



# LEADING YOUR GROUP



PROJECT LEADER GUIDE 2022



## PROJECT LEADER GUIDE

# Thank You!

Thank you for the role you play in Operation Christmas Child (OCC). Without Project Leaders, the participation of churches, schools, community groups and businesses that fill shoeboxes for OCC simply wouldn't happen!

The information in this Guide will equip you to lead, organise and motivate your group towards the best possible experience with OCC. You'll find:

- Ideas for how your church, school or group can participate, as well as helpful steps for running OCC, including who to contact if you need help or a question answered (see pages 3)
- How to order and download OCC resources such as brochures, posters and pre-printed shoeboxes (see page 4)
- Key points to help you present to your group (see pages 7-8)
- Frequently Asked Questions (see pages 9-10).

I hope you will find this Guide beneficial. The team of OCC staff and volunteers are passionate about supporting you as best we can!

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Kinney'.

Phil Kinney  
National Manager  
Operation Christmas Child Australia/New Zealand



## STEP 1. REGISTER & CONNECT

If you haven't already, register your details at [www.samaritanaspurse.org.au/occ-register](http://www.samaritanaspurse.org.au/occ-register) (or scan QR code) and your local OCC Representative or Regional Ministry Leader will get in contact with you to ensure you have all you need and help answer any questions you may have.

### ENTER YOUR VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVE'S DETAILS HERE:

Name

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Phone

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Email

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Scan this  
QR code to  
register your  
details

## STEP 2. PLAN

Decide how you would like to run OCC in your church, school or group and set a date.  
For example;

### CHURCH\*

- Organise a **Celebration Sunday** during National Collection for shoeboxes to be dropped-off and prayed over;
- Encourage your Bible Study Group/s to pack shoeboxes and/or organise a packing event where everyone brings enough items to pack a shoebox together;
- Organise a Youth Group Packing Event where everyone brings enough items to pack a shoebox together or bring packed shoeboxes to pray over etc.

### SCHOOL\*

- Decide if it will be a whole school, grade or class activity;
- Organise a Fun Day wearing Christmas shirts for students to bring items to fill shoeboxes together, or bring packed shoeboxes that can be collected etc.

### GROUP

- Organise a packing event with friends and/or family where they all bring items to pack a shoebox;
- Host a meal and ask friends/family to bring \$30pp to Pack A Shoebox Online;
- Organise a shopping day with friends/family and gather items to pack shoeboxes etc.

\* If you haven't spoken to your leadership about OCC, please refer to page 11 for tips.



## STEP 3. ORDER RESOURCES

Plan for how many people in your church, school or group that will participate, and prayerfully set a goal for how many shoebox gifts you would like your group to pack to help with ordering resources. We have downloadable and printed resources available for you to use and you can get them from our website.

- [operationchristmaschild.org.au](http://operationchristmaschild.org.au) – for Australia
- [operationchristmaschild.org.nz](http://operationchristmaschild.org.nz) – for New Zealand

All resources are provided freely, with the exception of our pre-printed shoeboxes (PPSBs). We ask for a 50¢ donation per PPBS to help cover the significant cost associated with producing and distributing this item (alternatively you can use a regular shoebox).

Donations for PPBSs can be made online, or in person to your local OCC volunteer or Regional Ministry Leader.

### Resources Available:

- “How to Pack a Shoebox” Brochure
- A3 Poster
- Fridge Magnet
- Pre-Printed Shoeboxes
- OCC Videos\*
- Social Media & Website Graphics\*
- Church Bulletin Insert\*
- Colouring-In Pages\*
- Participation Certificate\*

All items marked with an \* are available online only as downloadable resources. Please download or order the resources your group requires via the website [www.samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-resources](http://www.samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-resources) (or scan QR code).



Scan this QR  
code to view  
resources



## STEP 4. HOST EVENT

The following pages outline key messaging and ideas for you to host and run your event. Feel free to come up with your own ideas, and contact your local representative if you have any questions.

### SHARE VISION

Operation Christmas Child is an incredibly simple and fun way for people to be involved in bringing hope and love to children in great need. There are, however, a few key points that must be understood by participants so that the project can be effective.

Please use the following points as a guide to framing your presentation/s to your group:

#### 1. Share key messages about OCC and The Greatest Journey (TGJ)

- Share amazing statistics and the vision of Operation Christmas Child (see pages 8-9)
- There are videos available to download to help you share.

#### 2. Follow the gift suggestions and prohibited items instructions in the brochure

- Include both fun and practical items – variety makes a great shoebox gift!
- Prohibited items are listed for the child's safety, customs regulations or other important reasons.

#### 3. Please encourage people to give shoeboxes filled with quality items

- We want all the children to receive a shoebox that is full of new, quality items.

#### 4. Encourage people to include the \$10 donation per shoebox

- Donations can be made online (preferred) or by using the "How to Pack a Shoebox" brochure
- The donation covers all project costs including international shipping, shoebox distribution, local warehousing, training distribution teams, staffing and administration, etc.

Your local OCC volunteer or Regional Ministry Leader may be able to assist you by making a presentation to your group, or sharing a sample presentation with you. Please contact them to discuss these options.

### COLLECT SHOEBOXES

Depending on your chosen event (see event ideas on page 3) collect filled shoeboxes, shoebox items for packing, or \$30 donations for Pack a Shoebox Online. See Step 5 (page 7) for drop-off instructions.

### PRAY

Most importantly, pray for the children who will receive your gift-filled shoeboxes and for their families and communities to be transformed by the Gospel.





## STEP 5. SHOEBOX DROP-OFF

Shoeboxes need to get to your local Processing Centre for shipping. There are two options for this to happen;

- Drop-off shoeboxes at a local drop-off location during National Collection, 17-31 October 2022. See locations here.
- For large quantities of shoeboxes, please contact your local OCC representative or Regional Ministry Leader who can organise collection from you.

## VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

### Seasonal or Year-Round

If you, or your group are interested in volunteering opportunities we would love to hear from you!

We have **year-round roles** including Leadership, Church and Community Relations, Office and Administration, Logistics and more! Volunteering with Operation Christmas Child is a great opportunity for people to be part of a local team that promotes and fosters community involvement with the global Samaritan's Purse project.

There are also **seasonal roles** available at our Processing Centre to inspect and prepare all the shoebox gifts ready for international shipping. This is a great Corporate Volunteering initiative, as well as a fantastic activity for schools, churches and family and friends groups. Organisation teams, church congregations, youth, Bible study and school groups (over 15 years) often sign up to volunteer and have a wonderful time.



Scan this  
QR code for  
Volunteer  
information



## KEY MESSAGES

### WHAT IS OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD?

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organisation. This project is a hands-on way for you to bless children in need across the world by filling shoeboxes with toys, hygiene items, school supplies, and fun gifts.

We collect the gift-filled shoeboxes and send them to local partners around the world that use them as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. After receiving gift-filled shoeboxes, many children are invited to participate in The Greatest Journey discipleship program and millions of children each year are making decisions to follow Christ.

Since 1993, more than **198 million** children in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. The project delivers not only the joy of what, for many kids, is their first gift ever, but also gives them a tangible expression of God's love.

In 2021, Australia and New Zealand sent **210,182** shoeboxes to Cambodia, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Madagascar, Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Globally, there were more than **10.5 million** shoeboxes collected and sent to over 100 countries and territories.

All of Samaritan's Purse's projects, including OCC, are given and provided with "no strings attached" and without regard to the race, creed, gender, religion or ethnicity of the beneficiaries.

### WHAT IS THE GREATEST JOURNEY?

The Greatest Journey is a 12-lesson discipleship course offered by local churches to many of the children who receive shoebox gifts. Children who participate in the program learn how to follow Christ and share Him with others. As they do, entire families and communities are transformed by the power of the Gospel, and churches are started. Nearly **31 million** children have enrolled in this program since 2009.

After completing The Greatest Journey, children attend a graduation celebration and receive a certificate. Most importantly, they are given a Bible that includes the New Testament and selected Old Testament stories along with a dictionary of Biblical terms and a map of Bible lands. Complete with illustrations, it is often the first copy of God's Word the child, or their family, will own. Family and friends who attend the ceremony hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hearing the Good News and testimonies during their loved one's graduation reinforces the changes they have seen in the students' lives, and their families often come to faith in Christ.

Since 2009, more than **15 million** children have reported decisions for Christ while taking The Greatest Journey. These children as well as those who hear the Gospel at shoebox outreach events share their faith with friends and family—who in turn disciple others.

## 2021 OVERVIEW



# 10,505,155

SHOEBOXES PACKED WORLDWIDE



THE GREATEST JOURNEY  
WORLDWIDE



**4 MILLION**  
CHILDREN ENROLLED

**2.3 MILLION**  
DECISIONS FOR CHRIST



# 210,182

Shoeboxes were packed in Australia & New Zealand



**17,113**  
TASMANIA



**25,747**  
VICTORIA



**38,601**  
QUEENSLAND



**12,114**  
PACK ONLINE



**60,693**  
NEW SOUTH WALES



**19,474**  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



**26,147**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**10,293**  
NEW ZEALAND

Over **100** receiving countries worldwide

Shoeboxes from Australia & New Zealand went to:



**26,862**  
FIJI



**10,769**  
SOLOMON ISLANDS



**47,223**  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA



**5,000**  
SENSITIVE COUNTRY



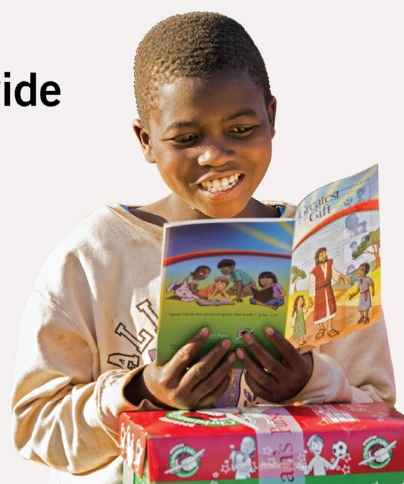
**43,304**  
CAMBODIA



**73,146**  
MADAGASCAR



**3,878**  
NAURU



## THE GREATEST JOURNEY IN 2021



**4,041,199**

Children enrolled



**2,970,868**

Children graduated



**2,336,071**

Decisions for Christ



**173,119**

Teachers trained



**2,185,712**

Children praying sharing with family & friends





## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What countries are shoeboxes sent to?

- Globally, over 100 countries receive OCC shoeboxes.

### 2. Which country will my shoebox go to?

- We don't know where each shoebox will be shipped until they are processed and a sea container is booked. This is due to timing, targets and export/import schedules to our receiving countries.
- The best way for people to find out where their shoebox/es are shipped is to make their \$10 donation per shoebox via "Shoebox Labels & Donations" on the website and selecting "Follow Your Box" which will email a barcoded label to be attached to their shoebox/es.

### 3. What age/gender category is most needed?

- We plan our distributions based on historical data, so please encourage people to give as they are led. Highlighting a gender/age category isn't necessary and can throw our distribution projections out.

### 4. What is the cut-off date?

- National Shoebox Collection is 17-31 October 2022. Please see the drop-off location page on the website for accurate information on your nearest drop-off point's starting and closing dates.

### 5. Do I have to use a pre-printed OCC shoebox?

- Not at all – in fact we prefer people to use their own empty shoeboxes. The pre-printed shoeboxes are available to assist people and groups with their participation if required.
- Please use a regular sized shoebox with lid the approximate size of an A4 page.

### 6. How can the \$10 donation be made?

- The best method is online, as it is the most secure form of giving to OCC and requires the least handling and administration. You can give your donation on the website via "Shoebox Labels & Donations".
- If you aren't comfortable giving online, please use the donation form on the OCC How to Pack a Shoebox brochure and include it with your cash, cheque or credit card donation and place in an envelope inside your shoebox/es.
- Please try to place the envelope on top of the shoebox contents so it is easily located by our processing team.
- If you're giving multiple shoeboxes, you can make a combined donation for all your shoeboxes and place it in one of the shoeboxes.



## **7. Do shoeboxes go to the same children every year?**

- OCC has a one shoebox for one child policy. We do this to ensure as many children as possible can be reached and impacted by the program.

## **8. What are the reasons for prohibited/inappropriate items?**

- There are a variety of reasons behind the guidelines. Some are due to customs regulations, but most are to do with the safety and wellbeing of the child. Please encourage your group to follow the guidelines as closely as possible without too much speculation regarding what the reason may be for each guideline.

## **9. Can I donate items, or shoeboxes without the donation?**

- We encourage people to donate shoeboxes with the accompanying donation as our first preference – gift-filled shoeboxes and donated funds are the two things that fuel our ministry.

## **10. Why can't I put a Bible or Christian Literature in my shoebox?**

- There are two practical reasons for this. Firstly, many of the shoeboxes go to countries where the children cannot read or speak English. Secondly, OCC works with the local church to invite children to a follow-up discipleship course called The Greatest Journey. They receive teaching, discipleship material and get a Bible in their own language.

If you have any other questions, please discuss with your local OCC volunteer or your nearest Regional Ministry Leader. You can also view more FAQs at [samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-faqs](https://samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-faqs).



Scan this QR  
code to view  
more FAQs



## SET UP A MEETING WITH LEADERSHIP

If you haven't already, set up a meeting with your church Pastor or Minister, school Principal or group leader (consider who has the ability to make the necessary decisions) to discuss the opportunity of running OCC. Please see key points below to help you with your conversation.

### PRAY

Seek the Lord first. Ask Him to open and close doors according to His will. Pray for your leadership, remembering that they have many unseen pressures and factors that influence their decisions. Pray for wisdom, clarity, and an opportunity to meet with them at the right time.

### PREPARE

Before you attempt to share the project with your leadership, be sure to understand personally the scope of Operation Christmas Child. Every shoebox gift is an opportunity for a child to discover, know, and share Jesus Christ.

#### 1. Share Key Talking Points and Statistics

Refer to pages 8-9 for clear definitions to help you share about "What is Operation Christmas Child?", "What is The Greatest Journey?" and statistics to encourage participation.

#### 2. Consider how being involved in Operation Christmas Child benefits your church school or group

Possibilities may include:

- An opportunity to help fulfill the Great Commission.
- A tool to teach children about giving.
- A tangible way to equip churches around the world in outreach, discipleship, and church planting.
- A fun and personalised project that unites people of all ages in your group or congregation.
- A Christmas outreach that can be completed before Christmas and the busy holiday season.

#### 3. Think through exactly what you are asking of your leadership

It will be important to reassure them that involvement in Operation Christmas Child will not require additional work on their part. As a Project Leader, you will organise your church or group's involvement in shoebox packing. You are simply looking for your leaders' endorsement and support.

#### 4. Gather materials from the website that will assist you in sharing about Operation Christmas Child

Gift-filled shoeboxes are bringing great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children all over the world! Order and download resources, including; videos, stories, brochures, posters and pre-printed shoeboxes to help you share the vision and mission of this project.

Visit [www.samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-resources](http://www.samaritanspurse.org.au/occ-resources) or scan the QR code to get started!



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code to view  
resources



Good News.  
Great Joy.

