



**MARCH** **STEP**  
*UP!*  
**FOR BABIES**

**PARTICIPANT  
TOOLKIT  
2020**

Thank you for leading a March for Babies team. The following toolkit is your playbook for activating the Step Up! campaign as part of our annual March for Babies fundraiser.

APRIL 2, 2020

# THANK YOU

## Thank you for signing up for March for Babies!

We are going virtual this year and the success of our campaign depends on you more than ever before. You'll have the chance to make a real difference for moms and babies, while having some fun with friends and family at the same time. And, we have the tools to help you do it!

For more than 80 years, March of Dimes has provided critical care and services to moms and babies. We've been marching on their behalf for 50 years and, in our history, never have we offered such a unique campaign. While we can't do a physical walk event this year due to COVID-19 and social distancing, that isn't going to stop us from supporting the moms and babies who depend on and need us right now.

Even in the best of times, moms and babies rely on our programs, research, advocacy and health information every day. During this time of urgency given the COVID-19 pandemic, the need is even greater. Moms and babies carry more health risks than other populations. With our medical system being tested as never before, it is imperative March of Dimes "steps up" the fight for healthy moms and strong babies.

Just like in years past, the role of the participant is to recruit friends and family and encourage others to fundraise.

But this year, instead of gathering at a physical walk, you'll individually track your steps between now and May 15 through the Charity Miles mobile app.

You can continue raising money through your [MarchforBabies.org](https://marchforbabies.org) dashboard, and you can raise even more for March of Dimes based on your steps tracked in the app.

The following outlines the steps you will take to step up. If you have questions, reach out to your local March of Dimes team or Kelly Ernst, [kernst@marchofdimes.org](mailto:kernst@marchofdimes.org).

Thank you again for all you do. Despite the uncertain circumstances we currently live in, your support helps bring clarity to what's most important to us and our participants.

# STEP UP!

## 3 THINGS TO KNOW

- 1.** It's not that different from previous March for Babies campaigns – it's just now an ongoing virtual campaign to track steps rather than a physical walk. And, it has more ways to fundraise and engage others.
- 2.** Use the Charity Miles app as a new opportunity to earn funds for March of Dimes. Ask your friends and family to pledge and support, just as you would have done before, but in a fun, new virtual way.
- 3.** The Step Up! campaign will engage new supporters virtually to connect with one another and take action for a good cause.

# STEP 1: DOWNLOAD THE CHARITY MILES APP

1. Register or sign-in to participate at [MarchforBabies.org](https://marchforbabies.org)
2. Download the Charity Miles app. Be sure to use the link/QR code on the page to take you directly to the Step Up! campaign
3. Start stepping and share your story
4. Request pledges from friends and family via the app – don't be shy!
5. Visit the app daily and watch for challenges to participate in throughout the campaign
6. And don't forget to make your own donation!

# STEP 2: RECRUIT FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO STEP WITH YOU

The more the merrier! Recruit as many supporters as possible to help you raise money. Based on previous campaigns, teams with 10+ members are most successful at fundraising.

Ask friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, etc. to fill your team. It can't hurt to ask and if someone doesn't want to join, maybe they'll donate or share the message and encourage others to support the campaign and join your team.

Once you have your team, encourage each team member to create a pledge page and set a fundraising goal that is both ambitious and attainable. After everyone has set their individual goal, set a goal for the broader team. After your team establishes individual and team fundraising goals, send and share your fundraising pages out to the world.

If donations are coming in fast and furious, don't be afraid to update your goals along the way. As the campaign progresses and as you add new team members throughout, make sure you're increasing your team fundraising goal proportionately. Shoot high and do your best to surpass every goal you set!

# SAMPLE TEAM MEMBER RECRUITMENT EMAIL

**Subject: Join My Team for the 2020 March for Babies Step Up! Campaign**

Dear [name],

The 2020 March for Babies campaign is finally here!

I'll be leading a team this year and I need your help *stepping up* for our moms and babies who need our support more than ever. In light of COVID-19, this year's campaign will be 100% virtual, meaning you can get involved in this great cause and raise money for March of Dimes anyplace, anytime.

And the time is right to help. Even in the best of times, moms and babies rely on our programs, research, advocacy and health information every day. During this time of urgency given the COVID-19 pandemic, the need is even greater. Moms and babies carry more health risks than other populations. With our medical system being tested as never before, it is imperative that we "step up" the fight for healthy moms and strong babies.

In addition to gathering pledges, we'll Step Up! by using a new mobile app to track our steps and engage with the other supporters between now and May 15. Throughout the campaign, we'll have the opportunity to participate in fun online challenges through social media. The campaign will culminate in a one-day virtual celebration you won't want to miss.

Visit [MarchforBabies.org](https://marchforbabies.org) to register, follow the prompts to download the Charity Miles app and donate to your personal page.

I hope you'll join my team in stepping up. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

[name]

# STEP 3: GET YOUR TEAM STEPPING

Even though we won't have a physical walk this year, we will get your teams moving! We'll have a number of virtual activations that you and your team members can participate in throughout the campaign. Follow March of Dimes, [#MarchForBabies](#), and [#MFBStepUp](#) on Facebook and Instagram to find out what the challenges are and learn how to get involved.

All social media activations share the goal of encouraging March for Babies Step Up! participation in different ways and on different social channels. The app will function as a virtual march platform, enabling users to count steps indoors or outdoors (safely), and raise money for each step they take!

On Facebook and Instagram, you'll find "always on" content that will create engaging ways to raise money, step and tell stories about why you march. Between now and May 15, keep an eye out for fun ways to get involved and help moms and babies in these challenging times. Also, get your Tik Tok account set up – you won't want to miss our dance challenge!

We encourage everyone who participates to use the hashtags [#MFBStepUp](#) and [#MarchForBabies](#) so we can create content for a very special event at the end of this campaign.

# STEP 4: SHARE WHY YOU STEP UP

Throughout the campaign, encourage your team members to share their progress and motivation on social media as you step and fundraise. This campaign is powered by the personal stories of families and individuals that show why fighting for the health of moms and babies is so important.

Regularly share posts on Facebook and Instagram about why you're stepping up to support March of Dimes, who you're stepping up for, and how it helps make a difference. Remember to always use #MFBStepUp and #MarchForBabies so you can connect with other marchers and attract donors to support your team's participation and fundraising goals.

Asking team members to regularly post their progress and personal stories/motivations is crucial. When they post, ask them to tag national and regional March of Dimes Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as using the hashtags. This way, March of Dimes team members can find their content and re-share. Also, tagging friends and family in posts can help attract donations and support for their step challenge participation and March for Babies Step Up! as a whole.

When engaging on social with team members who post, re-share and remember to thank them for stepping up for moms and babies!

# STEP 5: CELEBRATE WITH US

On May 15, we will host a virtual celebration with advertising, sponsorship, promotional giveaway opportunities and more. Celebrity influencers, top walkers and funders and people from across the country will engage to celebrate months of hard work, and success!

Watch the March for Babies Facebook and Instagram accounts for more information.



# Q&As

## What's happening?

This year we are excited to announce that our annual March for Babies fundraising events will become virtual so that everyone can Step Up! for moms and babies, no matter where they are. We are asking March of Dimes supporters across the country to participate and Step Up!

## Why isn't the March for Babies event being postponed instead of changed to a virtual event?

The onset of COVID-19 and the effect it is having on families around the world is truly devastating. With our medical system being tested as never before, it is imperative that we "step up" the fight for healthy moms and strong babies. Even in the best of times, moms and babies rely on our programs, research, advocacy and health information every day. During this time of urgency given the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for March for Babies to Step Up! its support is even more critical.

Babies can't wait. Moms can't wait. You can't pause pregnancy. Moms and babies carry significant health risks, and the COVID-19 pandemic is putting more stress on a healthcare system that will be challenged to meet their needs. This is why March for Babies will proceed, but in a new way.

## How does participation in Step Up! support COVID-19 efforts for moms and babies?

By fundraising for March for Babies, participants will help support moms and babies directly impacted by COVID-19. This support includes:

- Research for COVID-19 treatments ensuring they are inclusive and safe for pregnant and lactating women.
- Fundraising and advocacy efforts needed to help those families during COVID-19 and beyond.

- Resources and training for doctors and nurses in the ICU and NICU who are fighting tirelessly for moms and babies every day.
- Development of educational materials for moms-to-be and families about what they should know to protect themselves.

## What is the Step Up! campaign?

It is a virtual version of March for Babies in which participants track steps and collect donations between now and May 15. The campaign will include a series of challenges to get teams moving and increase those steps.

Throughout the campaign, March of Dimes will provide supporters with a series of fun, engaging virtual challenges (including a Tik Tok step/dance challenge, Corporate Bracket Challenge and more) to get people stepping, encourage the sharing of personal stories about why participants are "stepping up" to get the word out about the critical needs of mothers and babies right now.

## How do individuals participate?

1. Register to participate at [MarchforBabies.org](https://www.marchforbabies.org)
2. Download the Charity Miles app. Be sure to use the link/QR code on the page to take you directly to the Step Up! campaign
3. Start stepping and share your story
4. Request pledges from friends and family via the app – don't be shy!
5. Visit the app daily and watch for challenges to participate in throughout the campaign.
6. And don't forget to make your own donation!

## How does fundraising work?

There are two main ways team leaders and participants can fundraise for March for Babies.

1. **Your pledge page on [MarchforBabies.org](https://www.marchforbabies.org).** You can invite friends and family to donate to your personal fundraiser just like before, and you can show them you're getting your steps in by using the social share links in the Charity Miles app to share progress on social media. When you share on your social media accounts, be sure to link to your personal fundraising page to encourage more donations.
2. **The Charity Miles app.** You can invite your friends and family to pledge to donate to your steps and when they pledge, they will be driven to make a donation to March for Babies!

## How do corporations participate?

Corporate partners can participate as sponsors. Contact your local March of Dimes chapter or [who] for more information about opportunities to receive broad recognition via our virtual event and promotions.

Corporate partners can also participate by having teams. Engaging employees in a fun, team-building activity that encourages wellness and community engagement. Contact your local March of Dimes chapter or sign up on [MarchforBabies.org](https://www.marchforbabies.org) to start a tea