



Social Media to Promote the Overnight



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Why Use Social Media?

Unlike the traditional media, social media empowers *you* to share information and stories about issues that are important to *you*. As you begin your Overnight journey, it is important for you to be involved with a social network. Not only can it aid in your fundraising efforts, but it can also help you raise awareness about suicide prevention and mental disorders such as depression.

The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media

DO become a fan of AFSP National and join The Overnight Walk on Facebook and MySpace. You can also follow us on Twitter. You can find the links to these pages on www.afsp.org and www.theovernight.org

DO be actively engaged with a social media community. Social media is only worthwhile if you are an active user. Posting information once and never updating is not effective.

DO be creative. Provide content that is interesting for people viewing your page. Post videos, pictures, stories, etc., to help promote [The Overnight](#).

DON'T set up a "Cause" Page on Facebook specifically for your Overnight fundraising goal. Wondering why? While it may be hard to believe, there are more than 150 Cause pages on Facebook that are raising funds for AFSP; the caveat of Cause Pages is that they send a single lump sum donation quarterly making it impossible to allocate funds from specific Cause pages to your personal Overnight fundraising page. So we encourage you to steer clear of Cause Pages, because we want to make sure that your donations are appropriately attributed to your fundraising account!

DON'T use social media solely for fundraising. Using these networks to promote the cause, raise awareness and share your story will ultimately only aid your fundraising efforts.

DON'T only share information through Facebook, Twitter and MySpace. Explore other news sharing sites such as Stumblupon, Digg and Reddit to help spread information about [The Overnight](#).

[Easy Ways to Promote The Overnight](#)

Post Pictures

- If you have participated in The Overnight in previous years, upload pictures to your Facebook and MySpace page.
- Use the Overnight Logo as your profile photo
- You can also post photos to Twitter using Twitpic (<http://twitpic.com/>).
- When posting on Twitter, try to use the #theovernight hashtag

Share Videos

- Go to the AFSP National YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/afspnational) and share the [2010 Overnight video](#). Click share under the video and select the social network you wish to post it to.
- Upload your own videos if you have any from previous walks.
- If you are walking in memory of someone, create a video/or photo slideshow about their life and impact on your life. Share this video on YouTube and post it to social networking sites such as Facebook. Video can include link to your fundraising page.

Post Links

- Repost stories from the [AFSP National](#), [Overnight Facebook](#), and Twitter pages.
- Share links from the [AFSP National](#) and [The Overnight](#) websites using the “share this” feature in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- Share any other relevant articles that you think will help to promote suicide prevention efforts in general.

FOR TWITTER

*You can shorten a link using a tool such as <http://bit.ly> or <http://tiny.cc>

Since space is limited and hyperlinks are often long, you should post “short links” in your Twitter posts. To do this, go to <http://bit.ly> and register for free by creating a username and password.

Once you are registered you will be able to copy and paste the link and click shorten. It will give you a short link that you can post. After you copy and paste your link and click “shorten” you will be given the link, and also a box that says “share.” You can type your tweet in that box and it will post directly to your Twitter page.

Bit.ly also tracks the number of times your link is ‘clicked’, so you will know what types of news your followers are interested in, the number of unique visitors that were directed to that link, as well as the number of visitors that reposted that link.

Create a short link directly to your fundraising page and save this link to reuse on future Twitter posts.

Sample Tweets

- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among teens and young adults learn more @ www.morethansad.org #theovernight
- Some1 dies by suicide every 16minutes in the US #suicideprevention #theovernight
- Depression is the leading cause of suicide More than 19 million suffer from depression in the US That's why I am walking #theovernight
- #theovernight = an 18mile walk from sunset 2 sunrise for #suicideprevention I lost my friend to suicide, thats why I am walking
- It is not too late to sponsor me in #theovernight! Help prevent suicide, donate at www.theovernight.org or your fundraising short link.

Samples for Facebook or MySpace

Copying the URL from your fundraising page into your Facebook/MySpace status update will link your friends directly back to your Overnight donation page.

- Every 16 minutes someone dies by suicide in the US. I lost my (friend/spouse/parent...) and that is why I am walking in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Out of the Darkness Overnight. Find out more at www.theovernight.org
- I will be walking 18 miles from sunset to sunrise in the Out of the Darkness Overnight to honor of my (friend/spouse/parent...) who I lost to suicide. To support my efforts visit (your fundraising website).
- Depression is the leading cause of suicide. Please support me in the Out of the Darkness Overnight to raise funds for the AFSP's prevention programs, research, education and survivor support. Learn more and sponsor me at www.theovernight.org.
- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among teens and young adults. Proceeds from the Out of the Darkness Overnight will help distribute AFSP's new educational film on teen depression titled *More Than Sad: Teen Depression*. Learn more and make a donation at www.theovernight.org.

[Start Your Own Blog](#)

Making the commitment to walk in The Overnight is a big deal. Why not document your journey in a blog. You can share your experience with others while creating a collection of writing that will have special meaning for you.

Two popular free blog programs are Blogger (www.blogger.com) and WordPress (www.wordpress.org). Either of these options will allow you to design your own blog in a few simple steps.

Here are some good tips on blogging from ProBlogger:

- **Make your opinion known**
People want to know what people think. Tell them exactly what you think using the least amount of words possible.
- **Link like crazy.**
Support your post with links to other web pages that are contextual to your post.
- **Write Less**
Give the maximum amount of information with the least amount of words.
- **Include bullet point lists**
We all love lists, it structures the info in an easily digestible format.
- **Make your posts easy to scan**
After every few paragraphs insert a sub heading. Make sentences and headlines short and to the point.
- **Litter the post with Keywords.**
Think about what keywords people would use to search for your post and include them in the body text and headers. Make sure the keyword placement is natural and does not seem out of place.
- **Edit your post**
The key to good writing is in your editing. Before you hit the submit button, re-read your post and cut out the stuff that you don't need.