How it Works

Pick a Location	Determine a Date & Time	Organize a Walk Committee	Recruit Sponsors & Walkers	Walk to Remember

Getting Started

A Walk to Remember is one of The Compassionate Friends' most meaningful awareness and fundraising events. It provides families, friends, and communities an opportunity to honor and remember children, siblings, and grandchildren who have died while increasing awareness of the support, understanding, and hope TCF offers to bereaved families. More than a fundraiser, the Walk is a powerful expression of remembrance and connection, bringing people together to celebrate lives that will never be forgotten.

This packet is designed to help Chapters plan and host a successful Walk to Remember in their communities. The resources and suggestions can be adapted to fit the size, needs, and goals of your Chapter.

The success of your Walk depends on the involvement of Chapter members. The more people who help plan, promote, and support the event, the more meaningful and successful it will be. Chapters may also choose to partner with neighboring TCF Chapters to host a larger walk, increase participation, and share responsibilities for fundraising, publicity, and event coordination.

Encourage members to recruit walkers, promote the event, and seek pledges and sponsorships through their personal and professional networks. Share information through meetings, newsletters, websites, email lists, and social media. While many participants will be family and friends, community members often join after learning about the Walk through local outreach and publicity. These efforts not only contribute to a successful event but also help expand TCF's ability to provide support, education, and hope to grieving families in communities across the country.

4 - 6 Months from Walk

CHAIR:

An event chairperson should be appointed to be responsible for the overall success of the Walk. This person's job is two-fold:

1) Keep the team on track and motivated

2) Set the tone of appreciation and gratitude for all the volunteers participating in the planning of the Walk. Communication throughout the process is key.

Establish a Walk Committee within your chapter. Key roles include: Chair, Fundraising, Media, Logistics, Volunteers, Community Outreach, Registration

LOGISTICS:

Choose a Location: Explore locations without site fees or opportunities to get space donated, or negotiate a reduced rate.

Select a Date: Consider weather, conflicting community events and national holidays. Local walks can be held whenever it is convenient for the Chapter.

Craft a Budget: Determine possible expenses and estimate costs for the Walk. Consider reaching out to businesses for in-kind support or corporate donations to offset costs.

Advise the TCF Home Office of your Walk so that we can provide liability insurance to the Chapter. To request a Certificate of Insurance, email nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org or call 877.969.0010. Please note that there is no charge to the Chapter for this insurance.

KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Does this location offer a weather contingency plan?
- Explore parks, farms, sports complexes, shopping malls
- Consider projected attendance, parking, cost and privacy
- Are there bathrooms onsite?
- Is a permit required?
- Do you need to coordinate with local police?
- Is there access to power?
- Is there emergency vehicle access?
- Is onsite medical support available in the area?

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FUNDRAISING:

Fundraising can come from pledges to support each participant or through donations from the participants themselves, friends, family, and business acquaintances. Encourage walkers to seek pledges. Collect the pledges at Chapter meetings or prior to the start of the Walk.

- Decide on Revenue Opportunities
- Find a local business who will "match" all funds raised in the Walk.
- Ask local restaurants or coffee shops to donate a percentage of sales to TCF.
- Consider setting up a Facebook Fundraiser as a way for friends and loved ones to contribute.

- Consider an online fundraising platform like JustGiving.com to promote the Walk.
- Use local connection to invite notable officials to participate in your Walk, like Clergy, Mayor, Sheriff, Celebrities

---

REGISTRATION:

We highly recommend that you have registration for the Walk, not just in advance, but also for those who just show up on the day of the Walk to Remember. Registration fees should cover the cost of T-Shirts, Walk Bibs and any other items provided to participants.

By requiring registration, the Chapter is able to have each person participating sign the Liability Waiver contained within the Registration Form. Make sure to have a parent or guardian sign for any child walking not of legal age. Also, with the registration form filled out in full, you have names and mailing addresses so you can further communicate with your participants to 1) thank them for participating and 2) invite them to attend future Chapter meetings.

MEDIA:

The Walk's Media Coordinator identifies and contacts all media where the event may be publicized. This includes newspapers, radio, and cable TV. Prepare flyers or posters for members to distribute at businesses and churches throughout the area. Post Walk Details on social media and online event calendars. To have your Chapter's Walk to Remember added to the Home Office Website, please e-mail the nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org.

3 Months from Walk

KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What is the rain contingency?
- Consider whether a microphone and speakers are needed
- Source trashcans; parking cones; other race materials
- Determine music, emcee, other participants
- Explore other activities that can be done at the Walk, i.e., rock painting, face painting, butterfly release, family picnic, chalk walls, etc.

CHAIR:

- Consider alternatives to walking for those with limited mobility including rocking chairs and scooters.
- Develop the program for the Walk
- Decide on key elements

LOGISTICS:

Consider reaching out to a local running or specialty sports store for guidance and support. These businesses often have connections with race management organizations and may be familiar with popular walking routes, permitting requirements, and event logistics in your area.

While race management companies typically charge fees to organize competitive events, many may be willing to assist a Walk to Remember by providing advice, sharing best practices, lending equipment such as cones, tables, or signage, or even helping recruit volunteers. Building these community partnerships can be a valuable way to strengthen your event while reducing planning challenges and costs.

FUNDRAISING:

- Visit local businesses for donations or to sponsor a TCF Family to Walk
- Collect items for Raffle and secure Raffle Tickets
- Connect with local grocery stores for support with bottled water, fruit and snacks

REGISTRATION:

- Collect Loved One photos for all registered walkers
- Track emails and cell phone numbers to send Walk Reminders

Walk Signs feature a photo of your loved one. During the Walk to Remember, Walk Signs will be carried by each walker in memory of beloved children, grandchildren, brothers, and sisters. They can also be installed along the Walk route. Participants will be able to take home their Walk sign as a precious reminder that you need not walk alone.

MEDIA:

- Post flyers at local businesses
- Post Walk details on social media
- Consider creating a promo video

VOLUNTEERS:

- Recruit volunteers from local businesses or organizations like the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, youth sports teams, churches, Rotary Club, ROTC, social clubs

1 Month from Walk

LOGISTICS:

- Inventory supplies needed for Registration, Raffle, cones for intersections or caution areas
- Create a poster-sized map of the Walk route to display at the start of the Walk
- Make directional signs along the route
- Determine a first aid protocol
- Consider making name tags for Walk participants

FUNDRAISING:

- Decide on sponsor recognition

REGISTRATION:

- Work with local business to print Walk signs
- Design and print a program; or one-page flyer

MEDIA:

- Encourage coverage from local newspaper, television and radio
- Identify TCF spokespeople

VOLUNTEERS:

- Use a colored t-shirt to identify volunteers
- Create a list of volunteers and contact information for the day of the Walk

Day of Walk

CHAIR:

- Schedule a run-through, meet with your volunteers, and ensure roles and responsibilities are assigned.
- Create a checklist of the day's schedule, including a list of contact information of vendors, speakers and volunteers.

LOGISTICS:

- Start the set up 2-3 hours before the event start time in coordination with Volunteer Committee
- Identify a Race Leader who starts the Walk and sets the pace at the front
- Identify a Race Sweeper who is the final person on the course, walking behind the last participant to ensure safety and that no one is left behind

FUNDRAISING:

- Collect pledges and donations
- Deliver Raffle prizes to the winners

VOLUNTEERS:

- Day-of volunteer jobs to assign: parking assistance; distributing programs; place sponsor and loved one signs throughout walk area; décor, flags; set up tables and chairs, trash pickup

Post-Walk

CHAIR:

- Be sure to thank attendees, volunteers, and supporters through an email or personal note.
- Ensure any donations made via cash or check are attributed to your Walk by mailing them to TCF Home Office at P.O. Box 46, Wheaton, IL 60187.
- Post Walk photos or videos on social media, tagging sponsors, local organizations or individuals who contributed.
- Announce the date for next year! If this is an annual event, consider producing a highlight reel to promote the event the following year. Take a moment to watch this promo video from the North Central MA Chapter.

Resources

Resources are available on CompassionateFriends.org to source:

- Walk Bibs
- Walk T-Shirts
- Walk Signs
- Graphic Design

Resources and templates are also available on our website for:

- Walk Press Release
- Walk Recruitment Letter
- Walk Registration Form
- Walk Thank you Note & Tax Receipt
- Walk Social Media Post for Facebook
- Walk Social Media Post for Instagram

Trusted Online Fundraising Platforms:

- Just Giving
- Rally Up
- Givebutter
- GiveSignup
- RunSignup

Suggested Revenue Opportunities

Registration	Cost to participate in Walk to Remember	$25-$50
Sponsorship: Sponsor a Walker	Cost to sponsor a walker in Walk to Remember	$50-$75
Sponsorship: Gold	Opportunity to be a speaker at Walk; 4 walkers participate in Walk; Listed in Program as a Gold Sponsor; Name featured on sign along the Walk	$1,000
Sponsorship: Silver	2 walkers participate in Walk; Listed in program as a Silver Sponsor; Name featured on sign along the Walk	$500
Sponsorship: Bronze	Listed in program as a Bronze Sponsor; Name featured on sign along the Walk	$250
Purchase Loved One Walk Sign	Walk signs will be displayed along the Walk route or carried by the registrant	$50-$75
Sell Raffle Tickets	50/50 Raffle; Gift baskets; Gift certificates	$10-$25
Sell Walk T-Shirts		$40-$50

Contact Us

"The impact our individual communities can have on the lives of those grieving the loss of a child, sibling or grandchild is great. We hope Walks to Remember all over the country remind our families they do not walk this path alone."

Andy McNiel, TCF CEO

For further information or assistance with planning your Walk to Remember, please reach out to us at support@compassionatefriends.org.

This packet can be found at https://www.compassionatefriends.org/support/.