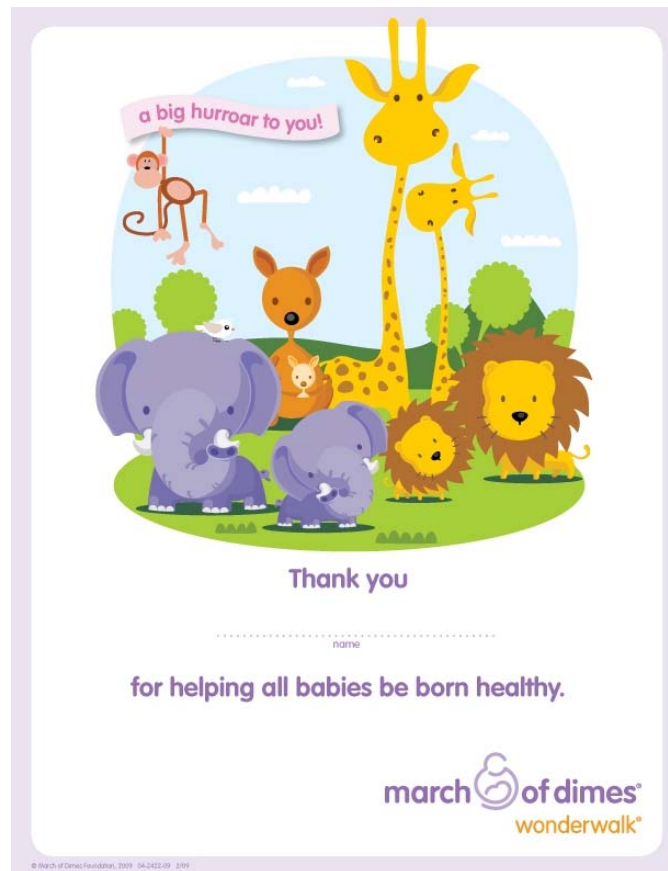


# March of Dimes WonderWalk Implementation Guide

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Good luck with your WonderWalk! For more assistance, please contact us at [teamyouth@marchofdimes.com](mailto:teamyouth@marchofdimes.com)  
All donations gained through WonderWalk should be submitted to [your local March of Dimes office.](#)

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## Event Overview

**What:** WonderWalk is a fundraising and community service event for children in preschool and elementary school. Children experience what may be their first opportunity to become a volunteer, and participants learn about the mission of the March of Dimes and the value of helping others. The event works equally well in rural and metropolitan areas.

**Who:** WonderWalk works best for children from preschool age through elementary school age.

**When:** WonderWalks can take place any time of the year. Schools typically participate during the school year, but WonderWalks can be conducted during the summer with community organizations, summer education programs, or faith-based groups. Consider planning your WonderWalk around a theme, such as Halloween or Fourth of July, which can create a fun atmosphere for the participants.

### **Fundraising Potential:**

By recruiting day care centers, preschools, public and private schools, community youth organizations, or faith-based groups to hold the event on their grounds, each institution acts as an individual team. This provides flexibility in scheduling and limits the logistical needs of the event drastically. Depending upon the enrollment, each event can raise from \$1,000 to as much as \$10,000.

The key to raising significant dollars with WonderWalk is in the number of events held throughout the year and the number of participants involved.

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## WonderWalk: Step by Step

WonderWalk is made up of four basic steps:

1. Educating the children about the March of Dimes mission by presenting age-appropriate messages about nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices.
2. Distributing collection envelopes to children and information to parents.
3. Establishing the logistics of the site.
4. Collecting donations and distributing incentives.

Each of these steps is outlined in this guide, and presented with the appropriate samples.

### **ONGOING**

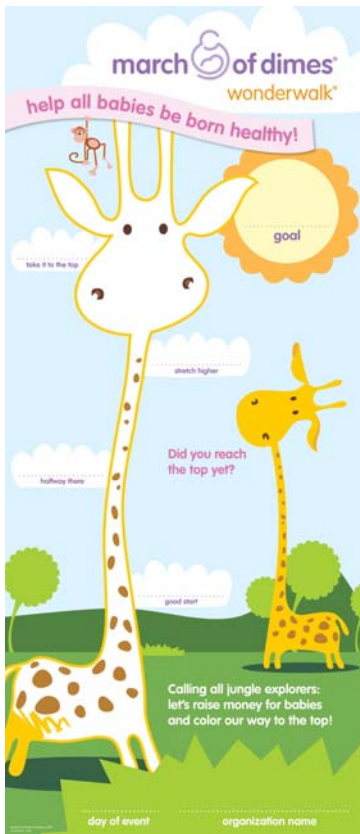
- Recruit day care centers, preschools, elementary schools, community youth groups, and faith-based groups to participate.
- Obtain the necessary approval for each WonderWalk (i.e. school district, principal, etc.).

### **FOR EACH EVENT**

- Determine dates, place, & time. WonderWalks can be held during school hours, in the early evening, or on the weekend. Many times, a school or community center grounds is the best place to hold the event; however, if the WonderWalk involves several schools or groups, consider a local park.
- Determine incentives. Consider the relationships the school or group you are working with has. Oftentimes, local businesses partner with schools and may be willing to donate incentives.
- Tell students why they are walking and distribute event materials. A school or classroom presentation is a great place to explain to students how their walking will help babies. Keep in mind the age of the participants and use age appropriate messages. See the Healthy Living Elementary School Guide.
- Work with the teachers or group leaders to ensure they have all the necessary information. Set goals for each classroom or group using the WonderWalk goal poster.

DAY OF:

- Create a fun atmosphere for the walk. This could be as simple as decorating with balloons & banners, or the walk can have a carnival-type theme with games and activities that appeal to a young audience.
- Collect donations.
- Remind participants of why they are walking. This would be a great place to feature a teacher or family affected by the mission who is in the community and comfortable sharing.
- Thank the students, teachers, administration, group leaders, and families for participating.



**MATERIALS:**

The following items, new in 2009, are available from the March of Dimes Fulfillment Center (click to see). You can also make your own to fit your theme!

**WonderWalk Certificate of Appreciation**

**WonderWalk Goal Poster**

**WonderWalk Child Stickers**

Child Stickers, designed as a thank you gift to each child.

**WonderWalk Parent Stickers**

Parent Stickers, designed to be sent home as a friendly reminder to parents that the WonderWalk event is coming soon.

**WonderWalk Coloring Page**

Download and print this coloring page to use at events for kids to have fun coloring.

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## Recruitment

The best method for recruiting schools is starting with contacts that are familiar with the March of Dimes. Consider board or committee members or top March for Babies participants who have young children or are teachers, principals, or other education leaders in the community.

Within schools, physical education teachers and school nurses are great school coordinators for the WonderWalk. Physical education/gym teachers have an interest in health and the event is an excellent exercise activity for students and can include physical activity stations, in addition to the walking, such as jump rope. School nurses also have an interest in health and may be able to utilize *the Healthy Living Elementary School Guide* in their activities, connecting exercise and nutrition to the WonderWalk.

If you are having trouble conducting a WonderWalk in partnership with an elementary school or public preschool, consider these options:

- Private day-cares or Mother's-Day-Out programs
- Synagogue or Church groups, particularly if in conjunction with youth-specific programming, such as Vacation Bible School
- Youth community organizations; such as, Girl Scout and Boy Scout organizations, youth sports teams, or local mothers and children groups

WonderWalk participants are motivated through the following methods:

- effective presentation of the March of Dimes
- incentives
- publicity within school and community
- involvement of parents and adult leaders
- challenges between grades, groups, schools, etc

Thanks for your support of the March of Dimes!