

## MNAEYC-MnSACA Annual Conference Community Service Project for The Family Place

Listed below are some tips on how you can take this great community service opportunity to your kids/families and help provide a great service to The Family Place!

**PREPARATION:** Work with your kids/staff to develop an action plan— this is where you can educate everyone on what The Family Place does. Use The Family Place website to inform yourself on the program, and get your kids and yourself fired up to engage in this opportunity! Some of the things you can do to prepare are:

- Gather definitions of what it means to be helped, or to help others from the kids/families/staff in the program. Post them up for all to read!
- Make flyers/posters explaining what is being collected, for what organization, and the general details of your drive (dates, locations for drop off, etc.)
- Come up with a goal— and brainstorm ways of achieving this! Make it a competition between groups, or set a goal to collect a certain number of items!
- Make a timeline for your plan, and stick to it!
- Be creative— let the kids/staff in your program take control of their ideas, and put them into action!

**ACTION:** This is the actual collection stage! You have done all the work to get here, so now is the time to act! Everyone is prepared and knowledgeable as to why they are collecting these items. This stage allows everyone to utilize what is inherently theirs: ideas, energy, talents, skills, knowledge, enthusiasm, and a concern for others! Make sure you have a plan in place for the storage of the items, and for transporting them to the conference!

- Really work within your building to make sure everyone is aware of your drive!
- Send a letter/email reminder to parents in your program explaining all of the hard work behind the project!
- Take pictures of the whole experience, and create a display or bulletin board that documents the entire process from start to finish!

**REFLECTION:** This step is critical throughout the whole process. This allows everyone involved to experience some personal growth and gain more personal awareness. It allows for the development of empathy, an understanding of how one's actions are affecting those around them, and gives them a larger sense of themselves, their community, and our world. This is a great time for any questions to be answered about homelessness, which can in turn lead to a greater understanding of the purpose of the collection drive!

- Have the kids/families you work with write/draw about what they have learned from this experience.
- Follow up with the kids/families in your program and see if they now have a different definition of helping, and place these next to the original ideas!
- Take quotes from different parents, kids, or staff— about how it felt to help others, what they learned, how it made them feel, etc— and display them in your program.
- Some great resources can be found by searching on line for children's literature on homelessness, or talk to a librarian.

**CELEBRATION:** The final step! This provides evidence on what students/families/staff have gained from their service. You can allow the kids/families/staff to celebrate all that they have done, allow them to be proud of the accomplishment, and share this joy with others! Some of the things you can do are:

- Plan a special activity/event since your goal was achieved— special family hour, special activity, special guest, etc.
- Present those involved with a certificate thanking them for their hard work, or for helping to meet the goal!
- Write personal thank you notes to all those involved!

**MNAEYC's & MnSACA's Annual Conference will be held February 5th and 6th at the St. Paul River Centre. All items can be dropped on either day of the conference and will then be delivered directly to The Family Place following our conference! THANKS for taking the time to help a great organization!**



### Help us serve The Family place

**The Family Place receives over 12,000 Phone calls each month from families needing shelter assistance. Over 60% of their guests are ages new-born to 18. You can find more information about The Family Place by visiting them online at: [www.famplace.org](http://www.famplace.org)**



### Current Needs for The Family Place

**ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW!!!!**

**1. Gift cards in any amount for Target, Lakeshore, or Wal-Mart**

**2. Educational Games & Puzzles for infants through teenagers!**

**3. Baby/Personal care items:**

- Washcloths
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Baby lotion
- Baby Wipes
- Hand Soap
- Baby socks
- Dental Rinse
- Toothbrushes