

EARLY GIFT GUIDE

Consider giving real 'gifts that keep on giving'

(StatePoint) While the latest video game can make a big hit, the most meaningful gifts are often ones that help those in need. The holidays are the perfect time to give a charitable gift that could make a profound difference in someone's life.

Donating your time or money to a charity in honor of a loved one is a great way to reach out and help others this holiday season:

Work at a Soup Kitchen

Many people have made working at a soup kitchen a holiday tradition. Something as simple as giving the homeless and hungry a hot meal and a full stomach can make a person's day. Contact your local soup kitchen to see how you can volunteer. If you don't have time to help out in person, consider donating non-perishable goods, as many soup kitchens have a food pantry as well.

Rescue Gifts

You can also help provide essentials for people in need by giving a "Rescue Gift" in the name of friends and family. Rescue Gifts are charitable gifts that support humanitarian aid work and represent the kinds of emergency relief and services that the International Rescue Committee (IRC) provides to refugees and others uprooted by war and disaster.

Rescue Gifts, such as a pair of baby goats, can help put a family in drought-ridden Somalia back on the road to recovery by helping to start a new herd. Or the gift of a year of school can help supply the tuition, books and other materials to send a young Afghan girl to school.

Help Children

The perfect gift can help brighten up the life of a child in even the most dire situations. There are an estimated 45 million people around the world who have been uprooted from their homes by

war, persecution and disaster, many of them children. Sometimes, the need for love and reassurance is just as great as the need for food and shelter.

Consider giving the International Rescue Committee's Teddy Bear and Creativity Kit to a child on behalf of friends or family as a gift this holiday. In crisis zones like Syria, children hold tight to their beloved teddy bears, finding emotional support in a simple toy. A Rescue Gift like the Teddy Bear and Creativity Kit can provide three children with their own teddy bears, as well as a toy and coloring kit that will help them cope with the psychological distress of war and upheaval. For more information, visit www.Rescue.org/Gifts.

"Support from the purchase of Rescue Gifts allows the IRC to address crisis places like Syria, in addition to offering ongoing support and lifesaving care for people around the world affected by catastrophes that have



A child holds stuffed toy animals distributed by the International Rescue Committee.

Photo by StatePoint Media

slipped from the headlines," says Nancy Haight, VP of External Relations at the IRC.

While conventional presents are often soon forgotten, a charitable gift can have a lasting effect beyond the holiday season.



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