

Disciples Women Mission Project 2020: Sparking Joy

Disciples Women's mission project for 2020 is an opportunity to simplify and streamline our personal space while providing much-needed items to those for whom we can offer support. One of the current popular tidying movements (Marie Kondo) involves deciding if items in your home spark joy. Her suggestion is if they do not they should be appreciated and removed.

Below are some items that may no longer bring you joy and you might be prepared to part with as well as suggested organizations who may be able to put them to good use. Hopefully, you will be able to identify other opportunities in your local areas or local branches of these organizations. In addition, you are encouraged to offer additional support to the organizations for which we are recommending these items. As always, we encourage you to contact directly similar organizations in your area to find out what their specific needs are as well as to begin building a relationship.

Luggage:

It's My Bag: nationwide movement of travel agents coming together and encouraging the community to donate suitcases, travel bags, and duffel bags so that every child in foster care can have their own bag. "One of the great disservices we do to foster children is to give them the message that they are not valuable. We do it in subtle yet destructive ways; it might be as simple as putting a child's few worldly belongings in a trash bag in order to move her. The message that child receives is that she is trash. It is not intentional. Child welfare resources are slim; providing a safe home, nutritional food and clothes on their backs is of utmost importance, and that is enough to strain the budget. This campaign provides these children and teens with travel bags, but more importantly, it provides them dignity."

Casa for Children: Most children in foster care arrive at their first placement with little to nothing in their possession. These donations to local agencies are almost guaranteed to be put to good use immediately.

Prom or Bridesmaid Dresses:

Project GLAM!: hosted by WGIRLS Inc. is dedicated to providing formal dresses for economically disadvantaged young women who cannot afford a prom dress. GLAM stands for Granting Lasting Amazing Memories which is exactly what you can give these young women by donating your old dresses.

Old Shoes:

Soles4Souls: organization that believes in the power of a pair of shoes. Having already donated over 30 million pairs of shoes in over 127 countries and in all 50 U.S. states, they provided relief to people that have come upon hard times for a number of reasons.

Handbags:

Handbags of Hope or Purses 4 A Purpose: Recycle gently used, unwanted purses. Provides handbags full of necessities to women and teens in shelter situations.

Clothing:

Vietnam Veterans of America: Donations go toward supporting veterans of all wars and their families. Donations can be scheduled for pick-up right at your doorstep. All you have to do is label your donation boxes.

** Other highly rated wounded veterans charities include: Gary Sinise Foundation, Semper Fi Fund, Fisher House Foundation, etc.

The ARC: Nation's leading advocate for those with development disabilities. All of the funds they raise from donations go toward public policy advocacy as well as inclusivity programs and services for the community. You can help their mission by donation your old belongings and clothing to one of their thrift stores.

Old Mobile Phones:

Women's Shelters: some shelters accept used mobile phones for women to use to call 911 in an emergency. You may also want to donate phone cards that women can use to call friends or family without requiring a phone plan.

Kids' Games, Crafts and Books:

Women's Shelters; Often families have to leave home with just the clothes on their backs. In addition to worrying about food, clothing and personal grooming products, they need to manage to entertain their children and comfort them in a strange environment. Anything from coloring books to Little Einstein toys for toddlers are invaluable in keeping kids happy and safe.

Makeup:

Women's Shelters: You may have make up sitting around that you bought with the intention of using but changed your mind to something different or it came free with something else. While this might seem frivolous, studies show that employers discriminate against candidates who do not wear makeup to a job interview. In addition, wearing makeup can help someone to feel more confidence and secure which is key to landing a job. Makeup needs to be new and unused.

Linens:

Women's Shelters: From kids' comforters to queen-size sheets to towels and washcloths, most linens will be appreciated. This may also include kitchen towels, oven mitts, burp cloths, crib sheets and throw blankets.

Also, please share with the Disciples Women office what you are doing so we can celebrate together. If you have stories or pictures to share on social media, please use #DWConnect. Of course, as always, we want to be careful not to exploit or to have the appearance of exploiting the people we are hoping to assist.