

Cradles to Crayons



Fun Family Recipes for
Giving Back Together

Our Mission

Cradles to Crayons® provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive—at home, at school, and at play. We supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities that have with communities that need.

Our Model

Cradles to Crayons collects new and nearly new children's items through grassroots community drives and corporate donations. Donations are processed and packaged by volunteers, and then distributed to children in need through our collaborative Network of Service Partners, including schools, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies.

Cradles to Crayons

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Introduction

One in three people in the United States living in poverty is a child.

Cradles to Crayons currently meets a critical need in three regions that have significant percentages of children living below the poverty line—Boston, 33%, Philadelphia, 37%, and Chicago, 33%. Poverty is defined as a family of four living off of \$24,250 or less for the year.¹

But statistics don't get to the heart of what we do. We help kids who don't have access to basic resources: kids without shoes that fit, a coat warm enough to fend off winter winds, or a backpack to carry their books to and from school.

When children don't have these simple things that are often overlooked, they face unnecessary challenges. They have a harder time learning in school. They are less likely to engage with their peers. They don't feel valued.

Your family can support other families right in your own community by collecting high-quality children's essentials like clothing, shoes, or books, or by raising money.

From collection drives to raising awareness to celebrating milestones by sharing gifts, there are many ways to come together to support Cradles to Crayons and celebrate the power of giving!

This guide shares some of the creative activities our families and youth are doing to give back together. We invite you to try out the "recipes" in this book—or share your own ideas or favorite giving tradition with us.

We know that working for change can affect all of us. We know that we are stronger together. Thank you for your commitment to our mission and investment in giving all children the basic essentials they need and deserve.

¹Annie E Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center, 2014 "Children In Poverty (100 Percent Poverty)"

²U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014 Federal Poverty Guidelines for 48 Contiguous United States



Be a Birthday Star!

Share your birthday with another child and celebrate together!

Ingredients

- ☐ Toys (no stuffed animals)
- ☐ Children's books
- ☐ New socks, underwear, pajamas
- ☐ New clothing

Recipe

1. Sign up as a Cradles to Crayons Birthday Star.
2. Plan your own birthday party (date, time, theme, etc.)
3. Invite family and friends and ask them to bring donations of specific children's items (or money).
4. Have fun at your party!
5. Coordinate a time to drop off your donations, take a tour of The Giving Factory, and get your picture taken.
6. Thank your guests.



TIP: Cradles to Crayons can help you customize an online donation page if you would like to ask for financial contributions.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah or Confirmation Project



Make an immediate difference in the lives of kids in your community

Ingredients

- ☐ Volunteer at The Giving Factory with your family and friends
- ☐ Organize a Cradles to Crayons clothing drive at your synagogue
- ☐ Raise money with your youth group via bake sale, car wash, etc.
- ☐ Substitute centerpieces with children's essentials to be donated
- ☐ Educate students in your faith-based school about Cradles to Crayons and encourage tzedakah
- ☐ Donate money in lieu of party favors
- ☐ Tithe 10% of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah money
- ☐ On the day you become Bar/Bat Mitzvahed, teach about the importance of service using your Cradles to Crayons experience to inform your D'var Torah

Recipe

1. Pick an ingredient (or more than one).
2. Enlist classmates, friends, family, and your community to support you.
3. Provide your audience with a list of suggested items they should purchase or collect if you are doing a drive. Communicate your online donation information if you are raising money.
4. Communicate an end date and periodically check in with your participants.
5. Utilize social media, word of mouth, and flyers to spread the message and educate your audience.
6. Designate an accessible location where people can bring donations.
7. Use emails, social media, and other resources to thank your participants. Share pictures to show your impact.

TIP: This is also great for Eagle Scouts, National Honor Society, and other service learning projects!

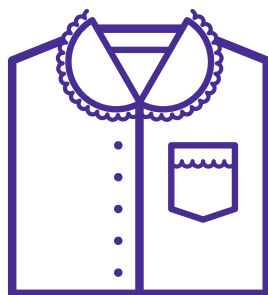


Pajama Party Project

Give back in your pajamas!

Ingredients

- ☐ Wear PJs to school
- ☐ Bring a new pair of PJs to donate
- ☐ Organize a group of student leaders
- ☐ Have fun!



Recipe

1. Introduce the drive idea to your school community.
2. Identify a date to host your “PJ Day” and collection week.
3. Recruit a small group of student leaders to help you get the word out, wear PJs, and promote your collection.
4. Announce the PJ drive at a school assembly or on the PA system.
5. Make posters for the event.
6. Use social media to get more people to participate.
7. Encourage your community to donate money along with new PJs.
8. Tally numbers of PJs per classroom.
9. Give out awards (most creative PJs, highest number collected, most enthusiastic PJ wearer, etc.).
10. Have your PJ Day!
11. Thank your participants for the donations, emphasizing the importance of giving children the basic essentials they need and deserve.

TIP: Cradles to Crayons can help you customize an online donation page if you would like to ask for financial contributions.

Hygiene Kit Collection



Keep babies and children safe and healthy

Ingredients (all items must be new)

Baby Hygiene Pack

- ☐ Baby lotion
- ☐ Baby shampoo
- ☐ Baby powder
- ☐ Diaper wipes
- ☐ Nail clippers
- ☐ Aspirator
- ☐ Thermometer
- ☐ Washcloth
- ☐ Brush/comb set

Child's Hygiene Pack

- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Dental floss
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Bar soap or body wash
- ☐ Bubble bath
- ☐ Brush/comb set

Recipe

1. Engage your neighbors, friends, or community by sending an email explaining the purpose, mission, and details of the collection.
2. Designate an accessible location where people can bring donations.
3. Provide a start and end date—this will motivate your supporters to participate with a sense of urgency.
4. Make it fun! Ask your network to use social media to showcase the enthusiasm they have supporting a worthy cause. Make the final day of the collection a celebration.
5. Deliver the donations to Cradles to Crayons.
6. Send a thank you email acknowledging everyone's efforts.

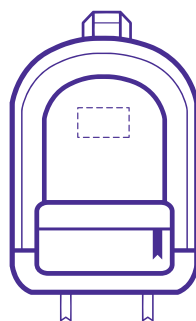


School Supply Drive

Help kids succeed in the classroom on the first day of school and throughout the year!

Ingredients (all items must be new)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pencils (unsharpened) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket folders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil top erasers | <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil sharpeners | <input type="checkbox"/> Markers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crayons (24-pack) | <input type="checkbox"/> Colored pencils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notebooks | <input type="checkbox"/> Calculators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rulers | <input type="checkbox"/> Highlighters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glue sticks | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue/black pens |



Recipe

1. Get a current school supply inventory list from Cradles to Crayons.
2. Ask people to collect age-appropriate supplies from the list.
2. Engage your community by posting on social media, word of mouth, and distributing flyers.
3. Ask each participant to bring the school supplies to an accessible location in your community.
4. Deliver the donations to Cradles to Crayons.
5. Thank your participants for the donations, emphasizing the importance of having essential school supplies for academic success all year long.

TIP: Cradles to Crayons can help you customize an online donation page if you would like to ask for financial contributions.

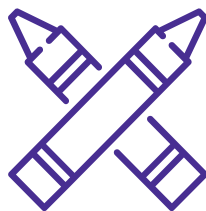
Well Wish Note Project



Send words of encouragement and bring joy to kids this school year!

Ingredients

- ☐ 3x5 index cards or paper to fold into a card
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Colored pencils
- ☐ Stickers



Recipe

1. Set a goal of how many Well Wish notes you and your family, classroom, or friends want to make.
2. Write supportive and enthusiastic messages like:
 “Have a great year!” or “Reach for the stars!”
3. Decorate with fun drawings, stickers, or pictures.
5. Tally up how many cards you’ve made.
6. Drop off or mail completed cards to Cradles to Crayons!



TIP: Create “Warm Wish Notes” in the fall and winter to add extra warmth to coats that will be distributed to kids.



Quality = Dignity Clothing Drive

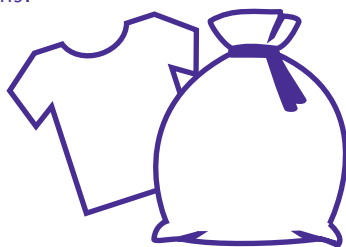
Outfit local kids for success with new and like-new clothing

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shirts | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter hats/gloves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Coats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Shorts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks (new) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas (new) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undergarments (new) | |

Recipe

1. Promote your clothing drive to your community by word of mouth, posting on social media pages, and using other promotional materials like posters or flyers.
2. Invite your friends, family, schoolmates, and community to collect or purchase the items listed within a scheduled time period.
3. Set up a collection bin at an accessible location.
4. Clean out your own closets and contribute high-quality items to your collection.
5. Deliver the donations to Cradles to Crayons.
6. Thank your participants for the donations, emphasizing the importance of giving children the basic essentials they need and deserve.



TIP: Cradles to Crayons can help you customize an online donation page if you would like to ask for financial contributions.

Gear Up for Winter Collection



Protect children from the dangers of brutal winter conditions

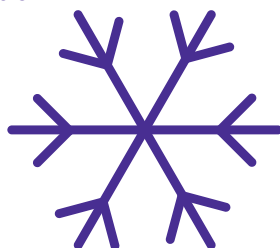
Ingredients

- ☐ Try on winter coats, boots, gloves, mittens, and hats from last year and donate those that no longer fit but are new or still in near-perfect condition
- ☐ Send an email to or tell friends and classmates to do the same
- ☐ Share Cradles to Crayons quality standards with your networks and raise awareness about the challenges for families who struggle to afford basic essentials



Recipe

1. Determine a start and end date.
2. Set up a community drop-off location at your home, community center, school, or at another accessible location.
3. Set up bins for winter coats and boots.
4. Advertise and promote your drive. Encourage everyone to spread the word and support you.
5. Continue to engage the community throughout the drive.
6. Deliver the donations to Cradles to Crayons.
7. Thank your participants for the donations, emphasizing the importance of giving children the basic essentials they need and deserve.





**Share,
Spend,
Save.**

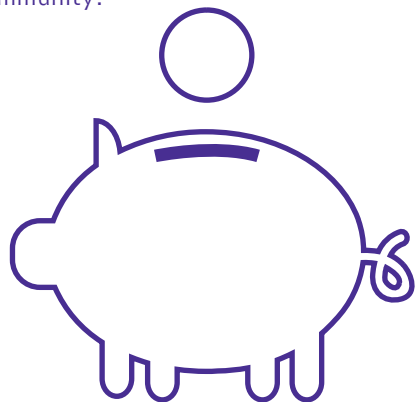
Manage and share your money—for now and for the future!

Ingredients

- □ A piggy bank that you can divide into three sections

Recipe

1. Take the “piggy bank” and label the sections with “Share,” “Spend,” and “Save.”
2. When you receive your allowance or other money, decide how much you want to put into each section.
3. Every month, write a check from the “Share” part of the bank to Cradles to Crayons or other mission-driven nonprofit organizations.
5. Put the “Save” part in a savings account.
6. Take the “Spend” part and use it to have fun or purchase new essentials for other kids in your community!



TIP: Cradles to Crayons can help you customize an online donation page if you would like to ask for financial contributions.

We're Social!

Showcase your commitment to supporting others and giving back by sharing your community's acts of kindness on social media.

Hashtag #CradlesToCrayons

Create your own recipe and share it via social media



Tag your local Cradles to Crayons

@c2cchicago

@c2cboston

@c2cphiladelphia

Thank You

At Cradles to Crayons, success is measured by the impact our community of volunteers, supporters, and Service Partners has in providing local children in need with critical essentials all year round.

We Empower 80,000+ Volunteers

We Partner With 2,000+ Service Partners

We've Served 1,000,000+ Children

With your help, we will keep on growing.

Cradles to Crayons is thankful for all the generous support we receive from our donors! If you would like to get more involved or have suggestions for future recipes please email: info@cradlestocrayons.org



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