

# Best Practices for a Holiday Toy Giveaway Drive

## Stellar Examples –

- The P.I.C.O Neighborhood Council (PICO) works in conjunction with the city's Youth and Family Center to host an annual winter holiday toy giveaway. Last year, over 17,000 toys were given to children in the area!
- The Watts Neighborhood Council (WATTS) handed out over 200 toys to needy children in their community "Christmas Party," where there were over 300 people present

Many children are not fortunate to receive gifts during the holidays. Getting together as a community to collect toys for children of all ages in the community is a great opportunity to put a smile on a young and innocent face. In the charitable spirit of the holidays, community members of WATTS and PICO worked hard to provide every child with a memorable holiday season.

**Word of advice** - let volunteers pick the toys for the kids because allowing kids to peruse the toys may lead to time delay, tears, and tantrums. Encourage toy swapping & start early!

**Great challenge** – the "line went around the block before the doors opened!" (Tony) You can never have enough toys! There will always be a child left toyless so make sure to write their names down in case any late donations are made.

**Educational lesson** – WATTS learned that they will have to secure a bigger location next year because the room capacity for last year's Christmas Party reached the maximum!

**Grandest benefit** – a smile from a child! In certain areas and in many occasions, it may be the "only present the kids get for Christmas." (Tony)

## Special thanks & acknowledgement to those interviewed:

Tony Nicholas, coordinator of the Tom Bradley Youth & Family Center  
Henry Bromfield, Board Member of WATTS  
Carlos Mino, President of MACNC

Interpretation of interviews & creation of "best practices" by DONE intern: Helen Leung

## Best Practices for Holiday Toy Giveaway:

- ❖ **Start as early as possible**
  - Many companies start accepting request in June and stop soon after
- ❖ **Submit request to at least a dozen organizations**
  - Especially Toys for Tots (<http://www.toysfortots.org>), KECK Foundation (<http://www.wmkeck.org>), Toy's R Us ([www.toysrus.com](http://www.toysrus.com)), Mattel, Inc ([www.mattel.com](http://www.mattel.com)), Warner Bros. ([www.warnerbros.com](http://www.warnerbros.com))
  - Goodwill, your local Wells Fargo branch, the Fire Department Human Relations Committee, radio stations (especially 100.3 BEAT & 102.3 KJLH), and large department stores
- ❖ **Separate toys into age specific categories**
  - The tendency is to have an overabundance of toys of younger children and fewer for teenagers
- ❖ **Give first to the more needy**
  - Especially if limited in toys and abundant in children
  - Make a list of children who will probably not get any other gift for the holidays and make sure they get a toy
- ❖ **Work with a "Youth & Family Center"**
  - A part of the City's Community Development Department (CDD), total of 9 locations throughout the City of Los Angeles
  - Who have many connections with organizations & usually have a space to keep the toys until the giveaway drive
  - Log onto [http://www.lacity.org/CDD/com\\_youfam.html](http://www.lacity.org/CDD/com_youfam.html)
- ❖ **Contact all local businesses, organization, and groups**
  - Through personal impassioned pleas or touching letters of request
  - Don't forget to follow up on promises
- ❖ **Use NC Board Members**
  - Who come from unique backgrounds and can make a request to their own contacts, companies, and organizations
  - Ask each one to donate a toy
- ❖ **Ask Stakeholders**
  - For a contribution of at least one toy
  - At a NC meeting or send out letters of request
- ❖ **Do NC outreach at the same time**
  - Have information about NC at event, pass out surveys, and invite everyone to the next meeting!
- ❖ **Provide food**
  - The holidays are a time of good food in abundance! Serve holiday snacks, turkey, apple cider, pie...
- ❖ **Make it a family event**
  - Info for parents, entertainment & activities for the children

**Remember to check in with your DONE Project Coordinator for regulation updates, new info, and other resources!**