

The JDRF Letter Writing Campaign: *Old faithfuls, new wrinkles, and why it is still so important, EVERY year!*

The Letter Writing Campaign has proven to be one of the most effective (and easiest) ways to raise money for the Walk. By simply drafting a “Dear Family and Friends” letter or email explaining why you and your family are participating in the JDRF Walk, you can reach your largest audience without even leaving the comfort of your home!

We’ve broken it down, for beginners and veterans alike, to a few simple steps:



1. Write a letter!

Telling the story of your family’s daily struggles with type 1 diabetes is a way to let people know just how important JDRF research is. No matter how “together” a family is at managing the disease, and no matter how healthy the child or adult with diabetes may appear, we all know that there is no substitute for a CURE. Include pictures and your team’s fundraising goal, so that your contacts can see how important their contribution really is, every year!

1.5 And we mean every year!

Just like everything that goes along with type 1 diabetes, sometimes raising funds to find the cure gets exhausting! Families who have participated in the Letter Writing Campaign for several years may feel that they have said all there is to say. We hear you. But consider this: If we don’t ask, we don’t get. We are in our families’/friends’ giving calendars, and even when we get tired of asking, we have to give them the opportunity to donate.

Here are some tips from JDRF Letter-Writing Campaign pros to keep it fresh:

-  Wrap-around events make it fun, and can tie into your letter. If you are holding a carwash, or a yard sale, tell people about it in your letter. Ask them to “buy” a virtual carwash, cup of lemonade, leisure suit, or other yard sale prize with an online donation.
-  Include research, or developments in your loved one’s treatment—a new pump, a different insulin, or new tricks learned at diabetes camp! Hope is always appropriate!
-  Get a new perspective. Have the letter come from the child with diabetes, a sibling, a close friend, a grandparent, or even the family pet (the only other member of the household keeping watch on those late nights fighting ketones)!
-  And for even MORE impact, check out the instructions [here](#) on the JDRF Web site for making a video letter! You can burn copies of the video onto DVD and mail them out, or post it on YouTube to reach WAY beyond your personal contacts!

2. Get the message out!

Whether you do it via email using our handy tools in your Participant Center, snail mail (which does still have some advantages!), or a combination of both, get that letter out to as many people as possible!

Start with the lists you already have:

-  Address book
-  Holiday card list
-  Team rosters
-  Church/Synagogue directories
-  Business contacts

Then watch the numbers multiply!

-  Ask your email contacts to forward it on to THEIR contact lists.
-  Send five extra copies of the paper letter, with envelopes, to the people who receive it via snail mail.
-  Post your fundraising link on Facebook and Twitter.

3. Watch the donations roll in!

With secure online fundraising through your Participant Center, there's no need to worry about keeping track of checks and cash. And if donations do come in the "old-fashioned" way, you can mail them in or drop them off at your local JDRF office any time before Walk day. That way when the big day comes, all your team has to do is show up, get your T-shirts (for each team member raising \$100 or more), and CELEBRATE getting us all a step closer to the CURE!

4. Walk and have fun!

No instructions necessary!

5. THAT'S IT, right?

Wrong! There's still one more step to go—the most important step of all! Say THANK YOU to the friends, family members, and even total strangers who have contributed to your Walk team! Let them know how much your team and the total Walk raised, and thank them for being an important part of our success. Acknowledging your contributors' generosity this year will ensure their support next year!