

# Relay For Life Team Captain Handbook

## What is the American Cancer Society Relay For Life?

### *It's Our Signature Activity.*

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life is a fun-filled, overnight experience you'll never forget. Relay mobilizes communities throughout the country to celebrate survivors, remember loved ones and raise money to support the mission of the American Cancer Society, to eliminate cancer. Teams of 8-15 members seek contributions prior to Relay and then gather with tents and sleeping bags to camp out at local high schools, parks or fairgrounds and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Relay brings together friends, family, businesses, hospitals, schools, places or worship...people from all walks of life! Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during this overnight event-because cancer never sleeps.



### *It's About Hope.*

When the sun goes down, hundreds of luminaria light the way under the stars to remember those lost to cancer, those fighting cancer, and those who have fought the battle and won. The luminarias that light up the night symbolize the hope and perseverance with which we all continue to fight.

### *It's About Honor.*

The Relay invites all cancer survivors, our honored guests, to take part in the Survivors Lap. Their courage and strength help the community see that cancer survivorship is real, and that we are making progress in the fight against cancer.

### *It's About Connection.*

Relay is your connection to the support your American Cancer Society provides. Through Relay, you will become more knowledgeable about cancer prevention and early detection. You will also learn more about the services available for cancer patients and their families. You can connect with others to advocate for additional funds and policies to aid in the fight against cancer.



## It's a Worldwide Movement

In May 1985, Dr. Gordon Klatt took the first step of his 24-hour marathon around a Tacoma, Washington track ultimately raising \$27,000 to help the American Cancer Society fight this nation's biggest health concern. A year later, 340 supporters joined the overnight event. Since then, Relay For Life has become the American Cancer Society's single largest activity. Each community's Relay For Life is special, but its greater power lies in the synergy created by all the Relays taking place worldwide. In 2006, more than 4,600 communities and 24 countries hosted a Relay For Life event, making this the largest fund raising event of any kind!



# What Do Your Relay Dollars Support?

The American Cancer Society has had the same mission since it was founded in 1913: to eliminate cancer. By the year 2015, we aim to double the number of lives saved, reduce cancer incidence by 25 percent, and make measurable improvements in the quality of life of cancer patients and their families. Funds raised through Relay For Life help drive the Society's mission to eliminate cancer as a major health problem by providing support for:

**Research** The Society is the largest source of non-profit, non-governmental cancer research funding in the U.S., investing about \$120 million each year. We've funded 40 researchers who later went on to be awarded the Nobel Prize.

**Education** Following the American Cancer Society's wellness and cancer-detection guidelines can save your life or the lives of people you love. We provide materials and educational programs on early detection and prevention of cancer to the community, our schools, and cancer patients.

**Advocacy** We fight for life-saving laws to increase federal research funding, reduce tobacco use, promote early detection of cancers, improve access to care, and support cancer patients. After the enactment of laws the Society supported in California, for example, lung cancer rates in the state have declined.

**Service** Patient and family support services help people with cancer during and after treatment. Anyone, anywhere can access cancer information and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1.800.ACS.2345 or at [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

## Cancer Facts

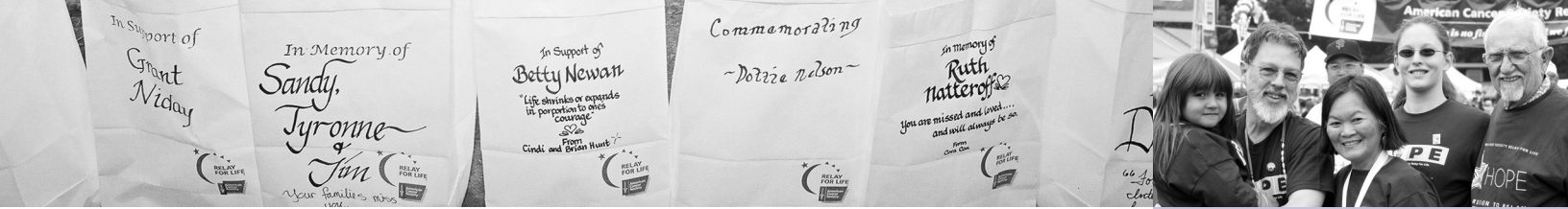
- 1 of 2 men and 1 of 3 women will receive a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime.
- Based on the latest data, American Cancer Society epidemiologists predict that approximately 1.44 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer in 2007. Of those, 133,225 will occur in California.



## The American Cancer Society Research Program

Since 1946, the American Cancer Society has funded more than \$3 billion in cancer research, and many American Cancer Society-funded researchers have played key roles in major breakthroughs:

- Cures for childhood leukemia
- The Pap test, which has resulted in a 70% decrease in death from cervical cancer
- 5-FU, the first-line drug therapy for colon cancer
- Tamoxifen, a drug for reducing breast cancer risk
- The identification of the first human cancer-causing gene
- The first successful bone marrow transplant
- The development of the PSA test to screen for prostate cancer
- Establishing the link between cigarette smoking and lung cancer
- Developing one of the first therapies to attack cancer at its genetic roots: Rituxan for lymphoma and Herceptin for breast cancer
- Gleevec, a drug to treat chronic myelogenous leukemia



## What Does a Relay For Life Team Captain Do?

You are the cheerleader, coach, and creative force. Your team counts on you to keep things running smoothly in leading them to success – on and off the track. You make sure deadlines are met and that your team's money is turned in.

Successful Relay team captains learn early to delegate, keeping in mind that Relay is a community event – it takes a village to grow a Relay! Throughout your team captain experience, your Team Development Committee will serve as a coach and will provide you with all the needed resources and tools. Use the following as a checklist of duties and responsibilities:

- ❑ Read the Team Captain Handbook. Distribute the materials to your team.
- ❑ Recruit a co-captain to help you with your duties.
- ❑ Invite or re-commit others to be team members.
- ❑ Attend team captain meetings (or delegate a team member in your absence).
- ❑ Present ideas and skills learned from team captain meetings to your team. Communicate the mission and vision of the American Cancer Society. Remind your team that the Society provides free programs and services in your community. This is one of the reasons why Relay is so important!
- ❑ Hold at least one team meeting prior to the event. Establish a team name and create a team theme.
- ❑ Fill out and submit the team registration form as soon as possible.
- ❑ Turn in your team registration fee. Team members can pitch in to cover it, or ask a company to sponsor you. Ask your dentist, doctor, insurance agent, attorney. Get creative!
- ❑ Have your team members set goals for how much money they can raise. Remember, to get a t-shirt each team member must raise at least \$100. Follow up to see how they are doing, offering tips and encouragement.
- ❑ Be a leader. Help your team reach its fundraising goal. Challenge other teams!
- ❑ Turn in the money your team has raised – early and often.
- ❑ Follow a schedule of deadlines and due dates. Your event's committee is counting on these deadlines to advance with its planning.
- ❑ Recognize and thank team members and supporters for their efforts and accomplishments.
- ❑ Commit to recruiting at least one new team for your Relay.
- ❑ Adopt a cancer awareness educational activity to help promote American Cancer Society programs and services for the day of Relay.
- ❑ Attend the Kickoff Celebration and the Team Captain Wrap-up Party.

*"Let the good of  
who you are reflect  
off of everyone  
you meet. Let the  
positive attitude  
and hope of your  
dreams illuminate  
the darkness and  
ease the burden of  
someone else."*

## Relay Reminder

Relay For Life is a family-friendly activity. All Relays are alcohol-free and tobacco-free.





## You are a hero!

Why? You're making a difference in the fight against cancer.

### Chaperone Facts

- All Youth Teams must have one chaperone for every 10 youth
- Chaperones need to be 25 years of age or older
- There must be a chaperone in attendance at the event for the full 24-hours.
- Chaperones and students need to attend the mandatory Youth/Chaperone meeting.
- Chaperones are responsible for youth conduct at the Relay For Life event

## How to Recruit a Terrific Team!

- Get excited! Your enthusiasm is contagious.
- Dedicate your team to a cancer survivor. If you know someone who is dealing with cancer, why not pay tribute by dedicating your team to them? Also, invite cancer survivors to participate. The Survivors Lap is for them.
- Create a team theme. Tap your creativity. Come up with a unique name, an education theme that will help people to understand how to reduce their risk and plan to decorate your tent with props that match your theme.
- Show the Relay video to everyone on your team. It will help connect them with why Relay For Life is important, and how much fun the event will be.
- Set a team goal for fundraising. Have each participant set a personal goal, and then set a team goal. Encourage team members to meet goals by keeping in touch.
- Get the word out. Put up Relay For Life posters and display the brochure to invite others to participate. Become a Relay For Life champion.
- Relay is for everyone. You don't have to be athletic to participate in Relay For Life. People will be walking, running, strolling, dancing, and wheeling around the track. ANYONE can be part of this great community event.
- Arrange an employee presentation at work. Lunch is a great time or at an all-employee meeting. Tell your co-workers what Relay For Life is all about. Try to set up a challenge between departments. Ask your company to sponsor your team (by paying the registration fee). If you'd like a speaker from the American Cancer Society, call your local office.
- Recruit your family and friends. Expand your team roster by including family members. It's a family affair. Other potential members can be found at your place of worship, doctor's office, neighborhood, etc.

## Youth Team Chaperone Requirements

As a Youth Team Chaperone, you are an integral part of Relay For Life. We at the American Cancer Society are grateful for your presence and for your taking up the fight against cancer. As a chaperone, there are a few things that we ask of you. Although for the most part they are common sense, please read the list of requirements on the Youth Chaperone Commitment Form before signing on as a chaperone.

Again, thank you for your dedication to the youth of our community and to the American Cancer Society. We value the energy, enthusiasm and involvement of our youth participants.