, volunteering at registration, selling raffle tickets, and most importantly on the stage for the start of the walk inspiring others in the crowd. Hendrik's enthusiasm and energy are contagious. Oh, and by the way, when asked if he is homesick, he replies, "No, never!" We are so excited to see what else is in store for Hendrik's future.

Think Support

Hear Nicole Cooper's story

After Nicole Cooper and her husband learned about their daughter's Down syndrome diagnosis at fifteen weeks pregnant, they needed help processing all the emotions they were feeling. They had amazing family and friend support but no connection quite compares to talking with another parent who has a child with Down syndrome. Their experience, both at the time of diagnosis and wherever they are in their parenting journey, was immensely helpful being a part of [DSAW's Parents First Call](#) program.

Nicole shared that connecting with another parent who has a child with Down syndrome can be one of the most helpful resources a parent will have; it can help make their journey a little easier and can be comforting to have that connection. DSAW trains Support Parents to provide support to others who have just received a diagnosis.

Nicole loved that DSAW's Parent's First Call staff took the time to ask specific details about what they were looking for in terms of their support parent match. Nicole's family was just learning about the high potential that their daughter would need heart surgery so it was important to them that they could ask questions and have that in common with their support parent. They were also first-time parents and wanted to find a family who had been in their shoes. It felt good that their needs and personal stories were taken into account to match them with an appropriate support parent, instead of just a random match.

Think Housing

Meet Kathryn Burish and Hannah Rahmanpanah

Kathryn and Hannah are shining a light on living independently and exceeding expectations for people with Down syndrome and other disabilities.

Living independently bolsters your self-esteem and confidence.

Kathryn Burish and Hannah Rahmanpanah have known each other since they were 16 months old! And now, they feel right at home living on their own in Elm Grove - as next-door neighbors. They both moved out when they were 22 years old and have lived independently in their apartments for the past 5 years.

They each expressed their love of having their own space. They come home and it's just how they left it. Kathryn works at TJ Maxx with the dream of starting her own fashion line. Hannah works two jobs - Pick n Save in the Floral Department and at a consignment clothing store.

Although they have the support of their families living nearby and sometimes carpooling together with their parents, they each have found ways to be self-sufficient. They take the Elmbrook Senior Taxi service to get to places like grocery shopping. They can cook, clean, do their laundry, and entertain friends. When needed they get assistance from mentors and support people for "deep" cleaning and planning meals.

Both young women are on the Advisory Board of the Southeastern Chapter of DSAW and are active with other DSAW groups and activities. Hannah attends Rad Rec events and was recently at our fundraiser at Culver's. Kathryn loves going to DSAW dances and socializing with friends.

They love getting together with friends and having fun! Hannah shared she "likes to do the things she wants, whenever she wants." Kathryn said that she wanted her own space when she felt like she was butting heads with her parents. Who hasn't felt that as a young adult? She lives in a 4-unit building where she knows the other tenants. Hannah lives in the building right next door. So Kathryn lives in a building with all her friends, just like her favorite TV show, "Friends."

“People with Down syndrome are just like everyone else and having a disability is not scary, “ says Hannah. And Down syndrome does not define who they are and what they deserve.

Being independent for people with Down syndrome is not only possible, Kathryn and Hannah are just a few participants leading by example.

Think Employment

You help to support life-changing programs like our Manufacturing Basics course. This is an employer-embedded skills training program within [Rely Contract Manufacturing/Engauge Workforce Solutions](#) in Menomonee Falls. This 12-week integrated, on-the-job training program teaches the basic information necessary to start working in manufacturing, as well as soft skills like communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and more.

Did you know that the manufacturing industry in Wisconsin generates \$66 billion in economic output and accounts for nearly 19% of the state's domestic product? However, 77% of manufacturers say they will have ongoing difficulties in attracting and retaining workers into the future. People with disabilities can be great candidates to support the vital manufacturing industry in our state, and we are helping to prepare them!

Wendy Schmidt, DSAW's Director of Employment Services, says "Individuals with diverse abilities are often an undervalued, overlooked population of people that are more than capable of being successful in the manufacturing industry. We hope to break down the doors and open up more opportunities for those individuals in manufacturers across the state."

Stories from specific chapters to share with donors

Green Bay

Sign-N-Play :

"It is the foundation of how our family started to sign. Hendrix is and was young starting this. It is nice as everyone is starting at or around the same level so it makes it feel welcoming to come into the group." Nicki Skinkis

"He loves the routine of the class using books and music to learn sign language. He can use sign language at home to reduce frustration to gain items he wants. My family has also made lifelong connections and friends by attending the class." Vanessa Kudick

South Central

Thanks to the generous support and funds raised from our Annual Awareness Walk, we've been able to offer a wide variety of *free* social and educational outings throughout 2024–25. In January, we kicked off the year with a visit to the Holiday Lights at the Rotary Gardens in Janesville and began hosting quarterly group birthday parties. March was full of fun, including a trip to Crawdaddy's Waterpark, snow tubing at Cascade Mountain, and a special Moms' Retreat. We also held our Gallery 21 celebration on March 21, which welcomed over 200 participants to honor World Down Syndrome Day in style. Other exciting activities included dance classes in partnership with GiGi's Playhouse and a rock climbing adventure at Boulders Climbing Gym. April brought bus safety and riding sessions, along with a fun bowling outing in Reedsburg. May was especially active, featuring an adaptive bike class, horse therapy sessions, a bowling party, game night in Janesville, a Moms & Me party, and even more bowling in Madison. We're excited for a summer filled with even more amazing opportunities and meaningful community connections! THANK YOU for your continued financial support!

Fox Cities

Over the past 15 years, the incredible generosity of our community through the Fox Cities Awareness Walk has fueled the growth of our chapter from the ground up. Thanks to these contributions, we've been able to lease dedicated office space, hire our own staff, and expand our programming to serve individuals with Down syndrome across all age groups.

The funds we raise continue to make a direct impact, supporting local families through grants and scholarships, offering inclusive and free or low fee events, like our first annual Friendsgiving hosted at the Children's Museum, and hosting educational workshops.

Our outreach efforts evolve to meet the changing needs of our loved ones with Down syndrome, and our future depends on continued awareness and support from the

communities we serve. As we take the next step in our journey, searching for a new office space to help us grow even further, we're more grateful than ever for the support that makes it all possible.

Southeastern Region (SE & KRW)

At the end of 2024, we were able to move into our new incredible location, the Carmelite! With funds raised from the Awareness Walk, we were able to start additional recurring programming and expand our services in the Southeastern Region. We continue to be able to offer amazing free events for our families and we can't wait to continue!

La Crosse

Thanks to the generous support from our Walk, we have the funds to offer fun, free family events, as well as helpful resources and webinars! These special gatherings create safe and welcoming spaces where parents, guardians, and support teams can connect, swap stories, share advice, and simply feel seen and supported. Because of you, these meaningful moments and learning opportunities can happen, and we're so grateful. Thank you for helping us build a stronger, more connected community!

Chippewa Valley

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, sponsors, and the dedicated families who participate in our Annual Awareness Walk, we are proud to offer a variety of free events for families throughout the Chippewa Valley. Each month, we host engaging family-friendly activities as well as social outings for our Adult Social Hangout group.

A highlight of our year is the World Down Syndrome Day celebration at Action City—an event filled with joy and community spirit. Additionally, we offer quarterly Parent's Night Out gatherings and virtual informational meetings to support and connect our families.

We conclude the year with a festive holiday party for our participants. Individuals with Down syndrome and their siblings receive personalized gifts, thoughtfully chosen in advance. Santa and Mrs. Claus help make the occasion magical by distributing the presents. The event includes a catered main course and beverages, with guests invited to bring a dish to share. Holiday music and crafts add to the joyful atmosphere, making it a memorable celebration for all.

Sheboygan

With the funds that we raised for our chapter from last year's Awareness walk, we were able to continue our Teen Hang Out Club! This program has been extremely popular with our 12-18 year olds! We've been able to provide more free activities for our families to enjoy throughout our chapter counties. In addition, in 2025, we are opening our first-ever brick-and-mortar building in Glenbeulah! We are so excited to host more free events for our families and participants!

Central WI

Because of the generous support from our donors, sponsors, and our family teams, we can host many free events for our families here in Central WI. We have started a spotlight educational series for our families where we bring in guest speakers who present on various topics. We have also hosted other events such as a zoo trip, where we explored outer space at the Planetarium. We are looking forward to our pool party and cheering on the WI Rapids Rafters in June and July.

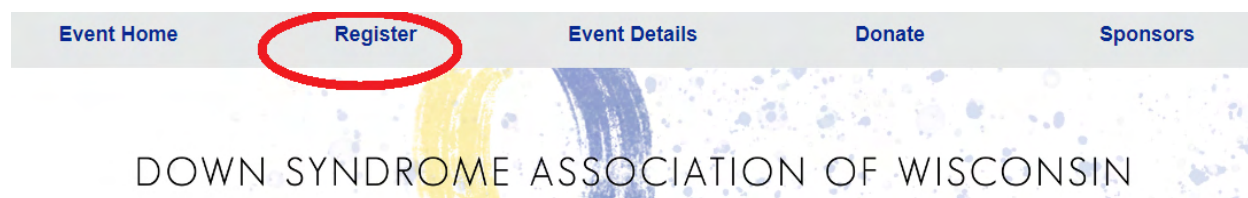
REGISTERING A TEAM OR JOINING AN EXISTING TEAM

STEP 1. Welcome to (Insert Chapter's Name) Awareness Walk!

Click on the link to get started. (Insert Chapter's Qgiv website link)

STEP 2.

Click on the REGISTER button



STEP 3. How do you want to participate?

Click on the **"BOX"** that best represents how you wish to participate.

How do you want to participate?



Registration	\$15
Includes admission, a round of mini golf, and event t-shirt	
Registration Individual with Down syndrome	Free
Participants with DS participate free of registration charge! We will still have a shirt for you!	
"Virtual" Walker (All ages)	\$15
Can't attend the event? Honor your loved ones from around the world by launching a virtual team and/or signing up to be a virtual walker. Whether you live halfway across the globe or simply can't join us that day, honor your loved one by committing to walk or run in their honor. Sign up by August 9 and we'll do our best to mail you this year's walk shirts to wear while you participate from afar (USA only). Registration includes a t-shirt, but we cannot guarantee its arrival by September 14.	

STEP 4. Join or start a team

Click on the box that says **“JOIN OR START A TEAM”**

To Start or Join A Team



As an Individual

Work on your own to reach your personal fundraising goal.



Join or Start a Team >

Work as a group to reach your personal + collective fundraising goals.

STEP 5. CREATING A NEW TEAM

(if you want to join an existing team proceed to step 10 for more information)

Click on the button that says **"Start a new team."**

Join a Team



There aren't any teams yet!

[⏪ Back](#)



[👤 Start A New Team](#)

STEP 6. SETTING UP A NEW TEAM

Type in your team name & team fundraising goal then click on **"Save My Team"**

Start A New Team

You'll be team captain.

What do you want to name your team?



Team Name

How much does your team want to raise?

Money raised by each team member will count toward the collective team goal, plus their own personal goal.



\$ 1,000



Save My Team

STEP 7. Creating A New Team

Type in your details, choose your t-shirt size & agree to the waiver terms

Do you want to register another participant on your team?

YES-Click the button that says **"ADD ANOTHER PARTICIPANT"**. **REPEAT THE STEP FOR EACH NEW PARTICIPANT YOU WISH TO ADD.**

NO- Click the **"NEXT"** button and proceed to step 8.

 Heidi's Heroes

 You

Your Fundraising Goal

How much will you try to raise?

Money raised counts toward your goal + your team's goal of \$250!



Let's get your details.



We'll send you a confirmation, plus a link to set up your fundraising page!

Just a few more things...



Waiver



☐ I agree and accept the following terms and conditions:

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

To the fullest extent allowed by law, I agree to WAIVE AND DISCHARGE CLAIMS AGAINST, RELEASE FROM LIABILITY, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin, Inc., DSAW-Sheboygan and Surrounding Counties (collectively the "Operators") and their officers, Board members, directors, employees, volunteers and agents

[Show more](#)



STEP 8. ADD ANOTHER PARTICIPANT

Fill out their fundraising goal & choose whether they want their own fundraising goal or page. Fill out their details, select their t-shirt size & agree to the waiver terms.

To add a 3rd + participant repeat steps 6 & 7 until all participants are added. When complete, click the **"NEXT"** button.

STEP 9- OPTIONAL GIFT & PAYMENT DETAILS

To answer **YES** to any of the following questions click on the small box- a ☒ will appear or type in the amount you wish to donate.

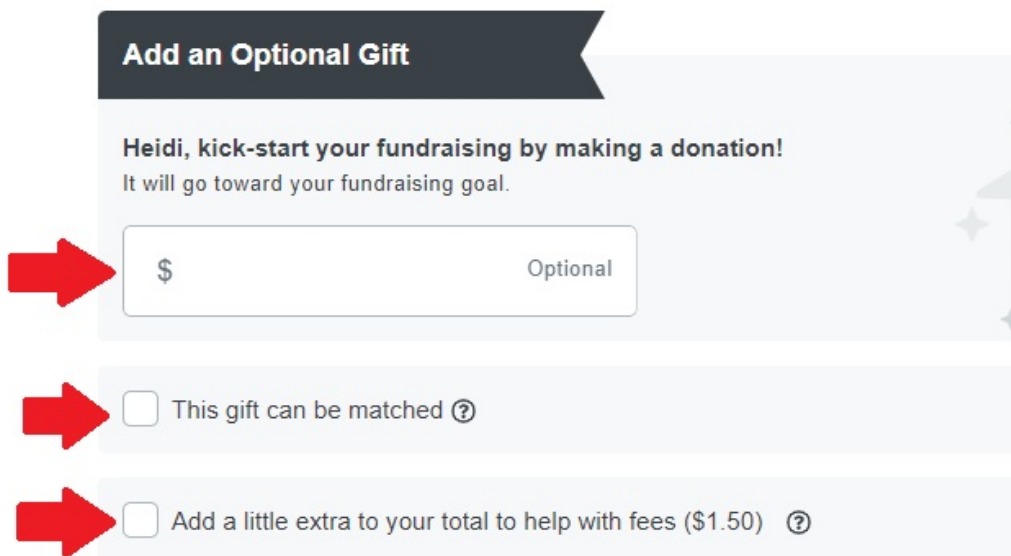
To answer **NO** to any of the following questions leave the ☐ blank.

Will you make a personal donation to kick-start your fundraising goal?

Will your employer match your donation?

Will you consider covering the processing fee?

After answering these questions enter your payment information.



Add an Optional Gift

Heidi, kick-start your fundraising by making a donation!
It will go toward your fundraising goal.

Optional

☐ This gift can be matched ?

☐ Add a little extra to your total to help with fees (\$1.50) ?

Payment Details

How would you like to pay?

Credit Card



Card Number



Exp. Date

CVV

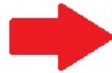


Billing Address

☒ Same as Mailing Address

PO BOX 385
Schofield, Wisconsin 54476
US

 [Back](#)




Complete Registration • \$15



STEP 10-TO JOIN AN EXISTING TEAM

In the search bar type the name of the team you wish to join. Select the team name and click the **"JOIN"** button. Then follow steps 6, 7 & 8 that are listed above.




×

Join a Team

👤 1 teams

Camden's Crew

👑 Camden Sveom



Join

⏪ Back

👤 Start A New Team

Virtual Walker Information

How do I participate as a virtual walker?

There are several ways to participate. First, make sure you register as a participant to be eligible for all of our prizes and giveaways! As part of registration, you can purchase this year's t-shirt to wear on Walk Day. You can donate to DSAW, encourage fundraising, participate in our contests, and share our Awareness Walk event with your friends. Be sure to visit your chapter's Facebook page for ongoing event information.

How do I order T-shirts?

T-shirts are included in your registration fee. Once you register as a virtual participant, you will need to select your t-shirt size. Your T-Shirt(s) will be mailed directly to you.

Do I have to register?

We highly encourage registration! We want everyone to be involved in our Awareness Walks. By registering for this event, you will be eligible for our giveaways and prizes in the months leading up to the Walk. Registrants can purchase t-shirts, create teams, and fundraise. Top teams will receive AWESOME prizes!

Is there a registration fee?

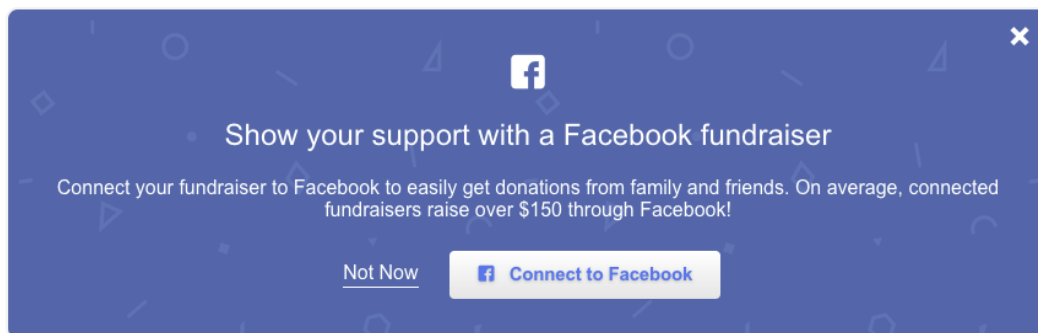
There is a registration fee to sign up to be a virtual walker for our Down Syndrome Awareness Walk which includes a t-shirt and postage. The Awareness Walks are our biggest fundraiser and account for much of our organization's income. We ask every walker to consider making a personal donation and/or commit to raising funds and awareness to help sustain our organization's programs and events.

Connecting to Facebook

Connecting to Facebook allows fundraising teams to raise more money and share their team with friends!

Steps:

1. After creating a team, you will be prompted to create or log into your account.
2. Once logged in, you will be on your fundraising dashboard.
3. Locate this section:



4. Click Connect to Facebook
5. Sign into your Facebook account
6. Allow QGiv to access your Facebook account. This will automatically create a Facebook Fundraiser for your team.
7. Add your personal story to share why you are raising money or use the existing paragraph about DSAW that is already typed! (Personal stories tend to gain more traction on Facebook.)
8. Click "Connect to Facebook" and your fundraiser has been created!

Accessing your Fundraiser on Facebook

1. Log into your Facebook account
2. Click the 9 dot menu up in the upper right corner.
3. Type in the menu "fundraiser" and select the top option.
4. On the left side of the screen, you should see your newly created DSAW fundraiser.
5. Click the title of the fundraiser to edit, add photos, stories, or update your friends/family on how the fundraiser is going.

Social Media Example Posts

These Facebook posts were created by a top fundraising team last year. Please look at these as an example of what you can post to add more members, solicit donations, or generate excitement for your team!

Caroline's Crew is all signed up for the 15th Annual Down Syndrome Awareness Walk!

💙💛 Would you join us?? 💙💛

We'd love to have friends and family from near and far join us + make this the biggest year yet. It is such a fun family event!! Face painting, balloon animals, raffle baskets, bounce houses, + more.

This year, Sweet Caroline has a goal of raising \$5k. 🤖 It's a hefty goal but we believe we have the best support system who will help us get there!! Funds go directly to providing so many services and resources to individuals who have Down syndrome + their families.

Caroline personally benefited from an enrichment grant from DSAW this year that allowed her to participate in an 8-week educational therapy program and a sign language class. We could go on forever about the incredible things DSAW is doing in our community right now.



👉 Details:

Saturday, Sept. 30

12-3pm @ Rockers Stadium (Green Bay)

\$10 Registration includes t-shirt

If you can't walk with us, you can also donate at the link below in Caroline's honor and/or donate a raffle basket! 🛒

THANK YOU for supporting and being a part of Caroline's Crew!! 💙💛

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/account/1527166>

Friends and Family! 🙌 We are participating in the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin's Awareness Walk on September 24 to raise awareness and acceptance of people with Down syndrome! Please consider supporting DSAW-Green Bay this year by joining our team, making a donation, or both!

The funds raised from this event go to job training programs, new parent gift baskets, virtual classes, therapy scholarships, and different family events for families within our Down syndrome community. All things that have greatly impacted our household and journey as a family.

We hope you'll consider joining us for this family fun event to celebrate Caroline along with all of her other friends with Down syndrome! 💙💛💙💛 Seriously...it's so fun! Bounce houses, face painting, princesses, and more!

Here's the link to join Caroline's Crew:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/gbwalk22/account/1294886/>

It's that time of year...Down Syndrome Walk time! 💙💛💙💛

September 30th

12:00-3:00

Capital Credit Union Park

There are many ways to support Caroline & her friends in the Down Syndrome group before or on walk day!

💙 We need raffle items for our Raffle Baskets. Please message me if you would be interested in putting a basket together or donating items towards a basket. (100% of the proceeds stay in the Green Bay chapter) **RAFFLE BASKETS NEEDED BY SEPT. 9**

💛 The walk could use business sponsorships. If your business, workplace, or someone you know is interested in sponsorship of the walk please message me!

💙 Volunteers are always helpful! Message me if you would like to help out this way.

💛 Bring your family & enjoy the many activities (bounce houses, balloon art, and crafts to name a few)going on. Enjoy walking a few laps on the track while helping a great cause!

💙 Donate to support the cause. 100% of the money stays in our chapter! Money raised provides activities & education for the families in our group throughout the year.

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/team/927265/>

Caroline is busy making THANK YOU cards for everyone who donated to her walk fundraiser + helped her reach her goal. 💙💛💙💛 We aren't done yet though! Help us get this cutie on a billboard (promoting next year's walk) by keeping her in the top fundraiser spot + of course help us get DSAW to their goal for the year! 🙏

You'll get a ONE-OF-A-KIND piece of artwork from our Sweet Caroline + the pleasure of knowing you helped to provide crucial resources, programming, grants, and more to individuals who have Down syndrome. 🧡

You can donate and/or register to walk with us, here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/team/927265/>

This is the last week that you're guaranteed a t-shirt with registration for the Down Syndrome Awareness Walk! 🧡👕🚶🚶

We'd love it if you'd join Caroline's Crew on Sept. 30th here in Green Bay. It's such a fun family day — bounce houses, face painting, characters, yard games, raffles, + more!!

It's only \$10 to register and it helps raise money for the [Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin - Green Bay Connection](#). It's nearly impossible to put into words what this org means to us + how they've supported our family. 💙💛💙💛💙💛

Please join us! Bring the whole family! You can register here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/team/927265/>

💙💛ONE WEEK💙💛

We are ONE week from the [15th Annual Down Syndrome Awareness Walk](#) + we need your help!!!

We have some "inside information" 🤔 that Caroline is only about \$1,500 from being the FIRST PLACE fundraiser for this year's walk + landing this cute face 🙌 on next year's billboard. Would she not be the cutest person to spread Down syndrome awareness in our community?? 🥰

Of course, it's all in fun but it also helps an AMAZING local org that has honestly helped Caroline + our family so much. She would not be where she is today with the help of the families we've met through DSAW. They've helped us navigate so many pieces of our journey — every time we've been so scared or lost or worried for our girl. We'd LOVE to give back to them in the biggest way possible. 🥺

How you can help:

🌟DONATE: Big or small, every donation makes an impact on the life of someone with Ds.

🌟SHARE: Help us spread the word! Who do you know that we should know? 🤗! Share the link below!

🌟REGISTER to walk: We'd LOVE to have you on our team for walk day. It's such a fun family day for only \$10!

💙💙💙💙 And THANK YOU so much to everyone who has helped us get this far. It means the world to us 🌍💙💙💙💙

More details here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/team/927265/>

We've been setting up for tomorrow's Down Syndrome Awareness walk + I cannot hold back the tears of joy + anticipation + gratitude for everyone who has supported this year's fundraising drive. 🥹 The impact of what is happening here will reach far beyond what we can see today. We are SO CLOSE. Closer than we honestly thought possible to reaching our chapter goal. When you give, here is what your donation will go towards:

- ★ Job & daily living skills training for adults with Ds
- ★ Enrichment Grants (👉 Caroline received one of these for an educational program last fall)
- ★ Welcome Baskets (👉 we received this when we received Caroline's diagnosis)
- ★ DSAW Connect Classes
- ★ Sign-N-Play Classes (👉 Caroline has now participated in two of these + each time we watch her language development leap forward)
- ★ Financial Classes for parents (as we need to navigate unique hoops with a child with a disability like a special needs trust)
- ★ Buddy Up Tennis (a buddy health/wellness program here in GB that not only promotes fitness but assists in gross motor development)
- ★ Training for doctors delivering a Ds diagnosis

And so much more!!!

THANK YOU. Thank you so much for your support of Caroline's Crew but beyond that, DSAW-Green Bay. Thank you for helping us to change the narrative around disability + for helping us to provide life-changing services to individuals with Ds. 💙💙💙💙

At this moment, we have met our personal goal but we have just under \$2k left to hit our chapter goal. How cool would it be to reach what we thought was "so far out there" or better yet exceed it?? Would you please consider donating any amount to help us get there? The deadline to give us tonight! 🥹🙏

You can donate, here: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/greenbay2023/team/927265/>

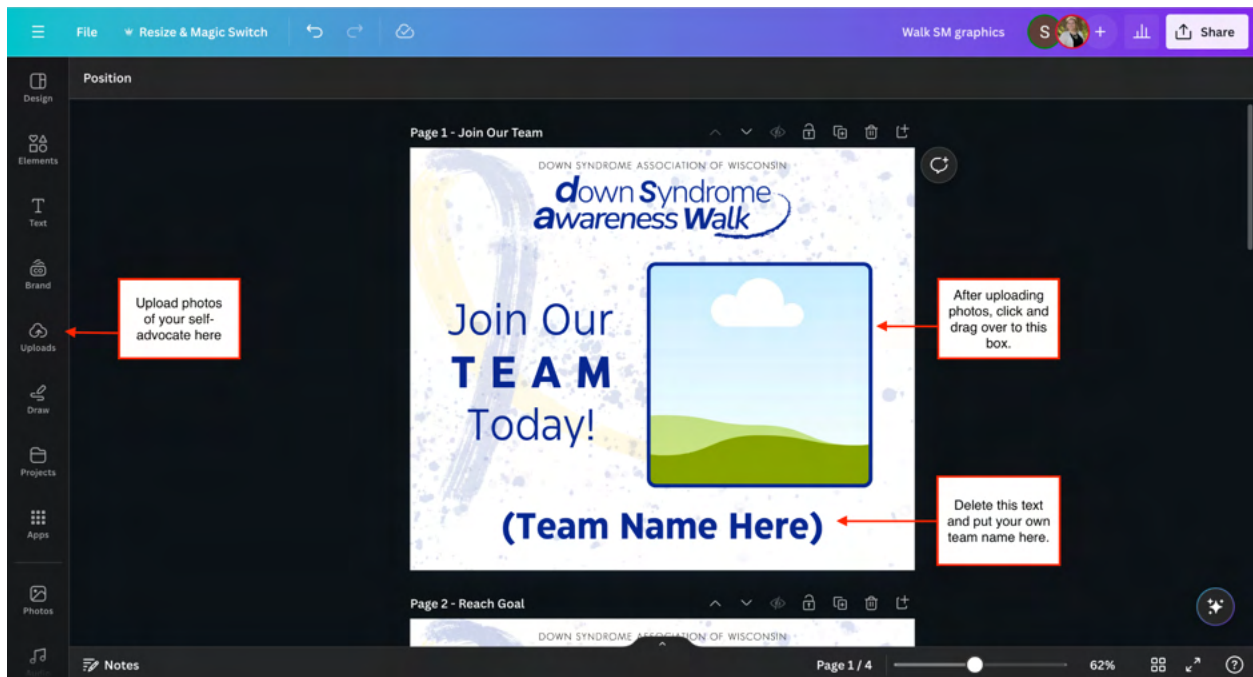
From the bottom of our hearts, thank you. Whether you “like” or donate or come walk with us tomorrow...thank you!! 🙏

Templates for Social Media

Using Social Media to promote your team is a great place to start! DSAW has created Canva templates for teams to use that can be easily edited to be customized to your self-advocate.

Canva is a free editing app that allows you to add words and text to a template. To use the following templates, you will need to create a free Canva account. You do not need premium access to edit these templates.

Once you click this link and log into your account, you can add a photo of your loved one to the “upload” side menu. After you upload a photo, you can insert it into the sky/hills photo placeholder. Be sure to update the team name as well! Double-click and delete the text, then add your team name. Each of the 4 templates is very similar and just requires a few updates to make it personalized!



Canva Templates:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGG_SBEGvI/BJ0OaFLEkNZwsLkIh9QFg/view?utm_content=DAGG_SBEGvI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink&mode=preview

Team Incentives

Recognize teammates on social media

Offer extra raffle tickets

Do a personal raffle drawing for individuals that are on your team

Reserve parking spots



Personalized yard signs

Provide DSAW branded items

Treats (candy, popcorn, chocolate...)

Provide crowns, sashes, or buttons

Create a theme (if event doesn't have one)

Crazy socks for all team members

Print a team photo to give out after the walk



Personalized thank you note

Glow sticks for your team

Coffee or donuts on walk day

Personalized Candy or Kind Bars (put a sticker over the label)



Fundraising: Who?

To brainstorm how to ask local companies for donations for the Down Syndrome Association awareness walk, start by thinking about businesses in your community that care about helping others. Look up information about these companies to see if they like to support events like ours. Gather a few friends or team members and talk about how the walk will help people and why it's important. Share personal stories and explain how the money will make a difference. Write down the main points you want to mention, like how much you're asking for and how the company will benefit from donating. Finally, practice what you'll say to feel more confident when you reach out to them.

Team Members and Donor Ideas

