

**2023  
ALS  
YOUTH  
CHALLENGE**



**TAKE ACTION. SPREAD HOPE.**

**ALS**  
ASSOCIATION

TAKE ACTION. SPREAD HOPE.



## HELLO, FRIENDS!

Thank you for taking the ALS Youth Challenge, a chance for kids to rise to the challenge and help raise awareness and funding for ALS.

ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a fatal disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Eventually, people with ALS lose the ability to move their muscles. This loss often leads to total paralysis and death within five years. There is no cure for ALS.

On **May 13, 2023**, ALS Youth Action Day — kids, teenagers, and young adults across the country will unite to take a stand against ALS. You can write letters, tell stories about your ALS hero, spread awareness through your social media accounts, or host a creative virtual event. By participating in ALS Youth Action Day, you'll be showing the world that you are fighting to end ALS.

People choose to get involved in social change for all kinds of reasons. Maybe you have a family member battling ALS. Maybe you're like me, and you want to honor a father and grandfather or a friend you've lost to ALS. Maybe you want to participate to honor someone in your community who is meeting the challenge of living with ALS as a caregiver, doctor, or scientist. Or, perhaps you don't know anyone with ALS but have been inspired by peers participating in Youth Action Day and wish to challenge yourself to join the movement.

### **No matter your reason, know that:**

- You have the power to make a positive impact on the lives of people facing ALS.
- You have the creativity to create a plan, virtual event, or idea to raise awareness or funds for ALS.
- You're not alone. Together with your peers, you will make a difference in the ALS community. Imagine the impact we can make if we all ask three friends to participate, and they in turn ask three more friends.
- You're the generation that must rise to the challenge and carry the fight against ALS into the future — and could be the generation that finds a CURE.

Thank you for joining with your peers across the country to help make your generation the first to create a world without ALS. We're on the verge of changing ALS forever. Your support will keep the momentum going! Now...it's time to get busy. Take Action. Spread Hope.

# STEP 1

# CHOOSE YOUR CHALLENGE

Pick one of the challenges listed below or create your own awareness and fundraising idea! Kids across the country will be taking the ALS Youth Challenge on **May 13, 2023** – Youth Action Day. But you can take the ALS Youth Challenge any day!

The following pages will give you step-by-step directions for each challenge.



## **Share Your Talent. Spread Hope.**

Do you play the piano? Like to draw? There are fun ways to do what you love and raise awareness – and money – at the same time. Set up a virtual event to showcase your hobby or talents! (Don't forget to make sure it's okay with your parents!)



## **Write Letters. Spread Hope.**

Contact your local members of Congress and tell them why ALS research and legislation are important to you.



## **Educate Others. Spread Hope.**

Create an online presentation to teach your class, friends, school, or any organization about ALS and how it affects your family.



## **Share Your Hero. Spread Hope.**

Find a picture of your ALS hero. It could be someone living with ALS, or a caregiver, scientist, or doctor participating in the fight against ALS. Post the photo to social media using both of these hashtags – **#ALSHERO** and **#ALSYouthAction**. Include a few sentences about how your ALS hero inspires you.



## **Use Your Imagination. Spread Hope.**

Develop your own awareness or fundraising idea. Your ideas and passion are limitless. Show everyone your creativity as you help those fighting ALS!

# STEP 2

# REGISTER



**If you're under 18, ask your mom, dad, or another adult to help you!**

1. Register your ALS Youth Challenge participation at:  
[www.defeatALSyourway.org](http://www.defeatALSyourway.org)
2. Click "Get Creative" then "Become a Fundraiser."
3. Choose "Individual" to create a single fundraising page, "Join a Team" if you already know of one to join, or "Create a Team" to recruit others to help you fundraise under a group team name.
4. Login with an existing account or create a new one.
5. Choose a name for your fundraiser, a lofty fundraising goal, and upload a photo.
6. Add your contact information and select "Youth Action Day" as your type of fundraiser.
7. Ask a parent or guardian to review and agree to waiver.
8. Click Finish and you're ready to go!

**Start planning** your ALS Youth Challenge activity!

**Share** your plans on social media with the hashtag **#ALSYouthChallenge** (If you are participating on Youth Action Day, also use the hashtag **#ALSYouthAction**).



## NEED HELP?

**Reach out to your local  
ALS Association staff!**  
[www.als.org/local-support](http://www.als.org/local-support)

Participants in Youth Action Day waive all claims against The ALS Association, sponsors or personnel for any injury that they may suffer from participation in the event and grant full permission for organizers to use photographs, videotapes, motion pictures, recordings or any other record of the event.



## IDEAS FOR ACTION

# SHARE YOUR TALENT!

## SHARE YOUR TALENT. SPREAD HOPE.

### 1. Pick a hobby or something that you're good at.

Any activity can be used to spread hope and raise money for ALS. The first step is to choose something that you enjoy doing. — playing an instrument, making the perfect smoothie, juggling — share it with others online with a virtual event!

### 2. Pick a platform.

You can use video, broadcast through Facebook Live, share on Instagram or on Tik Tok.

### 3. Find supporters.

Use your Defeat ALS Your Way page, Facebook Fundraiser or Instagram donation stickers to collect donations for your virtual event.

### 4. Promote your virtual event.

Use social media to let people know about your ALS Youth Action Day virtual activity. Make sure you include a sentence or two about why you're passionate about helping to create a world without ALS. And always include the **#ALSYouthChallenge** hashtag.

### 5. Have fun!

On ALS Youth Action Day, remember to have fun!

## USING ART

Create a painting or picture and auction it off.

Hold a virtual art show and charge an "entry fee."

Hold an art class or teach others a new skill. Charge a fee for your knowledge.

## USING MUSIC

Hold a concert.

Create a song about ALS and post on social media.





## IDEAS FOR ACTION

# ADVOCACY

## WRITE LETTERS. SPREAD HOPE.

1. **Make a list.**

Find out who your Congressional representatives and senators are using:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

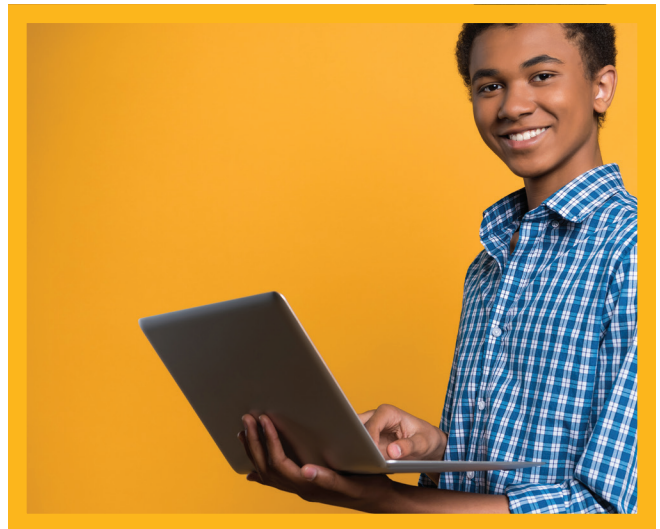
Make a list, including each person's name, title, mailing address, and email address.

2. **Recruit help.**

Ask your friends to write letters too.

3. **Write letters.**

Start your letter by explaining why ALS is important to you or how it has affected your family. Go to [ALS.org/advocacy](https://www.als.org/advocacy) to learn about The ALS Association's legislative priorities — like more money for research or support for people living with ALS.



4. **Get social.**

Post about your letter-writing activity on social media. Include this hashtag — **#ALSYouthChallenge**.



## IDEAS FOR ACTION

# PUBLIC SPEAKING

## EDUCATE OTHERS. SPREAD HOPE.

1. **Pick your audience.**  
You could teach your class, your whole grade, or even the entire school.
2. **Ask for permission.**  
Determine the person to ask for permission to give your presentation.
3. **Determine the format for your presentation.**  
Will you make a PowerPoint presentation, read an essay, or create a video?  
You can decide the best way to present your information.
4. **Research the facts.**  
Use The ALS Association's website to find information that informs your audience.
5. **Create your presentation.**  
Help your peers understand how ALS affects your life. Decide how much of your personal story you wish to share with your audience. If you're comfortable doing so, explain the everyday difficulties of ALS and the courage it takes to face the disease. Illustrate with your facts why others should want to join your fight against ALS.
6. **Give your presentation.** Have someone in your household take pictures of you giving your presentation to share on social media with the #ALSYouthChallenge hashtag.



## IDEAS FOR ACTION **YOUR ALS HERO**

### **SHARE YOUR HERO. SPREAD HOPE.**

**1. Find a picture of your ALS Hero.**

Your hero might be someone living with ALS, or a doctor, a scientist, a caregiver, a social worker, or anyone who is fighting or has fought ALS with courage in their own way.

**2. Get social.**

Post the picture of your ALS hero to social media on May 13. Use both the **#ALSHERO** and the **#ALSYouthChallenge** hashtags. Include a few sentences about how your hero has demonstrated courage and persistence in the face of ALS.





## IDEAS FOR ACTION **CREATIVITY**

### **GET CREATIVE. SPREAD HOPE.**

Your ideas are limitless. Pick anything you like and turn it into an awareness or fundraising idea. Don't forget to post photos or video on social media using the hashtag **#ALSYouthChallenge**.





# PROMOTE YOUTH ACTION DAY

## SAMPLE MEDIA PITCH

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that is 100 percent fatal, usually within five years. It affects everyone in the family — even kids. Children whose parents or other family members have ALS often serve as caregivers, even as they try to make sense of a devastating diagnosis and constant change. Many young people who have been affected by ALS talk about their challenges in talking about the disease with their family, friends, and other people in their community.

ALS Youth Action Day is a way to empower young people to play a leading role in the fight to create a world without ALS. It's a day set aside for kids with a connection to ALS to challenge themselves to raise awareness about the disease, challenge their peers to join the fight, and help to raise critical funding for research into effective treatments and a cure.

I am taking part in ALS Youth Challenge by **[fill in your activity here]**. I would love to talk with you about why I am participating and further explain how I am spreading hope to the ALS community. I hope you can help share my story and in turn recruit other youth to take action and help my generation be the first to create a world without ALS.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

**[signature]**

# APPENDIX



ALS is a progressive disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord.



Eventually people with ALS lose the ability to move their muscles, which often leads to total paralysis.



**ALS IS NOT**  
contagious.



**THERE IS NO CURE.**

Researchers are working to discover effective treatments and a cure to help people with ALS.

**PEOPLE WITH ALS CAN STILL THINK, FEEL, LOVE.**





**ALS.org**

For more information please contact:

*The ALS Association • 1300 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209*