

PRESS RELEASE

SHIELDED HEARTS

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**SHIELDED HEARTS PARTNERS WITH MILWAUKEE POLICE
DEPARTMENT AND THE CHILD PROTECTION CENTER TO
COLLECT ITEMS FOR CHILDREN IN NEED THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

*Collections Will Provide Children with the Essential Items Needed to Stay Warm
and Happy This Holiday Season*

MILWAUKEE – Shielded Hearts, a local group of women in long-term committed relationships with men in law enforcement, the Milwaukee Police Department and the Child Protection Center are launching collection drives this holiday season for kids in need. The drives, three in total, will collect new and gently used stuffed animals, new toys and new socks and sweaters, and will run now through Dec. 10. The announcement was made at a press conference this morning.

“For the past few years, we’ve held ‘Teddy Bear Drives’ to collect items for children who were involved in scary situations and the outpouring of support has been overwhelming,” says Catherine Draeger, executive director for Shielded Hearts. “Our first year we collected more than 2,000 animals; last year more than 5,000. We wanted to expand this year’s efforts to help children with more essential needs, such as socks, sweaters and new toys, to make sure their not only warm, but happy this holiday season.”

“It will be great to get clothing as well as toys as we are always in need.” said Milwaukee Police Officer Karla Lehmann. “Already this season, on one of the colder days, we had a child come in wearing only a t-shirt and a windbreaker. We had difficulty finding him something warmer to

take with him and actually had to call around to some of our other service providers. These Round Ups would allow us to have items here at the ready.”

While in it’s third year, the collection drive is now expanding to help more kids in need. Previous years the drive was exclusive to collecting new or gently used stuffed animals for children who may have been effected by a crime. Those stuffed animals were largely distributed by the Milwaukee Police Department and the Sensitive Crimes Unit, a specialty unit that deals with crimes involving children. Because of the growing need of essential items for children, Shielded Hearts is also teaming up with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Child Protection Center to collect new toys of all kinds, as well as new socks and sweaters, to ensure children who are in need receive the essential items they need to stay warm and happy this holiday season. The Child Protection Center provides assessments to children who may have been harmed. The goal of the center is to protect children from abuse and provide resources to help them heal.

Those interesting in donating new or gently used stuffed animals, new toys, and new socks and sweaters can drop off unwrapped items at any Milwaukee Police Department District from Nov. 19 through Dec. 10. Other drop-off locations can be found at www.roundup.shieldedhearts.com. In addition to the collection sites at Milwaukee Police Districts, Shielded Hearts is looking for local businesses and organizations who would like to coordinate their own Round Ups. Monetary donations can be made to Shielded Hearts, Inc., with Round Ups in the check memo line. Checks can be sent to: Shielded Hearts, Inc., PO Box 26813, Milwaukee, WI 53226. Shielded Hearts, Inc. has filed to become an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations will be tax-deductible, to the extent of the law, retroactive to August 1st, 2011, contingent on final approval from the IRS.

About Shielded Hearts

Shielded Hearts, Inc. is a community of women in long term, committed relationships with men in law enforcement. We encourage one another to find hope in police life though education, friendship, service and faith. More information about the organization can be found at www.ShieldedHearts.com.

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