



# BEST BUDDIES FRIENDSHIP WALK

## Team Captain Guide







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## Welcome

Congratulations on registering as a Team Captain to participate in the Best Buddies Friendship Walk!

Whether this is your first time building a team in the Friendship Walk or you're a seasoned veteran, we're thrilled and hope this Team Captain Guide steers your efforts.

As next steps, we encourage you to follow the steps outlined in this Guide as they have been crafted to help you prepare and be successful leading up the Friendship Walk.

We're excited to see you and your team at the Walk and wish you and your teammates the very best of luck with their fundraising efforts! And, we look forward to rewarding your team members with the exclusive 2025 Walk t-shirt at the event when they each fundraise \$100 or more.

Regards

Melanie Haydon  
Director, Community Events



# You Rock!

As a Team Captain, you serve as the link between the mission of Best Buddies Canada and the communities in which we live and serve. You are on the ground, actively promoting and pursuing inclusion in your community, and you have a chance to make a real difference.

The strongest teams not only motivate their friends and family to get involved with the Friendship Walk, but also empower a culture of inclusion in everyday life.





# Because of You...

The Friendship Walk has become a catalyst in fueling the mission of Best Buddies through community engagement, visibility, dollars raised and volunteer recruitment. Your leadership as a Team Captain affords the opportunity to educate, empower, and instill a culture of inclusion in your community.



## Mission

Best Buddies Canada an extension of Best Buddies International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, inclusive living, and family support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

## Who We Serve

Best Buddies Canada serves individuals with IDD and their families. The IDD community includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, Fragile X, Williams syndrome, and other undiagnosed disabilities.

## Programs

Best Buddies is the largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people worldwide with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower people with IDD to form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure jobs, improve communication and advocacy skills, and live independently, while also offering support for their families.

# Best Buddies Canada

## Story Spotlights

### BEST BUDDIES STORY SPOTLIGHT

30  
YEARS

Jessica Rotolo  
Lauren Abela

*"Best Buddies  
helped me  
become a leader  
in my  
community."*



Jessica and Lauren have been involved with Best Buddies Canada for nearly a decade. Their journey with the organization has brought them exciting leadership opportunities and a lifelong friendship, shaping their lives and leaving a lasting impact on their community.

Their efforts helped the Guelph-Humber chapter grow and positively impacted the broader school community. For many students, it was their first time engaging with individuals with disabilities. "The Best Buddies Canada chapter on campus sparked that curiosity, created those positive experiences," Lauren explains. She, too, felt inspired by her experience with the chapter and her friendship with Jessica.

### BEST BUDDIES STORY SPOTLIGHT

30  
YEARS

Romir Robinson  
Minaxi Sharma

*"I truly cherish  
the friendship  
that we have."*



Romir, was new to the school and eager to join Best Buddies Canada to make new friends. Paired together; "It was easy to be around Romir," Minaxi says. "I love coming to school to spend time with friends like Romir." Their bond was instant and quickly developed. They enjoy playing games and going for walks together at lunchtime. One of their favourite things to do is visit the school's classroom turtle. Whether they work on puzzles, read books, or simply chat, they're always happy to spend quality time together. "As the months went on, Romir's excitement increased and so did mine," Minaxi says. "Our relationship evolved from its beginning stages into a really close friendship."

### BEST BUDDIES STORY SPOTLIGHT

30  
YEARS

James O'Donohue  
Cy Fletcher

*"It takes a really  
special person to  
be a part of Best  
Buddies."*



Cy and Jame spent their lunches together playing card games, participating in sports, or going to the weight room. Cy introduced James to his group of friends. "Everyone knows James now. He's friends with so many different people. He never treats anyone bad; he's nice to everyone."

As Cy prepares to attend university, he feels better equipped to make new friends, communicate, and relate to people who might be different than him. He knows his friendship with James will continue beyond high school. "We're always there for each other," he says. "We'll definitely maintain our friendship. Whenever I come back, I'll say hi to James and everyone else in the Best Buddies Canada program."

# Team Captain Check list

## 8-12 WEEKS

- ☐ Register your team online.
- ☐ Set your team goals.
- ☐ Begin recruiting team members by sending communications through your participant center.
- ☐ Inquire if your company has a matching gift policy.

## 4-8 WEEKS

- ☐ Continue recruiting team members.
- ☐ Let your team know fundraising deadlines to receive the 2025 fundraising rewards and prizes!
- ☐ Team members should begin collecting donations.

## 2-4 WEEKS

- ☐ This is a great time to host a team fundraiser: bbq, garage sale, etc.
- ☐ e-mail your team with weekly updates.
- ☐ Be sure all your team members are registered.
- ☐ Get creative, make team t-shirts and signs to bring the BBFW.

## 1 WEEK

- ☐ Communicate the BBFW details with team.
- ☐ Let your team know what time and where to meet at the BBFW.

## WALK DAY

- ☐ Meet your team at a designated location.
- ☐ Pick-up your Walk reward (t-shirt) if you raised \$100 at the Check-in tent.
- ☐ If you have cash and cheque donations please remit at the Check-in tent. *To qualify for the Walk Reward, funds must be turned no later than 10 days after BBFW.*
- ☐ Take a team picture.
- ☐ Enjoy the day and celebrate with your team.
- ☐ Post your pictures and tag us at  
#WalkWithBBC2025  
#BBCFriendshipWalk2025  
#WalkForFriendship2025  
#StepUpForFriendship  
#FriendshipInMotion

## AFTER THE WALK

- ☐ Follow-up with outstanding donations and remit to BBC.
- ☐ Congratulate and thank team members.
- ☐ Recognize top team members.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

- ☐ You did it! Thank you for all your efforts to support Best Buddies Canada and people with intellectual disabilities.





# Build Your Team

## Set your goal

It's important to have a vision, both individually and as a team. Have your teammates set personal goals for fundraising and recruitment and then share with each other to determine your team goals!

## Find a killer team name!

I mean, would you rather join "Bill's Team" or "Bill's Buds for Bustin Barriers"? Have fun with it and think how you can make it meaningful to your group!

## Start with your core

Who can you count on? Who counts on you? Think about your closest friends family and fellow Best Buddies supports, and start there.

## Get connected

Whether it's through a group text, email chain or Facebook page keep each other posted with updates, share fundraising ideas and make plans to hold each other accountable!

## Create Your Team Identify

Bring you team to life by updating your pictures, sharing stories and setting a personal and team goal.



### TEAM CAPTAIN TIP

encourage your teammates to each recruit one person that the rest of team doesn't know – bringing people together is one of the best parts of the Walk!



# Lead Your Team to Success

## Lead by example

You will be asking your teammates to donate, participate, and recruit, so you should be the one to show them how it's done.

## Tell Your Story

Sharing your story motivates and connects your supporters to the cause, giving deeper meaning to the importance of the Walk and potential impact of your team.

## Fundraise

It's never been easier to fundraise. Simply upload your contact list to your participant centre use one of the sample email solicitations to send to them. And, a friendly reminder to thank your donors.

## Use social media

There's no easier way to reach a huge audience all at once, and you never know who your story might impact. Upload your fundraising page link to Facebook and Instagram and you'll almost always receive a donation you never expected!

## Do it as a TEAM

One of the best ways to generate excitement, awareness, and support for the Walk is to fundraise as a team. Plan a team fundraiser and have loads of fun together.

## Double your money

Ask your employer about their matching gift programs, and make sure your teammates do the same! One simple inquiry could mean twice the funds for Best Buddies Canada. Be sure to let us know if your team is receiving matching dollars.





# Fundraise Online

## Use Your Online Fundraising Tools

We encourage all members of your team to register online so they have access to the powerful fundraising tools available for them to use. Fundraising online is the most effective way to fundraise, and it is also the easiest way to reach friends and family to ask them for their monetary support.

Every registered walker has full access to their “own” Participant Centre which includes a customized fundraising link. Within their participant centre members can track their fundraising, send emails requesting support with their custom fundraising link and send thank you letters to their donors. There are lots of templated emails available in everyone’s participant centre.

Fundraising online is simple, safe and secure and it’s convenient for donors because they automatically receive their tax receipt.

## Team Captains

You have even more power within your participant centre. Team Captains can:

- invite people to join their Walk team through their participant centre
- create a team goal and a team page (option to use)
- send friendly update emails to their team members
- track their team’s overall fundraising results

# Event Day

Get ready for the best day ever!



## Be Prepared

We walk rain or shine, so whether it's suntan lotion or an umbrella, know what you need!



## Bring the Spirit

As we celebrate the abilities that all of us have to offer, there's no better time to be yourself.



## Check In

Even if you've signed up online, make sure to visit the Check-in tent to pick-up your Walk t-shirt if you've raised \$100 or more!



## Get Social

- Share the fun on social media! Capture the day! Tag us and you may have even get reposted. #WalkWithBBC2025  
#BBCFriendshipWalk2025, #WalkForFriendship2025,  
#StepUpForFriendship, #FriendshipInMotion



## Join the Party

Your top priority for the day is to have fun!







# BEST BUDDIES FRIENDSHIP WALK

## Thank you

[MAKE A FRIEND](#)



[DONATE](#)



[VOLUNTEER](#)