



The Festive Season Starts Now: It's time to pledge Santa Shoeboxes for children in need

Almost [eight million](#) South African children live below the poverty line, resulting in many not receiving a Christmas gift. While it may still be cold outside, now is the time for warm hearts to come together to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children. The [Santa Shoebox Project](#), which brings festive season joy to more than 70 000 disadvantaged children each year, is giving teams the chance to get into the spirit of giving early, with the opening of Team Pledges on 1 August.

Imagine Secret Santa but on a grand scale! By pledging 20 or more shoeboxes packed with treats and essential items, your team can light up the faces of children around South Africa and Namibia. Each box includes a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, facecloth, school supplies, toys, sweets and an outfit of clothing, all new, unused and age-appropriate, chosen for a specific child living in the donors' community.

The magic doesn't stop there. Team Pledges are all about fostering a sense of community. Alison Lurie of RE/MAX Living shares, "It brings everyone together... reminding us of the joy a little shoebox can give a child."

And for the kiddos in your team? Participating in the Santa Shoebox Project can be a valuable learning experience. As Tholsi Heeralall, a teacher at Assumption Convent School, explains, "Learners get to witness the impact their contributions have on another child's life. This, in turn, fosters a sense of belonging to a South Africa that cares, while nurturing humility by reminding pupils of their own fortunate circumstances."

Beyond the joy of giving, Team Pledges also offer potential tax advantages for companies. It's a win-win – your team builds festive spirit while potentially reaping rewards such as 135% procurement recognition and a 10% deduction under Section 18A of the Income Tax Act.

To encourage other teams to join in on the festive gift-giving fun, Lurie says, "This is such a worthy cause and although it is a small act of kindness, it can have a big impact."

Heeralall adds that children are the future of our country, but some do not have the luxury of having the basics. "Knowing that your efforts can make their holiday season special is truly rewarding."

Ready to give children a reason to smile? Gather your colleagues, friends, or family and join the movement! Visit <https://santashoebox.org.za/team-pledges> to pledge your team's participation. Let's make this Christmas one of joy and goodwill.

About the Santa Shoebox Project

Traditional Santa Shoebox: Over the last 18 years, 1 226 756 Santa Shoeboxes, each containing eight specified items of treats and essentials, have been given to underprivileged and socially vulnerable children throughout South Africa and Namibia. From 01 September each year, Santa Shoebox donors choose their beneficiary child/ren by name, age and gender and are given the child's clothing size. Each personalised shoebox reaches the very child for whom it was pledged.

Virtual Santa Shoebox: These shoeboxes are purchased online by donors and are available year-round, meeting the needs of donors who live too far from drop-off points, are too busy to shop or have health issues. Components are chosen by the donor on the Santa Shoebox website, the shoeboxes are packed by the Santa Shoebox Team and delivered to children attending far-flung rural facilities. A VSS contains the eight specified items, as well as additional items, such as a lunchbox and books, and costs R450 plus an optional delivery fee of R30.

SSP Legacy: All Santa Shoebox Project operating costs are covered by corporate sponsors. Privately donated funds and surplus funds generated by the sale of Virtual Santa Shoeboxes accrue to the SSP Legacy and are used to bring permanent change to the lives of Santa Shoebox beneficiary children and the impoverished communities in which they live. SSP Legacy initiatives have thus far reached more than 95 000 children.

Fiduciary information: As a Level One Contributor to B-BBEE, the Santa Shoebox Project earns 100 points on the generic scorecard, and with Section 18A status, is able to provide a tax-deductible receipt in recognition of donations. The Project is an initiative of the JOG Trust (IT2671/2009). The Trust is registered as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO-930031301), a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO 102-098) and holds a current ICPR in support of 100% SED compliance.

Social media:

TikTok: @santa.shoebox

Facebook: /SantaShoebox

X: @SantaShoebox

Instagram: /santashoebox

YouTube: The Santa Shoebox Project

Pinterest: /santashoebox