

WHEN MONEY IS SCARCE, FIND NEW WAYS TO DONATE

According to the **2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering & Participating**, over 23 million Canadian over 15 made a charitable donation over the course of 12 months. Most donations result from mail requests or from someone asking in a public place. Most people reported that they donated due to “feeling compassion for those in need” or because they wanted to help a cause they believed in.

It is no surprise that many of those donations are made during the holiday season, simply because people are more aware of the plight of the less fortunate, and because there are more opportunities to donate.

Yet, in a time of economic downturn, some people do not have the means to donate, or cannot donate as much as they would like to. Here are some suggestions to overcome this issue:



1. Donate used goods. Everyone has something laying around that they no longer need or use, which would be much appreciated by the less fortunate. Instead of putting it outside, pack it up and bring it to a donation center, like the Salvation Army or St. Vincent de Paul Society. (Make sure it is useful and still useable though. Do not donate broken goods.)
2. Give away leftovers. Everyone makes too much food during the holidays. Rather than eating turkey sandwiches for 2 weeks, bring your extra food to a homeless shelter. Or simply, pack an extra lunch every day, and give it to someone asking for donations on the street.
3. Don't re-gift! Everyone gets presents they have no use for! Yet another toaster? Rather than re-gifting it, or trying to return it for store credit, give it to a charitable organization.. If you already have a toaster, then you won't miss it. And in the meantime, it will help someone else. This is particularly true of toys! Children often get more toys than they will ever play with. If the child is old enough, ask them to choose one toy they want to give to someone else. According to **Living in Below the Poverty Line: Canadian Children in Poverty 2007**, a World Vision report, approximately 1.2 million children live in poverty in our very own country.
4. More and more, people want to donate their time or skills. But often, there is a surplus of volunteers during the holiday season. Try to volunteer after the holidays, when there is a scarcity of volunteers.

Remember that every little thing helps. If everyone donated one dollar in Canada, we'd raise 33 million dollars. So before you dismiss giving the dime or quarter because it seems like so little, think again- every little bit helps.

Here are some links to organizations accepting goods (as well as money):

Salvation Army:

<http://www.thriftstore.ca/british-columbia/donating-goods>

St. Vincent-de-Paul:

http://www.svdpvictoria.com/donate_material.php

Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Greater Vancouver:

<http://www.bigbrothersvancouver.com/clothingpickup/>

The Developmental Disabilities Association (DDA):

<http://www.develop.bc.ca/contribute/donate-clothes.html>