



Chapter 1: ***The Buddy Walk program***

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society: An introduction

Since 1987, the CDSS has worked to achieve its vision of a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to realize their life aspirations. The CDSS is committed to being Canada's national voice for individuals with Down syndrome.

The *vision* of the CDSS is a proud Canada where all are welcome, we embrace diversity and we value everyone equally.

The *mission* of the CDSS is to ensure equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome. This means to make sure all Canadians with Down syndrome have the right supports to give them the same opportunities everyone else has.

The Buddy Walk background

The Buddy Walk was developed by the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) in 1995 to bring together a range of concerned individuals to reach out to friends, family and co-workers to promote awareness and inclusion for people with Down syndrome and to raise funds for education, research and advocacy programs. The Buddy Walk is a one or two kilometre walk in which anyone can participate without special training.

- * More than 250 walks were held worldwide in 2005
- * Approximately \$5 million has been raised across Canada and the United States through the Buddy Walk. These funds were distributed among sponsoring Buddy Walk organizations and the NDSS.
- * More than 200,000 individuals participated in a Buddy Walk in 2004. Since the Buddy Walk was created in 1995, almost one million people have participated in Buddy Walks!

The Buddy Walk partnership: CDSS and local Buddy Walk organizers

The CDSS wants planning your Buddy Walk to be as easy as possible. This manual discusses the specifics of planning your walk, and promoting the event.

Canadian Down Syndrome Society – Buddy Walk Commitment

What the CDSS can do to support:

- * Distribute media materials – press releases, media alerts, media distribution lists, and media kits to local outlets.
- * Distribute Public Service Announcement to local and national media outlets
- * Unlimited access of Buddy Walk information– templates for registration forms, talking points, sponsorship materials, etc.
- * Buddy Walk logos – for print, website and promotional materials

The Canadian Down Syndrome Society is committed to ensuring your group hosts a successful Buddy Walk. Based on our Buddy Walk commitment, it is now the CDSS' policy to receive 20 per cent of net proceeds from walks. This helps CDSS pay for the copyright usage of Buddy Walk in Canada, which we purchased from NDSS. In addition, it helps offset the cost of printing and the provision of the Buddy Walk materials.



Chapter 2:

Planning your walk – the first steps

CDSS Support

We're ready to assist walk organizers like you to ensure the success of your Buddy Walk. While this manual provides you with an overview of the Buddy Walk planning process, we know there are questions and concerns that may not be covered in great length. For in-depth questions and support or additional information, please e-mail us at info@cdss.ca.

Event Insurance

The CDSS requires that all groups and individuals organizing a Buddy Walk provide proof of \$2 million general liability insurance coverage for their event. It is important to learn early if any other event insurance is required locally for your group to hold its Buddy Walk. Many venues such as parks, school grounds, recreational areas, etc., will require your group to have an insurance policy. Provide a photocopy of the Liability Certificate, available through your insurance agent. If required, the attached link is available to you:

www.ibc.ca

If your group is incorporated as a non-profit group and has office/contents insurance coverage:

Some groups may be able to simply buy a rider on their office insurance packages that gives event coverage for a Buddy Walk. For instance, if your group has done public awareness events in local malls in the past and the mall administration required proof of insurance, this would be a similar situation. Proof of insurance is required before any use of the Buddy Walk logo. Proof of insurance must be faxed by the first of October.

If you are a group of individuals banding together as volunteers to host a Buddy Walk:

Comprehensive Event Insurance is available for a specific event and you apply through a local insurance agent. Costs vary and depend on the nature of the event, how many people you are expecting, where the event is held, etc.

Planning Committee

Create a committee

- * Keep a committee roster, phone and e-mail list. Keep it updated and distribute to your committee at every meeting;
- * Take notes and minutes at meetings and distribute to your committee within a week of your meeting;
- * Give yourself plenty of lead-time to make sure you accomplish all of your objectives;
- * Try to meet at least once each month in your early planning stages and more frequently as your event draws near.

Expand your existing committee

Your existing committee may be large and diverse, but reaching out to even more potential volunteers is a great way to expand both creativity and participation. *Some ways you might recruit new members to your committee are:*

- * Ask your local paper to do a follow-up story on last year's Buddy Walk that may introduce new people to volunteer. Encourage interested readers to contact the walk's chairperson to get involved;
- * Ask current committee members to bring a friend or colleague. Host a Buddy Walk information meeting for your new recruits to introduce them to your walk and discuss some areas where you would like to see the walk grow;
- * Don't be afraid to look outside your group's membership – you'd be surprised how many friends of existing members would be willing to come out and lend their expertise to a fun event like the Buddy Walk!

Determine the scope of your walk

- * What geographic areas should be included in your walk?
- * Is there interest among members of your group and larger community about the Buddy Walk concept? Hold an information meeting with your members to explain the Buddy Walk, national attention and visibility to be gained from sponsoring an event in your area.

Delegate responsibility

The committee Chair should determine specific jobs and responsibilities, assigning committee members with small, manageable tasks to be completed in small increments of time. This allows your group to meet attainable deadlines – and celebrate your accomplishments!

Select a public site

Your Buddy Walk can be in a park, on a boardwalk, in a shopping mall, etc. Make sure you contact municipal and/or police authorities to gain approval for use of the site.

Stay in touch

- * Distribute meeting minutes and new developments in writing via e-mail or regular mail to your committee on a regular basis;
- * Contact the CDSS to keep us updated about your plans. Send us photos, press clippings, etc. Keep us updated on any date, location or contact information changes;



Chapter 3

Fundraising and the Buddy Walk

The Buddy Walk can be a great way to raise money for supporting local and national Down syndrome programs and services. Here are some simple ideas to help raise money for your walk.

Registration fee

Consider requiring participants to pay a small registration fee, usually \$10-\$25. This contribution will help to cover event costs such as toques.

Pledge forms

Many walks also encourage participants to collect pledges from family, friends, neighbours and co-workers. This is a great way to get your entire community involved with the Buddy Walk, while raising additional funds.

Make fundraising fun – and be creative!

- * Create a list of potential sponsors who will donate to your walk. Encourage walkers to get pledges from family, friends, co-workers, colleagues and places where they are frequent patrons;
- * Provide incentive gifts for walkers who raise certain dollar amounts;
- * Approach local businesses to donate items for a raffle or silent auction (if you want to hold a raffle, check with your provincial gaming commission about rules and regulations);

- * Make and sell Buddy Walk ribbons (in the blue and yellow colours) to sell for \$1 – this will increase awareness of the Buddy Walk and provide your event with a little extra cash!
- * Ask sponsors to exhibit their products at your race site;
- * Ask local businesses to place cans in their shops to raise “Dimes for Down syndrome” (or other spare change). Decorate these cans with the Buddy Walk logo and information about the Buddy Walk;
- * Your school, church, or place of employment might have a special collection for a charity each month – find out if the Buddy Walk can be included in this!
- * Contact grocery stores or restaurants about providing food for your event. As well, these businesses may be willing to give a certain percentage of their proceeds on a specific day to help local events. Encourage your group members and friends to shop (or eat) at these locations on the Buddy Walk day.

The Buddy Walk Challenge

The Buddy Walk Challenge was instituted at the New York City Buddy Walk in 2001 and has proven to be successful in motivating participants to raise \$1,000 or more to be Buddy Walk Challengers. The local group proudly displays the names of all Buddy Walk Challengers at the walk and on their website as a tribute to their significant contribution. This may be a fundraising incentive that your local Buddy Walk may want to institute.

Your committee can decide what amount of money raised by an individual will entitle someone to challenger status. You can submit the names of successful Buddy Walk Challengers to the CDSS so these efforts can be recognized on our website. Creating a sheet of fundraising tips is also a good idea – these can be used for people wanting to take the Buddy Walk Challenge.

IMPORTANT NOTE!

**If your organization does not
have a non-profit charity status,
donations are NOT tax-deductible.**



Letter writing campaigns – an effective fundraising tool

Draft a “Dear friends/family/co-workers” letter or e-mail template for your walk participants explaining their participation in the Buddy Walk, asking for financial donations. Explain to your participants that they will be reaching out to their friends and family with a simple note or the click of a button – they’ll be amazed by the results!

All you have to do is ask!

- * Pledge seekers who conduct a letter writing campaign raise an average of five to 10 times more money than those who just ask for donations.
- * The average walker raises \$100 – **The average letter writer raises \$500 to \$1,000 or more!**
- * When writing your letters, invite people to walk with you as a member of your team in addition to sending in a donation. As always, remember to thank everyone who supported your walk.

Sponsorship: A different challenge

Many organizations and events solicit sponsors to help raise money to cover the cost of the event as well as to provide in-kind donations. When done correctly, it can make money for your organization as well as help you build relationships with corporations and companies in your area. Finding and retaining sponsors for your walk can be a challenge in itself. There is no one type of sponsorship that will work for all walks and organizations. It is important to tailor your sponsorship package to your community.

The following are some important steps to consider when securing sponsors.

Figure out your target audience

- * The least effective way to get sponsors is to send out a “blind” proposal. Events with a specific focus (like the Buddy Walk) can work well for sponsors who would like to reach a target audience.

Set up your sponsorship levels

- * The trick to this is being sure the benefits at each level of sponsorship are attractive enough so previous sponsors will want to increase their sponsorship level.
- * We encourage having a variety of sponsor levels that will fit both a large company and a small company's budget. Be flexible when working with your sponsors as some organizations may wish to give a donation split between cash and in-kind gifts.
- * One creative option is to seek media sponsors. A media sponsorship is similar to a regular corporate sponsorship, but instead of asking for cash or product donations, you ask for complimentary advertising time/space. A typical approach is to ask for a certain dollar amount of donated advertising time/space. The specific dollar amount depends on media outlet rates. Some sponsors may even do live hits on their station from your event, giving you prime media coverage.

Make phone calls – lots of them!

- * Depending on the size of the company you are calling, you may speak to the owner (a smaller business), the marketing department or human resources department. Ask which department deals with corporate gifts or donations.
- * This is the part that takes the most time – and energy. But this also saves money as you pre-qualify potential sponsors before sending out packets. Sell the sponsorship as a marketing opportunity for your local companies.
- * When calling local businesses, it is important to let them know how a sponsorship opportunity with the Buddy Walk will benefit *their* company. Come up with a short pitch (20 seconds or less) that explains the walk, your audience and some of the ways the company will benefit from participating. Keep it brief – if they are interested, you can tell them more and/or send a sponsorship packet with more information on the Buddy Walk.

Send out the proposal letters and packets

- * When you are sending out sponsorship letters, tailor your requests to each business – this prevents companies from feeling like they are receiving a generic request.
- * Keep the letter short (one page) and focus on how the company will benefit from their participation in the walk. Try to make the letter as personal as possible. Be sure to mention if you are part of a charitable organization – some companies will only donate money to these groups.
- * Be sure the sponsorship levels are easy to read and understand and that you have provided a description of the Buddy Walk and what your organization does.

Follow up

- * Don't be apprehensive about following up with potential sponsors. It is important to find out what their thoughts are on your proposal. Once a company receives your letter, they may - or may not call you back. It is your responsibility to check in with them in the next two or three weeks. You may wish to prepare a short script.
- * If they do not have time to speak, find out when a good time to call back would be. If they do, ask if they have any questions about the proposal and if they think this would be something they would be interested in being involved in this year. If they say, "Yes," great job! You've just secured your first sponsor! If they say, "No," thank them for their time and try to find out why they aren't interested. You may be able to use that information when approaching other potential sponsors. If it is a budgeting (or timing) issue for them, you should ask them if you can contact them for next year.

Build relationships with your sponsors and non-sponsors

- * It is important to build relationships even with groups that did not participate this year. You may wish to send them a note that says, "Although you were not able to sponsor our Buddy Walk this year, we hope that you will consider attending or volunteering at the walk next year. This small step can lead to their sponsorship next year."

- * For companies that are sponsoring you, don't make the mistake of forgetting about them as soon as they send in their donation. Here are a few easy ways to build relationships with your sponsors:
 - * Send a thank-you note outlining the benefits of their level;
 - * Send another thank-you note after you receive the donation;
 - * Add their name to your mailing list so they will begin to receive your newsletter.

Publicize the involvement of your sponsors

Be sure that your sponsors receive all the recognition that you promised them in your sponsorship proposal. If you can add an extra mention of their names during the Buddy Walk, or a thank you in the newspaper, do it.

Continue building the relationship with your sponsors

It is extremely important you take the time to send a thank you note after the Buddy Walk. In the letter, let them know how successful the walk was (how many people attended, how much money was raised, etc) and how much you (and the families that attended) appreciate their participation. You may wish to send them a photograph showing the success of your Buddy Walk. Keep them on your mailing list or invite them to some of your other events. You don't want the only time that they hear from you to be when you are asking for a donation.

Other ideas:

- * Attractive sponsorship proposals that highlight the success of last year's event are highly effective. Let all potential sponsors know the number of people that attended, the national recognition of the program, and how you are ready to recognize their contribution;
- * Try contacting advertising or public relations agencies to see if any of their clients would want to get involved with the Buddy Walk.



Buddy Walk Teams

Each year, more and more walks across the country are encouraging families and businesses to participate in their Buddy Walk by forming a team. Walk organizers have found that having teams is an easy way to raise money for their organization and/or increase participation in the event. Plus, it can be incredibly motivating and impressive to have large teams participating in an event. While what constitutes a team may vary from walk to walk, the basic premise remains the same - a group of individuals walking on behalf of a person with Down syndrome.

A Buddy Walk team can consist of a family, friends, co-workers, students and colleagues. Usually Buddy Walk teams are five or more individuals walking on behalf of one buddy. Some walks have the individual with Down syndrome as the "Team Captain," others walk in their honour. As Walk Organizer, you get to choose what works best with your event.

To promote the "Buddy Walk Team," consider including a team option on your registration forms with a special team price. For example, team members can get a reduced registration fee. It is also important to have them indicate the name of the team or group they are walking with. You can also create "Team Packets" to give out to people who are interested in being part of a team. These can contain sample letters and other tools to raise interest in team participation.

To further promote the Buddy Walk Team concept, you can encourage your team members to wear special shirts (which they create), buttons, stickers or carry signs promoting their team. You may want to consider a separate team registration area, so teams can stay together during registration, which will make it easier on you and them. Have a photographer take pictures of each of the teams that you can post on your website or put in your newsletter. You can also send a copy to the team captain after the walk. Keep in mind a photo release form is required to use photos taken at your event.

As a thank you to your "Buddy Walk Teams," we suggest you create signage including the names of all the teams. This will serve as a thank you to them for their organization of a team and encourage others to form a team next year.



Chapter 4: *Marketing and Public Relations*

Strong, proactive and creative marketing and public relations can have a huge impact on the success of your Buddy Walk. *There are three goals that you want your marketing/PR efforts to accomplish:*

- 1. Get people to attend your event**
- 2. Raise money** to fund the efforts of your local organization and the CDSS
- 3. Inform/educate the public** about the Buddy Walk, your group, the CDSS, the Down syndrome community, and the importance of ensuring equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome.

While the first and second goals are important for short-term results, the third goal will help us all achieve long-term success.

The Buddy Walk Brand: Your Most Powerful Tool

Since the inception of the Buddy Walk program in 1995, the Buddy Walk brand identity has grown dramatically at both the national and local levels.

The effective and consistent use of the Buddy Walk brand identity is vital to building the image of the CDSS and its affiliate organizations. We depend on all of you to protect and build the Buddy Walk brand identity because it is through brand identity that we send a unified message across the country: “one vision and one voice”.



NDSS is the legal owner of the “Buddy Walk” name and logo and CDSS has paid to have permission to add our name to it. We allow registered walks to use the logo and name in order to build the program and support a strong, shared brand identity.

You must use the trademarked Buddy Walk brand name and logo and the approved national talking points in all marketing/PR activities for your local walk. This includes, but is not limited to, posters, registration brochures, advertisements, press releases, toques, and other swag. By incorporating the elements of the Buddy Walk brand identity, your local walk will be linked with at least 200 other walks in North America taking place each year.

Grassroots and Direct Marketing

With this type of event, the most effective type of marketing involves you and your committee members reaching out directly to potential participants. These activities are time consuming, but the returns can be very high. Here are examples of grassroots and direct marketing tactics:

- * Print extra copies of your *registration brochure*. This piece should attract the reader's attention through photos and key points and provide all the basic who/what/when/where/why information.
- * *Posters and flyers* are simple, but very effective. Again, make sure they are as visually compelling. Post flyers/posters wherever your target participants and sponsors might frequent - local Community Living Associations, Special Olympics events, doctors' offices, early intervention centers, schools, YMCA/YWCA, malls and shopping centres, parks and recreation centers, grocery stores, etc.
- * If your organization has a *website*, use it to communicate information about your walk. You can post the basic information, registration form, contact information, photos from past walks, quotes from families who participated last year, and your sponsors' logos;
- * Register early to have your information posted on www.cdss.ca. This website is used in all CDSS's marketing and PR efforts, so potential participants might visit that site first.
- * Develop an *e-mail distribution list* based on previous year's registrants of any fundraising and awareness event, your group's members and others. Send monthly updates leading up to the walk. Create excitement about the walk by tracking fundraising progress and number of registrants, new sponsors, entertainment and other planned highlights of the event. If you use the list to share useful information and

- always provide information on how to "opt out" of the list, you won't be accused of spreading "spam;"
- * Register your event with *other e-mail distribution lists* in your area (e.g. schools, local service agencies, etc.);
 - * Ask *local organizations* to post your Buddy Walk information in their newsletters, and their websites. Be sure to reciprocate for their events;
 - * If your members participate in *online message boards* about Down syndrome, ask them to post messages inviting people to attend your walk;
 - * Direct marketing through *regular mail* can be costly, but if your mailing list is targeted and up-to-date, it can be very effective. Mailing your registration brochure to all of your members (past and present), last year's participants and others interested in your group;
 - * Don't forget your *sponsors!* Sponsoring companies are often very willing to promote the event with their employees through internal newsletters, displaying posters in public areas, organizing department walk teams, etc.;
 - * Give away promotional items to all participants or use them as incentive prizes for fundraising. Examples include toques, tote bags, water bottles.
 - * *Promotional items* can be a fun way for everyone to go home with a little something to remember the Buddy Walk. The items can also supplement your grassroots marketing for next year.

Advertising

Before committing to advertising of any kind, it is important to *consider your audience* (Who do you want to reach? Do they read the local newspaper, watch the evening news, listen to "drive time" radio, or get their news online?) *and your budget* (Do you want to allocate a portion of your marketing budget to targeted paid advertising, or can you only seek "free" advertising?).

Paid Advertising (print/TV/radio)

Advertising rates vary greatly based on geography and media outlet. If your group has an advertising budget, call your local media outlets (daily/weekly newspapers, circulars, radio stations, TV stations, etc.) and request a media kit for advertisers. This contains the demographics

of their audience and detailed advertising rates. Also, ask if they offer reduced rates to charitable organizations.

Public Service Announcement (PSA)

A PSA is an announcement that benefits the public at large. Media outlets regulated by the CRTC are required to prove they are broadcasting in the public interest and this often translates to allocating a certain amount of air time each year to PSA's. Media outlets also frequently use PSA campaigns as part of their general community service programs.

It is often challenging to place PSAs in your local media as you have no control over whether or not it will "air" and even if it did, if the timeframe works for your specific audience. In addition, you are also competing against other charitable groups and events. However, a targeted and creative PSA campaign is an effective marketing tool. Throughout National Down Syndrome Awareness Week, the CDSS will be sending PSA's to media outlets nationwide and this will benefit your event.

Media Sponsorships

When you seek corporate sponsors for your walk, consider approaching media outlets and offering them a media sponsorship package. The concept is similar to a regular corporate sponsorship, but instead of asking for cash or product donations, you ask for complimentary advertising time or space. Although this sounds similar to a PSA, it is important to treat a media sponsorship differently than a PSA campaign. A media sponsorship agreement should provide you with guarantees on content and amount of advertising time/space - possibly even timing of the ads. You can also be more "commercial" in the advertising content used through a media sponsorship - for example, you can and should incorporate the logos of your major sponsors.

A media sponsor might also donate production services to develop or customize your advertisement, if you include their logo on the ad.

If you manage to secure a media sponsor, keep in mind that most media outlets insist they receive exclusivity for your event. You cannot usually solicit multiple sponsors for print, TV or radio. You should discuss this with the media outlet first to avoid any confusion later.

Media Coverage

Securing media coverage is not an easy task, although it often depends on the relationship your group has with the local media. Whether or not your event gets print or airtime can be dependent on factors out of your control, like other news happening that day, whether you've built a working relationship with the reporter and the opinions and interests of editors and producers. It takes a lot of time and effort to pitch a story idea, follow-up with reporters, and set up interviews. Even if you get coverage, you aren't able to totally control the message, as you would in advertising or direct marketing.

So why bother? Because media coverage - whether it's print, TV, radio or online - can significantly increase the visibility of your event/organization and magnify the effect of what you're trying to communicate. Consumers are sometimes more likely to pay attention to and remember something they read or see in editorial coverage, versus an advertisement. Plus, media coverage adds credibility to your messages. The "buzz" created through positive publicity can help you achieve your overall goals. The CDSS can help in the distribution of information to local media outlets.

This section gives you tools to embark on a media outreach campaign for your Buddy Walk. All tactics are scalable, based on the time and resources that are feasible for your group. For example, if this is your first attempt at media outreach, you might just try a media alert and some follow-up calls, and then have press kits at your walk. If you're more experienced, you might try pitching a few feature story ideas to print and broadcast outlets.

Pre-Event Coverage

- * Calendar Listing or Event Preview - A listing on a community calendar or a brief article about your event might run in a newspaper, Web site or broadcast "community calendar" segment one day to several weeks prior to the walk to encourage participation and raise funds;

- * Feature Article or Segment- A feature article or segment is not a regular hard news story that tells the basic who/what/when/where/why of a development that just happened. Instead, a feature is more of an "evergreen" human-interest story that has

broad appeal and doesn't necessarily have a set timeframe attached to it. It is difficult to successfully pitch a feature story, so work hard to develop an angle that is different and compelling. Start by talking about what makes your group unique, about Buddy Walk participants who have interesting and inspiring stories, or recent legislation impacting people with Down syndrome.

Live Coverage

- * Radio - Invite a local radio station to do a live broadcast from your event. You have a better chance of succeeding if the station is a media sponsor of your event or if you have VIP's in attendance who can be interviewed on-air. Also, because of the set-up time involved in broadcasting from a walk, and the fact the media outlet would require exclusivity; you likely would not be able to offer this opportunity to another station.
- * TV - Pitch local TV stations to send an on-site news reporter or weather person to your event. Again, it helps to have VIP's in attendance for interviews. And offering interesting visuals is imperative for TV - for example, an interesting location, a large crowd, kids playing, games, clowns, face painting, petting zoos, etc.

Post-Event Coverage

- * Print or Online - If a newspaper reporter attends your event, the coverage will run after the event (typically the next day). This will be a wrap-up of the event, what happened, who was there, how much money was raised, etc. You might also be able to secure post-event coverage if you distribute a press release immediately following the event. You should have press kit available for all media personnel who attend your event. Also, have a media sign-in sheet at the event, as this will enable you to follow up with them and supply them with the amount raised, etc.
- * Print or Online Photo - Even if you can't get a full wrap-up article in a newspaper, you might be able to get a photograph and caption printed. The newspaper might send a photographer.

Or you could take your own photographs and deliver them (within hours of the event, preferably by 3 p.m. the day of the event) to the newspaper. If you want to try this last option, call the photo desk ahead of time to get the details of how (or if) they accept photos.



- * Feature Article/Segment - The post-event feature article is similar to the pre-event feature. You have the best chance of developing a post-event feature if a reporter attends the walk and can meet potential newsworthy subjects in person at the event.

Steps for Securing Media Coverage

Where do you begin? Here are basic steps to secure media coverage for your Buddy Walk. Ideally, start thinking about these steps about 2-3 months before your walk.

1. Find (or Create!) Your Story

- * Know the story you're going to pitch to the media. Is it hard news or a feature?
- * *Invite local community leaders to your Buddy Walk*, such as the mayor and other local government officials, local sports figures, school and hospital administrators, business groups and other organizations. When VIP's attend, the media is more likely to cover your walk.
- * *Ask your mayor or other local government representative to sign a proclamation* recognizing Nov. 1-7 as National Down Syndrome Awareness Week and showing community support of your local Buddy Walk.
- * *Talk to your committee about possible feature stories* - interesting things your group is doing, members with inspiring stories, etc.
- * *Think advocacy*. What are some examples of pending local, provincial, federal legislation that might impact people with Down syndrome in your community? How does your group work to protect and defend the rights of individuals with Down syndrome?
- * *Think about milestones and accomplishments*. Did last year's walk break participation and fundraising records? Are you expecting to break them again this year? Is this year a special anniversary or milestone for your group?
- * *Don't forget National Down Syndrome Awareness Week November. 1-7*
It gives you an immediate "hook" when you talk to the media.

2. Media Materials

Before you pick up the phone, put some facts and persuasive story pitches on paper. Following is a list of all the written materials you might use for your Buddy Walk media outreach. You might not need everything on this list, and you might not have to finalize all of it before you start

contacting reporters. At the very least, have a few talking points and a media alert (if you're pitching the event as hard news) or pitch letter (if you're pitching a feature).

- * Talking Points - These are clear, concise messages you want to communicate to the media. Use these when pitching the media and in interviews. Your talking points document is for internal use only, not for distribution to the media (although you might include key nuggets of information in your fact sheet - see below);
- * Media Alert - This is a simple and effective way to get media attention. It briefly lists the "who, what, when, where and why" of your event and serves as an invitation for the media to attend and cover it.
- * Pitch Letter - Like a media alert, a pitch letter is an invitation to the media to attend and cover your event. However, a pitch letter can also
 1. suggest a good story idea
 2. facilitate coverage by offering helpful background information. For example, a pitch letter may suggest a feature story idea related to your walk, offer important background information about your group and Down syndrome, and offer interviews so the reporter can get more details;
- * Fact Sheets – Attach fact sheets to media alerts and pitch letters. They provide quick facts about the Buddy Walk, your group, CDSS and Down syndrome;
- * Press Kit - A press kit is a comprehensive resource that provides the media with background information about the Buddy Walk, your group, the CDSS, Down syndrome, VIPs at the walk, etc. Press kits are typically distributed on the day of the event, but a reporter might ask you for a kit ahead of time, so you should have them ready. The press kits might include:
 - * Detailed schedule for the day of the event
 - * Press release
 - * Fact sheets
 - * Bios, publicity photos of attending VIPs
 - * Additional literature about your organization, the CDSS, Down syndrome
 - * Contact information for someone in your organization who handles media inquiries, in case they have questions after the event
- * Press release - If you choose to write a post-event press release, it should be distributed immediately following the event to maximize coverage.

3. Create Your Media List

The key to getting media coverage is developing a relationship with the local media. First, find out what relationships already exist. Do your sponsors have public relations departments that can assist you? Do any group members have connections to local TV, radio or newspapers? Does anyone know any individual news reporters or editors? Have you worked with any media outlets on past stories? Have any reporters contacted your organization for background information or a quote on a story?

Once you have exhausted personal and business contacts, focus on local reporters who have recently written stories about Down syndrome or other health or disability issues. Also contact reporters who cover community events.

Know your pitch. When calling local media, know what you're going to say before you get on the phone. It's always wise to ask if the reporter is on deadline before you launch into your pitch (try to avoid calling daily print reporters after about 12pm). Make your pitch informative. Also, don't be afraid to show your enthusiasm for the cause.

4. Make Your Initial Contact

Opinions vary on whether your initial contact with a reporter should be via phone or written correspondence (fax, mail or e-mail). If you have a connection to the reporter or you live in a small media market, an initial phone call is probably your best approach. If the reporter is at all interested, he/she will ask you to send more information. If you live in a large media market, don't know the reporter at all, or simply don't have time for lots of phone pitching, it's fine to start by sending a media alert or pitch letter.

✧ *If calling by phone be confident!* You are calling because you're promoting awareness and acceptance of people with Down syndrome through your Buddy Walk. It is a great cause, and the media will be more inclined to listen to you.

✧ *Don't get discouraged!* About 99 per cent of your initial calls will result in "no" or "maybe" answers. It's rare for a reporter to commit to a story during a first conversation. They'll probably ask you to send more details about the walk, say they

have to discuss it with their editor or someone. If possible, ask when you can follow up with them.

- * *Have your media alert and fact sheet ready to send as soon as you get off the phone with a reporter. Even if a reporter doesn't explicitly ask for more information, if he/she shows any interest at all in covering the event, it is customary to follow up your pitch with supplementary written material. If possible, ask for their preferred means of receiving the information (mail, fax or e-mail).*

- * *If your initial contact will be via written correspondence, mail and fax are generally safe options. Many reporters are inundated with e-mail and never open messages from people they don't know. Never send a reporter an attachment via e-mail, unless they specifically ask for it.*

5. Follow Up

If time permits, we highly recommend that you follow up with the reporter several days after speaking with them on the phone or sending your written materials. During the follow-up call, reference the written correspondence you have sent, reinforce your invitation for them to attend the Buddy Walk, offer interviews with the head of your local organization, local families, VIPs at the event, etc., and ask if the reporter needs any additional details or has any questions.

Don't forget- this is the time to sell your event! If the reporter you are speaking to is not interested, ask if he/she can suggest another reporter or editor who might be interested. It is completely appropriate to contact more than one contact at a media outlet, but etiquette dictates that you notify the reporter/editor/producer that you are contacting others.

6. Interviews

If a reporter wants to cover your Buddy Walk or write a feature story related to the event, you will have to facilitate interviews. Find out whom the reporter wants to talk to (have some people in mind to suggest and make sure they agree to speak with the media). Then coordinate the logistics of the interview to take place either before the event (via phone or in person) or at the event itself.

Make sure the person being interviewed is familiar with your talking points, so he/she can reinforce your messages!

7. At the Buddy Walk

- * Designate one person from your committee to be the media contact.
- * At your registration table, have a sign for "media registration" and ask the media contact to man the area. Have press kits and media name tags at the table.
- * Be prepared to take the reporters to people (VIPs, head of your organization, families, etc.) for interviews. Talk to these people before the walk to make sure they are comfortable speaking with the media.
- * Hire a photographer or ask someone from your committee to take photographs. These photographs can be used for your post-event media outreach and for marketing throughout the year.

8. After the Walk

- * Get photos developed immediately, or use a digital camera, and select the best shot to send to print media (colour photos are fine) with a post-event press release and photo caption. The photo caption should be printed on a label and attached to the back of the photo. Do not write on the actual photograph. The caption should include a very short summary of the event and the names and hometowns of each person pictured.
- * Send thank you notes to any media who covered your event (not necessary for calendar listings). Send a thank you to both individual reporters and the editor or station manager. This is how relationships are started. Let the reporter know that you appreciated the coverage and that you are available as a resource for future stories dealing with Down syndrome.
- * Forward copies of all print clips, a list of any radio or TV stories and any good photographs to CDSS. Stories can be used to promote the Buddy Walk to potential national Buddy Walk sponsors, new Buddy Walk organizers and other interested individuals and organizations. Tracking all national media coverage also helps us to measure the effect of our messages.
- * Make the most of all your new media contacts! Stay in touch with reporters you have made headway with, send them new nuggets of information and story ideas

throughout the year and always answer their inquiries quickly and completely if they call for assistance.

Talking Points

- * The Buddy Walk has three primary goals:
 1. To promote equitable opportunities for people with Down syndrome;
 2. To raise funds locally and nationally for education and advocacy programs;
 3. Enhance the position of the Down syndrome community, enabling us to influence local and national policy and practice.
- * In the past 10 years, the Buddy Walk has grown from 17 walks in North America to more than 200. More than 200,000 people are expected to participate in Buddy Walks.
- * The Buddy Walk raised more than \$5 million to benefit national education and advocacy initiatives, as well as local programs and services. Every dollar donated to the Buddy Walk supports both local and national programs.
- * There are more than 35,000 Canadians living with Down syndrome. Millions are influenced by Down syndrome - including family members, educators, employers, healthcare professionals, peers and others.
- * Down syndrome affects people of all ages, races and economic levels. One of every eight hundred babies born in Canada has Down syndrome.
- * Quality educational programs, a stimulating home environment, good medical care and positive support from family, friends and the community at large enable people with Down syndrome to develop their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. They attend school, make friends, find work, and participate in decisions that affect them and contribute to society.
- * Since 1987, the Canadian Down Syndrome Society has worked to achieve its vision of a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to realize their life aspirations. CDSS is committed to being the national leader in supporting and ensuring equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome.
- * The Vision of the Canadian Down Syndrome Society is: A proud Canada where all are welcome, we embrace diversity and we value everyone equally.
- * The mission of the Canadian Down Syndrome Society is to ensure equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome. This means, to make sure all Canadians with Down syndrome have the right supports to give them the same opportunities that everyone else has.
- * CDSS initiatives include:
 1. Developing and distributing quality information materials and programs.

2. Shaping and advocating for improved public policy, increased public resources and services for people with Down syndrome.
3. Working in partnership with our affiliates and other support organizations.
4. Working on a Supported Employment Initiative



Buddy Walk Fact Sheet

- * The National Down Syndrome Society established the Buddy Walk in 1995 to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month in the United States. In 2005, Buddy Walks will take place in several Canadian communities.
- * The Buddy Walk has three primary goals:
 1. To promote equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome;
 2. To raise funds locally and nationally for education and advocacy programs; and
 3. To enhance the position of the Down syndrome community, enabling us to positively influence local and national policy and practice.
- * The Buddy Walk has grown from 17 walks in 1995 to more than 210 held in 2009 worldwide.
- * In 2009, 200,000 people participated in more than 200 international Buddy Walks.
- * Since 1995, over 1,000,000 people have participated in the Buddy Walk program.
- * Last year alone, the Buddy Walk raised more than \$5 million to benefit national education, and advocacy initiatives, as well as local programs and services.
- * The Canadian Down Syndrome Society supports the Buddy Walk program at the national level. Parent support groups, schools, and other interested organizations and individuals organize local Buddy Walks.
- * Most Buddy Walks take place from September through November, to recognize Canadian Down Syndrome Awareness Week Nov. 1-7.

- * Anyone who wants to support people with Down syndrome can participate in the Buddy Walk.

Canadian Down Syndrome Society

Vision

A proud Canada where all are welcome, we embrace diversity and we value everyone equally.

Mission

To ensure equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome. This means, to make sure all Canadians with Down syndrome have the right supports to give them opportunities that everyone else has.

Value and Guiding Principles

Equity - is about fairness, and goes beyond treating everyone equally to understanding people's different strengths, needs and circumstances and striving to meet those needs to ensure equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome.

Plain Language and People First Approaches - individuals with Down syndrome are people first and foremost and are to be communicated with in a manner suitable to their needs.

Shared Responsibility - work to enhance family and community capacity to ensure equitable opportunities and social justice for all people with Down syndrome. By working together, partners develop capacity to provide the comprehensive array of advocacy, support and information that could not be accomplished individually.

Sustainability - build upon individual, community and group strengths and effective use of human and financial resources to ensure long term sustainability of programs and services.

Responsive and Accountable - accountable to its members and Canadians with Down syndrome, the Board sets policy and priorities to be implemented and carried out through its Executive Director. The board seeks to identify the needs of Canadians with Down syndrome and their families.

History

Established in 1987, the Canadian Down Syndrome Society is a national non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with Down syndrome through advocacy, education and providing information. Headquartered in Calgary Alberta, the CDSS has a growing membership of over 1200 families, schools and community organizations.

As a non-profit charitable organization, the CDSS has a voluntary Board of Directors comprised of 12 members from across Canada representing people with Down syndrome and Family members. The CDSS has a national network of over 50 Local Groups that provide programs and services in their communities. The CDSS provides programs and services to achieve our goals. These education and information programs include:

CDSS Website
Toll Free
Information Line
Educational Resources
Publication Sales
New Parents Packages
Information Package Quarterly Newsletter
Annual Down syndrome conference
Resource Library

Down Syndrome Fact Sheet

- * Down syndrome occurs when an individual has three, rather than two, copies of chromosome 21. This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with Down syndrome.
- * Down syndrome is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement. 1 in every 800 babies is born with Down syndrome - about 500 children born each year in Canada.
- * More than 35,000 Canadians have Down syndrome.
- * Down syndrome affects people of all ages, races and economic levels.
- * The incidence of births of children with Down syndrome increases with the age of the mother. But due to higher fertility rates in younger women, 80 per cent of children with Down syndrome are born to women under 35 years of age.
- * Down syndrome is not a disease, disorder, defect or medical condition. It is inappropriate and offensive to refer to people with Down syndrome as “afflicted with” or “suffering from” it. Down syndrome itself does not require either treatment or prevention.
- * People with Down syndrome have an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia and thyroid conditions. Many of these conditions are now treatable, so most people with Down syndrome lead healthy lives.
- * These same medical conditions are also present in the general population.
- * Some of the common physical traits of Down syndrome include: low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes and a single deep crease across the center of the palm. Every person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may possess these characteristics at varying degrees or not at all.
- * Studies have shown that people with Down syndrome have a statistically lower risk of developing certain other illnesses and medical conditions.
- * Life expectancy for people with Down syndrome has increased dramatically in recent decades - from 25 years in 1983 to 56 years today.

- * All people with Down syndrome experience cognitive delays, but the effect is usually mild to moderate and is not indicative of the many strengths and talents that each individual possesses.
- * Quality educational programs, a stimulating home environment, good health care, and positive support from family, friends and the community enable people with Down syndrome to develop their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.
- * People with Down syndrome attend school, find work, participate in decisions that affect them, get married and are valuable, contributing members of society.



Chapter 5: *Graphical Standards*

By following the Buddy Walk Graphic Standards outlined in this chapter, you will ensure that all of your communications - from press releases to posters - leave lasting impressions that reflect the national presence and power of the Down syndrome community. For more background information about the Buddy Walk brand identity, see *Chapter 4: Marketing and Public Relations*.

The NDSS Buddy Walk logo is the only legal graphical representation of the words “Buddy Walk.” No organization or entity may develop another representation utilizing the words “Buddy Walk.” The Canadian Down Syndrome Society has been given permission by the NDSS to add our name to the logo for use in Canada. NDSS must enforce this usage standard in order to maintain its trademark of the Buddy Walk name and logo.

Please keep the following parameters in mind when writing about the Buddy Walk or designing Buddy Walk Materials:

- * **The Buddy Walk logo must be used as a whole.** No part or character may be removed from the logo or used separately from the rest of the logo.
- * **The trademark (TM) must accompany the Buddy Walk logo** and the first reference to the Buddy Walk in printed materials.
- * **There are three colour versions of the Buddy Walk logo.** Usage will depend on the printing process employed. A printer can help determine what logo is right for your job.
- * **Additional logos include French and Spanish versions of each logo type and a low-resolution version** for use on websites and other digital formats.

All versions of the Buddy Walk logo are available for download from the CDSS website, www.cdss.ca. File formats available include: JPG, EPS, PSD.



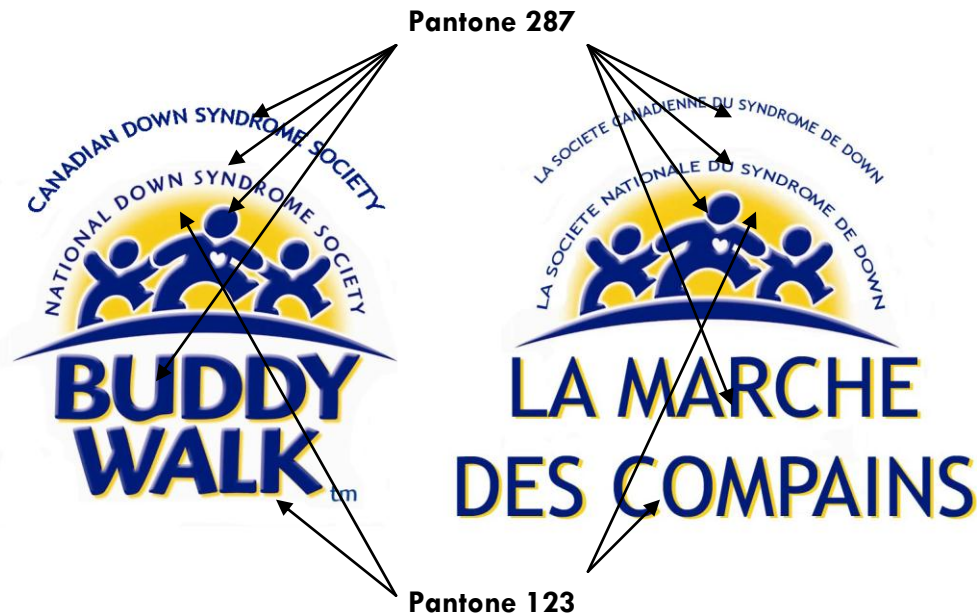
Buddy Walk Logo Types

One-color logo



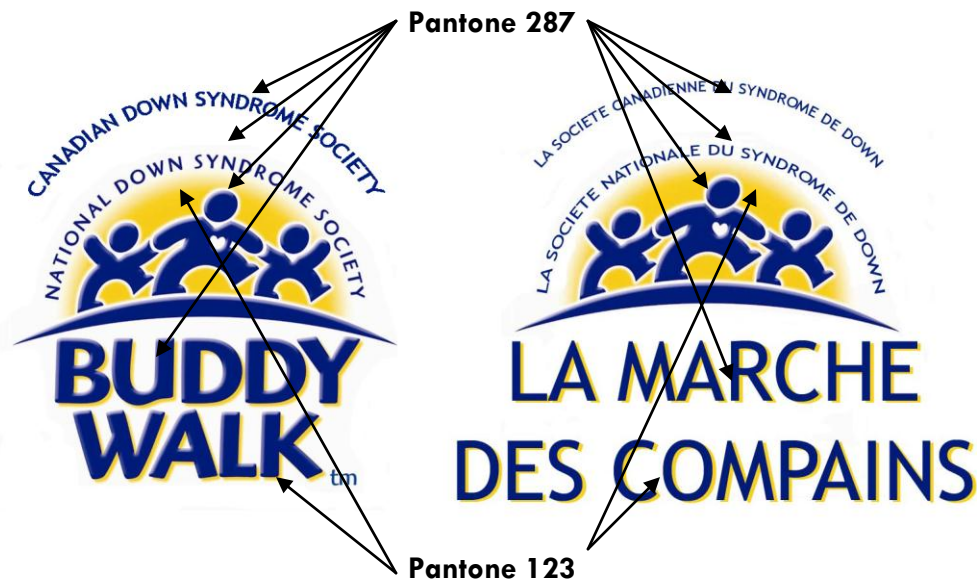
Use this logo when printing one-color from a desktop laser or inkjet printer, or when your budget for printing materials is tight. When printing in one color, use Pantone 287 or black when possible.

Two-colour logo with no gradation



Use this logo for simple printing processes (when halftone screening is not available), such as T-shirts and other merchandise. When printing two colors, Pantone 287 and Pantone 123 must be used.

Two colour logo with gradation



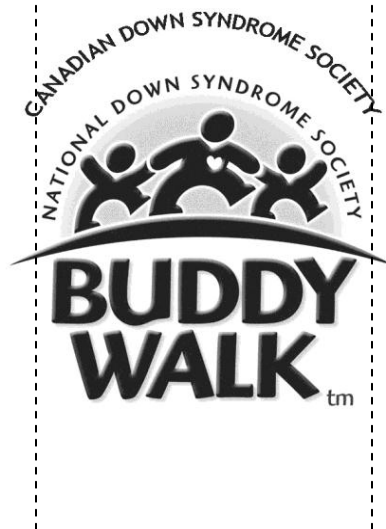
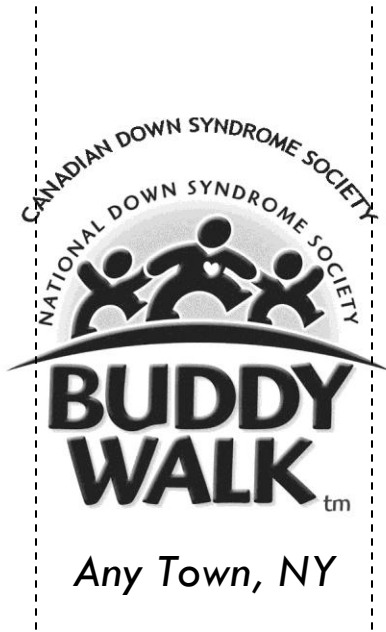
Use this logo for most two-color and four-color print jobs, such as brochures, letterhead and websites. To achieve this look in two-color printing from a professional printer (rather than a home ink-jet printer, color laser printer or color copier) the PSD or EPS file format should be used. The designer will put the TIF file in the document for placement only and the printer will replace it with the PSD/EPS file before printing.

Incorporating Your Walk's Name

CDSS encourages walk organizers to localize the Buddy Walk logo to include city or organization name and location. The Buddy Walk logo may be used on its own or in conjunction with a local organization or sponsor's logo.

When incorporating local information, please follow the following specifications:

- * When adding a city or group name to the Buddy Walk logo, the text must be added below the words "Buddy Walk" and it cannot exceed the width of the word "Buddy." Up to three lines of text may be added below the logo.



- * When using a local group logo or sponsor logo with the Buddy Walk logo, the logo must be added below the words “Buddy Walk” and it cannot exceed the width of the entire Buddy Walk logo when possible.

To find a local Buddy Walk and learn how to get involved:

www.cdss.ca or 1-800 883-5608

For more information about Down syndrome and the Canadian Down Syndrome Society:

www.cdss.ca or 1-800- 883-5608

The CDSS is here to serve as your resource for any inquiries on Down syndrome, the national and international scope of the Buddy Walk, and the latest education and advocacy developments. Feel free to forward media calls regarding the CDSS, Down syndrome or other issues to the CDSS Executive Director at 1-800- 883-5608



Canadian
Down Syndrome
Society

Société canadienne du
syndrome de Down

Canadian Down Syndrome Society Buddy Walk Contacts

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Kirk Crowther, Executive Director

(403) 270-8500 x203 voices@cdss.ca



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