
Team Captain Guidelines

2026

AgeWell

Community Walk

A Walk - A Celebration - A Community that Cares

Saturday, September 12, 2026

Oak Lawn Park District Pavilion, Oak Lawn



Pathlights

**Enriched by experience.
Empowered in life.**

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AgeWell Community Walk

A Walk - A Celebration - A Community that Cares

**What is the
AgeWell
Walk?**



At Pathlights, community is at the heart of everything we do. Guided by our core values—respect, compassion, client-centered service, and professional excellence—Pathlights remains committed to creating a future where everyone can age with dignity and independence. Each day, we have the privilege of walking alongside older adults, their caregivers and families, helping them navigate life's challenges. Our commitment to serving the community is more than a mission, it's a promise. A promise to show up, to listen, and to respond with care and integrity.

What is the AgeWell Community Walk?

Pathlights is offering this first-time family-friendly event to all members of our community. The highlight of the event will be the walk itself, showing a united force in the community advocating for older adults. The experience also includes age-friendly fitness activities, community resource booths, food and fun for all ages!

Leading up to the event, participants and teams fundraise to help Pathlights provide the support older adults need to age well in their own homes — from critical resources to delivering quality care to more than 17,000 people living in Palos, Lemont, Orland, Worth, Bremen and Rich townships. We look forward to engaging with families and businesses who share our commitment to Pathlights' mission and are dedicated to helping raise the funds needed to ensure our continued growth and impact.

We are excited to assemble an incredible community that is making life better for the older adults and caregivers we serve. The success of our fundraising efforts can lead to the expansion of programs and resources to keep our older population empowered thriving and our caregivers supported.

Be a Part of a Community that Cares!

WHY FORM A FAMILY & FRIENDS TEAM?

Support begins with friends and family!

Pathlights' programs are crucial to help older adults remain safe in their own homes and support caregivers supporting their loved ones. Aging is a shared journey – one that does not have to be made alone and is experienced by all of us every day, not just by older adults. As the number of Americans over age 60 continues to grow so do the needs for our services. We have no doubt you may also know someone who is providing unpaid care for a family member or neighbor - and you probably understand how this responsibility is both gratifying and exhausting.

Whether it's for your spouse, mother, grandfather, friend or simply because you want to make a difference in the world – fundraising for the AgeWell Walk lets you honor your “why” at our in-person walk event.

Friend & Family Teams

Getting Started

It doesn't just take a village to raise a child. It also takes a village to care for and support our older adults. When you create a fundraising team, your own village can multiply fundraising efforts instantly, enabling us to continue our mission!

Become a team leader and invite your friends and family to join you in raising \$500 or even \$1000! Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference — when everyone gives just \$10 or \$20, those gifts quickly add up to reach your goal and strengthen support for older adults in our community. Remember– it can take several asks for someone to take action. Make sure everyone registers and takes full advantage of the fundraising tools.

Fundraising Tools

When you register your team, you will have access to a variety of tools that will help you to reach your fundraising goal. Use these tools and share them with team members to make the work fun and easy in accomplishing your goal!

Inspire Your Loved Ones!

WELCOME TEAM CAPTAINS!

It's easy to become a team captain. Just sign up online and create a team fundraising page. You will have the opportunity to share your story and make sure that everyone knows the kind of impact they can make to enhance the lives of older adults in our community. Recruit everywhere – ask everyone in your circle of influence to join you.

The AgeWell Walk is all about community – young and old celebrating the shared journey of aging well. Educate your team about the events taking place the day of the walk and encourage them to put their best fundraising foot forward!

Below are a few things to think about as you get started.

New Captains

What you'll need

A team name (something fun or meaningful)

A shortlist of Pathlights' programs

A goal amount for the whole team (e.g., \$500)

A list of teammates (5-10 people is perfect)

A plan for how to reach your fundraising goal

Why it matters

Gives your walkers an identity they can rally around.

Helps people understand why they're walking.

Provides a clear target to aim for and makes progress visible.

Small groups stay motivated and are easier to coordinate.

A simple plan makes it easy for everyone to see how fun it can be to fundraise.

HEY, YOU'VE GOT THIS!

Being a team captain sounds like a big job, but it's really just a handful of simple, repeatable actions. Think of yourself as the friendly organizer who nudges the group forward, shares a few updates, and celebrates every little win. In the next few pages you'll see exactly what to do, why it matters, and how easy each step is.

As captain you can guide your team through the process and let them know how easy and un-scary fundraising can be. And for those who don't like to fundraise, ask them to organize a small fun fundraising project to raise money without even really trying! See some examples below.

Lead Others on a Journey to AgeWell!

YOUR ROLE BROKEN DOWN IN BITE-SIZE TASKS

Your Role As a Team Captain

- Recruit teammates – Aim for 5-10 walkers.
- Set a realistic team goal – We suggest \$500 for small teams & \$1000 for larger
- Kick-off meeting – Share the mission, set deadlines, assign small tasks (social media, outreach, thank-you notes).
- Brainstorm about fun ways to raise money as a team (e.g. - paint night, bake sale, spinning class, restaurant night, etc. - **a list of local companies with “give-back” programs will be available soon!**)
- Track donations – Keep a running total and celebrate milestones.
- Promote the walk – Post updates, share stories, and thank donors publicly.
- Celebrate – Host a post-walk gathering or virtual “high-five” to recognize everyone’s effort.

Quick Start Action Plan

Month1 – Get organized, Invite & Launch

- Attend our Kick-Off event and get excited to participate.
- Register your team and choose a fun team name.
- Set a modest goal (e.g., \$500-\$1000)
- Send the Welcome Email (see template) to your teammates. Include your custom fundraising link and a short “why we’re walking” paragraph.
- Encourage team members to register during the early bird period to save money!

Month2 – Broaden Your Promotion

- Post on social media with the custom link to your fundraising page. Be sure to connect your ask to Pathlights’ programs.
- Encourage all teammates to solicit donations from their inner circles.
- Send thanks for each donation that comes in

Month3 – Team Building and Fundraising Ideas

- Create a fun event to raise funds and encourage everyone to attend
- Keep reaching out via text, email and social posts to ask for donations
- Remind your team how close you are to reaching milestones that might earn you prizes like \$3000 = a space in the team tent to celebrate.
- Think of fun ways to dress up and celebrate the day of the walk.

Month4 – Final push

- Keep tabs on how close you are to achieving your goal and encourage teammates to try to do their part to help get there.
- Send a brief reminder (“Only 2 weeks left – please share the link one more time”).
- Be sure to share last minute details, location and time to meet up at the walk.

What is my role?

Getting Organized is EASY!

COMMUNICATING THE URGENCY

In order for your team and your donors to understand why you are supporting Pathlights and where the money donated to your team will go, please review the items below. This will help you gain insight about our mission and feel equipped to share information about our programs and services to help your donors make the connection. It is important for them to embrace your “why”, so choose 1 or 2 that resonate with you personally and include them in your emails, texts and social posts with your team page link.

The Need

What is Pathlights' Mission?

To inform, support and empower individuals and families as they navigate aging.

Who Does Pathlights' Serve?

Pathlights provides programs and services for adults 60+, adults with disabilities 18+, and their caregivers and families.

Where are our greatest needs?

In these uncertain times, with many public benefits being reduced and the rising costs of basic needs, the funds raised through our community events have become more critical than ever. Proceeds from our AgeWell Community Walk play a vital role in sustaining, strengthening and expanding these programs in particular:

- Home Delivered Meals
- Adult Protective Services
- Caregiver Programs and Respite
- Memory Care programs
- Education & Awareness programs

What are the biggest issues older adults face?

Pathlights' aims to combat many of the biggest barriers to aging well. Most older adults face one or more of the following situations every day:



HOME SAFETY



FOOD INSECURITY



FINANCIAL STABILITY



ISOLATION & LONELINESS



LACK OF INDEPENDENCE



CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES

AGEWELL COMMUNITY WALK FUNDRAISER INCENTIVES

Individuals and teams have numerous opportunities to earn rewards for their fundraising efforts! See details below and then set a goal for your team and also inspire your teammates to hit individual goals.



\$150 - Airline Ticket Drawing - individuals earn an entry into this drawing for a pair of round-trip tickets. Additional entries given for each multiple of \$150!



\$250 - Travel Mug - individuals can earn a Pathlights' branded travel mug and take it with you wherever you go!



\$750 - VIP Status - in addition to a Pathlights branded travel mug individuals can earn a fun VIP bag full of goodies as a thank you for a job well done!



\$3000 - Team Tent - teams earn a spot in the team tent and enjoy special refreshments with your teammates!



Top Fundraising Team - in addition to earning a spot in the team tent, the overall top team that raises \$3000+! will be recognized on stage and receive a special award!

Thanks for a Job Well Done!

READY-MADE TEMPLATES

Before you get started

Before you send out your first communication, think about your circle of influence. Many people will be eager to join and donate to you - they just need to be asked!

Family & friends

Employer and co-workers

Schools your kids go to

Activities you are involved in

Your local community/ neighbors

Vendors you support like mechanic, salon, doctor

Email Template

Emails

Good Morning Friends!

I am reaching out to you today to ask for your support. I have formed a fundraising team for Pathlights' upcoming AgeWell Community Walk, which will be held on September 12, 2026 in Oak Lawn. Pathlights is a 501C3 in the southwest suburbs of Cook County serving older adults and caregivers in the community.

Our team has set a goal of \$1000 to support programs that help combat food insecurity for older adults in our community. With your help, we can support those in our community who face the difficult challenge of meeting their nutritional needs on a daily basis.

Any donation of any amount will help us reach our goal. Please donate at: XXXx.XXXxxxxx// today! Your donation is tax deductible and you can have the knowledge that your contribution will have an impact on those who depend upon Pathlights for many programs and services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Social Media Post

Social

Our team, "The Golden Agers" will be walking in the AgeWell Community Walk on September 12th to raise funds to support the programs and services of Pathlights. Please help us eliminate barriers like food insecurity for older adults in our community. Donate to our team page here: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX and help us raise \$1000 to support crucial support programs like Home Delivered Meals.

TIP:

Be sure to include a team photo or short video of your "Why" when you post to help motivate potential donors to contribute to your team fundraising.

READY-MADE TEMPLATES

Texts

Quick Text to Friends

If your friends and family prefer communicating by text, send this quick message with your personal team page link to ask for donations:

Example #1:

“Hey everyone! I formed a fundraising team for Pathlights’ upcoming AgeWell Walk on September 12th and would love it if you could donate to my page! Any amount you contribute will directly support older adult needs in our community like Home Delivered Meals. If you are able, please donate at: XXXXXXXX/XXXXXX.xxx”

Example #2:

“Would you be willing to support me as I raise funds to support Pathlights’ programs? I formed a fundraising team for the AgeWell Walk on September 12th and have a goal of \$500 to support free programs like Home Delivered Meals. Here is the link to my team page: XXXXX/XXX.xxx. I appreciate any amount you can spare!”

Additional Tips

Tips

Team Flyers

A great way to get the word out about your team, especially if you set up a mini fundraising event to reach your goal, is to create a team flyer. Your flyer can be printed and passed out, but it can be effective as a pdf or jpeg version to post on social media or embedded in an email. Our team can help you create one if you need assistance!

QR Codes

It is easy to create a free QR code to add to your team flyer, email or posts. QR codes make it very easy to direct potential donors to your fundraising page.

Frequent Updates

Make sure to send out updates to your teammates to thank them for their efforts and let them know when you receive donations to your team. Keep the momentum going and get them excited to help you reach your goals.

Social Media

If you are active on social media, feel free to share the posts we create on Face Book (@pathlightsIL) so you don’t have to spend time creating your own.



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Thank you for forming a team for the AgeWell Community Walk. If you have any questions as you work your way through the process, please contact our Development Team! Our team is happy to answer your questions and help guide you as you recruit your teammates and fundraise toward your goal! We look forward to you joining us on September 12th for this exciting new community event!

Our Development Team



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