



Congenital Heart Walk

Hope in motion

Celebrating 30 years

2026 Congenital Heart Walk
Team Captain Toolkit

Thank you for committing to be a **team captain** for The Children's Heart Foundation.

We are glad you're here supporting much-needed congenital heart defect research.

Congenital heart defects (CHDs) are the most common birth defect in the United States. Every 15 minutes, a baby is born with a CHD. The Children's Heart Foundation is dedicated to supporting groundbreaking research that brings us closer to new treatments and healthier futures for Heart Warriors everywhere.

Our mission is to advance the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of congenital heart defects by funding the most promising research.

Thanks to your help, The Children's Heart Foundation has funded nearly **\$20 million in CHD research since 1996**, helping to improve survival rates, longevity, and quality of life for CHD patients. **Because of funded research, death rates from CHDs in the U.S. have declined by 37.5% since 1999.**

However, so much more research is needed to help CHD patients live longer, healthier lives. **That's why we're grateful for your help as a Team Captain, to rally your family, friends, co-workers, community, and donors in the fight against CHDs.**

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FAST FACTS



25%

Percentage of babies born with a CHD who will need surgery or other interventions in their first year of life to survive

40,000

Approximate number of babies born with a CHD each year

2-3 Million

Children & adults living with CHDs in the U.S.



85%

Percentage of babies born with a non-critical CHD now live to at least **age 18** thanks to medical advancements that have been made through research.

Getting Started

- **Register.** Form a new team or re-form a past team by signing up for a congenital heart walk.
- **Recruit.** Reach out to family, friends, and co-workers. Share the registration link from your Fundraising Dashboard to simplify the joining process.
- **Fundraise.** Set a team goal and discuss expectations with members. Brainstorm innovative ways to rally together for fundraising success.
- **Challenge.** Motivate each team member to surpass their previous fundraising achievements.
- **E-Mail.** Access your Fundraising Dashboard to send recruitment and fundraising emails effortlessly.
- **Get social.** Link your Fundraising Dashboard to Facebook and Twitter for seamless updates. Encourage teammates to do the same for a collective impact.
- **Build Team Support.** Beyond fundraising, identify what excites your team about this event. Foster a sense of unity and enthusiasm for this fantastic cause.



Building Your Team

Teams are the core of our Congenital Heart Walks and asking your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to join you will help build community and raise funds for the most promising research.

- **Make Your List.**
 - After registration, create a list of potential team members.
 - Consider family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, teachers, classmates, and community/civic/faith group members.
 - Extend to professionals like your doctor, dentist, and hair stylist.
 - Encourage distant friends and family to participate remotely.
- **Start Building Your Team.**
 - Personally call past team members, inviting them to join again.
 - Utilize social media to spread the word:
 - Share your participant on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn
 - Use your Fundraising Dashboard for seamless updates.



Thank you for joining us
in **Placing Children at the
Heart of Research.** We
couldn't do it without you!



Motivating Your Team

- Share fundraising tips and tricks and ask team members who have been successful in fundraising to do the same.
- Share personal stories from members of the team to inspire others.
- Keep the group posted on progress towards reaching your team fundraising goals.
- Remind your team members of the fundraising incentives.
- Consider creating some friendly competition or recognition for your team.

The prize can be as simple as bragging rights!

Earn badges for hitting milestones on your Fundraising Dashboard



First Donation Badge



Reach \$1000 to earn a Heart Warrior Badge



Reach \$75 to earn a Heart Aware Badge



Reach \$2500 to earn a Heart Champion Badge



Reach \$150 to earn a Heart Friend Badge



Top Team Member - Event Day Badge



Reach \$500 to earn a Heart Hero Badge



100% of Fundraising Achieved Badge

Photo Credits: Happy Days Photography, London's Bridge Photography



Ten Fundraising Ideas

1

Change My Heart. Change My Heart campaign is a great idea for school fundraisers, local businesses, or places of worship by placing jars for collecting donations.



2

Game Night. Host a game night in your home with donations for admission, game challenges, and snacks. Bunco, trivia, and board games work well, and bag toss or croquet tournaments are warm-weather alternatives. Secure donated items and add a raffle, where allowed!

3

Karaoke Night. You'll be singing perfectly in key when your cover songs benefit CHF. Arrange an entrance fee and request performance donations for a local karaoke night, or rent a machine for a home concert and let guests vote for the winner by donating.

4

Heart At Work. Earn funds through your "heart" work, offering to wash cars, run errands, babysit, garden, grocery shop, or more for your neighbors in exchange for a donation. A great fundraiser for school clubs, teams, and Scout and service troops!

5

Pancake Breakfast. Rise and shine! Host a neighborhood or workplace pancake breakfast, and don't forget the coffee and juice! You'll earn some thankful neighbors and co-workers!



6

Matching Gifts. If your company offers a matching gifts program, arrange to add The Children's Heart Foundation as a beneficiary to double the donations! Also, ask about casual dress donations or a special parking spot auction.

7

Facebook Fundraiser. Host a Facebook birthday, anniversary, or another fundraising event, and promote it directly to your network. Login to your Fundraising Dashboard and use the link to connect directly to your social media page.

8



Chili Cook-Off, Bake-Off, or Coffee Exchange. The competition will be delicious! Collect an admission fee and request donations for extras, side dishes, and drinks.

9

Yard Sale or Bake Sale. Spread the love, and help your treasures or tasty treats find a new home. These popular fundraisers can make a huge difference in your community, workplace, or school. For added impact, ask neighbors or others to donate items!

10

Community "Give Back" Events. Ask local businesses to donate a portion of proceeds to The Children's Heart Foundation during a specific period, then help promote the event! Ask to place donation displays at each table. Restaurants, theaters, and kids' gyms are great options!



On Walk Day

- **The Starting Line.** Arrive early enough to meet ahead, check-in, and claim your exclusive fundraising t-shirt when fundraising of \$100 is achieved.
- **Have a Great Time!** Wear team t-shirts, dress in costume, wave team flags and carry team posters.
- **Capture the Moment.** Take lots of photos and post them on social media. Tag your teammates and tag the *#WalkForCHDResearch*.
- **Remember & Honor a Heart Angel.** Bring a photograph or personal remembrance for our Peace and Memorial Garden. Personalize your walk bib to remember a Heart Angel, or to honor a Heart Warrior.



After the Walk

- **Time to Say Thank You!**
 - Be sure to thank your team members and your donors for the impact they made.
 - Make sure your team knows how much you appreciate their efforts.
- **Post Event Checklist.**
 - Send thank you notes to all donors to let them know how much money you raised.
 - Encourage your team to send thank you notes.
 - Include a team photo in your thank you notes and/or emails.

And lastly, from us to you...

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!



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