



Choose a charity to give mothers the gift of giving back

By June Muller

Homemade and heartfelt gifts are the hallmarks of Mother's Day. The occasion can also be marked by giving charitable gifts that celebrate moms and support a cause that is special to them. Some charities provide direct support to mothers in need while others are more wide-reaching.

The following are some charities that can help gift givers spread the love this Mother's Day.

• UNICEF Mother and Baby Programs

This international charity offers support to mothers and their children in the form of tetanus vaccine packs, newborn kits, blankets for babies, pool vaccines, waterborne illness treatments and life-saving food supplements. Prices start at \$11.

• Women's Shelters

Your local women's shelter offers crisis services and refuge to women and their children who are escaping abuse. Donations are a way to invest in the safety of mothers and children in your community. According to Statistics Canada, in 2011 there were approximately 97,500 victims of intimate partner violence and the vast majority (80 per cent) were women. During the pandemic it has been reported that incidents have increased over previous years.

• Adopt an animal

The Canadian Wildlife Federation has an adoption program that make donors mothers of a sort. Animals available include, moose, beaver, grey wolf and polar bear. There's also the option of making donations of any amount in the recipient's name or setting up a regular donation. Adoption kits \$45

• Adopt a tree

Tre Canada, with its community partners and sponsors, has planted more than 85 million trees. Canada's only non-profit organization of its kind, its goal is to bolster Canada's urban forests and inspire Canadians to participate in an advocate for community greening. Adopt a seedling for just \$5.

• Story time

Moms who love to read and cherish story time with their children will appreciate the opportunity to help Canadian Feed the Children to purchase library books for needy children and support literacy.

• Give safe water

Clean water is life-saving. Help mothers provide safe drinking water to their family with a donation to Oxfam. The organization distributes water purification tablets, water filters and facilitates hygiene training to help families stave off COVID 19. \$22

• Autism Counselling

Help a mom of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder by donating to support counselling services offered by Autism Canada. 30 minutes of counselling \$25

• Serve a family

Salvation Army Family Services works to lift up families in need in many ways. Serving families for more than 130 years, the organization works locally with families facing crisis in cities and communities across Canada. Well known for its food banks, Christmas hampers and kettles, the Salvation Army offers 50 different types of programs to the vulnerable, the challenged and those in crisis.

• Help with health

"#MomStrong" is the hashtag printed on the back of a Sick Kids t-shirt. The shirts and other clothing that promote and support the hospital are available at the online 50/50 shop. Donations can also be made in mom's name and gifts can be purchased for hospitalized kids as another form of support to families dealing with the illness of a child. Check out your local hospital for ways to donate and share your mom's caring nature with the community.

• Nature nature

There are many ways to acknowledge a mother's love of nature. Look into your local conservation authority or think nationally and make a gift out of donation to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Make a one-time donation in a mother's name, set up monthly donations or adopt a species or habitat.

• Support the arts

Not typically thought of as charities, performance venues and performers of all kinds are struggling during the pandemic. Find an online performance that your mom would appreciate and find out how to support an orchestra, musician or theatre group that she enjoys.



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(to Veronica Dick) xox



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