



What to PACK

Please only include the following items in the bag and return no later than Sunday, February 23rd:

Stuffed Animal (preferably weighted):

- Weighted stuffed animals are very therapeutic and highly valued by children. This is optional but encouraged.
- Please do not purchase a stuffed animal so large that it completely fills the bag. These bags serve as a resource for kids to carry some of their personal belongings.

New Toothbrush:

- If possible, please purchase a toothbrush that is elementary age-appropriate for the child.

Fidget Toy:

- Examples of popular therapeutic fidget toys include:
 - Pop-its, Fidget spinners, Stress balls, Stretchy strings, Sensory rings, or Tangle toys
- Please do not purchase a large quantity that completely fills the bag. These bags serve as a resource for kids to carry some of their personal belongings.

A Pair of Pajamas:

- Please ensure the pajamas are new for these children.
- Keep to gender-specific or unisex pajamas based on the tag you picked.

Handwritten Note:

- Please write a message of encouragement and hope.
- Keep the message positive, uplifting, and age-appropriate.
- You may include a Bible verse if you'd like.
- Avoid foul or vulgar language, negative comments, or any references to traumatic experiences.
- No obscene or inappropriate images should be drawn on the card.
- **Write the message in both English and Spanish to make it accessible to all children. If you don't speak Spanish, refer to the Bible verse resource provided.**

We kindly ask that no additional items be added to ensure consistency and meet the specific needs of the children.

Thank you for your support!



Bilingual RESOURCES

We kindly ask that each handwritten card be bilingual to ensure every child feels seen and valued. Bethany Christian Services in Charlotte serves a large number of children who speak Spanish, and we want to share God's love in a way that resonates with them.

Not fluent in Spanish?

No worries! Below are some Bible verses in both English and Spanish that you can include in your card.

English: "You are loved more than you can imagine. God has a special plan for your life!"

Spanish: "Eres amado más de lo que puedes imaginar. ¡Dios tiene un plan especial para tu vida!"

English: "God is always with you. He will never leave you or abandon you." (Deuteronomy 31:8)

Spanish: "Dios siempre está contigo. Nunca te dejará ni te abandonará." (Deuteronomio 31:8)

English: "You are fearfully and wonderfully made!" (Psalm 139:14)

Spanish: "¡Eres creado de manera maravillosa y admirable!" (Salmo 139:14)

English: "You are chosen and dearly loved by God." (Colossians 3:12)

Spanish: "Eres elegido y profundamente amado por Dios." (Colosenses 3:12)

English: "No matter what happens, God is your refuge and strength." (Psalm 46:1)

Spanish: "No importa lo que pase, Dios es tu refugio y fortaleza." (Salmo 46:1)

English: "God has good plans for you, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Spanish: "Dios tiene buenos planes para ti, para darte un futuro y una esperanza." (Jeremías 29:11)

English: "You are precious in God's eyes, and He loves you deeply." (Isaiah 43:4)

Spanish: "Eres precioso a los ojos de Dios, y Él te ama profundamente." (Isaías 43:4)

English: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted." (Psalm 34:18)

Spanish: "El Señor está cerca de los que tienen el corazón roto." (Salmo 34:18)

English: "Jesus loves you and cares for you always." (1 Peter 5:7)

Spanish: "Jesús te ama y siempre cuida de ti." (1 Pedro 5:7)

English: "Be strong and courageous! The Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

Spanish: "¡Sé fuerte y valiente! El Señor tu Dios está contigo dondequiera que vayas." (Josué 1:9)



Parent RESOURCES

This month, we have the wonderful opportunity to Spread Love by partnering with Bethany Christian Services. Together, we'll be packing backpacks for children in foster care. Below, you'll find a Q & A section, prayer prompts, and card ideas.

Why are we partnering with Bethany Foster Care?

Bethany Christian Services is a local Christian Ministry we partner with. Our goal is not only to bless the children through this campaign with backpacks but also to educate our families about foster care and serving those around us. We hope to inspire further involvement, including opportunities to open homes to children in need.

How do I talk to my child about foster care?

- **Use Simple Language:**
 - Explain that some kids can't live with their parents right now and need a safe and loving place to stay.
- **Focus on Empathy:**
 - Encourage them to imagine how it feels to need help and how they can show kindness.

Words to avoid when talking about the foster care system?

(Bold words are to be avoided)

- **"Real parents" or "real family":**
 - Use "biological parents" or "birth family" instead.
- **"Abandoned" or "given away":**
 - Say "placed in foster care" to avoid negative connotations.
- **"Orphan":**
 - Use "child in foster care" to reflect their current situation respectfully.
- **"Bad parents":**
 - Focus on the idea that families sometimes face difficulties and need support.
- **"Foster kids":**
 - Instead, say "children in foster care" to emphasize their identity beyond their circumstances.

Prayer Points:

- **God's Love and Peace:**
 - Pray that children in foster care will experience the love and peace of God in their hearts.
- **For Healing and Restoration:**
 - Ask the Lord to bring healing and restoration to their lives, emotionally and physically.
- **They Feel Seen and Valued:**
 - Pray that these children will feel seen, valued, and cared for by the people around them.
- **They Have Hope and Encouraged:**
 - Pray that they will be filled with hope and encouragement for a bright future.