

Christmas Gift Card Project for Teens in Foster Care

Project overview

- If there is already a host church in your county collecting cards, please work with that church.
- If you're not sure if there is another church in your county that is collecting gift cards, contact Paris Yanno at pyanno@ohioministry.net.

As a host, you will be the primary point of contact within your county. This role includes:

- Contact your local Children Service Department and ask them if they are still interested in receiving gift cards for teens this Christmas. If they are, find out how many teenagers are in the foster care system in your county. This will determine how many gift cards you will need to collect. In the past we have given every teenager two \$25 gift cards.
- Serving as the hub to collect gift cards and Christmas cards for each foster teen within your county
- Providing program information to other churches, organizations and individuals that want to participate within your county.
- Deliver the gift cards and cards to the agency.

FAQ

What kind of gift cards can we accept?

*We are accepting \$25 gift cards to any store with an online presence. ***Please note: we can only accept physical gift cards. Digital gift cards have the potential to be non-transferable and would be difficult to deliver to the teens.***

What if

Are we able to invite other churches/organizations to participate with us?

Absolutely! One church/organization per county will serve as the central point of contact for our foster agency and collection point for the gift cards. *However, other churches/organizations are more than welcome to participate.*

We encourage you to reach out to local businesses (gyms, coffee shops, restaurants, doctors' offices, etc.) and invite them to participate by either collecting gift cards from clients/patrons or by donating financially on behalf of the business. You may share the details of the campaign (what's being collected, dates, when/where to drop off) and you can work with them to coordinate having the gift cards or check delivered to your host site before you deliver the final donation to your local foster agency.

Do we have to make multiple deliveries to the foster agency? Or can we deliver everything at once?

You are able to decide this at your discretion, whether you'd like to make deliveries sporadically during the campaign or deliver everything at once. If you do make one large drop off at the end, we suggest storing gift cards within a secure area and keeping an accurate count as they are collected throughout the campaign.

Do we need to track who donates what or provide receipts?

You will not need to track the donors for this outreach. Anyone who donates \$250 or more is able to receive a receipt. Please feel free to use the sample donation letter below to create your own receipt.

Thank you for your in-kind donation of Gift Cards for our Foster Teen Christmas Outreach which is valued at \$ _____. For your records, our tax ID number is _____.
Thank you again for your generosity and for helping our teens in foster care know that they are not forgotten this Christmas.

Will we need to collect anything in addition to the gift cards?

We would like each teen to receive a personal Christmas card in addition to the gift card. We want to remind them how special and loved they are, especially during what could be a very difficult season.

It is important that each gift card has a Christmas Card to go with it.

**The following will need to be communicated to participants as they provide Christmas cards:*

- *No personal information (name, email, address, phone number) can be included*
- *Do not seal envelopes*
- *Do not place gift cards within the envelopes*
- *Sample verbiage:*

"Merry Christmas! This holiday season I want you to know you are very special and dearly loved. I hope you enjoy this gift!"

"It's a joy to offer a gift to you this Christmas. I hope you feel God's love during this holiday and beyond. Merry Christmas!"

"Christmas is a time to share love with those around us and I'm honored to extend that love to you. You are incredibly special and dearly loved. I pray this small token will remind you just how special you are. Merry Christmas!"

Sample Timeline

Nov 10 Campaign kickoff

Dec 6 Gift card collection ends

Dec 9 - 11 County Hosts deliver gift cards and Christmas cards to agencies

Dec 11 County Hosts sends the following to Father's Heart (fathersheart@ohioministry.net):

- Photos of gift cards collected
- Stories (encouraging stories from participants, staff, community?)

Dec 11-23 Agencies deliver gift cards and Christmas cards to foster teens