

Christmas Assistance for Dufferin County helps kids have a fun holiday]

Written By **Brian Lockhart**

Families who are struggling to buy toys for their children this holiday season can get some help through the New Hope Community Church's Christmas Assistance for Dufferin County program.

The church collects toys donated by members of the community through their Toys for Tots initiative every Christmas season.

As each child is different, parents are allowed to visit the church and select something they know their child will appreciate.

To be a part of the program, parents must register and visit the church at an appointed time prior to the toy pick-up date.

You will be required to show proof of income, as well as a way to identify the number of children you have.

This is to verify families that need help and the church does not record this information.

“People can call our family services number to set up an appointment so they can actually come into the building and register because we'll need ID for the children and proof of income,” explained New Hope Community Church Pastor, Roger Barrow. “It's for people who need help at Christmas who can't afford toys or [are] having a tough time. This is for the toys, and we also do food through the Christmas hampers. Last year we gave out over 7,000 Christmas gifts to children in Dufferin County. This initiative is the process whereby they apply for that.”

The initiative also helps and supports groups in both Grand Valley and Shelburne that distribute toys to deserving kids.

“People can come in and register and tell us how many kids they have,” Pastor Barrow explained. “We will assign a shopping day so they can come back to the church when it's filled with toys, and the parents can walk through and do their shopping. We're able to do a shopping model, so the parents can walk through and find something appropriate... All the toys come from the community. We do have a number of locations that collect toys for us around the community.”

Depending on how many children a family has, they can select appropriate gifts in terms of size, for a girl or boy, as well as some stocking stuffers.

To call ahead for an in-person appointment, you can call 519-943-1203 ext 1.

Registration dates will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 29, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Tuesday, Dec. 6, from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Dufferin OPP are involved in Toys for Tots each year and will be in front of the Orangeville Walmart from 5-8 p.m. on Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays to collect new, unwrapped toys, non-perishable food and gift cards. They will be there from Nov. 25 to Dec. 11.

Other locations where people can donate to Toys for Tots includes:

• The Salvation Army New Hope Community Church, 690 Riddell Road

• The Salvation Army Thrift Store, 162 Broadway

• Orangeville Townhall, 87 Broadway

? DUCA Financial Services, 16 Broadway

? LCBO, 510 Riddell Road

? Royal LePage RCR Realty, 75 First Street

? 7-Eleven, 288 Broadway

? YMCA of Greater Toronto, 46 Dawson & 65 McCarthy Street

? 10 and 10 Garden Centre, 634026 Highway 10, Mono

? Dufferin OPP Detachment - 390 C Line, Orangeville

? Dufferin OPP Detachment - 506312 Highway 89, Mono