

 **AUTISM SOCIETY**
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Nebraska



2011 Autism Puzzle Walk
Participant Guide

Welcome to the Autism Society of Nebraska's 4th Annual Autism Puzzle Walk! We humbly thank you for helping us as we work for a better future for Nebraskan's living with autism! This packet was created to provide you with the basic tools for you to become a successful team captain! You can always visit our web site for current walk updates as well!

www.autismnebraska.org

2011 AUTISM PUZZLE WALK

DATE: Saturday, April 30, 2011

LOCATION: Chalco Hills Recreation Area - Omaha (154th Street and Giles Road)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

9:00 am - Registration and check in. Join us for free continental breakfast. GFCF options will be available. There will be bounce houses, Star Wars Characters, Domesti-PUPS, face painting and lots of activities for the kids as well as a sensory break/quiet zone for those who may need to decompress.

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. – Door prizes drawn throughout the morning as well as a DJ and entertainment.

10:30 a.m. – Walk begins

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Fun for the whole family!

TOP INDIVIDUAL PLEDGE EARNER

iPad

2nd PLACE PLEDGE EARNER

iPod

3rd PLACE PLEDGE EARNER

2 tickets to the Husker Football game on September 11, 2011

TEAM PRIZE

The largest team will gather together and lead us as we start the walk.

INCENTIVE FUNDRAISING GIFTS

This year, you will receive gifts based on the level of fundraising that you achieve. Cash and checks brought the morning of the walk (by 10:00 a.m.) will be added to the total you have raised online (by 10:00 p.m. on Friday, April 29) to determine your incentive level.

Raise \$50 – Receive an Autism bracelet.

Raise \$150 – Receive an Autism Society of Nebraska BPA free water bottle.

Raise \$250 – Receive a family swim pass to Swimtastic.

Raise \$500 – Receive an Autism Puzzle Walk Sweatshirt (mailed to you post-walk).

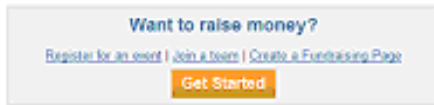
Raise \$1000 – Receive a \$25 gift card to a local business.

REGISTER FOR THE WALK

Registering online for the walk is easy! It only takes a few minutes to register for the walk and even create your own personal fundraising page. You can customize the text and photos to help tell your personal story. Be sure and share the link with friends, family, co-workers – anyone who might want to help Nebraska families living with autism.

To register and join us at the Autism Puzzle Walk:

1. Go to www.firstgiving.com/asn
2. Click Get Started.



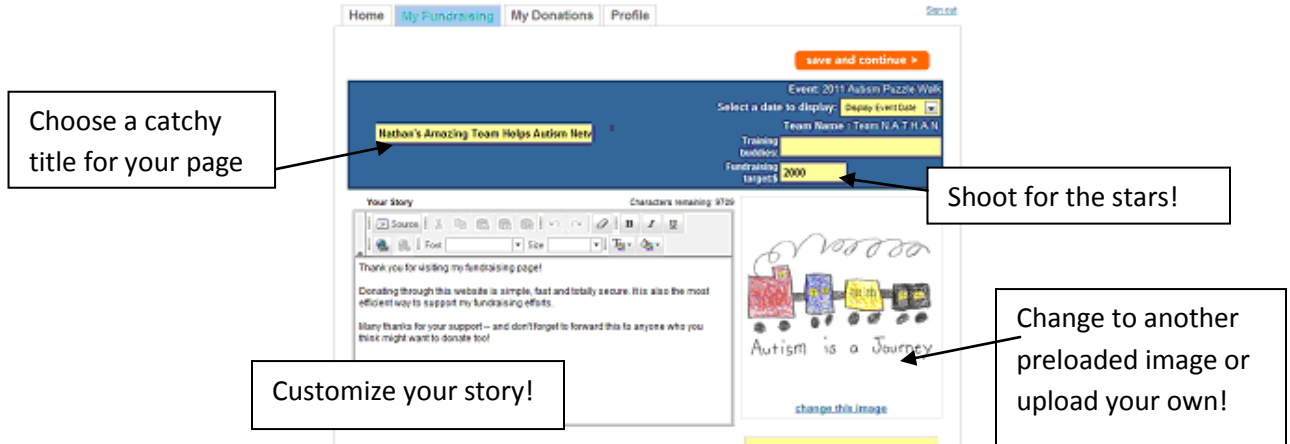
3. Select the 2011 Autism Puzzle Walk event
4. Choose "Raise Money"



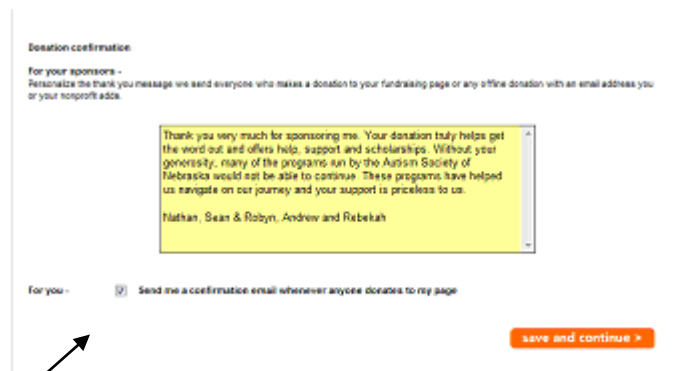
5. Select "Yes, Register Online Now"
6. Select how many walkers you will be registering and place a check mark after reviewing the walk waiver form.
7. If you are new to the site you will then create a log in and password.
If you had a page last year you can use the same log in and password.
If you forgot last year's log in and password you can click on "forgot my password" and they will immediately email your information.
8. Input your registration information. (The screens will repeat for each registered walker.)
9. Would you like to join or create a team? Grandma and Grandpa can sign up as your teammates or a team might consist of a group of teachers at a school who are rallying behind the cause.
10. Verify registration information and provide credit card information.
(Online registration requires pre-payment. However, if you do not have a credit card and want to create a fundraising page you can contact autismsociety@autismnebraska.org for assistance.)
11. You will then receive confirmation that you are registered as well as a registration code for each of your walkers. These codes can be used by those walkers should they chose to log in to the system and create their own fundraising pages. (This option exists back in step 4)
12. Click to create your page!

CREATE A FUNDRAISING PAGE

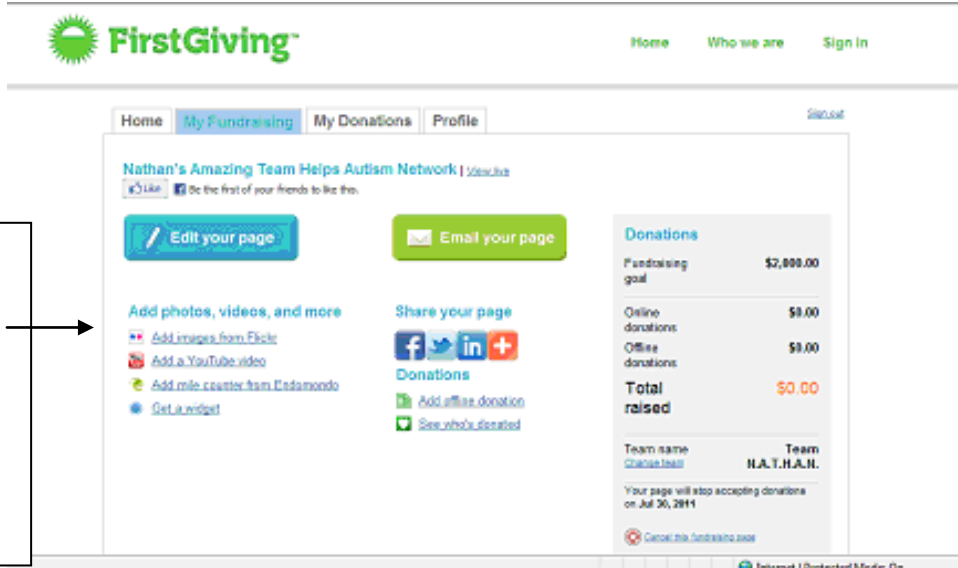
1. Choose a web address (example...your name, child's name, fun title for your team)
If you had a web site last year you can select to use the same address.
2. Personalize your page and make it a unique reflection of your story. Think awareness. Think love. Be creative. This is your chance to share your story and help your friends, family and co-workers gain a better understanding of your loved one or your passion for those with autism.



3. Customize the “THANK YOU MESSAGE” that will be emailed to everyone who makes a donation through your page.



4. Check the box to receive an email whenever a donation is received on your page!
5. Consider adding a personal touch with some pictures of your family or loved one. You are able to upload photos from Flickr and even video from YouTube. However, you will need to establish your own personal accounts with Flickr and You Tube in order to link them to your Firstgiving page.



6. Flickr: go to www.flickr.com to create your account. After creating your account you will be able to upload digital photos from your own computer. You will then need to input your Flickr account code into your Firstgiving site.
7. Click to add image from Flickr.
8. Input your Flickr ID

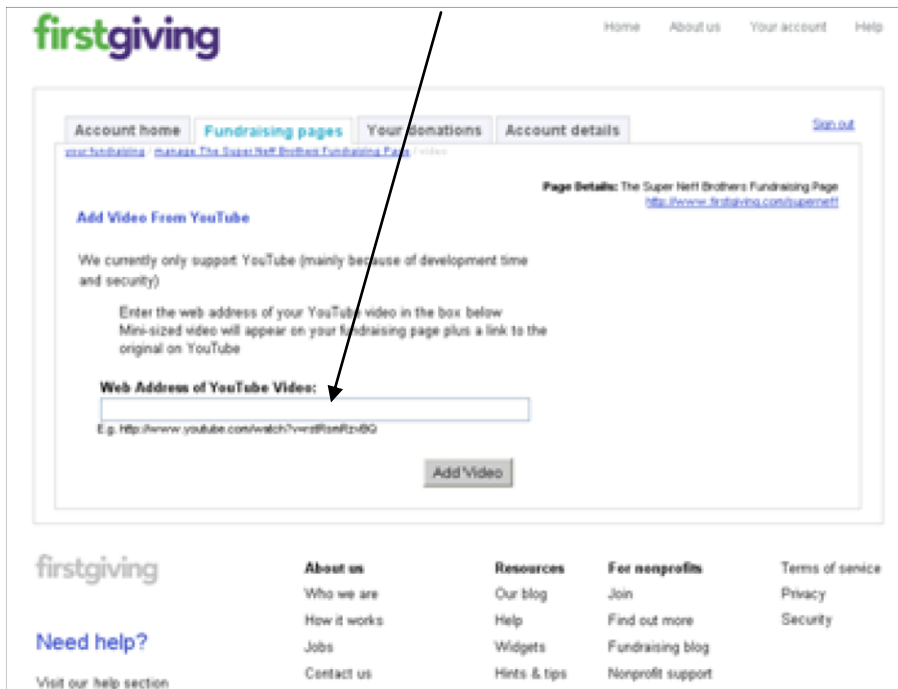
For example, the web site address for a photo was

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/23559243@N03/4418062217/>



9. YouTube: go to www.youtube.com to create your account. After creating your account you will be able to upload a digital video from your own computer. You will then need to input the address for your YouTube video into your Firstgiving site.
10. Click to add a video from YouTube.

For example, the video created by members of the Omaha Support Group for the 2009 walk was located at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KZKog-tWt8>



NOW WHAT?

1. Help us get the word out about the Autism Puzzle Walk! Help distribute brochures or posters and put them out in businesses in your area. Business owners are much more receptive to hanging up a poster for someone who is a client so using your personal connections to publicize the walk will be very helpful to the cause!
2. Share walk information with your local community media. Local communities love stories about local families and since the walk officially closes down April's Autism Awareness Month this might be a great way to get autism exposure in your local media.
3. Share the walk information with local community calendars to help others learn about the walk and how to get involved.
4. Get your local school involved. Many schools require community service projects. Consider sending home a letter with your child's classmates inviting them to join your child for the walk!
5. Ask your employer to sponsor your team or even form a corporate team at the walk. This is a great way to build team spirit. Having a team increases their visibility in the community and sends the message that the employer cares about their community.
6. Let your friends and family know about your walk efforts. Email, phone calls or mailing a letter are all great ways to spread the word. Share a link on Facebook or Twitter.
7. Add a special signature line to your emails. Every email can include a link to your fundraising page! This feature is usually located under "Options" on most email systems.
8. Ask your church, company or other civic groups if they will include the walk in their monthly newsletter.

9. Don't be afraid to ask!

The Autism Society of Nebraska...

The Autism Society of Nebraska is a non-profit organization. What exactly does “non profit” mean? It means that our goal is not to make a profit but rather to reinvest all revenues into activities that further the mission of the organization. And with a stated mission of “improving the lives of all affected by autism” that is a tall order!

There is just so much that needs done. Supports and services are simply not adequate and many families do not even have the financial means to access those existing services. We are making progress at early diagnosis but then those individuals are put on a waiting list in order to receive their “early intervention”. Our schools are being overwhelmed. Adult services are scarce. Society is starting to realize that there is an autism crisis going on in our world and it is not going to go away.

The Autism Society of Nebraska has made it our number one priority to empower our grassroots organization. Our board of volunteers can't do it alone. We have to rely on our army of volunteers out there in the trenches who are living and working with autism every day. We believe that it is those leaders in their communities who know what is important to their community. The Autism Society has partnered with support groups to create sensory friendly events for our families and have also worked with the Nebraska ASD Network to bring training to the Nebraska autism community. The Autism Society has established an online community where individuals across the state can network and share stories. Our weekly Newsgram also strives to connect those individuals across the state and keep them informed about all things autism related. Together we can have a stronger voice!

Autism used to affect 1 in 10,000. Today it affects 1 in 110. Times have changed and the needs of our community have changed. The Autism Society of Nebraska is committed to working with our grassroots networks to help make those changes happen; but we need you to help us.

First of all, we need your participation. With 1 in 110 children affected our autism community is bursting at the seams. The Autism Society needs everyone out here supporting the cause. The Autism Puzzle Walk is not only about our families but rather about our entire community. Autism touches everyone's lives. If you don't have a family member living with autism, then you likely know someone who does. Your support of the Autism Puzzle Walk helps everyone: our families, teachers and even our firemen and policemen. Individuals with autism don't stay four years old forever. They grow up and they must learn how to navigate society just as society needs to prepare to help them along the way.

Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly...we desperately need you to fundraise for the cause. There is no getting around the reality that we need funds in order to grow and expand on our mission. You do not need to feel uncomfortable asking your friends and family for money—after all, it is not for you—it is for all of these lives that are in limbo.

We have toddlers on waiting lists for their early intervention. We have families paying out of pocket \$60,000 a year for medically prescribed treatments that their insurance will not cover. We also have families who cannot pay out of pocket; therefore their loved ones are not receiving therapies. We have schools bursting at the seams with students they are not sure how to educate. Some schools are knowledgeable about autism. Some are not. We have adults on the autism spectrum who are seeking help as they navigate life's path only to be put on waiting lists for supports. Life doesn't wait. There is so much to do and that takes money.

The Autism Society of Nebraska challenges you to ask 10 of your friends to donate to the Autism Puzzle Walk and help us improve the lives of all affected by autism!

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