



How to...

AMAZING MISSION

One Warm Coat has helped distribute more than 8 million coats in the US since 1992.



Organize a clothes drive

You can support others by collecting and donating clothing.

With colder weather coming, it's important that everyone has the items they need to stay warm, from long-sleeve shirts to coats and gloves. You can help by organizing a clothes drive. This is an event where people drop off clothes they have outgrown or no longer wear so they can be distributed to people who need them. Here's how you can get started.

Pick a donation spot

Begin with a large cardboard box. You will want to select a spot for your donation box that many people will see and that is easy for them to access. You can ask a school, place of worship, community center, or local library if it can keep the donation container for your drive.

Set a timeline

Once you have a place to collect clothing, coordinate with their staff about the dates and hours people can drop off donations. You will want to give donors enough time, so consider a period of two to three weeks.

Spread the word

You can print out or draw flyers with details about what you're collecting. For example, you can let people know if

you're accepting clothing donations in good condition for both adults and children or if you are collecting a specific item, like coats. Also be sure to include an address where people can find the donation box. With an adult, ask local businesses if you can display your flyer in their window. You can also ask family members to tell their friends and post about your drive on social media.

Deliver the donations

Once you have the clothing donations, you'll want to bring them to an organization that can distribute them to where they are needed. (Some organizations also offer the option to pick up your donations at a scheduled time.) Sites to check out include clothingdonations.org and onewarmcoat.org.

Express gratitude

Be sure you take photos of your donations to document the community's contributions. You can write thank-you notes to any volunteers who helped. With an adult's assistance, post on social media about the success of the drive—your kind deed may encourage someone else to start one! For more ideas for helping others, see some examples in the column at right.



Identify gently used clothes.

More ways to help



There are many types of items you can donate. Here are a few.

Toys and games With help from an adult, you can check for toy collection initiatives at children's hospitals, fire and police stations, and after-school programs.

Old books Many public libraries will accept book donations, and teachers are often seeking more books to help fill their classroom shelves.

Pet supplies Animal shelters often need old sheets and blankets to help keep animals comfortable. You can also look online to see if your local shelter has posted a wish list.