



Shoes and Clothes for Kids Case for Support

In 2019, Shoes and Clothes for Kids will mark its 50th year of positively impacting the lives of greater Cleveland's neediest children. When our founder, Morrie Sayre, learned that many children in Cleveland lacked adequate footwear, he worked with the local YMCA to collect and distribute shoes. He and his friends sometimes kept supplies of shoes in the trunks of their cars so they could hand them out to kids on the playgrounds. Soon Mr. Sayre engaged his inner circle and began raising money to purchase new shoes. The organization continued to evolve and expand as the community's needs grew.

Today, Shoes and Clothes for Kids is improving school attendance and equalizing the classroom learning opportunity for greater Cleveland's neediest children by providing them brand new school uniforms, clothes, school supplies, and shoe gift cards.

As we celebrate being "50 years new," we are inspired by our founder's commitment to positively impact more students as the challenges for them and their families continue to grow and change. Our plans are big and bold, but we know we can achieve them with your support.

Our Vision

At Shoes and Clothes for Kids (SC4K), we envision a community where all our children have the resources they need to learn, grow, and become successful. Each young student, regardless of his or her family's economic situation, would have what he or she needs to thrive in school: new uniforms, a new pair of shoes, appropriate winter clothing and all the essential school supplies. Equipped with these resources, students become engaged learners – and ultimately engaged citizens. When a child stays in school, it helps us all.

A Critical Need

For some parents, replacing their child's outgrown shoes or ripped pants is a minor inconvenience. But for thousands of Cleveland families living in poverty, lack of proper clothing causes great anxiety—and can even create a barrier between their kids and school. Through SC4K's collaboration with Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD), we have proven that by ensuring children have the basics items they need, we can improve attendance by up to 24%. While other

barriers still remain, providing kids with school-appropriate clothing, shoes, and supplies creates a positive and lasting impact.

Our Work

Shoes and Clothes for Kids works to remove barriers to education and school attendance created by a lack of clothing and school supplies, and to equalize the learning environment for the students we serve. We do this through three core programs and a planned pilot program:

Distributing through a network of qualified neighborhood partners: SC4K distributes brand new items to children in need at no cost to them, including quality clothing basics, such as socks, underwear, t-shirts, pants, and school uniforms. SC4K leverages its connections and buying power to purchase new clothing at closeout prices, along with Payless ShoeSource gift cards, which recipients can then use to select the size and style of shoes that best fit their needs. These items are distributed through a network of vetted neighborhood partners located strategically throughout Greater Cleveland. SC4K maintains a growing roster of partners, currently consisting of 28 organizations located in areas with high densities of children living at or below at least 185% of the federal poverty level. Distributing items through partner agencies and volunteers has the benefit of connecting SC4K families with other important programs and services that can improve and enrich their lives, including food pantries, GED education programs, resale shops, job placement, Head Start, daycare, and health care.

Providing school supplies directly to teachers in Greater Cleveland classrooms: SC4K provides school supplies to under-resourced classrooms at no cost to participating teachers. Teachers can “shop” once per semester for school supplies with an average retail value of more than \$1,000. Available items include basic supplies, craft items, books, and even furniture. Supplies are also included in SC4K distributions that go directly to students. The program is open to any certified classroom teacher working at a public, parochial, or nonprofit charter school in Cuyahoga County where 60% or more of students are eligible for the National School Lunch Program. Educators have expressed appreciation for this service, which saves them from paying out of their own pockets when school budgets or students’ families fall short. One grateful teacher remarked, *“Without the Resource Center, my students would not have the tools they need to learn. Many of our students are homeless, poverty-stricken, and in foster care. This the best resource our district has.”*

Distributing to Cleveland’s neediest students through direct referrals from the school district: The cost of required uniforms is a financial obstacle for many CMSD families. Working with CMSD and the Browns Give Back, SC4K recently launched the Special Teams Package program to provide needed comfort and support to CMSD students living in emergency shelters or transitional housing. The Special Teams Package consists of three school uniforms, one casual outfit, socks, underwear, Payless ShoeSource gift cards, and school supplies. The program aims to support students’ regular attendance at school during a difficult time. To measure the impact of this initiative, CMSD and SC4K are collecting data on participating students’ attendance and academic performance, and initial data from CMSD is showing that our programs are improving school attendance up to 24% in certain categories of students.

Piloting programs to drive academic success: In addition to the core programs listed above, Shoes and Clothes for Kids is currently planning to pilot a program that combines all its core services (school and classroom supplies, uniforms, clothing, and shoes) and provide these to entire K-3rd grade classrooms by using the teachers as “first responders.” The goal of the pilot is not only to help

improve school attendance, but also to assess the impact of improved attendance on raising passage rates of the critical Third Grade Reading Guarantee scores. This pilot is scheduled to start in 2019 and run until 2022.

The SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund

Thousands of children risk their futures by staying home from school because they simply do not have the necessary clothing, shoes, and supplies they need to attend. Education is available to them, but they must show up to benefit from it.

With your support, SC4K can help eliminate this barrier for thousands of students and families with the greatest need, and create more success stories like these:

“I see the faces light up when students and parents get the clothing, shoes and supplies. The kids know they can go to school the next day. And the parents tell me now they don’t have to decide between spending money on clothing or rent. Or food.” -- A SC4K distribution partner

“By mid-semester, I know which of my students isn’t getting much support at home. I know which ones want to be in school and want to learn. But can’t because of a family situation. It’s helpful to have an organization to turn to that can help meet their basic needs.” -- A Cleveland school teacher

“Too often, our kids’ living situation changes two or three times in a school year. They can’t always bring their clothing and school supplies with them when change happens. Your program gets those kids, sometimes homeless, a chance to get to school where they can be warm, safe and fed. We need you.” – A local school official

An Invitation for Support

SC4K has more community partners, more hands-on volunteers, and more distribution channels than ever before. We have a strong working relationship with the school district and teachers to reach every student with a need. And we have our legacy to build on – 50 years of helping, encouraging, serving, and cheering-on the children in our community. Can you help us?

To celebrate 50 years of serving Cleveland’s families in need, **SC4K is committed to doubling our impact and raising an additional \$1 million during our 50th anniversary year.** Raising an extra \$1 million is our largest fundraising goal ever, but we believe it is attainable because the community cares, teachers care, and you care. We invite you to join us in honoring the founding work of Morrie Sayre, who saw a need and took action. With support from philanthropic friends like you, that small step was nurtured into an organization that now serves thousands of children each year but could do so much more.

The SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund is our gift back the community—an opportunity to express our gratitude for the many years of support *and* a commitment to deliver more services to many more families in the coming years. Our current budget for expanded programming allows us to serve nearly 7,000 students per year. With the \$1 million raised, SC4K will provide an additional \$200,000 per year from 2020 to 2025 which has been designated by our Board of Directors to be used solely for program needs.

These new funds will allow us to double our annual impact to serve 14,000 children each year with a complete service package, giving them the best chance possible to succeed in school and enjoy a healthy future. That means:

- 7,000 more kids will receive a new pair of shoes to wear to school.
- 7,000 more kids will receive a week's worth of school-appropriate clothing.
- 7,000 more kids will receive new school supplies throughout the year, so they can be actively engaged in learning.
- 7,000 more kids can receive new coats, gloves, and hats during Cleveland's cold winter months.
- Most importantly, 7,000 additional kids will have a better chance to graduate from grade-to-grade each year, eventually graduating high school with a real chance to break the cycle of poverty so many of them face.

Please help us set more kids up for success in school and life by supporting the SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund. On behalf of all the children, parents and teachers we serve...thank you.