

Emails are Key to Fundraising Success

Walkers who write emails collect more pledges. What is email writing? Email writing means simply (1) writing a personal story in the form of an email that explains why you are involved with **Walk in the Park for Abilis** and asks for financial support for Abilis and (2) sending that email to your family, friends, colleagues, etc. Please see the sample letter below for an example of what to say.

Why Emails Work

The money raised by walkers will account for approximately 80% of the money raised by the **Walk in the Park for Abilis – the rest comes from sponsors.** Letter writing works as an effective fundraising technique because it hones in on two basic fundraising principles:

- **Asking is the key to fundraising**
- **People give to people**

By writing an email, you put a face and a story on your fundraising efforts. The positive fundraising results of email writing are evident in walk-a-thon events across the country.

Who Should Write Emails? Everyone!

Email writing is not reserved for parents and siblings of those with special needs, though those individuals are closest to the heart of the mission. Any member of your team can write an email telling why he or she is involved. An email can be written by a colleague, a therapist or a teacher. As a Team Leader, you should encourage each and every one of your walkers to raise pledges, and let them know that the most effective way to raise pledges is email writing.

Ten Steps to Successful Email Writing

1. Say what you are doing and why you are doing it.
2. Include some information about the important work being done by Abilis and mention how Abilis has affected your life.
3. Ask for support either as a walking member of your team or as a donor.
4. Include a link to your personal or team page and encourage people to donate online.
5. State your personal fundraising goal in your letter – history shows that the higher the goal the better, as people will work to help you reach it.
6. Be sure to say that donations are tax deductible.
7. Send it to family members, friends, co-workers and business associates.
8. Remember to include on your mailing list any vendors, consultants and people with whom you do business. These people often make larger donations since they usually make them from a business checking account rather than a personal one.
9. Be sure to send thank-you notes after the **Walk in the Park for Abilis** to everyone who sponsors you.
10. Remember, the more people to whom you send your email, the more money you will raise to support Abilis's work on behalf of children and adults with developmental disabilities (and their families).

Sample Email

Dear Friends,

On Sunday, October 18 I will be leading a team in the Walk in the Park for Abilis. Abilis provides people with developmental disabilities and their families with supports and advocacy for building able lives and strong communities.

[Personal story about how you know Abilis, what it means to you, what services you've received...]

The walk is an annual event that raises funds to support the important work that Abilis does every day. It is a fantastic family event filled with children's activities and a walk around Greenwich Point. I would love for you to join my team and walk with me on October 18. If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation on my team page. I have set a goal for my team to raise [insert team goal]. Please visit my team page at [insert link to team page].

Thank you very much for your support and I hope to see you on October 18!