

Bridge Communities  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **When You Give a Little You Get a Lot**

Host a GIVING Party for your child's next birthday

For many of us, our children's birthdays have become occasions of getting stuff... LOTS of stuff. This excess can make us wish for simpler, less materialistic celebration we remember from when we were kids. Birthdays can be overwhelming for the child and the parents. Birthdays today run the risk of being less about celebrating a special day and more about GETTING.

But Bridge Communities has the opportunity to help our children increase their understanding of empathy for others, begin a tradition of generosity and the desire to give to those who have much less.

As you plan your child's next birthday, consider hosting a GIVING Party to benefit the client families in the Bridge Communities Transitional Housing Program. The GIVING Party birthday party guests can participate in activities from the "What's It Like to Be Homeless" education curriculum written by Bridge Communities staff. In addition guests will receive token gifts from a Bridge "goodie bag." All of these activities and gifts can be merged with your traditional party plans and are provided at no charge. In lieu of traditional birthday gifts, the guests are asked to bring retail gift cards or rolls of quarters for a Bridge Communities family or child.

Bridge Communities' executive director Joyce Hothan recently accepted nearly \$400 in gift cards from 13-year old Casey Cardona. Casey stated, "I just asked my friends to buy gift cards so that I could give them to the families at Bridge. I already have so much stuff and I just thought that the moms and kids at Bridge could use stuff a lot more than I need it. It felt really good to help." Several other kids and teens have also donated their birthdays to help homeless families served by Bridge. They have asked their friends to bring rolls of quarters, gift cards and household goods. All of these items are greatly needed and valued by the Bridge client families.

For more ideas as to how you can host a Bridge GIVING Party and to download the educational curriculum and GIVING Party invitations, please visit our website at [www.bridgecommunities.org](http://www.bridgecommunities.org) or call Amy Van Polen at (630) 545-0610, ext. 12.

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Bridge Communities.. *connecting homeless families with a better future* ... is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with offices in Glen Ellyn, whose mission is to provide transitional housing to homeless families in DuPage County through partnerships with faith-based and community

organizations who provide mentoring relationships which root homeless families into local neighborhoods. In the past 21 years, Bridge Communities has helped over 2000 people cross the bridge from homelessness to permanent housing.