



(tips borrowed from [AIDS Lifecycle Ride to End AIDS](#))

Write It Down

A personalized letter is the most basic tool of fundraising, and that's because it works. Regardless of whatever else you do, write a letter first! Use it to explain the facts – that you will be participating as a walker in the 19th Annual Walk for the Hungry and Homeless and that you would like to offer them the opportunity to help you support the hunger and homeless initiatives at Spooner House in the Lower Naugatuck Valley. Include some facts about Spooner House and why it is important to you. Send your letter to everyone you have an email or mailing address for, and then look for more addresses and send even more letters. Don't forget to include a link to your fundraising page, or a donation form and a pre-addressed return envelope.

Work the Neighborhood

There are countless opportunities to raise money within a few miles of your home. Think about it: the coffee shop, gym, workplace, laundromat, car wash, supermarket, newsstand, dry cleaners, video store, dentist's office, bar, deli, parking lot, bike shop, and the pizza place. You patronize these businesses all of the time – ask them to help you out with your fundraising effort. How?

- Just ask for the donation.
- Put a poster in the window, explaining what you are doing and how to help.
- Display a donation box and/or letters and donation forms on the counter.
- Ask the business to donate a portion of their proceeds on a given day.
- Offer to wear their name on your t-shirt in exchange for a donation.

Get Social

Making contact with as many people as possible will be key to your fundraising. Chances are, your friends and family will be more than happy to be a part of your fundraising campaign, but you will probably need to go beyond your inner circle.

- Throw a party!! Ask everyone who attends to write a check when they enter the front door or even join your team.
- Host an event.
- Ask your friends to ask their friends for donations or to join/make a team.
- Then ask their friends to ask their friends. And make a team.

Bring It to the Office

Your place of work is another good source for donations or team members. How can your business help:

- Just ask for money. Your company might be happy to donate to you fundraising goal or even sponsor the Walk.
- Then, ask for more -- see if your company has a matching gift program.
- Send an e-mail to the entire company with your donation webpage attached.

Timing is Everything

Special circumstances can provide an ideal opportunity to grab a donation. For example:

- Use March, April, and even May to suggest a great way to use tax refunds.
- Birthday coming up? Ask for donations in lieu of presents.

Go Paperless

The Internet and e-mail have significantly affected the fundraising world. Use them to your advantage:

- Personalize your fundraising page telling people about the Walk and how they can donate.
- Let people know that they can make donations on your behalf at www.crowdrise.com/SpoonerHouseWalk
- Add a short message about donating to your e-mail signature.

Get Crafty

Use your creativity, whatever it may be. Everyone has the ability to do something well; sell your product or skill to benefit your fundraising campaign. A few ideas: cookies, lapel pins, knit caps, poems, chili, short stories, tax preparation abilities, photographs, babysitting time, car washing, drawings, language tutoring, personal training, t-shirts, designated driving, dog-walking, errand-running, gardening.

There's No Limit...

To creative, effective fundraising techniques! The following is a quick list of many more ways to get the job done (courtesy of former Cyclists and Roadies of the AIDS Lifecycle bike ride):

Garage Sale - Time to get rid of all of those miscellaneous items in the garage and attic. Ask your friends to do the same. Put it in your front yard and sell, sell, sell! Put all the money raised toward your fundraising goal!

Bake Sale - Become Julia Child (and ask your friends to do the same) and host a bake sale.

Extra "Change In My Pocket" Box - Create little boxes for your friends and family and have them place it on their dresser. At the end of the day, they can drop that spare change in the box. Gather the boxes and apply the money toward your fundraising goal!

Office Fundraising Challenge – Form a team at your office! Then, speak with everyone in your office and get them to challenge each other to raise the highest amount. Give the winner a prize, like movie passes or a gift certificate to a local restaurant.

Voicemail Message - This will alert everyone who calls you that you are up to something special! Let them know that you need their support!

Return Address Labels - Print return address labels for your outgoing mail. For example, "I am participating in the Spooner House Walk. Will you sponsor me?" Be sure to include a donation form and a pre-addressed envelope to make it really easy for them.

Social Media - Post a message on your social networking page. You'd be amazed by how many people will be willing to help you. Make sure you follow up with them and send personalized thank yous!

Ask your local barista to donate a portion of one day's tips - Ask a local barista to donate tips from one shift. You can create a sign for them to place on the bar stating that "All tips collected today will go directly to 'Joe Walker' who's walking the Derby Greenway on May 21 for Spooner House." If the patrons see that sign they may be willing to dig a little deeper in their pocket!

Fundraising dinner at your favorite restaurant - Ask your favorite restaurant to host a fundraising dinner for you. They supply the food and you supply the donation forms!

Theme Party/Dinner - Hold a theme party for 10 (or more) of your friends. Donation: \$50.00 per person. Spend no more than \$20.00 per person on the food and you'll have \$300 (or more!) in donations by the end of the night. Better yet, get your dinner guests to form a team!

Movie ticket donation - Ask your local movie theater to donate several tickets. Sell them and put the money towards your pledges.

Local theater donation - Ask a local theater to donate a couple of tickets to one of their plays or musicals and auction them off.

Creative Friends - Find a local artist or ask a creative friend to donate a piece of art or some jewelry to be auctioned.

House Warming Party - Are you moving anytime soon? If so, ask your friends to make a donation instead of purchasing a gift for your new place.

Color Donation Forms - Capture your recipients' attention. Send them in colored envelopes too. These will stand out among your friends' bills and junk mail.

Email Signature - Create an email signature with a link to your fundraising page. You will be surprised at how many people will respond by donating!

Doctor / Therapist / Veterinarian / Insurance Agent / Dentist / Chiropractor - Ask him/her to make a check out for you instead of the other way around!

Radio Station - Call your favorite radio station and ask them to make an announcement on the air. They may even interview you. Encourage others to form teams and walk!

Inspirational Book Marks - Create them and sell them to your friends and family.

Gym - Ask your gym to place a Donation Jar at the front desk! Leave a stack of donation forms at the counter, too. Maybe they'll host a charity yoga or spinning class and proceeds go to the Walk.

Hair Salon - Ask your barber or hairdresser to donate \$5.00 from every haircut they complete over one the weekend.

Garden Tour - Check with a local historical society to see if they would sponsor a garden tour of one or several homes in your area. Promote the event in local newspapers.

Meet the Press - Does your company distribute a newsletter? Does your company have an intranet message board? Take advantage of these! It's a perfect way to get the word out.

Neighborhood Chores - Are you a Mr. or Ms. Fix-it? A lot of your neighbors would probably rather pay you than someone else. Place signs around your neighborhood advertising your services (i.e. watering gardens, cleaning roof gutters, sweeping the driveway, fixing an easy plumbing problem, painting a room, etc.)

Ebay - Remember the garage sale idea? Auction off the remaining items on Ebay.

Game night - Get out those board games and start playing! Break into teams and let the fun begin.

Bowling Nights - Plan a fun night of bowling at the local alley. Ask the owner to waive the fees and you can collect that money and apply it to your campaign.

Used book sale - Old books sitting in the attic collecting dust? Ask your friends, family and neighbors to donate whatever they have and host a book sale in your front yard.

Local Stores - Ask a local store manager what the hot selling item is these days and if they would be willing to donate a % of sales from that particular item to you.

Dress Down Day - Ask your company or school to allow a dress down day. For the privilege of dressing down, employees or students donate a certain amount to the Walk.

Company Grants - Find out if your company offers grants to employees who volunteer their time for charitable causes. If so, you can volunteer your time at the Walk and get paid grant money for the work. You may need a letter from us stating that you'll be volunteering in the office and we'd be happy to make that happen.

Church Bulletin - Place an advertisement in your church bulletin letting the congregation know what you're up to and that they may want to form a team and walk with you!

Is there a teacher in the house? - Get your students to help you fundraise or even form a team.

Other Parents - If your kids play on soccer leagues or any other sports teams, have them form a team or even a team among the parents.