



Operation Christmas Child®

2017 COMMUNICATION GUIDE

FOR STAFF AND CONNECT VOLUNTEERS



As we head toward National Collection Week, here's a quick reference resource for communicating about Operation Christmas Child. Keep it with you so you have it on hand when needed. As people ask you questions about this Samaritan's Purse project, please use this messaging in response.

OVERVIEW

WHAT IS OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD?

- Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, collects shoebox gifts—filled with school supplies, hygiene items, and fun toys—and **delivers them to children in need around the world to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way**. For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received.
- In 2017, Operation Christmas Child, the world's largest Christmas project of its kind, hopes to collect enough shoebox gifts to reach another **12 million children in more than 100 countries**.

ETERNAL IMPACT

- Delivered into the hands of children through local churches, every shoebox gift is an **opportunity to share about Jesus Christ**.
- Since 2009, more than **11 million children who have received a shoebox gift have participated in The Greatest Journey**—our 12-lesson discipleship program where they learn what it means to follow Jesus and share their faith with friends and family.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- **Using a medium-sized cardboard or plastic shoebox**, choose to pack for a boy or girl and decide the age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14.
- **Select a quality “wow” toy** such as a doll, soccer ball with pump, or stuffed animal. Fill with other fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies.
- **DO NOT include** candy; toothpaste; used or damaged items; war-related toys; food or liquids.
- **A donation of \$9 is critical to cover project costs** from collection and shipping to training and distribution. Give online through Follow Your Box to receive a tracking label and discover the destination of your shoebox gift.
- **Take your shoebox gift to a local drop-off location** during National Collection Week. Nearly 5,000 drop-off locations across the country will collect shoebox gifts **November 13-20, 2017**.

HOW CAN PEOPLE GET INVOLVED?

- **Learn how** to pack a shoebox, view gift suggestions, get your Follow Your Box label, and find your nearest drop-off location at samaritanspurse.org/occ.
- **Build a shoebox online** for only \$25 at samaritanspurse.org/buildonline. You select the items and Operation Christmas Child will pack and send your shoebox gift for you.
- **Volunteer** year-round, during National Collection Week, or at one of eight Processing Centers around the country to prepare shoebox gifts for international delivery. Visit samaritanspurse.org/occ to learn more.

2017 MINISTRY UPDATES

NEW INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS FOR 2017: CANDY/TOOTHPASTE

- Due to increasing customs regulations, all **candy and toothpaste cause complications** with shoebox delivery. As a result, they are not allowed in shoebox gifts.
- The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ using simple shoebox gifts as a platform to open doors for the Gospel. **Including candy and toothpaste prevents entry into a large number of our recipient countries**, blocking the opportunity to share the Gospel message.

PER SHOEBOX SUGGESTED DONATION

- From the beginning of the project through 2005, the suggested contribution was \$5 per shoebox gift. From 2006 through 2016, it was \$7 and **it's time for a small incremental increase** to support the growing impact of Operation Christmas Child.
- **A donation of \$9 per shoebox gift is critical** for Operation Christmas Child. It provides for the collection, processing, and shipping of shoebox gifts to more than 100 countries. It also provides ministry materials such as The Greatest Gift Booklet children receive alongside their shoebox gift and The Ministry Partner Guide, a tool used to ensure simple, easy-to-understand local outreach event training and clear Gospel presentations.
- **For resources to help communicate this change**, check out our social media platforms, see the How to Pack a Shoebox brochure, or visit samaritanspurse.org/shoebox-donation and samaritanspurse.org/occ-videos.

TWO VARIETIES OF PREPRINTED SHOEBOXES

- We now sell Operation Christmas Child **plastic shoeboxes** in packs of 12 as well as **cardboard shoeboxes** in bundles of 100.

PROJECT LEADER FACEBOOK GROUP

- **This exclusive group allows project leaders to connect with others** in their role and receive links to important resources. Email occinfo@samaritan.org to join.

OCC MOBILE APP NOW AVAILABLE FOR ANDROID AND IOS

- **Stay up to date** on current Operation Christmas Child news, find drop-off locations, see prayer requests, and build a shoebox online all in one spot! **Download the app** today at samaritanspurse.org/occ-mobile-app.

FACTS & STATISTICS

SAMARITAN'S PURSE FACTS

- **President & CEO:** Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham
- **Founded** in 1970
- **Purpose:** Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to victims of war, natural disasters, disease, famine, poverty, and persecution in more than 100 countries, with the purpose of sharing God's love through His Son, Jesus Christ.
- **Headquartered** in Boone, N.C., Samaritan's Purse has affiliate offices in Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia; field offices in 16 developing countries; and ministry partners in more than 100 countries, including Germany.
- **Projects:** Crisis and Disaster Response; Feeding Programs; Emergency Field Hospital; World Medical Mission; Children's Heart Project; Operation Christmas Child; Operation Heal our Patriots; Animals, Agriculture, and Livelihoods; Construction Projects; Water, Sanitation & Hygiene; Women's Programs.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD STATISTICS

- **In 2016, nearly 11.5 million** shoebox gifts were collected worldwide and 9.1 million in the U.S.
- **Over 146 million** shoebox gifts have been delivered to children in over 100 countries since 1993.
- 2017 U.S. Collection Goal: **9.6 million**
- 2017 Worldwide Collection Goal: **12 million**
- **Over 9,000 volunteers** serve in the U.S. year-round.
- **Nearly 400 Area Teams** are active around the U.S.
- **Nearly 5,000 drop-off locations** receive shoeboxes during National Collection Week.
- **National Collection Week** is Nov. 13-20, the third week of November annually.
- **Over 100,000 volunteers** serve in the U.S. during National Collection Week and processing season.
- Shoebox gifts are prepared for overseas shipment at **eight major processing centers across the U.S.**—Atlanta; Baltimore/Washington; Boone, NC; Charlotte; Dallas/Fort Worth; Denver; Minneapolis; and Southern California.
- **More than 300,000 volunteers** serve overseas.
- **Shoebox gifts are collected** in the U.S., Australia, Finland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, and the U.K.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Africa is home to 435 million kids under the age of 14. If each of the 322 million people in the U.S. packed a gift-filled shoebox, Operation Christmas Child still wouldn't reach all the boys and girls in Africa.
- People equaling three times the number of U.S. Operation Christmas Child volunteers serve overseas to implement the distribution of shoebox gifts and the Gospel.
- Every 24 hours, more than 31,000 children hear the Gospel at shoebox outreach events.
- Every 20 seconds a child becomes a follower of Jesus during The Greatest Journey discipleship program.
- Every day, 4,428 children accept Christ in The Greatest Journey.
- For every 100 shoeboxes distributed, 14 children report decisions for Christ through The Greatest Journey.

THE GREATEST JOURNEY STATISTICS

- **158,823 teachers trained** in 2016; 531,743 teachers trained since 2009.
- **3,552,115 children enrolled** in 2016; 11 million children enrolled since 2009.
- **2.5 million children graduated** in 2016; 7.8 million children have graduated since 2009.
- **1.6 million students** of The Greatest Journey reported decisions for Christ in 2016; 5 million reported decisions for Christ since 2009.
- **Over 5 million children** have committed to praying for and sharing with friends in family since 2009.

RECEIVING COUNTRIES

In 2016, Samaritan's Purse collected 9,122,910 gift-filled shoeboxes in the United States. An additional 2,363,863 came from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Those gifts were delivered to children in 104 countries, many of which are listed below:*

Albania	Colombia	Jamaica	Papua New Guinea	Suriname
Angola	Costa Rica	Kenya	Paraguay	Swaziland
Argentina	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Latvia	Peru	Tanzania
Bahamas	Dominica	Lesotho	Philippines	Thailand
Belize	Dominican Republic	Liberia	Poland	Togo
Benin	Ecuador	Lithuania	Republic of Congo	Trinidad and Tobago
Bolivia	El Salvador	Macedonia	Romania	Uganda
Botswana	Equatorial Guinea	Madagascar	Rwanda	Ukraine
Brazil	Fiji	Malawi	Saint Lucia	USA (Native Americans)
Bulgaria	Gabon	Malaysia	Saint Vincent	Uruguay
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Mali	Samoa	Vanuatu
Burundi	Grenada	Mauritius	Senegal	Zambia
Cambodia	Guyana	Mexico	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe
Cameroon	Honduras	Moldova	Slovakia	
Central African Rep.	Indonesia	Mongolia	South Africa	
Chad		Namibia	South Sudan	
Chile		Panama		

* Some countries are not listed for security reasons.



QUESTIONS YOU CAN'T ANSWER?

Email us or direct others to occinfo@samaritan.org

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