



Friendship Walk 2015
 "Walk With Your Feet as Well as Your Heart"

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The Houston Friendship Circle

Rabbi Dovid Goldstein
Director of Friendship Circle
 Rabbi Zally Lazarus
Youth Director
 Mrs. Esti Lazarus
Volunteer and Walk Coordinator
 Mrs. Elisa Goldstein
Management and Walk Co-Coordinator
 Rabbi Moishe Traxler
Co-Founder of Friendship Circle

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The Houston Friendship Circle, a 501c3 charitable organization, was founded by Chabad Outreach, is affiliated with Chabad of Texas and is an Affiliated Partner of the Jewish Family Service Alexander Institute for Jewish Families with Special Needs

Dear Families, Friends, and Community,

As a parent of a child with special needs my wish for my child, Evan, who has special needs, is to enjoy and participate in the same experiences of life as for my daughter, Rachel, who is special... My husband Allen and I have always wanted for Evan to have his own friends and to be loved and accepted for who he is, not for the reason of his special circumstance. The Friendship Circle of Houston models this attitude and behavior for all who come in contact with this fine organization, its leaders, and member volunteers.



Evan suffers from a very rare Jewish genetic condition: familial dysautonomia. Even so, he is a happy, well adjusted person who is also very accomplished. He loves to socialize and to celebrate his Jewish traditions. The manifestation of this condition on him requires that he has specific and scheduled medical interventions

throughout the day for which he is unable to administer to himself. However, being a part of the circle has made it possible for him to engage in meaningful ways both to formulate special friendships as well as to enjoy and participate in celebrations and special events. **This is the mission of the Friendship Circle.**

Our family has had the good fortune and privilege of being a part of the Friendship Circle of Houston since its inception in this community. As a result of having some programs that include parents & families, we have formed special friendships with other families in similar circumstances. This, too has been a special gift to our family. Being part of the Friendship Circle community provides the unique and special support and acceptance we all crave.

As stated, the Friendship Circle leadership models **unconditional love and acceptance** for all they serve. This organization serves as a lifeline for our special family members and our families both from a practical as well as a spiritual perspective.

And that's why I'm writing to you today, to seek your support for an amazing organization, the Friendship Circle of Houston. Their annual Friendship Circle Walk is approaching on **February 22nd, 2015**. This organization provides unique and special services on behalf of people who have special needs as well as their families. This support is implemented by facilitating friendships between individuals with special needs and trained volunteer members of the Friendship Circle. Trained volunteers then provide one on one friendship visits at various homes around our city. Friendship Circle also hosts events such as Sunday Circle, holiday programming, bowling, Shabbat & holiday dinners.

We will be joining Evan at this year's walk. The walk is the organization's primary fundraiser. By helping support the Friendship Circle's many programs for special needs children who live at home, as well as those who live in Texas State Supported Living Centers, you will help raise the necessary funds to continue and expand its mission. \$150,000 is needed to provide funding for the upcoming year's budget. **PLEASE JOIN US** to "walk with your feet as well as your heart"--to make it possible for this essential and important organization to continue and to grow. Visit houstonfriendshipwalk.com for details and make the commitment today.

With Love, Gratitude, and Hope,

Chava White

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