

# Houses for Change

## Teaching Guide, Grades K-3

### Goal

Children will reflect on the gifts that they have of their home, and the gifts they have within their homes. They will recognize that not all children are as fortunate.

### Objective

Participants will be assembling and decorating the boxes to look like homes. They will then take the boxes home and fill them with change to be donated to those providing support services to homeless families. The lesson gives the opportunity to be thankful for our gifts and to practice sharing. Focus on the positive aspects of gifts received and shared, not on the realities of being without a home. It is important that children of this age not be scared by the possibility of homelessness.

### Time Required

Generally allow an hour for the project, the first 10-15 minutes for discussion and the balance of the time for decorating the boxes. Some children may not finish decorating the box in an hour, but they can complete the project at home.

### Materials

You will need a box for each child and crayons, markers, stickers, glitter, collage materials, glue sticks, scissors, etc. to decorate the boxes. Select one color (red?) and be sure there are enough red markers or crayons for everyone. However, leave a few children without red markers/crayons, and give two or more to children sitting beside them.

### Procedure

Distribute a box to each child and be sure they have crayons, markers, stickers, etc. with which to decorate the box at the appropriate time.

Introduce the project by saying:

***“We are going to assemble these boxes and decorate them to look like houses. But before we do that I want everyone to pick up the red crayon in front of them and write your name on the bottom.”***

Allow a moment to see if they spontaneously share extra red crayons with those who do not have one. If that does not happen, ask:

***“Does anyone have a red crayon they can share with someone who does not have one?”***

Have them write their names on the bottoms then demonstrate how to fold the boxes. However, it is easier to decorate the boxes while they are unfolded and flat.

Before the decorating starts, begin a discussion by asking:

***“What is the most special part of your home to you?”*** Or, ***“What is the most important thing to you in your home?”***

Hopefully, you will be able to note the variety of “special things.”

Ask:

***“How do you feel about all the special things you have? Thankful?”***

Note that not all children have the same special things, not all have special things.

Ask:

***“What happened when we started and not everyone had a red crayon? How did you fix the problem?”***

***“What do we do when our friends do not have what they need?”***

Look for “We shared” for the answer.

Say:

***“These boxes will be used to collect money that we can share with people who help children and their families who do not have homes in which to live.”***

***“To make these boxes special we will color and decorate these boxes to look like houses . You can color it like your house or any house. Be sure to include some special things, like flowers, or even pets to show what makes this house special to you.”***

Continue to decorate the boxes for the duration of the time together.