



PRESS RELEASE

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Live interviews with Executive Director Celeste Edmunds and/or author Richard Paul Evans are available.

The Christmas Box International Charity Calls on Community to Help 1,000 At-risk Utah Kids

(SALT LAKE CITY, UT – March 1, 2023) This season, The Christmas Box International hopes to provide summer and back-to-school items for more than 1,000 at-risk children in Utah, and they need the public’s help. The Christmas Box International is sponsoring its annual Spring into Action Campaign to raise funds and collect in-kind donations for children and families served by The Christmas Box House emergency shelters and resource centers.

Since 1996 The Christmas Box International has provided shelter and essential items for more than 140,000 children. “During the holidays we are blessed to collect toys, blankets, and winter clothing for the kids. The holiday season is the time when most people think of giving and we are grateful. It is the springtime that we begin preparing for our summer and back-to-school needs,” states Celeste Edmunds, The Christmas Box International executive director. “We are seeking tennis shoes, \$50 Visa birthday cards, and school backpacks and supplies.”

As a child who grew up in the foster care system, Edmunds knows firsthand what these youth are going through. “Often, the children we are helping are not looking for much, just a sense of normalcy and belonging—like getting a new shirt with a tag on it, or not having to borrow a bathing suit or pair of shorts in the summer.”

“Safety isn’t seasonal,” said Richard Paul Evans, founder and chair of The Christmas Box International. “We serve children 365 days a year and need to make Christmas happen at our emergency shelters and resource centers for families served by the state within our community.”

Evans said the charity works in partnership with Salt Lake County Youth Services, and the Division of Child & Family Services, and there are online Christmas Wish Lists of the specific needs of children and families. Donations are accepted Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00

pm. Drop-off location sites are available on the website at <https://thechristmasbox.org/wish-lists-2023/>.

The community can learn more about The Christmas Box International and questions regarding needs may be directed to kristin@thechristmasbox.org.

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About The Christmas Box International

- *The Christmas Box International was founded in 1996 by New York Times best-selling author Richard Paul Evans after his first novel, The Christmas Box, became a global bestseller.*
- *The Christmas Box International partners with local, national, and international groups to improve the quality of life for children, teens, and young adults who are victims of abuse, neglect, trafficking, or are facing homelessness.*

The mission is simple: Every child deserves a childhood.

- *Over the last two decades, The Christmas Box International has protected more than 140,000 children. In 2021, The Christmas Box House International served 10,689 youth, providing shelter for more than 11,966 days of care.*
- *The Christmas Box House is an emergency shelter for children ages 0-18 who have been removed from their homes because of abuse, trafficking, or homelessness. Utah has three locations: Moab, Salt Lake, and Ogden. Between all three Christmas Box House locations, an average of 600 siblings each year can stay together.*
- *The Christmas Box International has 18 resource rooms throughout 11 counties in Utah, from St. George to Tooele, to Logan. Christmas Box Resource Rooms are located in a Christmas Box House emergency shelter or a Division of Child & Family Services office to provide resources to caseworkers who have had to remove a child from their home because of abuse or neglect.*