



BEYOND BELIEF NETWORK

Beyond Belief Network Guides: National Guide Dog Month

September is National Guide Dog Month. Guide dogs help the blind and visually impaired. These amazing canines go through extensive training which can [cost over \\$40,000 and take up to two years](#). This month, you can help raise funds and awareness to help train and place these dogs. If you decide to do a service event, don't forget to submit a [report](#) telling us how it went. You can also email us for help!

Guide Dogs

[Guide dogs](#) are a type of Assistance dog that assist visually impaired and blind individuals by avoiding obstacles and negotiating traffic. Large breed dogs, such as German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers, are bred, socialized and raised for over a year by volunteers. After this, they are trained by professional trainers for 4-6 months before being placed with their handler. The handler provides directional commands, while the dog works to ensure both of them are safe.

Guide dogs differ from other types of Assistance dogs. [Hearing dogs](#) alert deaf or hard of hearing individuals to everyday sounds (ie. doorbell, telephone, etc.). [Service dogs](#) help people with disabilities other than visual or auditory impairment.

Event Ideas

- **Bark for Biscuits.** Host a bake sale to raise funds for a guide dog organization such as [Guide Dogs of America](#). To save costs, have volunteers donate baked goods. Don't forget to have a few selections that are canine friendly! For additional tips and tricks, check out our Beyond Belief Network Guide on [Benefit Bake Sales](#).
- **Woof it up for Raffles!** Consider hosting a raffle in partnership with a local animal organization. Consider prizes that reflect this partnership such as a free dog grooming

session or basket of non-animal tested cosmetics. Beyond Belief Network has two guides related to [general fundraising guidelines](#) and [how to approach businesses for fundraising](#).

- **Lend a paw.** Many local animal shelter, sanctuaries, and rescues need volunteers to help them with routine and special events. Contact a representative or check out the organization's website for more information. Keep in mind some tasks may require volunteers who have had a certain amount of experience. This is a great event for volunteer groups looking for a regular service event.
- **Loving homes.** Puppies, that are specially bred to be guide dogs, are placed in foster homes when they are about eight weeks old. The foster families play an important role in socializing the puppy and teaching it basic obedience. A puppy will stay with the family until it's about 18 months old. Then it will be sent off for formal training. Many guide dog organizations need foster families. If your family is interested, [consider applying through one of these organizations](#). However, keep in mind that this is a significant commitment which includes a initial screening process. Make sure that you and/or your family can handle the responsibility and devote the required time for such an undertaking.

Questions or Concerns?

If you need help with planning your event or have additional questions, the best way to contact Beyond Belief Network is to use the [contact webform](#), which enables us to track the resolution of your question. You can also email us at bbn@foundationbeyondbelief.org.