

Publicising your Train Walk

The NAS press team can help you contact your local media (newspapers, TV and radio), to gain potential publicity for your Train Walk. Contacting your local media is really easy and the NAS press team will support you every step of the way.

Easy as 1, 2, 3...

1. The NAS press team can send you an initial press release which announces your Train Walk and invites local people to take part. You can adapt the press release and issue it to your local media ASAP!
2. The NAS press team can contact you in April 2009 with a second press release, which you can issue to your local media to help you raise awareness of your Train Walk.
3. The NAS press team can contact you in May 2009 with a letter for you to issue to your regional newspapers, after your Train Walk has taken place, thanking locals for their support.

We can't guarantee that the media will use information provided but we'll do what we can to help you! We suggest that you forward all media communication to the NAS.



Thank you. Thomas & Friends™ are chuffed you are organising a Train Walk to raise money for autism!

We hope you find this pack full of great ideas and tips to make your Train Walk a success. Every penny raised will make a difference in helping and supporting people whose lives are touched by autism.

Autism is a serious, lifelong and disabling condition

People with autism can find it incredibly hard to make sense of the world. Everyday life can be confusing, meaningless or even frightening. Understanding and communicating with other people is particularly difficult – which can leave people very isolated. Without the right support, autism can have a profound – sometimes devastating – effect on individuals and families.

1 in 100 people in the UK have autism. Together with their families they make up over two million people whose lives are touched by autism every day.

Despite this, autism is still relatively unknown and misunderstood. Which means that many of these two million people get nothing like the level of help, support and understanding they need.

Together, we can change this

The money you raise from Train Walk will help to support local NAS Branches and to provide local services. Your involvement will also raise awareness and encourage people to think differently about autism.

Find out more visit: www.think-differently.org.uk.
If you are affected by autism in any way and are looking for help and support contact **The National Autistic Society's Autism helpline: 0845 070 4004. (Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm)**

Contact the NAS press team:

- Telephone: 0207 903 3593
- Press team mobile: 07787 124792
- Email: press@nas.org.uk

After your Train Walk

Don't forget to thank the people involved and let them know how much money they've helped to raise for the NAS. Use the enclosed Certificate template to thank your 'Train Walkers'. Our press office can also help by sending a letter to your local newspapers to thank people for their support.

Send us your photos with signed permission forms and stories and we will endeavour to upload them onto our website and use them in our newsletters and magazines.

Download additional Train Walk event materials from the website:
www.autism.org.uk/trainwalk.

For key contacts, help and support:
email: trainwalk@nas.org.uk
or call: 0845 180 0426.

Train Walk:

Website: www.autism.org.uk/trainwalk
Email: trainwalk@nas.org.uk
Telephone: 0845 180 0426

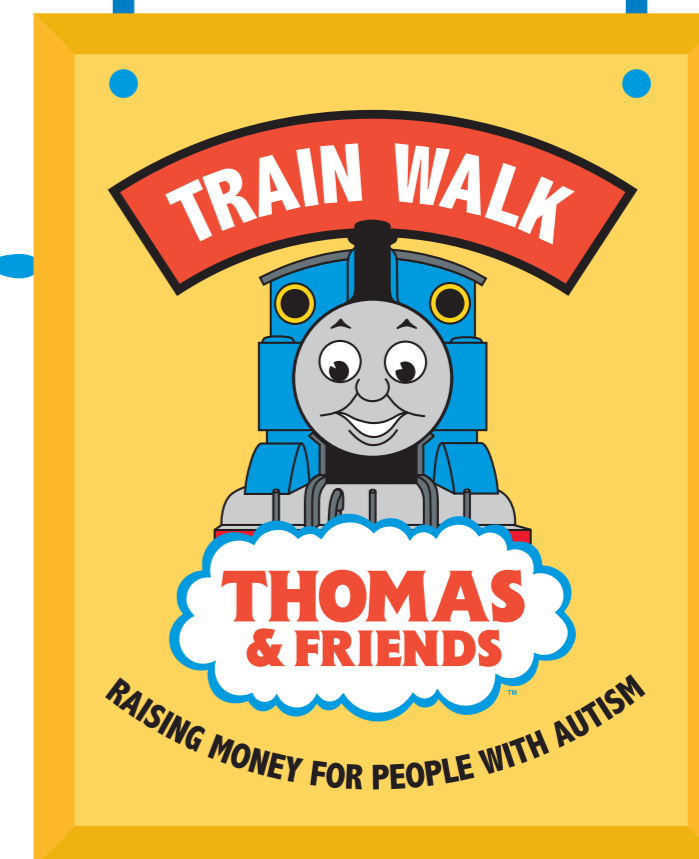


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Get going!



Your autism charity

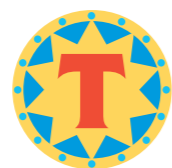
Full steam ahead!



Train Walk is a fun family sponsored walk. It can be any distance you choose to suit the ages and abilities of the children joining in. Just gather your friends, neighbours and family to walk around an imaginary track in your favourite park, playing field, or even indoors.

Making your Train Walk Thomas-tastic

There are lots of ways you can give your walk a real Thomas & Friends™ feel. Here's a list of ideas to get you started – no doubt you can think of lots more ideas.



- ➔ **Appoint an 'Engine Driver', 'Guard' or 'Ticket Collector! Give them a flag and a whistle to start the walk!**
- ➔ **Dress as your favourite Thomas & Friends™ character or wear that character's colour. Have a prize for the best fancy dress!**
- ➔ **Organise a Thomas treasure hunt with clues along the way.**
- ➔ **Colour and wear a Thomas mask. Download this and other fun activities at www.autism.org.uk/trainwalk.**
- ➔ **Organise a band, or walk to Thomas & Friends™ songs.**
- ➔ **Every child who raises money will receive a special Thomas bookmark and certificate to celebrate their achievement. There are some included in your pack.**

Invite everyone to get on board!

Thomas relies on his friends to help him be a 'Really Useful Engine.' Don't go it alone, ask your friends to help with planning and organising the walk. That way you'll share the load... and double the fun!



Recruiting walkers

There are two ways you can let families know about your walk:

1. We can put the details of your walk on the Train Walk website so that people can register online and then we will then send them all the information they need to take part. Each participant will receive a sponsorship form and a 'Train Walk ticket' – the ticket reminds your walkers of your Train Walk details.
2. You can get all your local contacts to take part by registering them yourself using the registration form enclosed – this form gives you a record of who to expect on the day and will enable you to collect contact details in case there are any 'last minute' changes to notify them of.

You will find copies of the sponsor form and ticket in your pack to give out when taking registrations. Additional copies can be downloaded from the Train Walk website, or call 0845 180 0426 and we will send you more.

Getting the message out

Decide the time, date and place for your Train Walk and use the enclosed posters and leaflets to let people know. Put up posters in local schools, playgroups, doctors' surgeries, supermarkets and so on.

Use your local contacts, for example at the playgroup, school, cubs or brownies to get others to sign up. The internet and email are also great ways to spread the word quickly. Social networking sites such as Facebook are an easy way to involve your friends... and their friends!

The NAS press team can also help. Read 'Publicising your Train Walk' to find out more.

Making tracks for people with autism

The people taking part should know how important the money they raise is, and how it will help people with autism. Suggest they take their sponsorship forms into work and ask all their friends and neighbours.

There are plenty of other ways to raise extra money, and help even more people with autism. Here are just a few ideas:

- ➔ **Hold a Thomas-based raffle or quiz**
- ➔ **Sell Thomas cakes or sweets**
- ➔ **Sell refreshments**
- ➔ **Let local businesses know what you're doing and that it's for The National Autistic Society. They may provide you with free food, drink or raffle prizes for the day.**



Capture the day

Don't forget your camera! We look forward to hearing all about your Train Walk including any particular news, hints, tips or stories.

To use your photographs we will need signed photo permission forms from the people in the photos. Download permission forms from our website: www.autism.org.uk/trainwalk or email: trainwalk@nas.org.uk.

Collecting sponsorship money

Collect sponsorship forms and money raised from the Train Walkers on the day. Encourage your walkers to give you a cheque for the money they raise – it's more secure and will save you a lot of counting!

We recommend that you allocate two people to manage this process, who can keep the money in a safe place during and after your walk.

Money should be counted with a witness present and banked as soon as possible after the event.

Gift Aid

Make your walkers aware of Gift Aid. We can claim an extra 28p from the Government for every pound donated!

For the NAS to be able to claim Gift Aid on the money you raise, you will need to provide information on your walkers and their sponsors and the money you paid in.

It's important, therefore, to send us a list of people sponsored with the total amount they raised, their individual sponsorship forms and a copy of your bank paying-in slip. The amount on the paying in slip must match the total on the bottom of the list.

Please send this information to:
Train Walk, The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London, EC1V 1NG.

