Together we can paint the town PURPLE!

Thank you for joining the Epilepsy Foundation Purple Pumpkin Project to raise funds and awareness in the fight against epilepsy! The Purple Pumpkin Project occurs yearly throughout October to the end of November. With our painted purple pumpkins, we hope to raise more awareness by answering the question: “Why is your pumpkin purple?”

This ToolKit will help you get started on your Purple Pumpkin Project activities and help you host your decorating party fundraiser. Remember, this toolkit serves as a guide and is not the rule. Some important topics that we will cover are:

- How to get started
- Promotion of your event
- Establishing the fundraising story and targeting donors
- Post Pumpkin Party

Honored Hero

While on a drive through Connecticut one Sunday morning with his family, founder Ron Lamontagne was brainstorming ideas on how to spread epilepsy awareness. Ron’s youngest son was diagnosed with epilepsy in 2009 at the age of four. Since the diagnosis, Ron has seen how epilepsy impacted his son. Although he appears like an average kid on the surface, his son has experienced major challenges academically, physically and socially. Additionally, the misperceptions and fear about epilepsy have impacted relationships in the family.

Although Ron has been outspoken about the challenges his son faces, many people still choose to keep their seizures private. By raising awareness and funds, Ron hopes to support those people and increase overall awareness of epilepsy.

Your Honored Hero: Join the Project with your own hero and host a Pumpkin Party for someone you know with epilepsy!
Getting Started

**Set up your fundraising webpage:** Collecting online donations makes it easier for people to donate to you if they can’t make it to your event.

- Pick a fundraising goal
- Add a personal message
- Add a photo/video
- Send out to everyone you know!

**Get the word out:** Leading up to your Pumpkin Party, let people know about it so they can be sure to stop by. Be sure to include your fundraising link on everything! If people can’t come, they still might want to donate, so always give them an option to do so.

- Send out invites or e-vites to join you for your Pumpkin Party
- Post on your social media; Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and your blog
- Send letters to everyone you know (see next pages for tips)
- Ask your family and friends to help you spread the word
Purple Pumpkin Project Painting Tips

Base Coats - Let base coat dry before adding any other decorations.

- For Fresh Pumpkins
  - Use a base coat of spray paint – this seals the pumpkins and they last longer.
  - Once dry, use acrylic craft paint, paint pens or other decorations to personalize.
- For Craft Pumpkins
  - Acrylic craft paints work well as a base coat
  - Once dry, use acrylic craft paint, paint pens or other decorations to personalize

Decorations – Add any decorations you can think of to personalize your pumpkin. To attach your decorations use quick-dry craft glue for flat items or double-sided sticky craft dots for other items such as pom-poms or wiggle eyes. Suggestions for decoration include the following items:

- Wiggle eyes
- Pom-poms
- Pipe Cleaners
- Feathers
- Glitter
- Sequins
- Tulle
- Fabric
- Scrapbook paper
- Felt
- Paper Basket Filler
- Yarn
Fundraising

Letter Writing/Emailing: We find that the most successful fundraisers are those who approach their friends and family for support. Your group of supporters will want to help you because this cause matters to you. Give people near and far a chance to support your fundraising efforts; send them a letter letting them know what you are doing and why!

- **Use the contact list of supporters you developed and add more to it.** Don’t say “no” for anyone by assuming that they can’t or won’t support. Send them the letter or email and let them decide. Do not hesitate to include casual acquaintances, as they will understand that you are seeking donations for a worthy cause.

- **Make the “Ask.” Include a call to action.** Don’t just tell them what you are doing; ask for their help. Include your personal fundraising goal in the text and suggest giving levels. Do not diminish your request by being apologetic or by saying something similar to “I hope you can donate something.”

- **Make it personal.** If mailing, hand address the outside envelope and hand sign each letter. For emails, don’t send a mass email with everyone’s address showing. It may take more time, but sending individual emails will make potential donors feel special. Write a short personal note to those you don’t see regularly, i.e., “Mary, I hope this finds you doing well!”

- **Put your HEART into it.** Let them know why you’re fundraising. This cause is important to you - share why. Don’t include too many facts and figures; instead include your personal story of why you have taken on this task. Someone will donate to you because they know you and want to support your efforts.

- **Make it easy to donate.** Include a link to your personal fundraising page and encourage online donations. If mailing, include a return envelope for them to send their donation to you. Label the envelopes with your address. It’s also nice to include a stamp on the return envelope. If they will be attending an event, instruct them to bring a check payable to Epilepsy Foundation: Pumpkin Project.

- **Set a deadline.** People are always motivated by deadlines. We recommend that you set a deadline earlier than the event date. This way you can assess your fundraising and revise your plan if needed before the actual deadline.
- **Send a reminder.** Keep a list of those who send in donations. Send a reminder to those who have not yet donated. Include fundraising updates in your reminder. Let them know that fundraising is going well, but you still have a bit farther to go. Sometimes, reminder letters are more successful than original letters for bringing in the money.

- **Send a “thank you” card.** “Thanks” is a powerful word. It is nice to receive a note acknowledging the importance of a donation, no matter the amount. Staying in communication develops a rapport that will have many added benefits, from closer bonds of friendship to continued support for future efforts.

**Know the facts:** Using facts about epilepsy not only is a great call to action but also spreads awareness about the need for funds.

- **65 MILLION:** Number of people around the world who have epilepsy.
- **Nearly 3 MILLION:** Number of people in the United States who have epilepsy.
- **1 IN 26** people in the United States will develop epilepsy (multiple unprovoked seizures) at some point in their lifetime.
- **3,000:** Number of people in the U.S. who die as a result of Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP).
- **150,000:** Number of new cases of epilepsy in the United States each year.
- **ONE-THIRD:** Number of people with epilepsy who live with uncontrollable seizures because no available treatment works for them.
- **6 OUT OF 10:** Number of people with epilepsy where the cause is unknown.

**Develop a budget:** You goal is to keep your fundraiser expenses low and your fundraising revenue high.

- Work with your contacts, your community and your vendors to get as many goods and services donated as possible.
- The Epilepsy Foundation can provide you with a letter affirming that your event will benefit the Foundation.
- Ideally your expenses should not exceed 20% of your gross projected revenue.
- **Please note:** The Epilepsy Foundation will not pay for nor reimburse you for expenses associated with your event.
Who Do You Know

Complete this work sheet to jog your memory

Make a Phone Call to:
1. Parents ________________________________
2. Sisters ________________________________
3. Sisters-in-law __________________________
4. Brothers ______________________________
5. Brothers-in-law _________________________
6. Aunts/Uncles ____________________________
7. Cousins ________________________________
8. Children ________________________________
9. Nieces/Nephews _________________________
10. Grandparents ____________________________

Send an Email to:
11. Accountant ____________________________
12. Attorney ________________________________
13. Babysitter ______________________________
14. Dentist _________________________________
15. Chiropractor ____________________________
16. Landlord/Manager _______________________
17. Real estate agent _________________________
18. Physical therapist _________________________
19. Physician ________________________________
20. Wedding planner __________________________

Drop Off a Letter to:
21. Pet Groomer/Vet _________________________
22. Drycleaner ______________________________
23. Florist _________________________________
24. Barber/Stylist ____________________________
25. School ________________________________
26. Supermarket ____________________________
27. Manicurist ______________________________
28. Bartender ______________________________
29. Gym/Yoga Studio _________________________
30. Pharmacist ______________________________

Others you might call or email:
31. College friends _________________________
32. Fraternity friends _________________________
33. High school friends _______________________
34. Facebook friends _________________________
35. Children’s friends _________________________
36. Children’s teachers _________________________
37. Neighbors ________________________________
38. Parents’ friends __________________________
39. Former Co-workers _________________________
40. Coach(es) ________________________________

Maybe you know people from:
41. Work _________________________________
42. Bowling League _________________________
43. Gym or Yoga ____________________________
44. Childcare ________________________________
45. Place of Worship _________________________
46. Coffee house ____________________________
47. Neighborhood Café ________________________
48. Camp _________________________________
49. Golf Course ______________________________
50. Favorite Restaurant _________________________

Don’t forget…. 
51. YOU can make a Personal Donation
Dear ______________: 

I am painting my pumpkin purple this fall; why you ask? I am raising funds and awareness about epilepsy for the Epilepsy Foundation in honor of my ____________(relation), _______________(Name)! On ________________(Date) I am hosting a pumpkin painting and decorating party so we can paint the fall purple with awareness! My goal is to raise funds for the Epilepsy Foundation, raise awareness about epilepsy and support epilepsy-related services, education, advocacy and research.

Your tax-deductible donation will make a difference in the lives of 150,000 people who will be diagnosed with epilepsy each year in the United States. Your gift will support awareness so that everyone understands what epilepsy is, and what it isn’t. It will support research into new therapies and a cure for epilepsy. It will support advocacy and services so that people living with epilepsy are able to participate in all life experiences.

Please join me and paint your pumpkin purple and help support the Epilepsy Foundation and those affected by epilepsy (all donations are 100% deductible). If you can’t make it, please consider making a donation on my website <Link to Website>

Thank you in advance for your generosity and help. We greatly appreciate it!

[YOUR NAME]
CONGRATULATIONS! Your event is over and all of your hard work has paid off with a successful event, by raising both awareness and funds for the Epilepsy Foundation.

Submit Donation: Submit your donations to the Epilepsy Foundation office within 14 days of your event. Individual donors can make checks payable to Epilepsy Foundation: Pumpkin Project. Submit the checks with the donation form included in this Toolkit and Epilepsy Foundation will send acknowledgement letters to your donors. These acknowledgement letters will serve as their tax receipts.

Mail donations to:
Epilepsy Foundation
ATTN: Pumpkin Project
8301 Professional Place East, Suite 200
Landover, MD 20785-2353

Submit Photos: Post your event photos to the Purple Pumpkin Project’s Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Purple.Pumpkin.Project) or email them to diyfundraising@efa.org

Send Thank You’s: Send letters to participants, vendors, volunteers and of course your donors. “Thanks” is a powerful word. It is nice to receive a note acknowledging the importance of a donation, no matter the amount. Staying in communication develops a rapport that will have many added benefits, from closer bonds of friendship to continued support for future efforts.

Post Your Results: Share on your social media the successes of the event, announce your total, post photos with #purplepumpkinproject and add your fundraising link for anyone who forgot to donate.

Thank you for your efforts and support of the Epilepsy Foundation!
Donation Form

For funds collected by check or cash please fill out this form and send back to the Epilepsy Foundation. **Please do not send cash!** For cash donations, please write a personal check for the amount and list the donor’s name on the form for credit. Please make checks payable to: **Epilepsy Foundation: Pumpkin Project**

**Donor Information:**

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This donation is for:

For Participant: __________________________

For Team: __________________________

**Credit Card**

Charge my credit card $ __________________________

- [ ] VISA    - [ ] MasterCard    - [ ] AMEX    - [ ] Discover

Card Number: __________________________

Exp. date: ___________  CVV#: ___________

Name on card: __________________________

Signature: __________________________

**Check(s) enclosed** $ __________________________

Check Number: ___________

Please make checks payable to: **Epilepsy Foundation: Pumpkin Project**

Mail your completed form to:

Epilepsy Foundation
ATTN: Pumpkin Project
8301 Professional Place East, Suite 200
Landover, MD 20785