

## **Guidelines for conducting a **food drive at a grocery store** for Ephrata Area Social Services (EASS):**

### **Things to consider...**

#### **Where to hold the drive:**

- Weaver's Market is probably the best.
- Martin's Country Market is good too.
- Redner's Warehouse Market has allowed the East Cocalico Lion's Club to collect food in the Ephrata store for the past two years.
- Weiser's Market in Akron is a possibility as the Akron Lion's Club has conducted drives there in the past. Outside of the store only.
- Wal-Mart is open to food drives as well...outside of the store only.

**Decide on the start and quit times...**this will help to determine the number of volunteers you will need to conduct a successful drive. Optimum coverage would be two people handing out request sheets and two people accepting and packing boxes. At Weaver's & Redner's there are two means of egress. Start and quit times will determine the number of people you need. Experience has shown that a two hour shift for the volunteers is most desirable. You can figure on collecting about 5 boxes an hour.

**Call the store...**you want to conduct the food drive at to get a date and permission. Establish a contact name. And clear up any issues regarding protocols and expectations.

**Be flexible on dates...**as there could be someone else collecting food or using the space on the date your group has decided on before talking to the store

**What to ask for...**needs for **specific food items** change from week to week in the EASS food bank. Call EASS 7 to 10 days prior to your food drive to get an updated list of food needs

**Create a hand out...**listing the food needs acquired from EASS. Also briefly describe your group or organization and that you are collecting food for the EASS food bank. The handout should be no more than 2 inches by 8.5 inches in size. That way you can get 5 to 6 on a regular sheet of paper.

**Set up a collection site...**within the foyer of the store. A card table is good. You will want to stack your collection boxes three or four boxes high with the top one being open in order to receive goods.

**Pack the boxes...**level, or less than, so that the lid can be placed on and be flush. Don't over fill boxes. Stacking and storage can be a challenge in the EASS warehouse.

EASS needs the **paper and plastic bags** received during the drive. We use them to pack the food orders for our food bank families. You will also receive monetary donations. Simply hold onto these contributions and pass onto those coming out to help pick up the full boxes if that be the case. Otherwise you can drop off when you deliver the food.

**Boxes**...EASS uses Banana boxes to store food. We have an abundance of these boxes available for use during food drives. Please call us to make arrangements to pick them up or to have them delivered for your use during the food drive.

**Pick up and/or delivery of food**...as alluded too, it is possible to make arrangements with EASS to have your collected food picked up at the collection site(s). We normally have someone available Mon. through Sat. to help out with this task.

**Thank you for considering collecting food for the EASS food bank.** We serve the Ephrata and Cocalico school districts. You will be collecting non-perishable food items. If someone gives you milk or other perishable food items ask the store if you can stow them somewhere until someone comes or it's time to bring in your food. Also it is not uncommon for someone to ask questions about what we will or won't accept outside of the food drive. We have been offered venison, eggs, corn and other vegetables. Please get a name and a phone number for us. And give them our number.

## **The Holiday Exchange Program:**

EASS coordinates the exchange of gift and thanks giving in the Ephrata and Cocalico region. Churches, businesses, organizations and individuals provide items to families that EASS has signed up for the program. Those registering could be familiar to us or may come from the social workers in the schools. Gifting could include food and presents or one or the other.

For those interested in getting involved, the program works like this; beginning in September we start signing up families wanting to be included in the Holiday Exchange program. The application asks for all pertinent demographic information as well as information on what the children might like to have Santa drop off on Christmas morning.

When you call for names or families we will give to you the actual hard copy application given to us by the applicant. We, of course, retain copies here in the office. With the application in hand you decide what, from the Wish List, you can purchase for the children and family. You don't have to get everything on the list! We ask only that you let us know what you can do so that we may re-designate the family, if need be, to fill the gap.

It's okay to call the family to discuss any questions you may have and to finally make arrangements to give the gifts to your Holiday family. We implemented this approach, you making the direct contact with the family in 2004 with outstanding results. Feedback from sponsors was very positive.

**If this is something that interests you call us at (717) 733-0345**