



DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES

Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



Joette Katz
Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

For Immediate Release
December 14, 2015

Contact: Gary Kleeblatt
Phone: 860-550-6305
Cell: 860-622-9824

More Than One Thousand Toys And Gifts Donated To Children in Foster Care
State Employees from Department of Social Services Play Role of Santa
For Children Separated From Family During The Holiday

HARTFORD – Santa Claus is pleased indeed with state employees from the Department of Social Services (DSS) who have collected more than one thousand toys and gift cards for children in foster care during this holiday season. A number of other public and private employees have also given gifts for children in care this year.

DSS staff are delivering the toys and gifts to offices of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) across the state in time to have social workers bring the toys to the children in time for the holidays.

DCF Commissioner Joette Katz said the effort is a heart-warming demonstration of the caring commitment of so many state employees who dedicate themselves in their professional and private lives to assist those who need help.



Maritza Velez (OD), Justin Smith (KPMG), Yash Acharya (KPMG), Valter Borges (IS Director), David Ciriello (KPMG), Kathy Fortier (Exec. Sec.) and Donna Maitland-Ward (OD)

“The men and women who work for the state show their compassion every day on the job for the children and families who face the most difficult challenges,” Commissioner Katz said. “So it is not a surprise that during this time of giving that they are going to even greater lengths to make sure that children in foster care know they are special and many people care deeply about them.”

--more--

DSS Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby said the toy drive marks another collaboration between the two agencies, which also work together on mental health, substance abuse, housing and other services.

“DSS staff across the state have enthusiastically joined our colleagues at DCF in this very special toy drive,” said Commissioner Bremby. “The generous response by our two agencies’ employees and their families will help make the holidays as cheerful as possible for so many children. We’re very proud of the compassionate spirit of state employees who care for children, families and older adults as their profession, and also go above and beyond in so many ways.”

Both state agencies also thanked employees from KPMG who gave generously to the drive as well.

“Caring for and about children requires the participation and cooperation of many people and organizations,” Commissioner Katz added. “This is a wonderful demonstration of what can happen when public and private forces join together to benefit children who really need us.”

Toys were delivered Friday to Milford and Monday to Hartford. Other offices have received or will receive the donations by the end of this week.

Other individuals also have given gifts for children in foster care this year, including local organizations and employees of the Department of Transportation, who brought toys to the Hartford office last week. Others are helping to assemble toys. For example, later this week, the automotive students from Kaynor Technical High School will be assembling donated bicycles so they can be provided to children in foster care being served by the Waterbury DCF office.

There are about 4,000 children in state care, a reduction of nearly 16 percent compared to January 2011. Anyone who is interested in learning about becoming a foster or adoptive parent is encouraged to call 888-KID-HERO or to visit www.ctfosteradopt.com.

- end -