



“Some smile because they’re happy. I’m happy because I smile.”

Joe Opatowski
April 19, 1983-October 29, 2004

Joe was a beautiful, inspirational person who left each life he touched better than it was when he found it. As a motivational speaker, leader and crusader through Free the Children and Leaders Today, he spoke to and connected with countless thousands of young people around North America. His message, which was always delivered with true passion and honesty was that every human being, young or old, had the power to make a difference through our daily thoughts, words, actions and interactions.

Walk the Walk is a program that was written for the people of Elizabeth Ziegler Public School in Waterloo, Ontario. Its message was born of the belief that we all KNOW how to be kind and treat others with respect; we just don’t always DO it. Joe was a special part of this effort and was a living example of its power. He brought joy, acceptance and love to wherever and whomever he visited. These gifts live on in all of us who were blessed to know him.

In the wake of Joe’s tragic death, we have created the **Joe Opatowski Walk the Walk-a-thon**. It is a kindness campaign in which people will collect pledges from sponsors, go out in the community to perform kind acts, and record and reflect on these acts in a log book. All proceeds will be given to Free the Children: Joe’s Dream. This is a scholarship fund that will allow all young people to volunteer in impoverished areas around the world, learn from new friends, realize their leadership potential and change their life through helping others.

Thank you for helping us to honour our beautiful friend Joe who would love to see us all Walking the Walk. Your support is lovingly appreciated.

To learn more about Free the Children: www.freethechildren.com

To learn more about Joe’s life and journey, read his essay in Me to We: Turning Self-Help On Its Head by Craig Kielburger & Marc Kielburger

To contact us and join the campaign: walk4joe@yahoo.ca