

Joyfully Packed

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This project began after our group noticed a need surrounding the community of foster children and foster families in Shelby County. We realized that the children who are being placed in foster care typically do not leave their homes with very many personal items, if any at all. We wanted to help alleviate some of the discomfort these children experience by giving them personal and comfort items during this transition. We reached out to the local Court and Child Advocacy Group (CASA) whose function is to help provide a voice for these displaced children.

Teaming up with CASA allowed us to get an accurate idea of the number of children in Shelby and Rush Counties who are being placed with foster families every year. Our project took the form of a closet of sorts at the CASA office where these children can receive personal and comfort items. This closet now contains essentials such as toiletries, age appropriate undergarment and comfort items such as small toys, blankets and stuffed animals.

As many of the children are between the ages of infant and three-years-old, many of the needs revolved around items for babies. We collected both physical items and monetary donations to fill the closet. We hosted an event,

BYOD: Bring Your Own Diapers, in collaboration with Young Professionals of Shelby County (YPSC) to collect diapers and other baby-related items such as wipes and onesies. CASA will facilitate the distribution of the items. With the monetary donations we raised, we were able to purchase the remainder of the items on our list as well as provide CASA with funds to replenish the closet as needs arise.

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