

WALKING TOGETHER FOR STRONGER, HEALTHIER BABIES

march  of dimes®
march for babies®

family team captain guide



go to marchforbabies.org/familyteams



Welcome!

Welcome to March for Babies and thank you for taking the time to be a team captain and support our mission to give babies healthy beginnings.

This guide is here to help you plan a successful March for Babies campaign, and includes tools and resources that can help you and team members stay organized and motivated.

Before you jump in, we want to say thank you. It means a great deal to us that you chose to honor a baby you love by walking with us in March for Babies and raising money for the March of Dimes. Your contributions will truly change the future, and for that, thank you cannot be said enough.

What's inside

Quick start	1
Step-by-step to a great campaign	2
Online fundraising	6
How to raise \$300	7
Building a team	8
Sample emails	9
Useful materials	15

Quick start

Below is a quick outline of the four stages that lead to a successful March for Babies campaign. The pages that follow offer step-by-step instructions for what needs to happen when.

Step 1 organize

- Set up the team page at marchforbabies.org
- Assemble your core team

Step 2 recruit

- Get the word out about March for Babies
- Grow the team, ask walkers to sign up online

Step 3 fundraise

- Encourage (online) fundraising
- Share the goal and give updates on progress

Step 4 walk

- Get out there on March for Babies day
- Don't forget to say thank you

pull out and post

Step-by-step to a great campaign

The lists on the following pages help keep you on track during each phase of your March for Babies campaign. Pull them out, post them and check off your progress.

Organize

3 months to March for Babies

Work with your local March of Dimes representative to scope out exactly what needs to happen. Get your core team together.

- Meet with your March of Dimes representative and develop a plan that includes fundraising targets and day-of needs, including activities, tents and T-shirts.
- Set up your team's fundraising page at marchforbabies.org. For help, call 888-274-3711.
- Set a dollar goal for the team. If you're a veteran team captain, aim for at least 20 percent higher than last year's total. A shortcut: recruit two new walkers.
- Set a walker goal. How many team members will you need to reach your fundraising goal? Three hundred dollars per team member is a good guideline.
- Contact the hospital where your child was born to see if they can help you raise money or if they will post flyers about supporting your teams.
- Build your team. Choose co-captains and determine how you will share responsibilities and how you will recruit walkers and sponsors.
- Encourage the team to get a fundraising headstart — it's never too soon start compiling lists of potential donors and to begin reaching out.
- _____

- _____

pull out and post

Recruit

2 months before March for Babies

Your team is working to help babies; let people know why you feel this is important — tell potential team members and donors why you are working so hard to make a difference and why their support matters.

You can do this in person, by email or in blog posts. Sharing why this is a personal cause can make a real difference, and can make your team’s contributions have an even greater impact.

- Reach out to people you know to join your team. Ask them to sign up at **marchforbabies.org**. Use email, voicemail and word-of-mouth to reach as many people as possible.
- Put up a notice advertising your efforts at your children’s school, place of worship or other organization you belong to.
- Increase your reach by asking your co-captain and team members to tap into their networks — community groups, carpoolers and co-workers — to ask for donations or recruit new walkers.
- Set individual fundraising goals. To give yourself a little wiggle room, make sure team-member goals add up to more than the team goal.
- If your child’s hospital has signed on, post flyers and talk to the staff of your child’s hospital about donating to your team and walking in March for Babies.
- Ask your March of Dimes office if the walk is going to have a Family Team mile or stretch along the route for family teams to place signs, pictures or luminaries and how to participate.
- _____



Your story

March for Babies is about more than doing good. It’s also about honoring the babies who mean so much to us. Sharing your personal story, your motivation for dedicating so many hours to help babies and families you have not met, is the best way to encourage others to join or support you.

pull out and post

Fundraise

6 weeks before March for Babies

Encourage fundraising, send out updates and reminders and confirm all day-of needs.

- Send out team updates and give shout-outs to walkers who are doing a great job.
- Follow up with people who said they were interested in giving but haven't yet done so.
- Ask your March of Dimes office about bank days and arrange for a time to drop off cash and check donations.
- Arrange for signs and T-shirts to promote your family team at the event.
- Establish where and when your team will meet at March for Babies.
- Email directions and parking information to team members and post them on your team fundraising page.
- Assign a photographer to take pictures at the event. Let him know which shots you definitely want him to take, like a team photo before the walk or the team crossing the finish line.
- Make a list of any items you want to bring to the walk, including T-shirts, food and drinks, bandages and a fully charged cell phone.
- _____

pull out and post

Walk

The day before March for Babies

- Encourage team members to send out “remember to donate” emails using the online fundraising tool.
- Check the weather and adjust your supplies accordingly.
- Check the traffic — see if there are any detours team members should know about.
- Send an email reminder about when and where your team will meet at March for Babies.
- Print a list with the cell phone numbers of your co-captains and everyone on the team.
- Charge your cell phone.
- Make sure any signs, T-shirts, first aid supplies, food and drinks and any other items you want to bring are packed and ready.

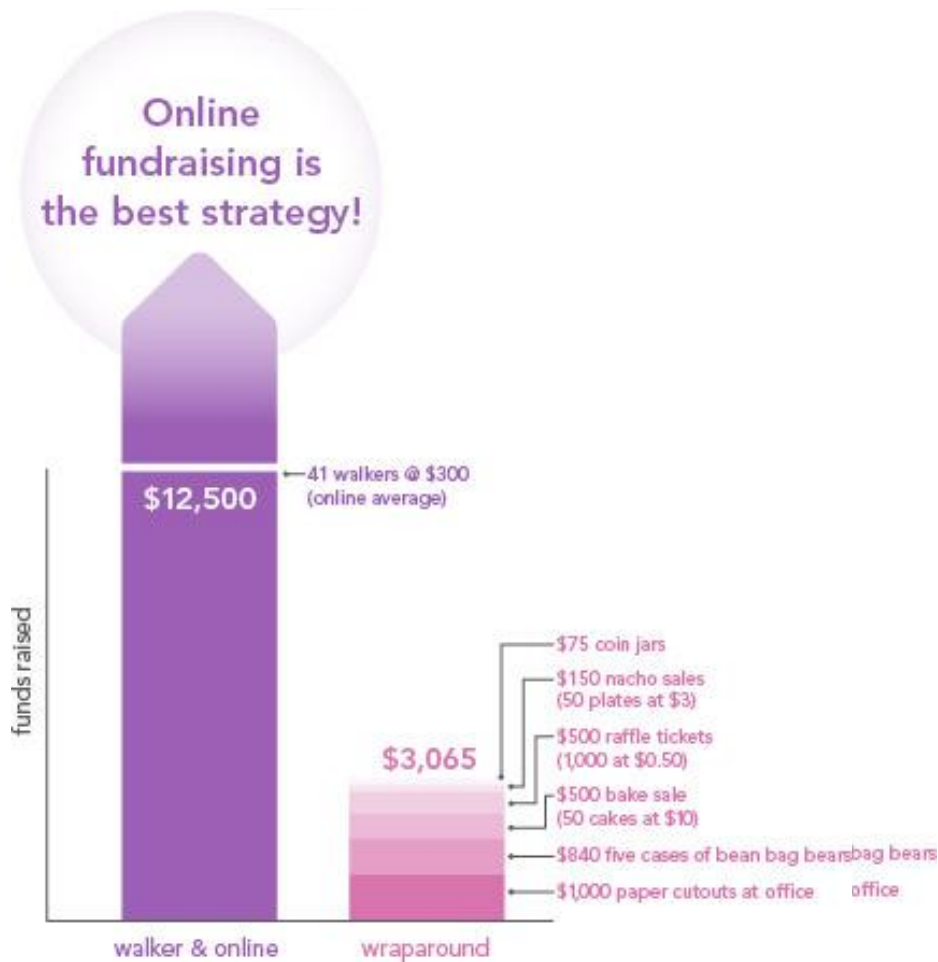
After March for Babies

- Send handwritten notes to supporters and encourage team members to do the same.
- Congratulate your team members with a thank-you party or get-together.

Online fundraising

Signing up your team, communicating with team members and monitoring the team's progress is easy to do online. At marchforbabies.org you'll find everything you need to help your team succeed.

When it comes to raising money, online fundraising is the hands-down winner. People who raise money online raise three times more than those who ask in person or only collect cash or check donations.



How to raise \$300

Did you know family teams are powerhouses: the average family team member raises \$300 or more. Twitter, Facebook, email and social networks can make raising money for March for Babies easier than you think.

This walker did it in eight steps:

• Their own \$25 donation	\$25
• Four friends each gave \$25	\$100
• Two family members gave \$20 each	\$40
• A grandparent donated \$25	\$25
• Four co-workers gave \$10	\$40
• Three neighbors each donated \$10	\$30
• Their local doctor gave \$25	\$25
• A local store donated \$15	\$15
Total raised	\$300



Double it!

Remind team members that every donor may be backed by a company that matches charitable donations. Ask them to find out from their supporters if their company offers matching gifts.

Building a team

Helping babies is a wonderful cause that's easy to get behind. When creating your family team, think much bigger than Mom, Dad, aunts and uncles. In fact, our top family teams continue to grow every year.

So, who can be on a family team? Absolutely everyone.

- Ask family and friends to join in and raise money for your team.
- Tell co-workers about your team and find out from Human Resources if you can send a companywide email announcing your participation in March for Babies and information on how to sign up.
- Tell community and faith-based organizations that you've started a team and are looking for members.
- Contact local schools to see if you can count on them to raise money for your team.

Sample emails

These sample emails and letters are here for inspiration. You can take what you need and make the messages your own.

Don't limit yourself to email. Reach out to your social networks — post your story, progress and requests on Facebook and Twitter and any other social spaces.

Included on the following pages:

- **Team-member recruiting email**
- **Fundraising email**
- **Team-member welcome email**
- **Event details email**
- **Thank-you email**



Sample emails

Team-member recruiting email

Subject: Walk with us in March for Babies!

Dear [NAME],

My family is excited to announce that we're launching our own March for Babies® team! The walk takes place on [DATE] at [LOCATION], and we would love for you to join us.

The March of Dimes mission has special meaning to us: We're walking in [CELEBRATION/HONOR/MEMORY] of [NAME CHILD], who was born [TOO SOON/VERY SICK]. The money we raise will be used to support families in our community and to fund research that will help other babies be born full term and healthy.

We can really use your help. Please sign up to walk and raise money with us at **marchforbabies.org/URL**. If you can't join us, will you help us reach our \$[NUMBER] goal? You can make a safe online donation on our team page.

If you want to learn more about March for Babies and the March of Dimes, there's great information on **marchforbabies.org** and **marchofdimes.com**.

Thank you so much!

[NAME]
[ADDRESS]



Sample emails

Fundraising email

Subject: Support team [NAME] in March for Babies!

Dear [NAME],

Team [NAME] is walking in March for Babies®. This is an important cause for us. We are participating in [CELEBRATION/HONOR/MEMORY] of [NAME CHILD], who was born [TOO SOON/VERY SICK].

Will you support our efforts with a donation? You can do so online at **[marchforbabies.org/URL](#)**. It's easy and safe and would mean a lot. You also can make out a check to the March of Dimes and send it to my address below.

Track our progress any time on our team fundraising page — **[marchforbabies.org/URL](#)**. If you'd like to learn more about the March of Dimes, visit [marchofdimes.com](#).

Thank you so much!

[NAME]

[ADDRESS]

P.S. Ask your company if they offer a matching gifts program — they may double your donation!



Sample emails

Team-member welcome email

Subject: So glad you joined us in March for Babies!

Dear [NAME],

Welcome to the team! We're excited to have you on board and look forward to having a wonderful time at the [DATE] March for Babies®. It's a great feeling to know we're helping families and a better feeling to know we have your support.

Please let me know if there's anything I can do to help you reach your \$[NUMBER] goal.

Two quick tips to start:

1. Online fundraising is the most efficient way to raise money. If you haven't set up your fundraising page, do it now, and ask me for help if you need it. The tools on your dashboard make sending emails to potential supporters much easier.
2. Email is not the only tool you have. If you're on Facebook or Twitter, reach out to your online friends. The more people you connect with, the more money you can raise. And that money will help so many babies.

I've also attached a tip sheet on how to raise \$300. There also is a great flyer at marchforbabies.org/familyteams that shows how the March of Dimes uses donations.

Please call or email me for anything — I'm always here to help.

Thank you so much!

[NAME]
[EMAIL]
[PHONE]



Sample emails

Event details email

Subject: Save this email: Info on March for Babies!

Team members!

March for Babies® is one week away, and we're doing great. So far, we've raised \$[NUMBER] and have \$[NUMBER] to go!

Now's the time to switch into high gear: Send reminders to everyone who expressed interest in supporting you but hasn't made a donation yet; post updates on Facebook and Twitter; and try to reach out to just a few new people. Every dollar we raise helps the March of Dimes give hope to the families of sick babies.

Here are the details for our walk:

Date:

Location:

Time:

If you need directions, you'll find them posted on our team page at marchforbabies.org/URL.

Go, team!

[NAME]

[EMAIL]

[PHONE]



Sample emails

Thank-you email

Subject: Thank you, Team [NAME]!

Team [NAME]!

We did it! We reached our goal and raised \$[NUMBER] in March for Babies®.

We couldn't have done it without you. Thank you for helping us give hope to families in our community.

I've included my favorite photo from the walk and hope you'll share it with your supporters.

Thank you so much!

[NAME]

[EMAIL]

[PHONE]

P.S. Our team fundraising page will be up a little longer at marchforbabies.org/url. If you want to send out some reminders, there is still time.

Useful materials

Download these guides, posters and other resources from the team captain toolkit at marchforbabies.org/familyteams.

Resources

Quick guide to online fundraising

How to set up your team page and use the online fundraising tool

Team T-shirts order form

Purchase customized T-shirts for your team

Posters

Team goal poster

Put it up and share your progress with the team

Walker poster

Help each team member proudly display his or her support

How your support helps poster

Show how the funds you raise contribute to stronger, healthier babies