

CLOTHING DONATIONS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN & TEENS



Many children enter foster care with nothing but the few belongings they can quickly fit into a plastic trash bag. This year, _____ will collect items to fill suitcases for children and teens (up to size XXXL) entering emergency foster care. We need your donations of these **NEW** or **“LIKE NEW”** items:

- T-Shirts (please no school, camp, team or event graphics)
- Leggings, athletic shorts, athletic pants, sweatpants
- Lightweight sweaters & sweatshirts
- New Pajamas, new underwear, new socks (WITH TAGS)
- Small throw blankets / toddler blankets (NEW ONLY)
- Journals (please no wires); art pads & colored pencils / crayons
- Toiletry kits: new toothbrush/paste, hairbrush, hair accessories, deodorant, lotion, feminine hygiene, lip balm, etc.
- Sneakers / athletic shoes & toddler shoes
- Small, new stuffed animals (WITH TAGS)

Please select items carefully and empty all pockets. Donate only what you would be a joyful gift for another child or teen to receive. Nothing dingy, nubby or noticeably worn. Quality over quantity.

Please place donations in boxes at _____

Drop off dates: _____.

Questions? Email _____

For more info. or to make a much-needed monetary donation, please visit

www.hopeinasuitcase.org

HOPE IN A SUITCASE WISH LIST & QUALITY POLICY FOR DRIVE ORGANIZERS

Thank you so much for organizing and participating in a drive benefitting Hope in a Suitcase and Los Angeles children and teens entering foster care! We are very grateful! Because we are a small, 100 % volunteer-run non-profit (everything we get goes directly to the children we serve; even our storage space is donated and/or in private homes, so we must be careful not to overwhelm), **we rely on event organizers and volunteers to sort items and maintain our very narrow mission and strict quality policy.** Thank you for understanding and for helping support some of Los Angeles' most vulnerable children!

Items we want & accept: New or "like new" casual, comfortable, clean clothing for toddlers – teens (up to size XXXL) in EXCELLENT condition (not stained, dingy, nubby, noticeably or overly worn, etc.). Ideal clothing items are broadly appealing and ones children could just as comfortably wear to take a nap, watch TV, or run a quick errand.

- Sweatpants; athletic pants; yoga pants; leggings; athletic shorts (no short-shorts): Particularly for children over age 5, the key for pants is having stretch or drawstring, so will easily fit a range of sizes and body types.
- T-shirts & lightweight sweatshirts: Please no logos from schools, camps, AYSO teams, religious or other events the receiving child not likely to have personally participated in.
- Casual & comfortable play clothes for young children.
- Packages of underwear, bras and socks: BRAND NEW ONLY!!! In package or with tags.
- Pajamas: NEW ONLY. With bottoms (no nightgowns).
- Journals (smooth bound – no wires).
- Sneakers: New or worn no more than a handful of times.
- New baby/toddler blankets & small throw blankets.
- New or like new carry-on or medium sized roller bags and large duffel bags. Please no large or jumbo roller suitcases; no back-packs, no purses. Please check all pockets.
- New small stuffed animals: BRAND NEW ONLY. With tags.
- Lightweight sweaters and lightweight jackets.

Items we cannot accept: dressy, business or formal attire; used or bulky stuffed animals, sleeping bags, tents, gloves, hats, bathing suits, used socks or used undergarments, short shorts, snow or ski clothes, items with logos or graphics from schools, sports teams (e.g. AYSO), camps, religious activities or other events the receiving child not likely to have participated in, items with slogans referring to family members. Or snug items, hard-to-fit items (e.g. skinny jeans or other items you'd need to try on for fit). Nothing sharp.

Quality policy: Clothing donations may be new or like new. Quality over Quantity. Please ensure that donations are youthful, pristinely clean, in excellent condition, comfortable and broadly appealing. The items that would bring a smile and dignity to a child entering foster care are the same items you would offer your best friend's child or your own child's best friend to make them feel special, comfortable and cared for. Nothing noticeably or overly worn, stained, dirty, dingy, torn, itchy, etc.

Step 1: Initial Sort of “Items Accepted” and for Quality Control - Please do an initial sort into 3 categories:

- 1) **Great!** On the list of items accepted & any child or teen would feel good about receiving this!
- 2) **Maybe?** “Hmmm....not on the list of needed items”; “Maybe on the edge of inappropriate, looks worn, has a tiny stain or hole, a little dingy or unusual, uncomfortable, something that requires a perfect fit, too dressy except for church or a country club, *etc.*” “*Someone* would love this, but....”
- 3) **Nope!** Even the most perfectly organized drive with the most generous donors will elicit a few surprising donations. Some things may even be nice (*e.g.* New bedding! Snow boots!), but won’t fit in a small-medium suitcase that a child may need to carry between placements with multiple foster families.

Items in both 2 & 3 above must be routed by the event organizers to other donors or to another organization (*e.g.* Goodwill has a model that allows people to try clothing on for fit, choose according to personal taste and style and is large enough to administer a wide range of items).

Step 2: Sort the GREAT! Items by size, type and gender. Please fold or lie flat-ish – not crumpled.

Thank you for helping Los Angeles children entering foster care!