

## SANTA'S ELVES ARE GATHERING

- General Focus: Christmas Toy Drive
- This project was designed to provide a way for parents in need to give gifts to their children for the holidays, and to ensure that agencies not being covered by the high profile giveaways were receiving new gifts.
- Audience: Homeless Children
- Benefiting: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Shelter (homeless families)  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ Home (homeless shelter, battered women & children)  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ (inner city outreach program)
- Budget: \$50.00 + donations

### HOW-TO

#### A. Preliminary Steps

1. I chose a location where we would get lots of walk-by traffic: a site with both a \$1.00 store and a discount store on one of the busiest corners in town.
2. Made an appointment, took a preliminary flyer and met with the managers of the discount store. Told him we would invite all of our friends and relatives to spend a few dollars in his store on the Saturday prior to Christmas. In exchange we wanted to set up a table and use electric outlets in front of the store. He received corporate management approval.
3. With budget, decided to give away donuts (priced and asked for a discount, ordered in advance for pick-up the morning of event.)
4. Borrowed a 32-cup coffee dispenser, filled with water. (Bought two large water containers and took with me) and served both coffee/with Irish cream and hot chocolate/with marshmallows.
5. Made paper angel pins with rubber stamps, glitter and corsage pins from the fabric store. (see attached).
6. Bought candy canes at discount store to round out our giveaways.
7. Set up radio with cool Christmas tapes, all helpers wearing elf hats, bells on our shoes, reindeer noses.
8. Covered several large boxes with wrapping paper for toys to go into.
9. Borrowed a six-foot-long table.
10. Went to local meat market and was given enough paper to make a large sign for the event. Used felt pen to write what we were asking for and who was receiving the toys.
11. Sent out flyers asking friends to come down and spend one or two dollars on a new toy for children in our community.
12. A jazz radio station gave us public service announcements throughout the days leading up to the event.

#### B. The Event

1. The discount store donated \$40.00 right off, (and asked us to make it an annual event). We sent angel shoppers in to purchase the items. So many people were touched by us or we by them.

We made many new friends.

2. The results are, of course, always the high points. We got 245 new toys to give. We offered everyone we saw that morning anything on our table for a donation of one toy or change.
3. We sorted, bagged, labeled and delivered the toys the same day.
4. Each volunteer who participated in any way received a follow-up flyer letting them know the outcome of their contributions and a handmade Christmas tree with buttons and a small ornament as a thank-you

Stumbling Block: After checking several times, we found that, on the morning of the event, the electrical outlets outside did not work. The manager of the discount store helped us by running a huge extension cord (that we had brought just in case) to an outlet inside.

Most touching moment: Two little boys, cold and hungry, came and got hot chocolate and donuts. They talked to us about who would be receiving the new toys. I'm pretty sure they should have received some of them.

### BUDGET

Donuts (3 dozen)	\$12.00	
Coffee/Hot chocolate/Cream/Marshmallows	\$15.00	(wholesale outlet)
Styrofoam cups/Stir sticks	0	(donated)
Balloons	\$ 4.00	
Candy canes	\$ 4.00	
Angel pins	\$ 5.00	(craft hearts & corsage pins)
2 large waters	\$ 2.50	
Bells for shoes/Napkins	\$ 2.00	
2 large rolls of paper	\$ 2.00	(to decorate donation boxes)
Elf hats	\$ 3.00	
Sign	0	(paper donated)

### INVITATIONAL FLYER

Santa's elves are gathering...to host a TOY DRIVE



Sat, Dec. 18th, 9:00-11:00 am

(address)

We need shoppers!

Shop, spend \$1 or \$2 on a new toy, and donate.

We will be in front of: (name of discount or dollar store)

Benefiting:  Family Shelter (moms with children on the street)

Home (battered women's shelter)

(inner city outreach program for underprivileged children)

We will begin delivery at 11:00 the same day.

Bring your children, stop by for a moment of giving. We will be giving hot chocolate and donuts.

What a great way to start (or wrap up) your holiday shopping. Your kindness will make a difference!

"The laughter of a child is among the most delightful sounds of the earth."

## THANK-YOU FLYER

The Toy Drive was a big success! We collected 245 new toys and had so much fun doing it. Santa's elves helped set up in front of (discount store) on Saturday the 18th. (Discount store) donated \$40 worth of merchandise so we sent elf shoppers in to choose toys.) We had Christmas music, bells, and balloons, gave away over 3 dozen donuts, countless cups of coffee, hot chocolate with marshmallows, and hundreds of candy canes and angel pins. We also made several new friends!

By 11:00, we were sorting and bagging toys for delivery. The caravan stopped first at the family shelter, dropping off 85 toys, puzzles, and books, and another 85 went to \_\_\_\_ Home. Delivery to the third site was made Monday morning with 75 new gifts for inner city children.



Special thanks to:      Elves Kathy, Linda, Betty, and Judy  
Set Up/Tear Down Team:      J., John, & David; Kevin & Pam for equipment  
Additional financing by:      (list of contributors)  
Angel Shoppers:              (list of shoppers)

Thank you all so much!

"A simple act of kindness, like a ripple on a pond, radiates from the giver throughout eternity."



Ready-made paper heart for volunteers  
The heart is stamped and colored with markers and  
glitter on wings. The heart is 2-3/4" tall x 3" wide.

☺ Project contributed by Maureen in Fresno, CA