

BTS FAQs

Back-to-School Drive

How do you decide which students to support?

Family Giving Tree determines which schools to support through Federal Free and Reduced Price Meal data. The schools chosen have 80%+ of their student population receiving this assistance.

How is your program different from other backpack drives?

The FGT backpack Drive defines the list of supplies needed by grade level to ensure that each student receives what they need while keeping the supply list shorter and more affordable for donors. The grade levels provided are K-2, 3-5, and 6-12. Each backpack is color-coded with a tag to ensure the appropriate backpack goes to the right student.

How do the students receive their backpacks?

In early August, partner schools pick up their allotted backpacks and then distribute them to the students.

Can I help distribute the backpacks to the kids?

We don't have this opportunity available to donors but are considering developing a special classification of volunteers who could have access to this type of activity. Given that distributions are done on school property, certain safety measures and checks must be performed. We are also mindful of providing privacy and respect for our student recipients, so these opportunities are very limited.

Backpacks

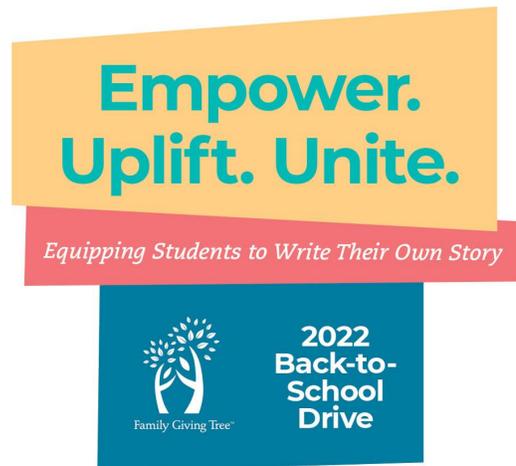
Are the supplies the same each year?

Each fall, we survey our partner schools to determine if the supplies provided meet current needs and if other supplies should be included or removed. If needed, we adjust the supply list by grade level accordingly.

Do you take any backpacks?

All backpacks must be new and appropriately sized for the student's needs (minimum height of 15" - 19"). We generally do not accept red, blue, or turquoise backpacks. Many of the schools we partner with ask that certain colors be avoided due to the serious issue of gang affiliation with specific colors. While we will accept donations of new corporate logo backpacks, we prefer to distribute backpacks in colors and patterns that leave the students with an excited and joyful first impression.

How do donated backpacks get to you?



Donors drop backpacks off at designated public drop-off locations [insert link to public drop-off page] or to their group's designated drop-off area if they are with a company or organization that is signed up to participate in the Back-to-School Drive. Designated Drive Leaders drop the donations off to FGT at our main South Bay warehouse or one of our remote drop-off locations at the end of July, and we take the time and effort to check every backpack we receive. We empty each backpack and inventory the supplies to ensure that each contains all the items on the supply list. If one or two are missing, we can add the item(s) to assure that each student receives the same as every other to avoid what we call "backpack envy."

Can I donate extra backpacks and supplies?

Yes! We use these extra items to put together additional supply-filled backpacks to help fill the community gap. All donated backpacks and supplies we receive are distributed. Each year we have a waiting list of schools to which we can provide backpacks if we receive more than planned.

Backpack Tags

What are backpack tags used for?

We provide Back-to-School Drive Leaders with three different colored backpack tags to distribute to their groups. Each color represents a grade-level grouping: K-2, 3-5, or 6-12. By color-coding them, they are easier to quality check and sort. The color-coded tags also make it easier for schools to distribute as they can be assured that the right bag is going to the right student.

How do I get a tag?

You can check with your employer or social/community groups to see if they are an FGT Back-to-School Drive Leader. If so, they can direct you to the tags. Alternatively, you can also download our printable backpack tags here [insert link to printable tag file].

If I printed tags online, how should I attach them?

There are instructions on the tag to loop the tag around the top strap of the backpack and staple the ends together. If you don't have a color printer and print black and white tags, please attach them to the backpack using a colored ribbon of the same color as that shown for the tag (blue, orange, or purple).

Warehouse and Backpack Drop-off

When are backpacks due?

Backpacks are due to Family Giving Tree by Thursday, July 28. Most public drop-off locations or participating Drive Leader groups may have an earlier due date, so check with them before you drop off your backpack.

Where can I drop off?

We ask that you return your donation to where you picked up the backpack tag. Please return your donation to our warehouse at [insert address] if you print and use an online tag. Check our warehouse calendar for hours of operation.

Will you pick up my donations?

Unfortunately, Family Giving Tree does not have the resources to pick up donations. However, you can find the closest participating public Drive location here [insert public drive link] to drop off your donation.

Virtual Giving Tree**How does the Virtual Giving Tree work?**

Participants can donate online via a secure, customized Virtual Giving Tree (VGT). Through the VGT, they can choose a backpack by grade level and design. Each backpack will have the grade-appropriate supplies included. This is a completely contact-free way of donating. Donors fund the backpacks, and FGT takes care of the rest. Note: Nothing will be shipped to the donor.

How do I host a VGT?

Register to become a Drive Leader and select the VGT option in the registration form.[insert link]
Once registered, you will receive setup instructions via email. Plan to promote your VGT link to your group. Visit our resources page [insert link] for media and ideas to help spread the word.

Who can donate to a VGT?

Anyone and everyone! The VGTs are globally accessible and can be shared with anyone.