

## Girls Inc. aims to help 25 families this holiday season through Hamper Campaign



Girls Inc. of York Region is looking for your help to make the holidays that much brighter for 25 area families in need.

The Aurora-based non-profit, which provides mentorship opportunities for youth in the community, kicked off its Holiday Hamper campaign on Friday when they formally opened their new offices at 154 Wellington Street East.

“The campaign provides low-income families, whose children regularly participate in Girls Inc. programs and services, with a holiday hamper containing essential items, seasonal goods, and gift cards for children's presents and groceries,” says Girls Inc.

Hampers include grocery gift cards, a gift card for parents to purchase an item from their child's wish list, hygiene supplies, warm clothing items, a small gift for each child, all topped with something the entire family can enjoy, such as a board game.

Community members, businesses, and groups can support the campaign by sponsoring a family or otherwise making a financial contribution to the campaign. Every little bit helps and if you're not in a position to support the initiative financially, boosting their efforts through word-of-mouth is always welcome.

“By providing gift cards and carefully curated hampers, the campaign ensures parents retain choice and dignity while meeting specific needs of their children,” says Girls Inc. “This approach not only provides practical support, but also fosters a sense of empowerment and holiday spirit for families. The Holiday Hamper Campaign is part of Girls Inc.'s ongoing commitment to empower the whole girl by supporting families, promoting wellbeing, and ensuring every girl and member of her family has what she needs to succeed and be strong, smart and bold.”

Barb Wallace, Executive Director of Girls Inc. of York Region, says the initiative was inspired by the “clear need we were seeing” in the community to “bring a sense of holiday magic to children in low-income families while empowering parents with a choice” choice to shop for their own children, and choice to purchase culturally-relevant groceries that honour their family's traditions and dietary needs.”

“When finances are tight, the holidays can be overwhelming for parents who want to give their children a joyful experience,” says Wallace. “Our aim is to ease that pressure and ensure families feel supported and valued. Providing gift cards is intentional. It allows parents to choose what their child truly wants or needs. We're not just supplying gifts, we're supporting families with dignity and choice.”

“For many children, the holiday season is where lasting memories are made. A small gift card or a shared family activity can spark joy and connection, something every child deserves. When someone sponsors a family or donates to the campaign, that generosity

has an immediate impact. You're not only contributing, you're becoming a part of the family's holiday experience. The Holiday Hamper Campaign is part of our commitment to supporting the whole girl. When families feel secure and supported, girls are better able to learn, grow and build confidence.?

?The holidays can be isolating for families facing financial hardship. This campaign reminds them they are not alone, their community is standing with them.?

Wallace notes there is a particular need for gift cards and other items for teens.

Toys have been generously supported by the CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish.

Budgets can be tight for everyone around the holiday season and if you can't contribute to this campaign, consider your plans for New Year's Eve.

If you're celebrating in style in a dress you might only wear once, Girls Inc. will soon launch its annual Dress Drive to support Grade 8 and Grade 12 grads look their best at graduation and prom.

?If you have your New Year's Eve dress or a chance to clean out your closet and you've got fancy shoes, party dresses and things like that, we are collecting them for girls to go to graduation and prom,? says Wallace. ?We collect them, we go through them, and we set up a big event where hairdressers come in, makeup companies donate makeup, and we have all kinds of gifts for the girls to help them celebrate their special day. It's hard to get all that done [during Prom season], and we really focus on low-income girls, but we serve all girls.?

For more information on how to support the ongoing Holiday Hamper Campaign or the upcoming Dress Drive, visit [girlsincnyork.org](http://girlsincnyork.org) or call 905-830-0776.

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