

# **START UP GUIDE**

**for**

## **Shoe Donation Project**

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## SERVICE-LEARNING FOR SCHOOL PROJECTS

This manual is the guide that was used for Stepp'n Up: Shoes for Needy Kids, a nationally recognized project. Using the same format, you can use this as guide for setting up any service project for which you are collecting and distributing goods (such as shoes, clothing, food, blankets, books, etc.). Create you own name, logo, business cards, and stationary. Use your project's name in place of Stepp'n Up and adapt the wording to fit your needs.

Service-learning is SMART. Here is what you need:

**Service project** that is structured within the school and linked to curriculum.

What is the name of your project? How is it linked to school curriculum?

**Meaningful experience** that is measurable and evokes memorable moments.

Through what activity will you accomplish the desired results?

**Academic component** in which you learn from the experience.

Will you learn math skills from fundraising and English from letter writing?

What will you learn from your research and investigation of the poverty that exists in communities that prevents many children from having shoes of their own?

**Reflection** to encourage you to think.

Why did you do this project, whom did you help, and how did you and others feel as a result of this experience?

**Take the learning experience** into your own world.

Will you now be more inspired to help friends or family members in need?

You will gain many skills from service-learning. These may include public speaking, accounting, fund raising, letter writing, dressing for success, networking, problem solving, and awareness of community and world problems.

Creating a service project is easy...you will achieve amazing results, raise your self-esteem, and inspire others to follow you. Just follow this guide!

## STARTING A SHOE DONATION PROJECT

Select an organization that cares for or deals with underprivileged children in your community. Names of such organizations may be obtained by:

- Contacting local churches, temples, or synagogues
- Contacting your local office of HRS (Health and Rehabilitative Services)
- Calling the editor of your local newspaper
- Contacting your local city council member

Call the various organizations to determine how they can work with you. Find out how many children they care for and see if it is possible to distribute the shoes directly to the children.

Choose the organization that best suits your project. Set up an appointment to meet with the director where you will discuss your program. Ask them to provide you with a letter recognizing you and your program and confirming that the donated shoes will be given to their organization. The letter may include a tax identification number for your contributors to use.

Ask the organization to provide you with a list of their children. It is best to have the list emailed to you. The list should include each child's name, age, sex, and their shoe size (see shoe commitment list). Put copies of these lists in a folder that you will bring with you when you distribute shoes.

Talk with the organization and choose a distribution date when the children will receive the shoes. When selecting this date be sure to leave yourself enough time to collect all of the shoes. Fax press releases to local media several weeks in advance.

**CAUTION:** If agencies are unsure of a child's shoe size, always select a ½ size larger because children's feet are growing between the time you get their shoe sizes and the time shoes are distributed.

### Collecting Shoes

Shoes may be obtained by direct contribution or by soliciting cash contributions that will be used to purchase shoes.

### Direct Contribution:

1. Make a list of your potential contributors:
  - \* Department Stores
    - \* Retail Shoe Stores
    - \* Sporting Good Stores
    - \* Discount Clothing Stores
    - \* Local businesses (salons, law offices, yougurt shops, etc.)

2. Make several copies of the letter (see sample) that is designed to introduce you and the program to your community. Also, have copies of the introductory letter you received from the children's organization.
3. Before visiting the various businesses, call to see when the manager will be there so you can speak with him or her about the program you are working on. Get an email address and follow up with a description of your program and how it works to benefit underprivileged children in the community. The easiest way to collect shoes is to contact local businesses because there will be many contributors in one location.

#### The Visit:

1. When you go to ask for contributions be sure to dress appropriately. Your attire will reflect your respect for the project as well as your respect for the people you are soliciting.
2. Be sure that you know the history, purpose, and work of the organization that you are collecting shoes for.
3. When meeting with the store manager, it is very important to know that his/her first impression will determine his/her willingness to help. Make good eye contact, shake hands, and introduce yourself. Hand the manager a copy of your letter and begin to tell him about the program.
4. Take out your list of all the children and ask the manager if he/she would be able to donate at least one or two pair of shoes. For each pair donated, be sure to print the name of the contributor under a column in your notebook entitled "donor".
5. As you receive the shoes, be sure to mark the shoebox with a number that will correspond to a child's name on the list.

#### Cash Contributions for Shoe Purchases:

1. Find out if there are any auxiliary groups or other organizations that directly support the organization you are representing.
  - a. If so, contact the leaders of these groups and ask them for an opportunity to speak about your program at their next meeting.
  - b. When you speak before these groups, your goal is to let people know about yourself and your program. You are there to either collect cash contributions (suggest \$15-\$20 a pair) or have to people purchase individual pairs of shoes.
  - c. Be sure to have your folder with you. Request that the people buying individual pairs of shoes print their name and phone number next to the

child's name who they wish to buy shoes for. Provide paper and pen for them to write down the child's name, number, and shoe size for their own personal record. If people choose to buy shoes, encourage them to buy sneakers and request that they put the child's name and number on the box. Arrange a drop off point (someone's house or a local store which is willing to help) and deadline for these shoes. Be sure to leave a couple of weeks before the distribution date in case of any mix-ups.

2. Contact your local podiatry association president and ask for a local and perhaps state contribution to your program.
3. Contact the owner or president of any local business and ask if they would like to participate in a shoe drive. If they so desire, put up a poster in their place of business (see sample poster). These opportunities are unlimited and are the easiest way to collect shoes. Many employees find it easy to make a cash contribution. Business people welcome the opportunity to be involved and they will be delighted that you brought the program to them.

#### Purchasing Shoes with Monetary Contributions:

Contact the manager of a local discount shoe store to discuss the program with him/her. Tell the manager about the program and be sure to mention that you will be purchasing a large amount of sneakers. Provide the shoe store with the tax identification number of the children's organization that you are representing so that you won't have to pay tax on your purchase.

#### So, Now You Have All the Shoes:

1. Go to your local drugstore, supermarket, or gift store with a letter requesting donations of tape, wrapping paper, labels, pens, and highlighters, all of which you will need to wrap and label the shoes.
2. Using the shoe list book, make out labels with each child's name and number. In addition, you may need to put the name of the social worker assigned to each child. Wrap the shoes and place the labels on the corresponding boxes.
3. Get some heavy duty lawn bags to put the shoes in because that will make the transportation of the shoes much easier.

#### Distribution Day:

1. Send out press releases two to three weeks before the distribution day. The press release should include the history of your program, a biography about yourself (your name, age, school, why you started your program, etc.), a biography on the organization receiving the shoes, and also include a paragraph on how you believe you are helping the community by doing this project. Be sure to state the

date, time and location of the distribution with an address, telephone number, and a contact name at the organization. Press releases should go out to local newspapers as well as television and radio stations in your area. Press is extremely important because it will give recognition and credibility to your project. Articles or interviews will confirm that the shoes were being distributed to the children of the selected organization, and that is of most importance to all of your donors. Contact the editor of your local newspaper and ask for the name of the person who handles community service events. Contact that person and send them a copy of your press release (see sample press release). Do the same for your local television and radio stations. Be sure to call anyone to whom you have sent a release a few days before the distribution in order to remind them. Encourage them to cover the event with a reporter and a photographer.

2. Meet beforehand with the director of the organization and arrange when and how you want to go about distributing the shoes. Holidays work well because children are gathered together and you have the opportunity to personally hand each child their shoes.

3. At the time of distribution, encourage the children to open their shoes and put them on because you will want to see their smiles and the joy that they get from the shoes you gave them. It is great to take pictures and videotape the shoe distribution but be sure that you have permission from the children's parents or guardians and the organization beforehand.

**GOOD LUCK!!!**

## PRESS RELEASE FORMAT

There is a fairly standard format for creating press releases. It will help your credibility and chances of being published if you present your material this way. Each press release should include the following:

<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:</b>	These words should appear at the top left of the page, in upper case. If you don't want the story to be made public yet, write "HOLD FOR RELEASE UNTIL ...." instead.
Headline	Just like a headline in a newspaper. Make sure this describes the content of the story.
City, State/Country - Month Day, Year	These details precede the story and orient the reader.
Body	This is where the actual story goes. There should be more than one paragraph, each paragraph no more than a few sentences. If there is more than one page, write "-more-" at the bottom of the page.
Company/organization info	Include any background information about the company or organization featuring in this press release
Contact Information	Include contact person, company name, phone/fax, email, and physical/postal address.
<b>ENDS</b> or ###	This indicates the end of the press release.



## **SAMPLE INTRODUCTION LETTER**

Date

(Use same letter for everyone, no need to put individual addresses)

Dear Manager:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old and I attend \_\_\_\_\_ school (or I am representing \_\_\_\_\_ organization, church club, etc.).

I am starting a project to collect new shoes for underprivileged children. We all take shoes for granted, but in the case of underprivileged children, new shoes not only cover bare feet, but they go a long way towards building personal self-esteem as well.

I have learned that there are many children in our own community who wear worn and tattered shoes and some that have no shoes at all. I need your help in getting this worthwhile project started. I am looking for any contribution of sneakers that you are able to make. Sizes that fit children ages one to eighteen years of age are needed. Please check your inventory to determine how many pairs of shoes you can donate.

Just remember that each pair you send will bring a smile to the face of a child who may not have much to smile about.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Your name

## **SAMPLE LETTER TO CORPORATION OR DEPARTMENT STORE**

Name, Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am \_\_\_\_ years old and have started a service project called \_\_\_\_\_. On behalf of myself and needy children in our community, we would like to request that this project be in this year's budget for donations to charitable organizations. If you are able to participate, we will provide you with a list of shoe sizes that are needed. We hope that we can count on your participation!

Sincerely,

Your name

## SAMPLE LETTER FOR POSTER

Name, Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Dear Employees and Clients of (business name):

I would like to introduce a new service project to our community. This year, more than ever before, there are children in our own community who are in need of shoes. Many children wear worn and tattered shoes and some have no shoes at all. A new pair of shoes not only covers bare soles but also builds pride and self-esteem for underprivileged children.

If you would like to participate, please sign your name and phone number next to the child's name that you would like to purchase shoes for. Please bring the shoes to this store by (date). Kindly mark the shoebox with the child's name and corresponding number. If you would prefer to make a donation, please make out a check to \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$15.00 or any denomination thereof and we will gladly purchase the shoes for the child you have selected.

We wish all of you a joyous and happy holiday season. With your generous support, many children will be wearing not only new shoes on their feet but big smiles on their faces, as well! Thank you so very much.

Sincerely,

Your Name

**SAMPLE POSTER**

**Letter**

**Shoe List**

**Code for Shoe Sizes**

**Photos and thank you letters from the  
children and organizations that have  
received shows in the past**

## **SUGGESTED PLACES FOR POSTERS**

local business offices  
podiatrists or other doctors' offices (some offices will have their staff participate as part of their annual giving or in lieu of a holiday gift exchange)  
law offices  
beauty salons  
barber shops  
shoe stores  
post office (postal employees may choose to do this project for their annual giving)  
restaurants  
health clubs  
dry cleaners  
exercise clubs  
grocery stores  
specialty shops  
yogurt shops  
high school service bulletin boards

Be sure to obtain permission before displaying posters. Arrange for someone at the location to collect the donated shoes or checks and hold them until the designated pickup date.

## **CODE FOR SHOE SIZES**

Provide all agencies and donors with a code list for children's shoe sizes.

**I (infant) sizes 1-4**

**T (toddler) sizes 5-10 1/2**

**C (child) sizes 11-4 1/2**

**A (adult) sizes 5-13**

### **SHOE LIST FOR KIDS IN NEED (please purchase sneakers)**

Child's Number	Child's name	Age	Sex	Shoe Size	Donor's name	Donor's Phone Number

## SAMPLE LETTER FOR RESPONSE TO INQUIRY

Name, Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding \_\_\_\_\_. The mission of my program is to provide as many new pairs of shoes as possible to abused, abandoned, neglected, and underprivileged children in our community. Names and shoe sizes of children in need are obtained a month or two prior to the Christmas holidays. This information comes from local agencies serving underprivileged children. Lists are then distributed to numerous businesses and individuals who get both donations and shoes purchased. Shoes are then wrapped, tagged, and distributed to the children.

If you are interested in participating as a donor, please call me and we will be happy to provide you or your church with a list of children. Please indicate approximately how many pairs of shoes you will be able to get donated. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Your name



## SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER TO STEPP'N UP DONORS

Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Happy New Year and so many thanks for helping to make the holidays so very special for so many kids in need! We distributed \_\_\_\_ pairs of sneakers this year and all the kids were so thrilled. One of the women at one of the agencies told me how especially happy she was because she always has glue on hand to "repair" the shoes that are falling apart. She asked me to personally thank you for your contributions.

On behalf of all of us, so many thanks for your time, caring, and support. *It is truly appreciated!* I have enclosed some photos for you to enjoy. You made so many children so very happy!

Sincerely,

Your Name  
School