

# Ten Ways to Be the Light this Holiday Season



This Chanukah you can be the *shamash*, the candle that helps spread joy and hope to others through *acts of service*!

Have more ideas? Share with Repair the World NYC's Family & Youth Program Manager, [hannah.grossman@werrepair.org](mailto:hannah.grossman@werrepair.org)

## 1. Donate money.

There is a Jewish tradition of giving *tzedakah* (money for people in need) each week before lighting *Shabbat* (Sabbath) candles. Many winter holidays involve candles or light. *Consider putting money aside before lighting your family's menorah, kinara, Christmas tree, or other special holiday lights.*

## 2. Donate toys or gifts.

Do your children help choose gifts for family members or friends? Use this opportunity to buy gifts for people who may receive less. Local public schools frequently request anonymous toy donations for students. *Try to connect with an organization in your community collecting toys.*

## 3. Wrap gifts for others.

Little hands can help with gift wrapping or creating gift wrap for others. Look for toy drives that may need help wrapping gifts before their work is done, or create your own gift wrap and donate it.

## 4. Give coats and other warm clothes.

Do you have extra coats, gloves, mittens, scarves, hats, or blankets? The COVID pandemic has increased economic insecurity, and so many people need extra ways to keep warm. *Are you in NYC? The NYC Cares annual coat drive has drop-off locations all over the five boroughs. Check out what's going on in your city too.*

## 5. Donate shelf-stable food to pantries in the neighborhood.

Food pantries around the country have experienced massive increased need over the last year due to COVID-19. *In Brooklyn, Brooklyn Landmark Elementary School is running a drive for its families at [tgt.gifts/brooklynlandmark](https://tgt.gifts/brooklynlandmark) and The Campaign Against Hunger is accepting food donations at this time. Where can your family give?*



## **6. Help out on a farm.**

Did you know that many urban farms stay open through the winter? They lose a lot of volunteers as the weather gets colder. Bundle up your kids & get to work!

*Imani Garden in Crown Heights is open on most weekend afternoons and welcome to children. Is there an urban garden near you that does the same?*

## **7. Make holiday or birthday cards.**

In addition to making beautiful artwork for loved ones, make time for your family to make cards for homebound seniors or chronically ill individuals.

*Dorot & God's Love We Deliver collect holiday and birthday cards year-round.*

## **8. Assemble bags of snacks, lunches, toiletries, or winter care items.**

Gather a small collection of items (we recommend keeping your items to a gallon-size ziplock bag) to share with others. When you see someone on the street asking for money or help, invite your child/ren to offer the bag you've assembled together to that person. Keep in mind that many people on the street are especially grateful for generous smiles and short conversations.

*Talk with your child/ren about specific places you've noticed people asking for help.*

## **9. Donate to organizations!**

Inboxes and mailboxes tend to pile up with requests for donations at this time of year. Take some time as a family to sort through and learn about the organizations requesting donations, take a vote, and donate to an organization for the holidays.

*Need ideas for great places to donate? Consider Repair the World NYC's service partners or sending supplies to Repair the World's disaster relief distribution site:*

*[rpr.world/registry](http://rpr.world/registry)*

## **10. Donate School Supplies**

Due to the economic impact of COVID-19, some families are struggling to afford school supplies for their children. *Reach out to nearby schools to find out if they need donations and encourage friends, family and neighbors to support your drive.*