

What is Relay For Life?



What is Relay for Life? Relay for Life is about being a community that takes up the fight! The inaugural NZ event was organised in the Manawatu Centre in 2001 as a pilot for the NZ Cancer Society and has been running in Taranaki since 2004.

Funds raised locally are held in the Taranaki region and are used for cancer research, prevention, and support services.

How it began?

One man. One track. One goal. In 1985 an American Cancer Society Volunteer, Dr Gordy Klatt, put on his jogging gear and headed for the local oval after a good friend of his succumbed to cancer. 24 hours later and 81 miles later, Dr Klatt had raised over \$27,000 in sponsored donations for the American Cancer Society. Since then Relay for Life has developed into the world's biggest fundraising event, with over 3 million people participating each year, in over 4000 events worldwide.

The concept involves a team of walkers/runners either walking or running around an Athletic Track. The team always has one member on the track at any one time. The aim is for each team to raise as much money as possible prior to the event and to complete the 24 hours around the track. As the Relay runs for 24 hours teams are given a tent site which they can use as a base throughout the event. Teams are encouraged to come up with 'themes' for themselves and their site. There is entertainment provided throughout the event for teams and the public to enjoy. Each team member pays \$15 to participate and is then required to fundraise \$100 or more before the event. A team of 10 participants should aim to raise at least \$1,000.

The opening ceremony of Relay is dedicated to survivors, and is a celebration of life and hope. It starts with a lap of honour to celebrate the determination and courage of anyone who is living with, or has recovered from cancer. At dusk a special Memorial Candle Light Service is held where the whole track is lit to honour those who lost the battle to cancer, or are currently battling the disease.

Make up a work, community or family team and stay overnight to join in the carnival style atmosphere!

A DVD on 'Relay for Life' is available from the Taranaki Centre for anyone wishing to view it.

For more information contact Cancer Society of NZ Taranaki Centre Inc. ph 06 758 5644, or visit <http://www.taranakicancersociety.org.nz/relayforlife.html>