



# Christmas Shoebox Appeal



[childrenindistress.org](http://childrenindistress.org)

Join us in spreading love, warmth and festive cheer this Christmas. Fill a shoebox with loving gifts for children, teenagers and older people in Romania.

Your guide to taking part

*Building brighter futures for children, families and communities.*

# Delivering joy at Christmas

For over 35 years, our **Love in a Box Shoebox Appeal** has brought festive hope and happiness to children and families facing hardship.

Every Christmas, beautifully decorated shoeboxes – filled with love, essentials, and thoughtful surprises travel by lorry from the UK to Romania and people in need.

Thousands of boxes are opened with smiles by children, teenagers and older people at over 20 locations in Bucharest and beyond. Your shoebox will be lovingly hand delivered to a kindergarten, school, church, care home, hospice or family home.

This leaflet is your guide to how to get involved, including practical tips for filling your shoebox and getting it ready for us to collect.



## Your kindness makes the journey possible

**Whether you've supported the appeal since the start or are joining us for the first time this year – a huge big heartfelt THANK YOU. We couldn't do it without you.**

Thank you also to our business supporters, including Prestons of Potto, who kindly provide free warehousing space to safely store the boxes before their journey.

A huge amount of work goes on behind the scenes as we collect and then carefully check, load and prepare all the boxes ahead of their travel to Romania.



# Ways to help

**We rely on the kind support of people like you to help make Christmas special and it's really simple and easy to get involved.**

**Here are the ways you can help:**

- Filling a shoebox with essential items and a £3 donation towards transport costs.
- Making a gift towards the cost of running the appeal.
- Helping spread the word amongst your friends, family and community groups.

Every act of kindness, however small, helps us reach even more vulnerable children and families Ensuring they experience the Christmas they deserve.



## Donating to the appeal

**We kindly ask for a £3 contribution per filled shoebox.**

Your £3 donation helps us ensure that your carefully packed box can safely travel from the UK to its recipient in Romania. The appeal is absolutely core to who we are but it is expensive for our small charity. It costs £5,000 just for the lorry and hundreds of hours to coordinate.

Any additional donations above the £3 per shoebox will make a huge difference. We also welcome donations to the appeal even if you can't fill a shoebox yourself.

Simply add any extra cash donations to your £3 for collection with your filled box/boxes. You can send cheques to the address later on this leaflet, donate via our website or you can phone our office to make a donation, including by BACS.

You can also help by Gift Aiding your donation. Gift Aid means your generosity will go even further – at no extra cost to you. We receive an extra 25p for every £1 you donate. There is a Gift Aid form at the end of this leaflet.

# Your guide to filling a shoebox



## PLEASE INCLUDE

Shoeboxes should be filled with new items and nothing second-hand please. Chocolate is particularly popular with older children! For assistance with what to pack, please read our guide to suggested items for different age groups.



## DON'T INCLUDE

Shoeboxes must follow the rules to be allowed through customs and be hygienic. Please avoid:

- Sharp objects like tweezers, blades or scissors
- Toy weapons or war-related toys
- Liquids, nail polish and make up
- Second-hand, used items
- Anything that is fragile and easily broken

If you include sweet treats, for hygiene reasons these should be in the manufacturer's original sealed packaging and not loose items decanted from larger bags. Please ensure they have a long sell by date.

Please don't enclose photographs or personal contact details and don't put your £3 donation inside the box. Please attach your £3 to the box or keep it separate.

Please don't include English language books – only sticker or colouring books.



# Your guide – most wanted items

**We've created a simple guide to the most wanted items for the different age groups we deliver shoeboxes to. We especially need gifts for ages 9-12, teenagers, and older adults.**

You will need to indicate the relevant age group and gender on the shoebox label that is cut out and fixed to the outside of your filled shoebox.

## **Ages 0-3**

- Soft toys
- Board or cloth books
- Teething toys and baby safe rattles
- Baby hats, mittens and socks (new or handmade)
- Baby toiletries (no liquids)
- Plastic feeding spoons and cloth bibs

## **Ages 4-8**

- Colouring and sticker books
- Small toys or puzzles
- Warm hats and gloves (new or handmade)
- Sweet treats (chocolates, sweets or biscuits but please read the notes about packaging overleaf)

## **Ages 9-12**

- Stationery
- Toiletries (no liquids)
- Small games or toys
- Refillable water bottles, key rings
- Sweet treats (chocolates, sweets or biscuits but please read the notes about packaging overleaf)

## **Teenagers**

- Toiletries
- Warm gloves/socks
- Travel games or cards
- Tote bags or refillable plastic bottles

## **Older Adults**

- Fleece blankets
- Mugs or sturdy plates (not easily breakable)
- Tea towels or fabric pot holders
- Toiletries
- Hot drink sachets/teabags
- Sweet treats (chocolates, sweets or biscuits but please read the notes about packaging overleaf)
- Cards or small decorations
- Fabric shopping bags



# How to pack your shoebox

Once you've chosen your age group and purchased your items please:

1. Fill your own sturdy shoebox or get in touch with us to order flat pack boxes.
2. Fill the box carefully with your chosen contents.
3. Wrap the box and the lid with Christmas paper. Please wrap the lid and box separately.
4. Use elastic bands to secure the lid to your box.
5. Cut out and fill in the shoebox label from this leaflet. Attach the label securely to your box.
6. Attach your £3 donation to the box or keep this separate, along with your completed Gift Aid form.
7. Get in touch with our office to arrange collection of your box/boxes, donations and Gift Aid forms.



## Help us spread the word

Every year, we're proud to work with church, school and community groups across the UK. If you would like to receive more leaflets to help inspire more people to get involved, please get in touch.



# Gift aid form

**Please cut out this form and give it to the person who collects your box/boxes along with your cash donation.**

Yes, I would like to Gift Aid my donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ and any other donations made to Children in Distress in the future and in the past four years.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

First name or initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Full home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

**Want to give regularly?**  
It's easy to set up a monthly donation. Just tick here and we'll send you the details.

Please tick this box if you would like to receive news from our charity. You can unsubscribe at any time.



**Please cut out the label below, complete it and fix it securely to your box.**

## Age group

0-3

4-8

9-12

Teenagers

Older adults

## Gender

Male

Female



# Getting in touch

Please get in touch with us to order flat pack boxes, to arrange collection of your box/boxes, to make a donation by phone or if you have any questions about how to take part.

We would also love to hear your stories. Please send us some photos and a few words about what being involved with the appeal means to you. You can email us or you can get in touch via our social media channels.

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18 Blake Street, York, YO1 8QG

**Tel:** 01904 460066

**Email:**

[adminyork@childrenindistress.org.uk](mailto:adminyork@childrenindistress.org.uk)

**Website:** [childrenindistress.org](http://childrenindistress.org)

 @cidcharity

 @childrenindistress

Scottish Registered Charity Number:  
SC039383.

## Checklist

**Before you get in touch to arrange collection of your box/boxes please check:**

- You haven't included anything on the 'Don't Include' list.
- You have filled in your Gift Aid form.
- You have £3 per shoebox to help cover transport costs ready to hand over or attached to your box.
- You have followed the 'how to pack your shoebox' notes.
- You have filled in the shoebox label and fixed it securely to your box.

**Your completed box should look like this.**

