

# A “How To” for Organizing a **Walk a Mile in My Shoes** Walkathon Fundraiser in **YOUR** Community

## **Timeline**

### ***About Eight Weeks Before the Event***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Either on your own, or with a core group of supporters, choose **which organization** you will support with your fundraising – a DEBRA organization, for instance, DEBRA Canada ([www.debracanada.org](http://www.debracanada.org)), DEBRA of America ([www.debra.org](http://www.debra.org)), DEBRA Mexico ([www.debra.org.mx](http://www.debra.org.mx)), or any of the DEBRA organizations listed on the international website: [www.debra-international.org](http://www.debra-international.org) (bottom right)... or EB Medical Research Foundation ([www.ebkids.org](http://www.ebkids.org)).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin planning your **walkathon route!** A local high school track? A street route? In a mall?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Choose a target date/time for the walkathon. Another date is possible, however October 25-31 is **International Epidermolysis Bullosa Awareness Week!**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Check with the city to find out if you need a permit – if so, be sure to get it!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make a rain-date plan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine logistics to transport walkers back to original meeting location after the walk (if necessary).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Designate your photographer and videographer – you can make a video with a camcorder, digital camera, webcam, some cellphones, or by using JPEG photo images and Windows Movie Maker. You can also use your photos to make a video at [www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com) – it’s free! If you are taking video, be sure to use correct parameters, basically the same as YouTube:  
<http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/bin/topic.py?topic=10521>  
<http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/bin/topic.py?topic=10524>  
<http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?answer=55743&topic=10527>  
Here’s additional information about making a YouTube type video using JPEG images:  
<http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?answer=80692&topic=10523>
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set any **walkathon goals you want** (such as the number of walkers, or a fundraising \$ target).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss strategies to attain your goals. Consider the impact of including any groups you know, and ask friends to help you identify potential participants who may want to be involved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize locations for any stopping points during your walkathon, if it’s longer than a mile.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Solicit donations to be used as prizes for those raising the most donations - these could include flight or movie tickets, hotel or resort stays, restaurant certificates, vehicle oil changes, etc.

### *Six Weeks Before the Event*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Produce **promotional flyers and signage** (see [www.mywalkamile.org](http://www.mywalkamile.org) for resources).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Email Gena at [gena@mywalkamile.org](mailto:gena@mywalkamile.org), and ask how you can get a **WAM2009 banner**.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit a **community calendar/public announcement or press release** to your local media (see [www.mywalkamile.org](http://www.mywalkamile.org) for resources).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin **outreach to your potential walkers**.

### *Four Weeks Before the Event*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin posting your flyers – this is when it starts getting exciting!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consider contacting local groups or media who may be willing to put an **event listing** on their website, or even help with promotional outreach on your behalf.

### *Three Weeks Before the Event*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize your walkathon logistics, and write down media talking points you might want to make to promote EB awareness in your country. Make sure the media is coming to your event!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine volunteer roles and responsibilities for the event:

❖ Setup/breakdown	❖ Greeter
❖ Stopping point	❖ Transportation coordinator
❖ Refreshments	❖ Presentations
❖ Photographer	❖ Information booths
- \_\_\_\_\_ You may want to see if any of your volunteers are First Aid or CPR certified, in case of an emergency. If you anticipate a larger group of participants, you may want to have a designated First Aid stop along the route.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send participants a **confirmation email** and encourage them to send emails to solicit donations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Draw up and organize any informational materials you want to distribute to walkers on the day of the walkathon. This should include a final map of the walking route, if necessary!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Repost flyers promoting the event, where any were removed, especially in key locations.

### *Two Weeks Before the Event*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Email participants a **reminder** and encourage them to keep soliciting donations and participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure logistics for returning walkers to starting point are complete and adequately staffed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Confirm participation of local businesses or groups that have offered either a location or services for stopping points along your walkathon route – be sure to invite the fire department, police department, service groups, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure you have provided for some method to communicate between volunteers at different stops during the walkathon, if your event is a longer one.

### **One Week Before the Event**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Final reminder email** to walkathon participants.

\_\_\_\_\_ Final check-in with volunteers to confirm roles and responsibilities for the event day.

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure you or another organizer brings the following:

- |   |                    |   |                            |
|---|--------------------|---|----------------------------|
| ❖ | Extra water        | ❖ | Basic first aid kit        |
| ❖ | Extra light snacks | ❖ | Camera and/or video camera |

### **Walkathon Event Day**

\_\_\_\_\_ Arrive *at least* 45 minutes before the scheduled arrival time of participants to start setting up.

\_\_\_\_\_ Have a sign-up sheet for participants; ensure signage is very clear so that everyone can find you easily.

\_\_\_\_\_ Encourage photographer and videographer to take lots of footage! This is YOUR DAY!

### **As Soon As Possible After the Event**

\_\_\_\_\_ Total up your donations and **send them securely** to the EB charity you chose to support, with “**Walk a Mile in My Shoes**” clearly marked on the outside of the envelope **and** on the memo line of the cheque – indicate to them whether you prefer that your funds go toward EB research (EBMRF **or** DebRA organizations) or toward family programs (DebRA organizations only).

\_\_\_\_\_ Send **Walk a Mile in My Shoes** your event video and photographs via email attachment or mail a DVD, so that EVERYONE can enjoy! Give your video a title and post it on YouTube. We want you to *share your success with others* and encourage them for next year!

**NOTE:** Please send Gena a brief summary of the event as soon as you can, along with any news clippings, including **which charity you raised funds for and how much you raised** (so that each year, we can **increase our total \$ goals!**). Email [gena@mywalkamile.org](mailto:gena@mywalkamile.org) with “Fundraiser Results” in the subject line, or if you prefer, send video and/or report by regular mail to:

**Walk a Mile in My Shoes  
c/o Gena Brumitt Gruschovnik  
122 Chalet Crescent  
London, ON N6K 3C6  
Canada**

*(Please verify that your postage is correct for a Canada recipient)*

### *Soon After the Event*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine your highest fundraisers; contact those people and send them their prizes (if you had them).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get your leaders together to **celebrate your accomplishment**, and hand-write thank-you notes to key volunteers who helped! Ask them if they would like to help out next year, and start making your list now for “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” for International EB Awareness Week 2010. ***We’ll keep going until there is a cure for each and every subtype!***
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send thank-you notes to any local businesses that provided a location or materials for your walkathon. Ask them if they would like to help out next year, and start making your list now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send thank you notes to leaders of other organizations that helped with promotion or recruited participants. Ask them if they would like to help out next year, and start making your list now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send post-walkathon thank-you note to donors and sponsors. Ask them if they would like to help out next year, and start making your list now.

*I hope this “how-to” is helpful – the basic ideas can be used for bike-a-thon’s also, or other fundraiser events. If you have any ideas on how to improve this “how-to,” please send Gena an email and pass on the information, so others can benefit!*