



Marine Toys for Tots Program



Marketing Guide for Coordinators

2025 Season

Introduction

Thank you for undertaking such a noble cause! You will find that running a local Toys for Tots chapter is both challenging and rewarding, knowing your efforts are directly responsible for supporting families and children in need within your community.

Toys for Tots is our Nation's flagship children's Christmastime charity. As an official activity of the U.S. Marine Corps, there is no job more important for a Coordinator than to honor and protect the image and reputation of both the Marine Corps as well as the Toys for Tots Program. The conduct of your chapter, the associations created, and the manner in which you publicly interact through the media, are critical factors that shape the perception of the American public. That perception contributes to a National Program awareness that maintains sentiment as America's favorite children's Christmastime charitable cause, as well as promotes the Marine Corps' community outreach objectives.

As a Community Action Program, it is paramount that you "engage" with your community to facilitate success. The local media should become your most important partner – they will be able to widely disseminate your support needs to call the public to action. Once your message is circulated, the American public will not let you fail in your mission of supporting children in need.

There is a wealth of information contained in your SOP that offers checklists and recommended timelines to solicit support and promote your local chapter. This guide is provided to augment your SOP and hopefully simplify your efforts in engaging with local media and businesses by offering a brand guide and commonly used marketing tools.

Semper Fi!



Ted "Migs" Silvester Colonel,
USMC (Retired)
Vice President Marketing & Development Marine Toys
for Tots Foundation

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Toys for Tots Brand Guidelines

The Founder and the Logo Creator

The Founder of Toys for Tots was the late Colonel William L. Hendricks, USMCR (Retired). In the middle of the 1940's, Bill Hendricks was the Director of Public Relations for Warner Brothers Studio and concurrently a Major in the Marine Corps Reserve. In the fall of 1947, Bill, with the assistance of members from his Marine Training Unit (MTU), collected and distributed toys to the children in need of Los Angeles, CA. Bill Hendricks' pilot project was such a success that the Marine Corps adopted it and expanded it nationwide in 1948. As a personal friend and as a favor to Bill, Walt Disney designed the first Toys for Tots poster which included a miniature three-car train that was subsequently adopted as the Toys for Tots logo.



First Toys for Tots Poster
(Designed by Walt Disney)



Colonel William Hendricks
USMCR (Retired)
Toys for Tots Founder



Walt Disney
Creator of Toys for Tots Logo



The Toys for Tots Name & Logo are Registered Trademarks

The Toys for Tots name and logo have been duly registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce (Name - Reg. No. 1,680,712; Logo – Reg. No. 1,929,756). Accordingly, no individual or organization can use either the Toys for Tots name or logo without the authorization of an approved local Coordinator of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program or by a representative of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

Identity Guidelines

In its 78-year history, Toys for Tots has become the country's premiere children's Christmastime charitable cause. The success of the Program in the number of children supported year after year can be directly attributed to the generosity of the American public (and the hard work of our Coordinators!). The Toys for Tots logo and a U.S. Marine wearing his/her Dress Blue uniform has become the face of the Program and is imperative that our name and reputation be maintained by the high standards the Marine Corps has lived up to for so long.

Because the Toys for Tots brand should never be compromised, we created this guide to assist your marketing initiatives that will help to preserve the integrity of our image.

Approval for Logo and Name Use

Local Toys for Tots Coordinators (whether appointed by the Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, or approved by the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation), may authorize local businesses to use the Toys for Tots name and logo in connection with annual local U.S. Marine Reserve Toys for Tots chapters used principally for the purpose of obtaining toy donations within the Coordinator's area of responsibility.

When a local area business, media or individual request is made to use the name or logo, be sure to insist on reviewing and approving prior to publishing. We all must remain protective of the image and reputation of the 78-year-old Program and that of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Use of name and logo for Regional or National undertakings may only be authorized by the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

Name usage:

When typed out in copy, Toys for Tots is presented in three words.



Correct Usage












Incorrect Usage

Proper & Improper Logo Usage

As the primary expression of the brand, it is important to ensure you are using the correct logo versions presented below.

No product bearing the Toys for Tots name or logo shall be offered for sale and no marketing materials using the Toys for Tots name or logo shall be distributed until submitted and approved by you, the Coordinator, for local use, or to the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation for Regional and National use.

Appropriate Logo Options

Please note, the Toys for Tots logo with yellow stars was used to commemorate our 50-year anniversary. While still available for your use, we would prefer using the original logo as our primary expression of the brand as often as possible.



Logos are available on our website: https://www.toysfortots.org/promotional_media/Default.aspx The Foundation can also provide logos in a variety of file formats including: EPS, JPG, PDF, TIF and PNG.

Logo Misuse

Due to the broad range of application requirements, our logo is vulnerable to misuse. Many times, a well-intentioned treatment of our logo can be categorized as misuse. This usually occurs simply due to lack of awareness of the correct logo use standards.

There are endless ways to engage your creativity and have fun creating holiday materials to promote a Toys for Tots event and/or raise awareness among the public. Following some basic guidelines will help preserve the integrity of the Toys for Tots brand and sustain the public's positive and trusting perception of the Program.



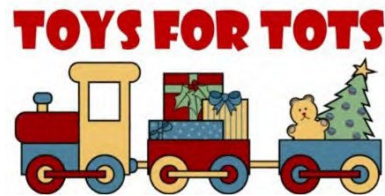
Do not add additional trains or change the words in the trains



Do not outline the logo



Do not change the shape of the train



Do not use alternate text or trains



Do not authorize the use of the USMC Eagle, Globe, and Anchor to external organizations (requires permission from Headquarters, Marine Corps (HQMC))

Interaction with the Media

As a Community Action Program, it is critical to engage as much of your community as possible leading up to and throughout the holiday season. The best way to accomplish this is with the assistance of local media.

The media is your most important partner and can be your best friend during the Holiday Campaign. The American public has a profound respect and admiration for the U.S. Marine Corps and the Toys for Tots Program. Using the local media to deliver your “Call to Action” to the public will not go unanswered – the American public will answer your call with support, but you must be able to circulate your message.

Your SOP contains valuable information on how to start and effectively manage a local chapter, including timelines and checklists. Here are a few extra tips for finding and working with local media:

Connect with local TV & Radio Stations:

WHY: Connecting with local media enhances your ability to inform your community about your campaign. Toys for Tots’ activities offer the media positive, uplifting stories supporting the local community during a continuous news cycle that can sometimes be dominated by politics and negative news. News stations will be excited to share the impact Toys for Tots delivers during the holidays and can even assist your campaign by asking the public to help overcome challenges such as finding a warehouse.

WHO: Many Coordinators have long-standing partnerships with local TV and radio stations. If you are a new Coordinator or do not have relationships with local news outlets, consider reaching out to Nexstar Media Group, a National Corporate Partner of Toys for Tots. Nexstar Media Group is looking to expand its partnership with Toys for Tots, assisting local chapters in implementing robust media campaigns with their local station.

HOW:

1. **Identify your Nexstar station** by visiting <https://www.nexstar.tv/stations/> and navigate to the station’s website serving your area.
2. **Locate the Director of Sales:** This is your key contact. Their role is crucial for implementing a co-branded campaign. Their contact information can typically be found on the station’s website or through a simple inquiry call to the station.
3. **Initial communication (Early September):**
 - a. Send an introductory email to the Director of Sales clearly stating your affiliation with Toys for Tots and referencing the National partnership with Nexstar.
 - b. Express your interest in collaborating on the upcoming holiday campaign, highlighting the mutual benefits of a strong community partnership.
 - c. Request a meeting to discuss campaign specifics and timelines.
4. **Key message to Director of Sales:** "Toys for Tots has a nationwide partnership with Nexstar Media Group to implement robust campaigns with your station. We propose a two-week live news segment campaign for toy collections, featuring Marines on-site during major newscasts at premier sponsor locations. This initiative will significantly raise awareness, encourage local businesses to become collection sites, and establish a consistent, impactful presence for Toys for Tots. In addition to these live segments, we anticipate a complementary promotional commercial campaign highlighting key dates and calls to action (e.g., 'Visit our website to become a toy-receiving family!' or 'Become an official toy collection site or sponsor!'). We believe this comprehensive approach will maximize our collective impact for children in our community."

WHEN: Here is what a potential Toys for Tots media campaign timeline could look like working with a Nexstar station:

- **Campaign Kick-off & Partnership Solidification (Early September - Early October):**
 - **September 1 - October 15:** Local chapters initiate outreach to Nexstar Director of Sales, securing commitment for live segments and promotional spots. Begin identifying and securing premier corporate sponsors for on-location live shots.
 - **October 1 - October 31:** Finalize agreement with Nexstar stations on live segment schedules (specific dates, times, sponsor locations) and promotional spot rotation.
- **Recipient Solicitation Window (Mid-October - Mid-November):**
 - **October 15 - November 30: "Help Us Reach Every Child!"**
 - Begin active solicitations for qualified recipients:
 - **Local philanthropic organizations:** Churches, schools, social service agencies, and other non-profits that distribute toys.
 - **Individual families:** Establish clear qualification criteria and a streamlined application process.
 - **News Hook:** Emphasize the importance of early registration for families and organizations to ensure toys are matched appropriately. Promotional commercials on Nexstar should drive traffic to your local chapter's recipient application portal.
- **Toy Collection Campaign & Business Sign-Up (November - Mid-December):**
 - **November 1 - December 10: "Be a Local Hero! Host a Toy Drop-Off!"**
 - **November 1 - November 20:** Aggressively recruit local businesses to become official toy drop-off locations. Provide clear instructions, signage, and promotional materials.
 - **November 15 - December 10: "The Great Toy Collection Begins!"** "This is the primary window for public toy donations.
 - **Nexstar Live Segments:** Implement the agreed-upon two-week live segment schedule, featuring Marines on-site at premier sponsor locations during major newscasts (morning, noon, evening). This creates consistent on-air visibility.
 - **Promotional Commercials:** Nexstar will run spots encouraging donations, highlighting drop-off locations, and showcasing the impact of Toys for Tots.
- **Toy Collection Deadline & Distribution Window (Mid-December - Just Before Christmas):**
 - **December 10 - December 15: "Last Chance to Give!"**
 - Final days for toy collection. Publicize this deadline widely through all channels, especially Nexstar.
 - Begin final collection from all drop-off locations.
 - **December 16 - December 23: "Delivering Holiday Magic!"**
 - Sort, organize, and distribute collected toys to registered families and organizations.
 - **News Hook:** Invite Nexstar for special segments showcasing the toy distribution process, emphasizing the joy brought to children. This provides heartwarming content for their holiday news coverage.

Remember: Proactive communication, early planning, and leveraging local TV and radio stations will be key to a successful Toys for Tots campaign. Nexstar is looking to expand its partnership with Toys for Tots and can significantly enhance your media outreach through co-branded media campaigns within your community.



TFT Media Assets available for public use can be found on our website and include:

- Marketing & Branding Guides
- TFT Logos
- Promotional Posters
- TV & Radio PSA Commercials
- B-Roll
- Photos
- Foundation Videos

<https://www.toysfortots.org/news/marketing-promotional-materials/toys-for-tots-digital-media-library/>

Tips for a Successful Media Interview:

Preparation is Key:

- **Know your objective and key messages:** Identify 2-3 essential points you want to convey during the interview, and support them with facts, data, or anecdotes.
- **Anticipate questions:** Prepare for potential questions, including challenging or critical ones, and craft concise, thoughtful responses.
- **Practice your responses:** Rehearse your key messages and answers, preferably with someone who can provide feedback. Focus on sounding natural and conversational rather than robotic.
- **Prepare sound bites:** Craft memorable phrases or short sentences that summarize your main points, as they are often used in broadcast interviews.
- **Gather supporting materials:** Have relevant documents, statistics, or visual aids readily available, especially for print or TV interviews.

Be punctual: Arrive on time or early for your interview. **During the Interview:**

- **Listen carefully:** Pay close attention to the interviewer's questions to ensure you understand them correctly.
- **Speak clearly and concisely:** Use plain language and avoid jargon or technical terms. , Tailor your language to the audience.
- **Stay on message:** Stick to your key points and use bridging techniques to redirect the conversation if needed.
- **Be honest and transparent:** Answer questions truthfully, even when acknowledging shortcomings or mistakes.
- **Stay calm and professional:** Don't get defensive or lose your temper, even when faced with challenging questions.
- **Maintain eye contact:** Look at the interviewer, not the camera, unless instructed otherwise.
- **Use effective body language:** Maintain an open posture, use natural gestures, and smile to convey confidence and enthusiasm.
- **Show appreciation:** Remember to thank and recognize those who assisted with your

campaign. After the Interview:

- **Follow up:** Thank the journalists for their time and offer to provide additional information if needed.
- **Leverage the interview:** Share the interview on your website or social media to extend its reach and impact.

Important Considerations:

- **Assume you're always "on the record":** Anything you say, even in casual conversation before or after the interview, can be published.
- **Don't ask to see the story before it runs:** This conflicts with journalistic ethics; instead, make yourself available for fact-checking.

By following these tips, you can deliver an effective interview, ensuring your message is conveyed clearly and accurately.

Impact Capture for Events

For 78 years, Toys for Tots has been the Nation's premier Christmastime children's charity, made possible by the unwavering support of our generous donors. We want to highlight the incredible impact of our donors' contributions on children in need across the Nation. We need your help gathering meaningful content—stories, photos, and insights—that will bring these experiences to life through impact stories, social media posts, marketing materials, and more!

Why is the collection of content important?

We want to share compelling stories that highlight the impact of our supporters' generosity on children in need. Our supporters love seeing real-time accounts of their contributions in action, so we aim to provide as much event content as possible to bring these moments to life! So...what do we need from you?

We want to hear about the impact your event had on the community!

To help us craft compelling marketing materials, we've put together a list of key details we'd love to receive—the more information, the better

- Facts and figures
 - Organization name/location/mission statement, etc.
 - How many children were supported?
 - How many volunteers?
 - How many toys, books, and games were distributed?
 - Were there other items distributed?
- Quotes from volunteers, families/parents, children—names aren't necessary; we want to make it generic.
 - What does this distribution event mean to children, families, and community?
 - What were the emotions of the children receiving the gifts?
- Quotes from the organization's staff—you can ask for their name and permission to use it in marketing materials.
- Why was this event so beneficial to the community and the children?
- Has this community faced hardships recently? (Natural disasters, economic hardships, etc.)

Please forward your details for an impact story to the contacts below and do not hesitate to contact them should you have any questions.

MaryKate Cobb

Communications Manager

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Kendra Mungra

Social Media Manager & Content Creator

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Marketing Aids

Whether working directly with the media, or assisting your local business sponsors, below are some marketing aids commonly used and often requested to facilitate your campaign.

- “About” Toys for Tots narrative (often requested by local business supporters)
- “Boiler Plate” Narrative (often requested by local business supporters)
- Quotes (often requested by local business supporters)
- Public Service Announcement (Script for Radio)
- Media Advisory Format
- Press Release Format
- Social Media Tips
- Ready-made creatives / advertisements

“About” the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program

Toys for Tots, a 78-year National charitable Program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides emotional support and hope to children in need during Christmastime. The toys, books, and other gifts collected and distributed during the holiday season by Marines and volunteers offer these children recognition, confidence, and a positive memory for a lifetime. We believe it is such experiences that help children in need become responsible citizens and caring members of their community. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.

“About” the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity, is the sole fundraising, funding, and support organization for the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. The Foundation was created at the behest of the U. S. Marine Corps and provides support in accordance with both a Marine Forces Reserve Force Order, and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, who directs the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. The Foundation has supported Toys for Tots since 1991 and supplemented local chapters with tens of millions of toys and books valued at over one billion dollars. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.

Toys for Tots “Boiler Plate” Narrative

Toys for Tots, a 78-year National charitable Program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides joy, comfort, and hope to children in need across the Nation through the gift of a new toy or book at Christmastime. The impact of these toys and books offers children in need recognition, confidence, and a positive memory for a lifetime. It is such experiences that help children become responsible citizens and caring members of their community. Since 1947, the Program has evolved and grown exponentially, having delivered hope and the magic of Christmas to over 314 million economically disadvantaged children. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is a not-for-profit organization authorized by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Department of Defense to provide fundraising and other necessary support for the annual Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.



Quotes

Quotes are often requested by local sponsors from you as the Toys for Tots Coordinator and can serve as a powerful marketing component adding credibility to an event or simply announcing a new partnership. They are typically included in a press release or a social media announcement.

Here are a couple examples of quotes / slogans that seem to work well for our supporters...

"We are very pleased to welcome **COMPANY NAME** as a local sponsor of **YOUR AREA** Marine Toys for Tots Chapter," said **YOUR NAME**, the Toys for Tots CHAPTER NAME Coordinator. "Their community service goals certainly align with those the Marine Corps has promoted for nearly 78 years through our Toys for Tots Program." "With their generous support we will be able to fulfill the Christmas holiday dreams of many children in need in the **YOUR AREA**, who otherwise might be forgotten."

Finding a present under the tree on Christmas morning is an experience every child deserves," said **YOUR NAME**, the Toys for Tots **CAMPAIGN NAME** Coordinator. "**COMPANY NAME** has certainly done more than its fair share to help us bring that joy to children whose families have suffered so much. This has been an especially difficult year to raise toys and donations, so **COMPANY NAME**'s effort in support of the Marine Toys for Tots program was a real godsend."

If you have a local sponsor that contributes to your campaign with a cash donation of \$5,000 (or more) or donates gift-in-kind with toys valued at \$25,000 (or more), the Foundation Marketing Department would be happy to provide a quote as well as publicly recognize that sponsor nationally. Simply send your request to the Vice President, Marketing & Development, at the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, Ted Silvester. His contact information is located at the end of this guide.

Media Announcements

Public Service Announcement Examples (Script for Radio)

PSA ONE

HELLO, I'M (STATE NAME), ASKING YOU TO JOIN ME IN SUPPORTING THE 2025 MARINE CORPS RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. YOU CAN HELP MAKE THIS A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS FOR A CHILD IN NEED IN YOUR COMMUNITY BY DONATING A TOY TO THE CHAPTER NEAREST YOU. DON'T HAVE TIME TO SHOP? VISIT WWW (DOT) TOYS FOR TOTS (DOT) ORG TO MAKE A CASH CONTRIBUTION. THE MARINES/VOLUNTEERS WILL SEE THAT YOUR TOY FULFILLS THE HOLIDAY DREAMS OF A CHILD WHO OTHERWISE MIGHT BE FORGOTTEN. BE A HERO. SUPPORT TOYS FOR TOTS.

PSA TWO

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A LITTLE CHRISTMAS...FOR 78 YEARS THAT'S BEEN THE HOLIDAY BATTLE CRY OF THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. HI, I'M (STATE NAME) ASKING YOU TO HELP THE MARINES/ VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE CHRISTMAS DREAMS OF A CHILD IN NEED COME TRUE. PLEASE GIVE A TOY TO A CHILD YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW. OR VISIT WWW (DOT) TOYS FOR TOTS (DOT) ORG TO MAKE A CASH CONTRIBUTION. YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT HOW GOOD IT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL. HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

PSA THREE

CHRISTMAS IS THE SEASON OF HOPE AND JOY FOR MOST, BUT NOT FOR MILLIONS OF OUR NATION'S ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED. I'M (STATE NAME) ASKING YOU TO SUPPORT THIS YEAR'S MARINE CORPS RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY. AS THE MARINES/ VOLUNTEERS CONDUCT THEIR ANNUAL CAMPAIGN, I ENCOURAGE YOU TO JOIN THEM AND DON'T LET THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS PASS BY THE HOME OF A SINGLE DESERVING CHILD THIS YEAR. DROP OFF A TOY OR VISIT WWW (DOT) TOYS FOR TOTS (DOT) ORG TO MAKE A CASH CONTRIBUTION. MERRY CHRISTMAS.



Media Alert

Do you need to alert the media of an upcoming event? Media Alerts should be one page in length and should be brief but compelling and informative to generate interest. Make it clear there are visual opportunities for TV & photographers. Below is a format you might consider using as a guide.

Media Alert Template

TITLE OF EVENT

Who: Toys for Tots Unit and Local Supporter / Donor

What: Describe Event

When: Date and Time

Where: Location of Event

Why: Describe impact to Community

Opportunity: Interviews with Marines/ Volunteers from Toys for Tots Unit Visuals of U.S. Marines collecting toys and loading them onto a tactical military vehicle

Contact: Name, Title,
Phone, email

About the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program

Toys for Tots, a 78-year National charitable Program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides happiness, hope, and emotional relief to children in need at Christmastime. The toys, books, and other gifts collected and distributed by Marines and volunteers offer these children recognition, confidence, and a positive memory for a lifetime. We believe it is such experiences that help children in need become responsible citizens and caring members of their community. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.



Press Release

A Press Release is what you distribute at the event where reporters are already with you. A PR is written as the story you would like to see written after the event has taken place. It is the “story” you would have featured by a media site. The Press Release should be short and concise. Begin by stating the announcement of your event with an impactful quote. Then, provide bullet points on what the event is going to accomplish and other impactful information. Then provide the Marine Toys for Tots Boiler Plate.

Press Release Example:

The Marine Toys for Tots Program Announces 2024 Campaign Results

Triangle, VA (January 2025) The Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, the U.S. Marine Corps’ premiere Community Action Program, can provide a lifetime of security and hope to a child or family in need. Through the support and dedication of the American public, the generosity of our Corporate Sponsors, and the tireless efforts of our Marines, Coordinators, and volunteers, we collectively distributed over 30 million toys, books, and other gifts to nearly 13 million economically disadvantaged children in 2024.

While our core mission is to bring joy and hope to children at Christmastime—to include Native American children living on remote Reservations through our Toys for Tots Native American Program—our support extends far beyond the holidays. Children face challenges year-round, which is why we remain a steadfast year-round force for good. Through programs like our Literacy Program, Foster Care Program, and Disaster Response and Recovery Program, we are dedicated to providing ongoing support to children in need—paving the way for a brighter future every day.

In 2024, the Program:

- Provided optimism and joy to nearly 13 million disadvantaged children
- Expanded our Foster Care Program by providing support to over 519,000 at-risk children, including those in Foster Care
- Provided 123 truckloads of emotional relief gifts to our non-profit partner, Good360, to be distributed to children in need across the Nation through the Spring and Summer months
- Distributed nearly 3 million books to disadvantaged children through our Toys for Tots Literacy Program to include over 570,000 books to Title I funded schools
- Provided 10,000 toys, books, and games to nearly 3,000 children in Henderson County, North Carolina, whose families were impacted by Hurricane Helene
- Supported over 237,000 Native American children through our Toys for Tots Native American Program
- Increased our highly desirable Program to Support Ratio to 98 to 2

Toys for Tots Contact: Ted Silvester, Colonel USMC (Ret)
Vice President Marketing & Development
Marine Toys for Tots Foundation
(703) 649-2021
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Multi-Media Assets: <https://www.toysfortots.org/news/marketing-promotional-materials/toys-for-tots-digital-media-library/>



About Marine Toys for Tots

Toys for Tots, a 78-year National charitable Program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides joy, comfort, and hope to economically disadvantaged children across the Nation through the gift of a new toy or book at Christmastime. The impact of these toys and books offers economically disadvantaged children recognition, confidence, and a positive memory for a lifetime. It is such experiences that help children become responsible citizens and caring members of their community. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is a not-for-profit organization authorized by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Department of Defense to provide fundraising and other necessary support for the annual Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.



QR Codes

Quick Response Codes, or QR Codes, are a useful tool for making a local chapter more mobile device friendly and increasing awareness in the community. A QR Code is scanned and read from the camera on a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet. Typically, it contains information for a web site URL and will direct the person to the website once they scan the QR Code.

The Foundation provides QR Code capabilities as part of the Local Website System. Once logged into your Local Website Control Panel, the local chapter QR Code section can be found under Settings in the Control Panel.



In the QR Code section, Coordinators will find two auto generated QR Codes, and a QR Code Generator for campaigns to create their own QR Codes.

- The **first auto generated QR Code**, when scanned, will take users to the home page for their local chapter website.
- The **second auto generated QR Code**, when scanned, will take users to the online donation form for their local chapter.

The QR Code Generator will create a QR Code for any website URL entered into the provided textbox. The QR Code image can then be saved, copied, or printed depending on use.

QR Codes can be used as needed by the local chapter. Typical use of a QR Code would be:

- Printed on local flyers and attached to local donation boxes.
- QR Codes can also be included in electronic communications such as emails.
- Additionally, QR Codes can be provided to local sponsors and supporters for their use on their website(s), storefronts, and electronic communications to generate awareness about the local chapter.

Any questions pertaining to the use of the QR Codes should be directed to the Foundation's IT Support Team using a Support Ticket found on the Technical Support Center here: <https://lco-admin.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-admin/support.aspx>.

Ready-Made Ads

Below are some examples of ads that can be repurposed for your needs or given to local supporters of your chapter. If you prefer to create your own, the slogans below are offered to spark your creativity!

Slogans:

- Every Child Deserves a Little Christmas!
- Bringing the joy of Christmas to children in need!
- Finding a present under the tree on Christmas morning is an experience every child deserves.
- Help us fulfill the Christmas Holiday dreams of economically disadvantaged children who otherwise may have been forgotten!
- Marine Toys for Tots is committed to motivating children in need to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders.
- In 2024, the Marine Toys for Tots Program provided optimism and joy to nearly 13 million children in need.
- Toys for Tots – 78 Years Strong!
- Toys for Tots – A Year-Round Force for Good!

**MORE THAN A CHRISTMASTIME CHARITY...
A YEAR-ROUND FORCE FOR GOOD**

**U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
Toys for Tots Program**

Marines & Volunteers supported 12.9 million
disadvantaged children last year.

TOYS FOR TOTS

**Help us become an
even STRONGER
force for good in 2025!**

www.toysfortots.org


www.toysfortots.org

U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program
A YEAR ROUND FORCE FOR GOOD
WE NEED YOUR HELP!



2024 Was a record-breaking year, and the Marine Toys for Tots Program supported over 12.9 Million children in need. With your help, we can reach even more this coming year!

You can deliver a message of hope by donating TODAY!


www.toysfortots.org
 U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program






U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program
A Year-Round Force for Good!
We need your help this Hoilday Season and beyond!

2024 Was a record-breaking year, and the Marine Toys for Tots Program supported nearly 13 Million children in need. With your help, we can reach even more this coming year!

You can deliver a message of hope by donating TODAY!



www.totsfortots.org

www.toysfortots.org





We're shopping for millions of children in need this year...



... BECAUSE EVERY CHILD deserves a little Christmas.

LAST YEAR, THE MARINE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM FULFILLED THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY DREAMS OF NEARLY 13 MILLION CHILDREN IN NEED.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO REACH EVEN MORE UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN THIS YEAR.

This holiday season, please support your local Toys for Tots Program

For more information
Please Visit our website

WWW.TOYSFORTOTS.ORG

Social Media Tips and Policy

There is no job more important than honoring and protecting the image and reputation of both the Marine Corps and the Toys for Tots (TFT) Program. The conduct of your chapter – the associations created and the manner in which you publicly interact through media with any of those aforementioned entities – are critical factors that shape the perception the American public has of TFT and the Marine Corps.

Why Should Our Organization Care About Social Media?

With nearly 250million Americans on social media, it's the perfect tool to promote the Toys for Tots Program to support our mission, expand brand awareness, and increase donations.

This social media policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media platforms for TFT Coordinators and related associations that represent and interact with local chapters. For the purposes of this policy, social media refers to any digital platform and commentary, including but not limited to blogs/websites, Wikipedia, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and any additional digital platforms that may arise. This policy complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology and the internet for the purpose of connecting the American public to expanding brand awareness, donations and reach for TFT.

TFT Coordinators are free to publish on their local chapter's social media pages and interact with community members in accordance with this policy. All Coordinators and volunteers are subject to this policy and should identify their affiliation when posting online for topics related to or representing TFT.

1. TFT Brand, Tone, and Voice

The American public, TFT Coordinators, and volunteers reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and viewpoints. Please do not say anything contradictory to the TFT mission on any digital platform or media publication. Do not be afraid to be yourself but do so respectfully. There is ZERO TOLERANCE for ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc. TFT is an APOLITICAL, NON-RELIGIOUS organization, therefore engaging with or creating content about such topics is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

The TFT voice and tone is one that is unbiased, politically and religiously neutral while maintaining an educational, friendly, safe, and welcoming personality.

- **Controversial Issues:** If you see misrepresentations made about or on behalf of TFT in the media or on any digital platform, please contact your Regional Campaign Managers. Always do so with factual regard and respect.

2. Privacy and Honesty

It is acceptable to dialog with your online community, but please be careful not to publish confidential information that impedes the privacy of volunteers, Coordinators, or toy solicitors.

- **Protect Privacy:** Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set as 'public' in order to allow anyone to see profile information, posts, and comments (see TFT Foundation's official social media pages as an example). Be mindful of posting private or sensitive information. Volunteers, partners, or solicitors should not be cited or referenced without approval. This is especially important when publishing photos of children involved with TFT or solicitors – parent or legal guardian permission is REQUIRED, whether verbal or otherwise. Never identify anyone by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of an engagement unless given permission. It is acceptable to blur faces as needed to protect identities or use a photo that obscures them from recognition when permission is not granted. Please use non-identifying pseudonyms for a solicitor/volunteer/child (e.g., Customer 123) as needed.
- **Be Honest:** DO NOT start pages anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Local chapters MUST use real names that identify the community they serve and their TFT representation/affiliation. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be cautious about disclosing details that compromise safety and privacy.
 - Websites/External Links: Any external links or websites that dictate your audience off of a social media platform to a separate page for donations, FAQ's, how to get involved, etc. must be of a "toysfortots.org" domain name.

3. Respect Copyright

It is essential to respect copyright laws and principles of fair use or fair dealing, including those that apply to content owned by others as well as Toys for Tots' own copyrighted materials and trademarks. Avoid quoting more than brief excerpts of someone else's work and always provide proper attribution to the original author or source. Whenever possible, link to the original work instead of reproducing it in full

4. Disclaimer

Many social media users include a disclaimer stating whom they work for, while clarifying that they are not speaking in an official capacity or on a national level. This is good practice and highly encouraged for local chapters.

The following disclaimer is encouraged on local chapter profiles for each social media platform (either in bio, or about tab):

"TFT " _____ " Local Chapter - not official Toys for Tots Foundation account. Visit: toysfortots.org for more info. Inappropriate comments/spam will be deleted."

Social Media Best Practices

1. **Post Scheduling:** Pre-writing and scheduling posts in advance can save you time and reduce daily stress! It helps you stay proactive rather than scrambling to decide, “What should I post today?”
 - a. Meta Business Suite contains a free content scheduler for Facebook and Instagram.
2. **Integration:** Include your website, and links/handles to all your social media to cross-promote and help your page grow while keeping your local community informed and building trust.
 - a. **Tailor Content:** Each platform is different. Instagram is highly visual, Facebook is more story-related where impactful narratives perform well, and Twitter has a shorter attention span with a higher frequency daily posting rate. Consider this when posting to your pages and tailor content as often as possible to ensure the highest rate of success.
 - b. **Repurpose Best Content:** Since users aren’t online all the time, republishing your best content with updated titles and wording can help reach new audiences. Even existing followers may see it as fresh and engaging.

Another effective approach is to completely reshape your content. For example, turn a standard post into a Reel, or repurpose it later as a Story. Performance varies by platform, so diversifying your format can boost engagement.

- i. Donors want to see the impact of their contributions and be recognized for them. Consistent posting—especially real-time photos from current campaigns/recent events—keep your audience engaged and reinforces your organization’s presence. Content that is visually compelling and emotionally resonant is more likely to be shared, helping expand your reach and drive increased support and donations. Be sure to tag and thank relevant parties.
- ii.
- c. **Content Development:** Use the 80/20 rule. 80% of the content you post should be helpful, informative, and valuable to your audience, and 20% should be promotional or fundraising employing a hard-sell (“volunteer today” “donate toys today” etc.).

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact/follow/comment on corporate sponsors' pages. • Interact/follow/comment on local sponsors' pages. • Interact/follow/comment on other TFT campaign pages. • Share 2-3 posts weekly. • Cross-Promote social media pages. • Create a LinkTree to provide quick action links on your pages for your audience. • Reshare stories for your local campaign represented in the media. • Have photo release disclaimer at entrance of campaign location and/or let photo release forms from parents when possible. • Shoutouts: Tag and thank/acknowledge donors/volunteers in your posts • TAG OR COLLABORATE WITH THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS ON POSTS TO INCREASE EXPOSURE <p>To add a secondary collaborator in a Facebook post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Facebook, log in as an admin or editor for your Page, and begin creating your post. • Navigate to Photo/video and upload video. • Click on Video options. • Click on Tags and collaborators. • Enter the collaborator's name or URL into the search bar, then select your collaborator. • Tap Save to complete your Facebook collabs post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact with any comment/post that discusses religion, politics or current events. (It is recommended that you hide or remove these comments when necessary.) • Use a fake username/bio. • Have a username/bio that leads the audience to believe your local campaign is functioning on a national, official Toys for Tots Foundation capacity. • Insert links that dictate audience towards websites outside of the "toysfortots.org" domain. • Promote products. • Post any images without consent or without filled out photo release form. • Advertise for local companies/donors on behalf of their product/business. • Avoid posting inflammatory or critical comments/messages using the Toys for Tots name/page on the National page, in groups, on others' posts, or on any public forum.

Photo Releases

In some cases, obtaining individual photo releases from parents may not be possible. To ensure all photos are cleared for use, please display the disclaimer below, or create a sign of your own, at the entrance of your local chapter location and in other visible areas. This helps inform participants that photos taken on-site may be used on social media and other promotional platforms.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOTAPING **IN PROGRESS**

By attending this event, you hereby authorize & consent to the use of your image - by the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, its corporate partners & direct marketing agencies.

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation sponsors & agencies will only use these images in conjunction with their support of and relationship with Toys for Tots.





Facebook Guidelines

1. **Page Monitoring:** Who monitors your page?

Whoever is assigned to monitor your page must have the time to be vigilant of all posts/interactions regarding your local chapter, including but not limited to: comments, complaints, direct messages, collaborative posts with other organizations or campaigns, etc. That individual must be able to respond to any inquiries appropriately and in a timely manner.

2. **Admin Roles:** Facebook has 5 different administrator roles.

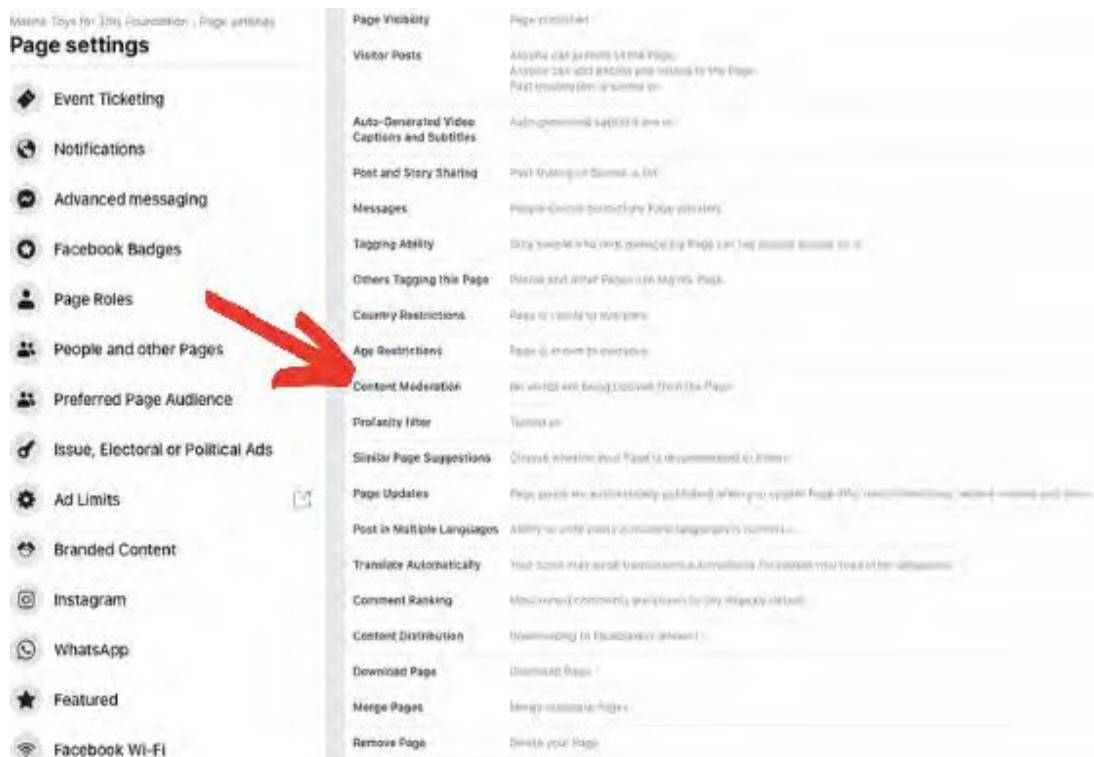
The roles - Admin, Editor, Moderator, Advertiser, and Analyst - each have different capabilities.

- *Admin:* The highest level of access can manage all aspects of the page. This role can add/remove people from other roles. Admin access is **required** not only to start a page but also to transfer page ownership if the most recent admin will not be participating in the next campaign season.
 - If a current admin will not be participating in the next campaign season: they must give admin access to another volunteer who will guarantee to participate next season, and the new admin must remove the old one, so they no longer have access to the page.
- *Editor:* This role has the same access as an Admin in terms of creating/scheduling content, responding to comments to mitigate public discussion, etc., but does not have the ability to assign/remove page roles as needed.
- *Moderator:* This role cannot post any content to the page but can respond to comments made on the page in order to monitor public discussion and interact as needed.
 - Note: Social media is social – interaction, responding to comments, sharing daily stories, etc. will trigger the algorithm to prefer to show your page's content above others.
- *Advertiser:* This role can only create ads and view page insights to monitor the performance of the page impacted by the ads created.
- *Analyst:* This role has the lowest access possible. They are restricted to only viewing page insights and cannot create ads or interact on behalf of the page.

IMPORTANT: Carefully consider role assignments when managing your page. The two most critical roles are: content creators and page monitors. If you need technical or social media support, consider recruiting a local student aged 16 or older who may be seeking volunteer hours or experience for their resume. Be sure to provide them with a copy of the social media guidelines and clearly outline the expectations for appropriate content and interactions on the page.

3. **Content Moderation:** Does your page get a lot of critical commentary or spam?

If so, try opening "Content Moderation" under page "Settings," and enter a few key words or phrases that will automatically hide certain comments from your page.



4. Fan and Follower Interaction:

This is your opportunity to clearly communicate what types of interactions your Facebook page will support—and which it will not. Will your page handle toy requests? Share drop site locations? Promote Corporate Partners? Advertise local events? Address complaints from toy recipients? Or would you prefer to direct them to an external source, such as your local chapter’s website page?

- a. Consider creating a FAQ post and pinning it to the top of your page. This can reduce repetitive inquiries and make it easier for people to find the information they need. In the FAQ, clearly state which types of requests or issues your page will not address. For example, you might specify that toy requests, event inquiries, or locating drop sites will be handled only through official channels such as your local website—not through Facebook messages or comments.

Use positive interactions to set the tone: encourage constructive comments and guide followers to the appropriate resources or links as needed. This helps maintain a helpful and respectful community environment.

5. Community Guidelines:

Followers will understand that your Facebook page is designed to promote the Program and highlight activities, rather than provide a venue for grievances. Consider providing a pinned post with pertinent information as well as the rules of your page. Short and concise guidelines show responsibility to the users and can protect the Toys for Tots brand. Consider including a “Dos and Don’ts” format that shows your audience what will get their interaction deleted and what will be positively reinforced with interaction. Please DO NOT engage in any religious/ political/government/military dialog and remember that links to outside entities such as GoFundMe, Indiegogo, etc. are STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

6. Likes/Interactions:

Liking National Corporate Sponsors (such as Disney, Hasbro, Five Below, etc.), as well as Local, Regional, and Event Sponsors, can help build valuable connections and may lead to increased exposure when they reciprocate. However, you should not promote individuals, products, or services that are not official sponsors. It is important to avoid giving the impression that Toys for Tots endorses or promotes any goods or services outside of its approved sponsorships.

7. Terms of Service

Facebook changes its terms of service often. Unless you follow the company's blog or frequently check their Page Guidelines, it can be difficult to keep track of what is permitted at any given time. To access the latest Terms of Service, simply type "terms of service" into the Facebook search bar..

Facebook Optimization

- Like ***facebook.com/toysfortots***
- Like our National Corporate Sponsors and your Local Sponsors to help build connections
- 2000-character post limit
- Use photography that captures the Toys for Tots mission.
 - Check out <https://www.shutterfly.com/ideas/photography-for-beginners/> for tips/tricks on the rule of thirds, exposure, etc.
- For optimum exposure, post 3-4 times per week
- You can check your individual account's analytics for posting-time data, but generally:
 - Mon – Fri anytime
 - 9:00 AM, 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM tend to generate more engagement.
 - Weekends between 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
- Create Facebook Events and invite your audience/friends to attend to promote donations, drop-offs, etc.
- Use Milestones to display history and progress.
- Email the TFT Foundation's Social Media Manager and Content Curator, Kendra Mungra, at (kendra.mungra@toysfortots.org) when you establish a FB page. The Foundation will then "like" your page and share content to extend your social media reach. Use the collaborator option to share posts with the Foundation page. Here is the link to the how-to- HYPERLINK "<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1139754056567362?id=203539221057259>"<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1139754056567362?id=203539221057259>



X Guidelines

1. Follow **@ToysForTots_USA**. The Foundation will reshare your posts to increase exposure.
2. Follow the accounts of our National Corporate Sponsors. (A complete list of our Corporate Sponsors is provided on our website: <https://www.toysfortots.org/corporate-sponsors/>)
3. Follow local businesses and mention the ones who have supported your campaign in the past (tagging their X handles, whenever possible)
4. Post about local events, but please:
 - a. Do not interact with any negative tweets.
 - b. Do not interact with political/religious tweets.
 - c. Do not allow people to request toys, schedule local events, or find local toy collection locations via your X. Everyone is encouraged to follow the official TFT Foundation channels for such requests.
 - d. Do not endorse people, products, or services UNLESS it's a Corporate Sponsor. We are not an advertising firm – we are a children's charity.

X Optimization:

- Post 1-4 times daily or more (being most active geographically is key)
 - Mon - Fri: 6:00 AM, 12:00 PM, 3:00 PM, and 9 PM
 - Friday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 AM or 7 PM is best.
 - Weekends: Anytime
- Use hashtags to expand your reach.
- Use links (for news, blog, and donation pages).
 - To shorten: Create custom links at bitly.com, don't worry, it's free!
- Keep posts conversational and leverage photos (be sure to have signed releases on file if you plan to use photos when fundraising).
- Tag relevant handles in posts.
- Share requests for donations, volunteer openings, sponsorship opportunities, and calls to action.



Instagram Guidelines

Make a Business Profile

- Press “Edit Profile” → scroll to “Profile Information” → “Category”, then select “Nonprofit”.
 - Interested in connecting to your campaign’s Facebook Page?
 - Go back to “Profile Information” → select “Page” and follow the steps to either Connect or create a Facebook Page with your Instagram.
- Add a donation link in your bio.
 - You can do this by either typing in the direct link to the website section of your bio or by creating a free account for your page on “LinkTree” to insert multiple links and help your audience navigate to essential actions/questions.
 - Note: Instagram does not allow clickable links in post captions, and its algorithm may reduce the visibility of posts that include links in captions. To maximize exposure for your local chapter, place important links in your bio and direct followers to them in your post captions.
- Tag local businesses in posts for added exposure and mention your key volunteers (with their permission) and tag them.
 - Get everyone involved in your local campaign to follow/share content from the account.
- Use relevant hashtags.
 - 30 is the max. A combination of smaller, more niche tags (#claycounty) and bigger, more general keywords (#nonprofit) will yield the best results to target the right audience.
- Post often– keep content authentic and relatable.
 - IG is a visual platform, therefore real, high-quality photos will get the most traction.
- Please DO NOT post photos of children without written parental/guardian consent.
- The best time to post for nonprofits is usually during the week in the afternoon, but experiment and see what works best for your campaign geographically.
- Follow **@toysfortotsofficial** and tag us! We will share your posts and interact to increase exposure.



TikTok Guidelines

The Marine Corps currently **DOES NOT sanction** the use of the TikTok platform. The Foundation adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Marine Corps. At this time, we do not allow the official use of TikTok.

If you have any further questions regarding proper social media implementation to optimize your local campaign's success, please contact Toys for Tots Foundation Social Media Manager & Content Creator, Kendra Mungra (kendra.mungra@toysfortots.org)

Local Websites

We live in a world of digital information, and you have a great source to disseminate your campaign info through your local website. Too many local websites do not have basic information posted. **Simplify your campaign** by adding basic, but vital information on your local website. **Arming the public with key information in a clear, concise manner will significantly reduce incoming phone calls & emails.**

Ensure your website is updated with basic info to educate your community:

Key Dates:

- Registration to receive Toys (From – To)
- Toy Distribution (From – To)
- Cannot accept toys after (Date)
- Volunteers Needed (Dates & Locations)

Clear & easy path to submit requests:

- Request Toys
- Become a toy drop site
- Request support for event
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Request a Box
- Collection Box Full – Request Toy Pick-up
- Listing of official toy drop-off locations

Many businesses conducting toy drop sites are willing to bring collected toys to you but cannot find your warehouse address & operating times posted.

- Address & Times for public to deliver locally collected toys.
- Chapter Contact Info available to public (Phone & Email)

Fundraising Tips

There are many Federal and State laws governing non-profit fundraising which are strict and often change. As a 501(C)(3) organization, the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation answers to the IRS, State Attorney's General, Financial Audit, Charity Oversight Agencies, and HQ Marine Corps and MUST ensure all fundraising activities are in compliance. Local fundraising by Coordinators is allowed but is NOT the principal role of the Coordinator. Local chapter focus is to collect and distribute toys to children in your community. Should you decide to engage in fundraising activity, here are some tips to help guide you:

Fundraising Do's

- Encourage local businesses / supporters to host a fundraising event benefiting your campaign. Hosting an event assumes big liability and often involves underwriting and insurance requirements. There is also a PR aspect that could create negative sentiment (i.e., auctioning a firearm). Shift these responsibilities to a hosting organization.
- Set up a booth at local events: fairs, carnivals, races, conventions, etc.
 - Visit your Chamber of Commerce to find out about local events.
- Generate support by offering interaction with Marines at events. The public loves its Marine Corps so ensure the type of activity will not present the Marine Corps in a negative fashion.
- Use MTFTF Peer-to-Peer online fundraising tools (not 3rd party fundraising platforms).
- Be sure to advertise through your local media sources and highlight local sponsors on your website. (Keep your local website updated with key dates and contact info!).
- Contact the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation with fundraising questions.

Fundraising Don'ts

- **Do not** use 3rd party fundraising platforms to solicit donations (GoFundMe)
 - They are not authorized for use with the Toys for Tots name and/or logo. They collect fees; lack oversight; anyone can raise funds claiming to support charity and keep the money.
 - Instead of using 3rd party platforms, the Foundation can provide you with a unique URL / link to track local online donations.
- **Do not** enter into any contracts. You could jeopardize our registered status within your state. The Foundation works with fundraising counsels, not solicitors.
- **Do not** engage in e-mail solicitation or telemarketing for fundraising.
- **Do not** collect, write down or maintain any credit card info of supporters.
- **Do not** host a raffle, rather ask another organization to host it. Conducting gambling events (raffles) can affect a charity's standing with the IRS, and therefore, Toys for Tots does not conduct raffles. Raffles are events often requiring registration with a State Gaming Commission and or underwriting / signing contracts to conduct a raffle. There are many raffles hosted by other organizations choosing to offer the proceeds to benefit Toys for Tots, but the sponsoring organization is responsible for all aspects of the raffle so as not to jeopardize our standing with the IRS.
- **Do not** try to sell or exchange donated toys.

Remember, Marines in uniform are not allowed to solicit cash donations. They may, however, stand by a collection jar and accept cash gifts on behalf of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

Proper Use of Donated Goods (Includes locally donated toys & GIK)

- You **may use** donated goods only as direct charitable donations to people in need.
- You **must not** sell, trade, barter, or otherwise transfer any donated goods in exchange for money, property, or services. Prohibited transfers include listing donated goods for sale or trade on websites, in stores, at flea markets, or in any similar manner.
- You **must not** return any donated goods to the manufacturer or to any retail store.
- You **must not** use donated goods for raffles, auctions, or any fundraising activity.
- You **must not** accept anything of value (including voluntary donations) in exchange for the donated goods.
- You **must not** give any donated goods to volunteers, officers, directors, employees, or contractors for personal use.

It is imperative that we honor the donor's intent. Coordinators and volunteers are not permitted to sell, exchange, or barter donated toys. They must be distributed to families with children that we serve.

Sample Speeches

Sample Speech # 1

SINCE 1775 THE MARINE CORPS HAS DEFENDED FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY - A DUTY THEY HAVE FULFILLED WITH HONOR, COURAGE, AND COMMITMENT. AS THEY HAVE FULFILLED THAT DUTY, MARINES HAVE EARNED A WELL-DESERVED REPUTATION FOR TOUGHNESS.

BUT THERE'S ANOTHER SIDE TO THE MARINE CORPS - THE SIDE THAT SPRINGS FROM A GENUINE CONCERN FOR THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY LIVE, AND A DEEP COMPASSION FOR THE CHILDREN IN NEED OF AMERICA. THAT'S THE SIDE THAT EXEMPLIFIES THE SPIRIT OF THE MARINE CORPS. THAT SIDE IS FOUND IN THE U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM.

IN 1947, A GROUP OF MARINES RECOGNIZED A NEED IN THIS COUNTRY AND FOUND A WAY TO FILL IT - TOYS FOR TOTS. AS HISTORY HAS PROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN, MARINES DO NOT DO ANYTHING HALFWAY. OVER THE YEARS, MARINES HAVE DISTRIBUTED OVER 708 MILLION TOYS AND BROUGHT THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS AND A MESSAGE OF HOPE TO MORE THAN 314 MILLION CHILDREN. JUST THINK OF THAT. OVER THREE HUNDRED ONE MILLION CHRISTMAS AND YEAR-ROUND DREAMS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. TODAY, MARINE CORPS RESERVE UNITS COLLECT AND DISTRIBUTE AN AVERAGE OF 25 MILLION TOYS, BOOKS, AND OTHER GIFTS TO TEN MILLION ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN EACH YEAR AT CHRISTMAS. THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE ACCOMPLISHMENT. IMPRESSIVE AS THOSE NUMBERS ARE, THEY DO NOT TELL THE WHOLE STORY. EVERY YEAR THERE IS A GAP BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN NEEDING TOYS AND THE NUMBER OF TOYS AVAILABLE.

WE SOMETIMES HEAR - ESPECIALLY WHEN A POTENTIAL DONOR IS TRYING TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO OR MORE WORTHY CHARITIES, ONE OF WHICH IS TOYS FOR TOTS - THEY SAY: "IT'S JUST A TOY. WITH ALL THE PROBLEMS FACING THE CHILDREN IN AMERICA TODAY, WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES A TOY MAKE?"

WELL, I SUBMIT THAT THE MARINE CORPS DISCOVERED THE ANSWER OVER 78 YEARS AGO. THE ANSWER IS "HOPE". THINK ABOUT IT, HOW MANY TIMES CAN A CHILD MISS OUT ON THE SIMPLE JOY OF A TOY AT CHRISTMAS BEFORE HE OR SHE BEGINS TO LOSE HOPE?

WE KNOW FROM THE SMILES ON CHILDREN'S FACES AND FROM THE GRATEFUL APPRECIATION OF THEIR PARENTS, THAT THE SIMPLE GIFT OF A SHINY, NEW TOY - SOMETHING THAT MANY TAKE FOR GRANTED - CAN MAKE A TREMENDOUS DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD. HOPE IS THE KEY, AND HOPE IS WHAT THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE IS GIVING TO CHILDREN IN NEED OF AMERICA THROUGH THE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM.

Sample Speech # 2

IT ALL BEGAN IN DECEMBER 1947, WITH A HAND-CRAFTED DOLL. THE WIFE OF MARINE RESERVE MAJOR BILL HENDRICKS MADE THIS DOLL AND ASKED HER HUSBAND TO DELIVER IT TO AN ORGANIZATION THAT WOULD PRESENT IT TO A CHILD IN NEED ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

MAJOR HENDRICKS COULD FIND NO AGENCY TO PROVIDE SUCH A SERVICE. TO HELP FILL THAT VOID, MAJOR HENDRICKS AND MEMBERS OF HIS LOS ANGELES MARINE RESERVE UNIT COLLECTED AND DISTRIBUTED 5,000 TOYS TO CHILDREN-IN-NEED OF LOS ANGELES DURING CHRISTMAS 1947. THE SEED WAS PLANTED AND TOYS FOR TOTS WAS BORN. THE FOLLOWING YEAR THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE ADOPTED THE PROGRAM AND COLLECTED AND DISTRIBUTED TOYS IN 74 COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE.

THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION SITES HAVE BECOME AN IMPORTANT AND FAMILIAR ELEMENT OF THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY LANDSCAPE. TO MANY PEOPLE, CHRISTMAS IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT MARINES, IN DRESS BLUES, COLLECTING AND DISTRIBUTING TOYS TO THE CHILDREN IN NEED OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

ANYTHING YOU ENJOY DOING, YOU GENERALLY DO VERY WELL. SO, IT IS WITH THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE AND THEIR TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. OVER THE YEARS MARINE RESERVISTS HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL AND HAVE WORKED TIRELESSLY TO MEET THE EVER-GROWING DEMAND FOR TOYS THAT ENABLE PARENTS, WHO MAY NOT OTHERWISE BE ABLE, TO PROVIDE THEIR CHILDREN WITH A CHRISTMAS TOY AND TO ANSWER THEIR CHILD'S CHRISTMAS DREAM.

THE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM HAS GROWN TREMENDOUSLY SINCE ITS INCEPTION. TODAY, TOYS FOR TOTS SERVES OVER 880 LOCAL COMMUNITIES COVERING ALL 50 STATES, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GUAM, PUERTO RICO, AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. NOW, MORE THAN EVER, TOYS FOR TOTS NEEDS THE ASSISTANCE OF MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO HELP US MAKE IT BETTER THAN EVER.

BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO US. IT'S A WAY YOU CAN GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY AND TO ITS CHILDREN IN NEED. YOU CAN SUPPORT TOYS FOR TOTS BY DONATING A NEW, UNWRAPPED TOY AT A TOY COLLECTION SITE NEAR YOU, OR BY ASSISTING US WITH TOY COLLECTION, SORTING, OR DISTRIBUTION. HELPING TO COORDINATE SPECIAL TOY RAISING FUNCTIONS IS ANOTHER WAY OF GETTING INVOLVED.

LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE INSTRUMENTAL IN THE SUCCESS OF THE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. YOU CAN GENERATE OR PURCHASE MEDIA ATTENTION FOR THE PROGRAM, SPONSOR A TOY RAISING EVENT, PROVIDE AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE LIKE PRINTING OR TRANSPORTATION, OR SIMPLY ALLOW YOUR PLACE OF BUSINESS TO BE A TOY DROP OFF LOCATION.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WE ARE LOCAL PEOPLE HELPING LOCAL FAMILIES. THIS IS THE CHRISTMAS MISSION OF YOUR MARINE CORPS RESERVE UNIT.



Potential Sponsor Letter Sample

Dear (**Potential Sponsor**):

As the holiday season begins to draw near, you can be sure that your local U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Coordinator is gearing up for this year's Toys for Tots campaign. Since 1947, Marines have been making Christmas wishes come true for economically disadvantaged children.

Toys for Tots in (**area name**) makes a difference in the lives of the children in need of our community. Last year approximately (**xxx**) children in the (**area**) received toys through Toys for Tots. This year we expect the need to be greater than last year, and we are asking you to help.

The local Toys for Tots chapter works very hard to make Toys for Tots a success, but we could never do it without the help of concerned citizens and business leaders. We rely on local businesses for assistance in several areas, including:

- Providing toy collections sites
- Assisting in the transportation and storage of toys
- Helping to promote Toys for Tots in the media
- Underwriting special events
- Providing a product or service suitable for auctioning
- Assisting with such critical services as printing

(**Mr. or Ms. Potential Sponsor**), for the many volunteers who make Toys for Tots possible year after year, Toys for Tots embodies the true spirit of Christmas. The gift of a shiny, new toy - something that most children take for granted - means to a child in need that someone cares, that he/she hasn't been forgotten, that Christmas hasn't passed him/her by.

The Marine Corps Reserve believes that "Every Child deserves a Little Christmas," and we are asking you to help us send disadvantaged children of our community a message of hope this Christmas through the gift of a new toy, book, or game. We will be happy to meet with you to discuss the Toys for Tots Program in greater detail, and how (**company name**) can help.

Sincerely,

Toy for Tots Coordinator



Marine Toys for Tots Foundation Marketing Points of Contact

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and Gunny Bear

Direct Your Local Supporters How to find their local Toys for Tots Coordinator

- Visit our website at: www.toysfortots.org
- Click "**Find Your Local Toys for Tots Program**"
- Enter your state then enter your county.
- That will take you to the local Toys for Tots Coordinator website serving that area. From there, you can then submit a request to:
 - Become a toy drop site.
 - Offer pro-bono warehouse space.
 - Provide vehicle support.
 - Provide other support as requested by the local Coordinator.

As a seasonal charity, our local Toys for Tots Coordinators and their websites are often inactive until the end of summer; however, Marine Toys for Tots Foundation staff members are available year-round to assist with your charitable giving.

Additional Information can be found on our website.

Website: www.toysfortots.org

Be sure to *Like* and *Follow* us on our Social Media sites:



Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/toysfortots>



X: @ToysForTots_USA



Instagram: @[toysfortotsofficial](https://www.instagram.com/toysfortotsofficial)





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