



ABOUT THE SHOEBOX PROJECT:

The Shoebox Project for Shelters, supported by Dream, collects and distributes gifts in the form of Shoeboxes to women who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in communities across Canada and the US. Each Shoebox is filled with items valued at \$50 that any woman is likely to enjoy, but may not splurge on for herself in difficult times.

In our founding year, 2011, we delivered 400 Shoeboxes to residents of four Toronto women's shelters. Through word of mouth and the support of some loyal sponsors, the initiative grew very quickly. In 2015, our network of dedicated volunteers delivered nearly 25,000 gifts to women in 134 communities.

WHY IT MATTERS:

For women who have been displaced from their homes and estranged from their families, the holidays can be a particularly challenging time. Often, women feel disconnected from society, invisible and alone. Reducing the feelings of isolation and loneliness faced by women living in shelters is one of the most important outcomes of The Shoebox Project. A Shoebox gift is a powerful reminder for a woman that she has not been forgotten and that she remains a valued and respected member of her community.

For those giving gifts, The Shoebox Project is an opportunity to give back to someone in your community. It's a small gesture of kindness that has an immediate and positive impact on the woman who receives it. The act of creating Shoeboxes tends to bring people together and works to give a human face to the broad issues of poverty and homelessness. When a person makes the effort to assemble a gift for a woman living in a shelter, it brings to mind the challenges she may be facing and the many obstacles to overcome.

“YOUR SHOEBOXES REMINDED (OUR CLIENTS) IN A TANGIBLE
WAY THAT THEY ARE STILL WORTHY OF ATTENTION,
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THE BASICS OF EXISTENCE”
– MUSKOKA VICTIM SERVICES, BRACEBRIDGE, ON



HOW TO MAKE A SHOEBOX:

1. **Decorate your empty Shoebox.** Please wrap the bottom and top separately so the gift can be inspected before delivery. You can also purchase decorative Shoeboxes that don't require wrapping at the Dollar Store!
2. **Fill your Shoebox.** Make your Shoebox as fun you would like! Choose items you would like to receive yourself. Please only include new/unused items.

What to Include:

- Something warm: mitts, scarf, hat, socks
- Something sweet: nut-free chocolate and candy
- Body or hand lotion, soaps, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- Brush, comb, shampoo, conditioner, hair ties
- Nail polish, mascara, eye shadow, lipstick
- Purse-sized Kleenex, small cosmetic bag
- Journal, pens
- Gift Cards
- Subway tokens and bus tickets



What to leave out:

- Used goods
- Hotel Samples
- Sized clothing (i.e. S, M, L, XL)
- Mouthwash containing alcohol
- Candles
- Foundations, concealers
- Hand-sanitizers
- Razors
- Jumbo-sized containers
- Anything opened or not packaged



3. **Write a message.** Women who receive a gift from The Shoebox Project are touched by the effort that goes into decorating the Shoebox as well as the special cards, messages, and poems contained inside. Get creative and have fun!

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– WINNIPEG BOOTH CENTRE, WINNIPEG, MB

*For more information on The Shoebox Project,
please visit our website at www.shooboxproject.com.*