

The Virus That TRIED to Steal Christmas

October 2021



Last Christmas was different due to COVID protocols, but we were thankful we could gather the kids to receive their toys!

We received a recent email from our Christmas toy supplier in LA. They were notifying all of their customers that this year could be a struggle for their store to keep toys in stock due to the supply chain shortages that exist around the world. What does that mean for us at Spectrum? It means we need to bump up our time frame and buy early! We've really found a good situation working with this company. We can order good quality toys that our kids love for an average of only five dollars a toy. Multiply that by the 1,500 plus kids in our neighborhoods that come out for our events and the savings really add up! However, if the toys aren't in stock it's all for naught.

Christmas is such an important time for us to minister to the children from our neighborhoods. Many families we work with don't have the resources to purchase presents for their children at Christmas. Especially in larger families. So each year the kids look forward to our "Cool Bus" pulling into their community, decorated, and loaded with toys. Speaking as one who gets to see it first hand each year, It's special to witness the moment when a child finds just the toy they were looking for.

Last year, our Christmas activities were nearly shut down due to the Pandemic. We proceeded according to government guidelines, putting tape on the ground to mark off six feet, taking temperatures, and providing masks and hand sanitizer to meet requirements. It paid off as we were able to go into all of our neighborhoods and every child received a toy! One neighborhood, the police did come, but after they saw all our precautions, they allowed us to carry on.

So this year our challenge is shaping up to be the toy supply chain. Before the prices start to increase because of demand and prior to the shelves running bare, we're hoping to place our first order for toys by the end of October. Grateful doesn't begin to describe how I feel when I think of all the toys Spectrum has given out over so many years, and to think of how many of you have given to be a part of it. What God does with those five dollar toys in a kid's hand goes far beyond the month of December. It provides us opportunities to build relationships



It's October and kids are already asking when the Cool Bus will be there.

with not only the kids but their parents as well. It helps us establish credibility in their minds when they see that we care and are on their side. It enables us to encourage them to attend our other kid's club and camp programs, furthering the chance to tell them about Jesus. It creates a bright spot in their lives, beyond the excitement and fun a new toy produces.

A gift can show them that they are loved and have worth. God communicated that to mankind on that very first Christmas by sending Jesus. Like the kids in our neighborhoods, things are bleak for us and without Jesus, we have no hope of getting better. But at just the right time, God sent His Son into the world, a free gift that we could never earn or pay back. A gift that through His death, burial and resurrection brings forgiveness, hope, life and peace. Please pray for us and for our Christmas programs that God will provide all we need to purchase toys and that He will personally work through each toy to reveal His great love for the child who receives it!

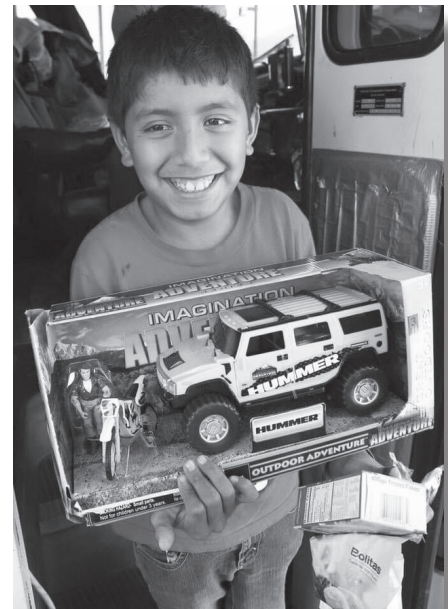
From all of us at Spectrum,



Matt Kooi
Director of Spectrum Ministries



So cool when they find just the toy they were looking for!



For some when times are hard, the toy they get on the bus may be the one toy they receive at Christmas.



We're thankful for the quality of toys we're able to bring for the kids. It let's them know how special they are!



Praying we will have a new toy for every child who comes.

"For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life!" - Romans 5:10