



PALS Holiday Hampers 2018 Happy New Year!

***Families and children in Greater Saint John really had
Happy Holidays this Christmas, thanks to the generosity of you folks!***

The “**delivery elves**” said that all schools and families were overwhelmed and so appreciative of all they received!

A huge thank you to all who contributed in one way or another - the hampers looked amazing!

These families really had a Christmas to remember!

It was a truly generous and heart-warming endeavour.

These are not the only PALS hampers that went out around the city – PALS and Community partners at other schools provided many as well, and some of these schools also received hampers from other folks – in fact more than 214 families were supported this year!! Amazing!

But here are the ones you helped with!

Here is how everything was distributed –

**83 sets of hampers
plus \$2600.00 in cash donations!**

1. Prince Charles School
2. Centennial
3. Saint Rose
4. Forest Hills
5. (unlabeled)
6. Hazen White - St. Francis
7. Lakewood Heights
8. (unlabeled)
9. Loch Lomond School
10. Westfield School
11. Grand Bay Primary
12. Island View
13. Beaconsfield
14. Princess Elizabeth
15. Saint John High
16. St. Malachy's High



**Just who were the elves who put together
hampers and donations?**

- Wyndham Worldwide
- J. D. Irving, Limited
- Innovatia
- Oncology Department Horizon Health
- Hatheway Pavilion at Lily Lake
- Terrapure
- Inside Out Adventures
- Pangea Spa
- JTS
- Port Saint John

A special thank you goes out to:

**our School District Delivery elves John and Terry, and all who
had fund raisers, donated, bought, packed and decorated!**

You folks “made it happen”!

It is wonderful to know such caring, generous (in spirit as well) people.

On behalf of the children, parents, and schools

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

***You do make a difference in the lives of these kids
and that is what it’s all about!!***

**Following this message, please find some comments that we
received from various schools – it helps to make it all real.**

***PS – please pass this along to all who helped with the hampers or turkeys
or all other ways of helping – thanks so much!!***



Notes from the schools:

When I called a single mum, working long hours in retail to make ends meet, she started to cry and said she was "shaking all over". She said I had no idea how much this was needed and she was so thankful and grateful to PALS. Great job PALS!!

We are very thankful for the donation as are the families who benefit. We have many parents who do not like to take larger donations so we choose to purchase socks, underwear, jammies, shampoo, toothpaste, and a few small stocking stuffers and parents have been very appreciative of this. We explain that we know they are working hard to provide for their families and that this is simply a few necessities - they can simply divert their wages to other things at this time of year. We were able to buy items for 15 students this holiday season thanks to our PALS donation and our Christmas Bazaar held at the school.

On behalf of our families, we say "Thank you and have a Very Merry Christmas!"

The hampers delivered to our school have had a significant impact on the families who received them. A couple of comments we heard were:

- *"We were speechless! It is more items than we see in 2 months. I sat there stunned, then I cried."*
- *"Thank you from the bottom of our hearts; really, you have no idea how this helps us."*

Handing these hampers to the families was a very touching experience. It was clear they were very appreciative, and they were quite emotional in the process. They struggled through tears to express themselves, so they followed up with a thank you card.

I also want to thank you for taking the time to coordinate this for families you do not even know. I can tell you it meant the world to our families and in a matter of minutes their Christmas holidays changed from a time of stress, to a time where they could focus on the importance of spending time with family and friends.

From one of our families:

"I do not know what to say. I might cry. We have been surviving just fine, just had water turned on yesterday (been living without power since September – heat turned on in November), this will make a difference. Might have to cook that turkey in my father's oven!"

There was a parent who was off work at 2pm and was going to pick hers up at school. I left her a voicemail last night to be sure she got it. This is what she emailed me ... (this is really what it's all about isn't it ... the gift goes so far beyond what we often see).

Thank you, we picked it up this afternoon. Glad I didn't have any of the kids with me, it filled the car. Very overwhelming, we divided it up and shared with a friend that could use the help as much or more than us. She is out of work due to a car accident, and hasn't had any income now for about a month.

I have had a really hard time getting into the Christmas spirit this year, being able to share with someone who was really deserving, who wasn't expecting anything truly lifted my spirits.

Thank you for all you do, I realize these hampers are donated, but I also realize the time, space, coordination required to get them where they need to go.

Our families were very appreciative as always. One mother told me she was really going through a hard time and this has made Christmas manageable for her. From another family who is dealing with the illness of both mom and dad – “We are so very thankful, words cannot express!!”

One grandparent caregiver was touched by the thoughtfulness of complete strangers. Having experienced the loss of her own father today, she was appreciative of the help this Christmas. The teary eyes of many tell the story of appreciation and gratitude.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of our school community I want to thank you for providing for so many of our families during this holiday season. After calling one parent to let her know she would be receiving a Holiday Hamper, she called back that evening and left a message-I think it says it all...” Mrs. ____, I was so overwhelmed when you called me today, I wasn't able to speak. I want your PALS to know that without them we would not have had a Christmas dinner this year, I am so thankful” You've done it again! Thanks is not enough but please accept ours.

Happy New Year to you all . . .