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## Christmas Shoe Park Party

Our annual Christmas party looked very different this year. Instead of having a large party at our Drop in Center, we brought food, blankets, clothes, socks, beanies, scarfs, mittens, and shoes to the local park to hand out.

We had 222 youth sign up and handed out over 250 pairs of shoes and the majority of the youth had never received shoes from us in the past. That means we are reaching a whole new group of youth this year.

One of the most memorable comments came from a young

man who said "I've never received a wrapped present in my whole life."

Thank you so much for making this Christmas special for our youth. We know what a tough year it was, but you still gave and made a lasting impact on our youth.



## What we accomplished in 2020

- \* 1,199 boxes of groceries
- \* 2,452 to-go meals
- \* 7,021 meals on the streets

**2020 was unlike any other year we've had. We had to adapt and make changes while still serving our youth and community. We are so thankful for the continued support that you showed us this past year. We would not have made it through it without you.**

## A Wrapped Gift?!

I'm not homeless, but I'm poor. My parents have always tried to provide for us, but it's never been easy. They don't have an education, they jump from job to job, and we usually are short on funds every month.

I spend most of my time at the local skatepark. It's an escape from my life and I like the people there. I noticed YouthHope earlier in the year when they continually showed up with food and water and clothes. I always take food from them because I'm not guaranteed food when I get home.

Around October, the people from YouthHope started talking about free shoes for Christmas. The part that really shocked me was that the shoes would be wrapped. In wrapping paper!

I've never received a wrapped gift before. Ever! Living in poverty means gifts are rare. And wrapped gifts are even rarer.

I signed up the first day that I was able to and then waited impatiently until the day of the party.

I showed up the day of the party and ran right up to the cars to get my shoes. When they gave me my first wrapped gift, I didn't want to unwrap it. I wanted to keep it wrapped. I wanted to keep it as a reminder that I'm loved and cared for.

I was supposed to try on the shoes before I left the park, but I didn't. I didn't want to unwrap it. I waited a few days before I opened them and kept the wrapping paper.

I can't wait for next Christmas where I can get another wrapped pair of shoes from YouthHope. Until then, I have a goal to better my life.

I'm going to try harder in school, do my homework, and be a better listener to my parents. I have a goal to be in a better spot next year when I receive my wrapped gift.

YouthHope believes in me and has offered to help me anytime I need it.

Thank you YouthHope for being a constant source of help in my life and for giving me a new sense of belonging and drive.

## Did You Know?

77% of our youth are enrolled in school!

## A Note From the Founder



Happy New Year! I hope you had a great holiday season and were able to rest and get prepared for the new year.

We ended 2020 with handing out Christmas Shoes to our youth and it was a great reminder why YouthHope exists. We heard from several youth that this is the only gift they receive all year long. We also noticed that many of the youth that signed up for shoes were brand new to YouthHope. I am so glad we have been able to

reach new youth this past year, but also breaks my heart that there are so many at risk and homeless youth in our community. We hope to continue to serve them this year and give them practical steps to help them be successful in life.

One of our goals this year is to continue to find at-risk youth who need help and then be able to offer them the programs that will help them succeed.

We are hoping we can continue some fundraisers this year and

hopefully open up our Drop-in Center later in the year.

Thank you so much for the support that you gave last year throughout all of the unknown. We are so thankful for each one of you and we could not reach so many youth without the support that you give.

To keep up to date on what's going on, make sure to like our Facebook page and follow us on Instagram @youthhope.