



Angels With Backpacks



SCOUTS CANADA **Our mission**

To contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

What is it ?

Street Kids, Homeless Youth, Panhandlers - by whatever name they might be known as, they are the young people in our communities that have had a difficult start in life and are worthy of being embraced by the Mission and Principals of Scouts Canada.

These youth are no longer just located in our major cities. More and more street kids are originating in smaller towns and communities, and Scouting can play a significant role in supporting these kids in a time of great need.

We could be the catalyst that helps a young person take a different path in life, away from a lifestyle that could decline into drugs, prostitution, and other crimes.

Angels With Backpacks is an opportunity for Scouting members to not only learn about Street Kids as part of their own personal development, but also to use the resources of the Scouting movement to assist other youth in need.

How did this idea start ?

The idea originated with the Walters family in Stittsville, Ontario, and is slowly gaining recognition as a meaningful way to assist homeless youth wherever they may be located.

Wendy Walters may be contacted at wndwalters@hotmail.com if more information is required.

How Can I Support This Idea ?

The concept is simple. It can be accomplished by individuals; Sections; Groups; even families. It is not expensive. It provides a richness of learning opportunities and experiences that everyone - young and old - can benefit from.

In it's simplest form, the goal is to fill a backpack with much needed supplies, and maybe a couple of not so essentials, that will make the life of a street kid just a little easier.

This is not a seasonal activity - these youth can do with assistance throughout the year, not just during the winter months.

Once the supplies have been gathered, arrange to deliver or present it to a local shelter that provides guidance and counselling to community street kids.

There's no limit to your involvement - this could become an ongoing activity initially involving Scouting, but there's no reason for families to not get involved on their own.

What Supplies Are Needed ?

Specific needs can be determined by contacting a local street kids refuge, but in general terms, a typical list of supplies includes the following:

- Toothbrush *
- Toothpaste *
- Fleece Blanket
- Hair brush *
- Socks *
- Scarf
- Hat
- Water Bottle
- Rain Poncho *
- Shampoo *
- Non-perishable food items (instant Hot Chocolate; Cup of Soup; Granola Bar; Juice Packs etc. *
- Undergarments *
- Mittens
- Soap & soap holder *
- Deodorant *
- Flashlight
- Candles & Matches
- Facecloth *
- Razor *
- Eating Utensils
- Thermal Mug *

It should be noted that the need is for new supplies, not second hand - though the backpack would be an exception to that understanding!

A recent shopping trip to gather these basics, marker * above, proved that it can all be gathered for as little as \$25.00 (before tax).

Principles

Duty to God: The responsibility to adhere to spiritual principles, and thus to the religion that expresses them, and to accept the duties therefrom.

Duty to Others: The responsibility to one's local, national and global community members to promote peace, understanding and cooperation, through participation in the development of society, respect for the dignity of one's fellow-beings, and protection of the integrity of the natural world.

Duty to Self: The responsibility for the development of oneself to one's full potential physically, intellectually, spiritually and socially.

How Does This Link With The Scouting Program ?

There are so many ways, only limited by individual creativity. Some ideas that can be considered:

- Invite the Director of a local shelter/refuge to come to a section meeting to talk about the work that they do and the services provided.
- Have the youth research homelessness within and around your community.
- Ask the youth to locate shelters/refuges in your community.
- Supervised visit to a homeless shelter or youth drop-in refuge.
- Provide Community Service hours by assisting in a shelter (*Venturers & Rovers*).
- Invite the Director of a shelter/refuge to talk at your next Group Banquet.
- Invite homeless youth to your Group Banquet.

Information Resources.

Unfortunately, there is far too much information on the subject of youth homelessness - but the following links will start your journey of discovery:

Peterborough	www.peacefulcommunities.ca
Kingston	www.kingston.cioc.ca
Kitchener	www.Rayofhope.net
Oshawa	www.refugeoutreach.com
Campbellford	www.campbellford-crc.ca
Hamilton	www.thelivingrock.org
Toronto	www.loftcs.org
Mississauga	www.thedam.org

Other Resources:

www.Streetkids.ca
www.raisingtheroof.org
www.salvationarmy.ca
www.sudburycf.ca

An opportunity for Scouting members to reach out and assist less fortunate youth in our communities.

