

When Your Mentee Has Basic Needs

At Seedling, we recognize the heartfelt worry and dismay of mentors who learn that their mentees and their families are in dire economic circumstances. *Seedling's Promise* continues to encourage you to observe the guidelines about modest (\$10) gifts in order to avoid awkwardness for the mentee or the caregiver. The best intentions about individuals or groups adopting families at the holiday season can have unintended outcomes. But there are other ways that you can help if you choose.

The best resource to consult is the staff at your mentee's school. Schools that have Parent Support Specialists or Family Resource Centers are well-equipped to tell you how to participate anonymously in various programs. You may always consult your School Contact for guidance. The programs below are typically advertised within the schools, but you might like to know about them, too:

COATS FOR KIDS

Coats for Kids is in its 28th year and strives to ensure every needy child in Central Texas has a warm winter coat. **Coats for Kids** works with the Texas Health & Human Services Commission, numerous Central Texas school districts, and several social service agencies to identify children who are eligible for this important program. This year's event will occur on **December 13th** from **8:00a.m. - 3:00p.m.** at the **Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road, 78704**. The deadline for donations is **Wednesday, December 10**.

Visit **The Junior League Austin** website for more information: <http://www.jlaustin.org/coats>

OPERATION BLUE SANTA

Austin Police Operation **Blue Santa** is a 501(c)(3) – non-profit, community based corporation, organized by the Austin Police Department, with support from the Austin Fire Department, Austin Energy, Austin Water Utilities and Texas National Guard. Each year they provide each family we serve with a full holiday meal and wrapped Christmas gifts for each child under age 14. This service to citizens of Austin began back in 1972 serving about 20 families; this year, they expect to serve over 3,800 families.

To learn more about families in need can apply for assistance or how you can help the cause, visit the **Blue Santa** website: <http://www.bluesanta.org/>

BROWN SANTA

Brown Santa is a community service program of the Travis County Sheriff's Department. The program has been providing holiday assistance to families in Travis County who live outside the geographical city limits of Austin, beginning with 25 families in 1982 to over 1500 in the current year. The adults in the families apply at the area Rural Community Centers, closest to their residence, for assistance.

To find out more about **Brown Santa** visit their website: www.brownsanta.org

TEXAS 211

Year-round, an excellent source of social service information is **Texas 211**. At this site, one can access a comprehensive database of social services by zip code or other search parameters. You may also dial 211 if you have a specific question.

Visit the **Texas 211** website: <https://www.211texas.org/cms/>