

**FROM: Williams Syndrome Association**  
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*For Immediate Release*

**MORE THAN 50 CITIES ACROSS THE U.S. TO HOLD EVENTS IN SUPPORT OF  
WILLIAMS SYNDROME AWARENESS WEEK MAY 5 – 13, 2012**

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*More than 6000 Across the Country Expected to "Walk-for-Williams" on May 12th*

(Troy, MI May 12, 2012) – Thousands of children and adults are expected to join the Williams Syndrome Association May 5 - 13 to raise awareness for Williams syndrome, a genetic disorder that remains virtually unknown to the general public, educators and many doctors. Included in the awareness events are more than fifty walks in cities across the U.S. including New York, St. Louis, Detroit, San Diego and Dallas.

The week-long activities are being held to help raise funds for critical scientific research and programs for individuals run by the Williams Syndrome Association. New research can lead to further insights about the disorder and new treatments for the future. Scientists are particularly interested in cardiovascular disorders and neuro-developmental issues in Williams syndrome, which may contribute to greater understanding of common problems such as hypertension and anxiety which affect millions of Americans.

Recently featured on ABC 20/20 and MSNBC, Williams syndrome is characterized by medical and developmental delays, cardiovascular disease and learning disabilities. At the same time, people with Williams syndrome often have unique abilities, including advanced verbal skills, highly sociable personalities and an affinity for music. Children with Williams syndrome need costly, ongoing medical care and early interventions that may not be covered by insurance or state funding.

**About the Williams Syndrome Association**

The Williams Syndrome Association (WSA) is a volunteer organization formed in 1982 by family members of people living with the disorder. Today, the WSA is the most comprehensive resource for people and families living with Williams syndrome as well as doctors, researchers and educators, providing programs and support in the areas of education, enrichment and research. For more information on the Williams Syndrome Association, please visit [www.williams-syndrome.org](http://www.williams-syndrome.org).

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