Dear Children,

We’re really glad to hear that you will be making a gift package for one of the children living in refugee camps in BiH – thank you so much!

Before you begin preparing your gift package, make sure you read the story of a girl called Lejla. During the war, with the help of one humanitarian organization, Lejla got a gift package from Astrid, a girl living in the faraway England - her story shows how much joy a gift package containing a few knick-knacks can bring to children whose childhood is affected by war, and it will definitely help inspire you some more.

Humanitarian Aid Package

In 1994, the children of Cazin received little care packages. I remember my excitement as I approached the house that was in charge of distribution. The shoebox was colorfully decorated. The package had toiletries, candy, and a photo and letter from Astrid. That gift was part of my daily life for a long time, as were the comb and mirror part of my makeup bag. I never used the crayons because I did not know how long the war would last and I did not want to run out of them.

I tried getting in touch with Astrid, but the address was incomplete. Maybe someday these items will find Astrid. The photo she sent me of her in a pool is still part of my family album. At that moment, I wished that I had that smile and that pool.

Lejla, 1983
Steps to follow

1. For starters, think about what would children, who are growing up far from their homes due to war, like to receive. Keep in mind that they often need to pack quickly, and can rarely bring anything more than a backpack...
2. What would make them smile? A toy, an article of clothing, school supplies, candy or something else? Write down everything you plan to include! Small things count too, you needn't spend a lot of money to make someone happy!
3. Collect the things you want to include in your gift package
4. Use an old shoebox or any other suitable box for packaging. Decorate it with drawings, stickers or magazine clippings. Be creative and recycle!
5. Take pictures of the packing process
6. Be sure to clearly label the gift package, telling us if it’s for a boy, a girl or if it’s universal, as well as the child’s age (e.g. 10-G, 5-B, 8-U)

Letter writing and delivery

1. Think about what you want to say to a boy or a girl who will get your gift package. You can tell them something about yourself, send words of support or ask a question or two.
2. Write a letter in English language on a sheet of paper. Take a picture of your letter (be mindful of lighting) before putting it in an envelope.
3. Put the envelope inside your gift package. (Don’t forget to sign the letter with your name)

Send us pictures!!!

• Once your gift package is all set, be sure to send us a couple of pictures that capture the packing process, as well as a picture of the letter you wrote to a child living in a refugee camp in BiH.

Email the pictures to: mia.babic@warchildhood.org

Thank you for taking part!
WCM Team