



CRY Walk for Child Rights 2025

Guidelines for CRY America Action Centers & Event Organizers

You've chosen to become a part of a movement for children's rights that is growing in momentum, with each 'step' that we take as volunteers across the USA. Organizing the CRY Walk is a step in the right(s) direction - Congratulations!

1. EVENT PREP : START AT LEAST 2-3 MONTHS BEFORE THE WALK

- a. **Event Core Team formation & allocation of responsibilities:** Walk Leader/s, Online Fundraising Lead, Sponsorships Lead, Publicity & Social Media Lead, Event Day Lead, Accounts Lead [Adult/Parent].
- b. **Date & Time:** Choose a weekend for greater attendance and avoid major holidays, long weekends, SAT/Final exam dates or dates that conflict with community events in your area. Check if your Parks Department offers rain dates and book/block it in case of inclement weather. Mornings / early afternoons are ideal for organizing the CRY Walk. The event should last around 4 hours from setup to cleanup with the actual walk occupying about 2-3 hours of that time. Note that everyone does not arrive at the start time, so also plan to guide smaller groups as they arrive.
- c. **Venue:** Choose a scenic walk path or a trail in a park/lake front. CRY Walks are family-friendly events - where children and grandparents can all walk for a cause. Please choose a trail/path that is accessible to everyone including strollers, walkers and wheelchairs. Other considerations include: sufficient parking, restroom facilities, space to set up tables. Contact the venue official to determine availability and permit requirements. Be aware of all rules or regulations the venue enforces.
- d. **Insurance:** To book the venue, most parks/venues require a Certificate of Insurance. Please contact the Volunteer Manager with all necessary details regarding date, time, venue, expected number of participants, description of the event and anything else the venue requires to get an Insurance Certificate. Add the venue as "additional insured".

2. EVENT BUDGET & FUNDRAISING PAGE SETUP: 2-3 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

- a. **Event Budget:** discuss & finalize a budget for the event with estimated expenses and incomes. Get as many snacks and activities sponsored as you can to save costs.
- b. **AC CRY Walk Web Page & payment page** will be set up by the CRY Volunteer Manager as soon as you have the date/venue finalized.

- c. **CRY Walk Attendee Registrations:** All event attendees are requested to register for the event, which involves a small registration payment of \$20 to \$30 per person. This includes a free CRY Walk Tshirt, snacks and lots of fun with your friends & family! Encourage participants to pre-register through the online registration page as this will lead to a faster check-in process on event day.
- d. **Individual Online Fundraising Pages:** CRY Walk Leaders and core volunteers set up individual Online Fundraising pages with a fundraising goal [approx \$1,000] and begin promoting your page among your friends, family and colleagues.
- e. If each AC encourages 10-15 volunteers to set up their fundraising pages, you can raise \$10,000 or more! Increasing the number of online fundraisers is the best way to increase your event revenues. Remember, online funds bring 90% of the event revenue.
- f. **Teams:** Encourage people to walk in groups of 8-10 as teams. Teams can be formal or informal groups, such as cultural organizations, student groups, running/walking groups, employees from a company, groups of friends etc.
- g. **NOTE REGARDING PAYMENTS & TAX DEDUCTIONS:** All payments for registrations and donations can be made online through the AC Event Page & Individual fundraising pages using Credit Cards or PayPal. As per IRS rules, event attendees are required to register for the event and all registrations/sponsorships are Non tax deductible (or Non 501c3). As per IRS rules all donations to CRY America are tax deductible (or 501c3). Receipts to donors are issued centrally by CRY America and takes 2-3 weeks to process. Official receipts are sent to donors via email, so pls collect emails for all check donors.

3. PUBLICITY & PROMOTIONS: ONGOING TILL EVENT

- a. CRY Walk Flyers & other promotional material will be available for your event, which include Evites, Print fliers, Facebook banners, Instagram, WhatsApp & Text messages, Press Releases etc.
- b. Ideas for Publicity and Promoting your CRY Walk within your community:
 - i. **Online Fliers:** please send to all your friends, family, colleagues and contacts with a link to your online fundraising page. Follow this up with a call talking about why you are walking in the CRY Walk for child rights.
 - ii. **Offline Fliers:** can be put up at local restaurants, grocery stores, office bulletin boards, community centers, gyms, dance studios, schools & colleges.
 - iii. **Tabling at other community events:** Setting up a CRY Table is a great way to get new volunteer sign-ups, spread awareness about the event and CRY America.
 - iv. **Social media:** promote your event with posts on all core volunteers social media handles and CRY America social media handles.
 - v. **Local Celebrity:** invite a local celebrity to join the CRY Walk who may add excitement, such as a media person, sports person or business leader.
 - vi. **Media Outreach:** contact media outlets - Radio, TV, Newspapers, Online to cover the event. Ask the Volunteer Manager for the CRY Walk Press Release.

5. SPONSORSHIPS - ONGOING TILL EVENT

- a. Compile a list of potential sponsors & approach them. Follow up with a phone call or a personal visit. Sponsorship template is available with the Volunteer Manager.
- b. Local stores, restaurants, food chains like Dunkin Donuts, Trader Joes, Costcos etc often donate water, gatorade, granola bars, fruit, pizza etc for local events. (Check with venue officials regarding rules around food service/sales, as we can't violate any rules)
- c. Reach out to small businesses & professionals who may sponsor your event.
- d. Include the name/ logo of all those who sponsor your event or activities on your event website & fliers, including appreciation announcements at the event.

6. CRY WALK T-SHIRTS: 3 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

- a. CRY America creates CRY Walk fliers & T-shirt designs for all the Action Centers to use.
- b. Contact the Volunteer Manager to place your Tshirt order 3 weeks before the event. The order must include a breakdown of exact sizes (S-XL) and quantities required.
- c. T-shirts cost \$10 each and are a big event cost, so please be judicious while ordering Tshirts as excess ordering is a waste, it increases costs & decreases incomes.

7. EVENT DAY ACTIVITIES: 2 MONTHS BEFORE THE WALK

- a. Once the venue is finalized, plan the actual event - a 5K walk, 5K run, 5k bike ride are all possibilities. Check that the venue allows for whatever activities you are planning.
- b. Encourage students to participate & lead the event with their parent. Include fun activities for Students which the student volunteers can organize, including watermelon eating contest, lime & spoon race, henna, face painting etc. Appreciation Certificates & letters can be given to the students for their contributions, hours volunteered and funds raised. AC Leader to ensure student contributions are tracked.
- c. Contact local dance studios/dance teachers/DJ and invite them to conduct [pro-bono] a warm-up session - Bollywood / Zumba sessions are popular and get the crowd going.
- d. Set up the Registration Table with 1 or 2 laptops to register walk ins & collect event day donations. QR Codes are also available for walk-ins to make registration & donation payments on their own. All walk-ins need to sign the "waiver form" which is available [here](#). [Note: all online registrants have already signed the waiver form online]
- e. The Registration Table should also have the latest event attendee lists, volunteer sign-up sheets, waiver forms, cash box, t-shirts etc. Also include the CRY America 1 page leaflet available [here](#).
- f. Place CRY banners & mark the trail with CRY placards/milestone markers available [here](#).
- g. Set up the activities area with all relevant materials for the games.
- h. Set up the snacks & water station at the start point or the halfway mark.
- i. The Walk Leader and/or AC Leader can give a short speech about CRY and invite the Special Guest to lead the walk.

- j. Lastly, enjoy the event! You and your team have worked hard and have done a great job!

8. POST EVENT CLOSE-OUT TASKS

- a. Photos: Take & send your CRY Walk Photos and information to the Volunteer Manager to post on CRY America's Facebook / Instagram etc.
- b. Accounting: Person assigned for AC Accounting to close the event accounts within 3 weeks after the event:
 - i. Collect all receivables (donations & sponsorships)
 - ii. Make payments for expenses or ask CRY Accounts to make the payments. Copies of all bills/expenses have to be sent to CRY Accounts for reimbursement.
 - iii. Fill out the Events Accounts Spreadsheet and email it to Nidhi.Saraogi@cryamerica.org and mail all checks to: CRY America, PO Box 850948, Braintree, MA 02185. Mark cc to Volunteer Manager.

EVENT DAY SUPPLIES:

You'll need supplies for your Walk. Use this checklist as a starting point.

- Carry copy of permit & insurance certificate
- Folding tables [Registration/ Snacks/ Half Way Table] and 2-3 folding chairs
- Laptops [2], Waiver forms, CRY Leaflets, Walk Tshirts [sort by size]
- Printout of Registrants list, Volunteer Sign-up Sheet, Cash Box with envelopes
- CRY banners, standees, posters, milestones etc
- Canopies / tents if there is no gazebo at the venue
- Water / Sports drinks/ coffee and Snacks/ fruit/ granola bars/ cup cakes etc
- Materials for activities, games and crafts
- Speakers, music and microphones for zumba session & announcements
- First Aid Kit