Let’s make sure every child gets a gift

So many families just can’t afford presents this season. Do one thing on this list and know that somewhere out there, a kid is grinning. By Alison Storm

2 Regift plastic toys that are still in great shape to Second Chance Toys' holiday drive (secondchancetoys.org). The nonprofit cleans and redistributes them to underprivileged children in Pennsylvania, Illinois, New York, and New Jersey. Ask your kids to help pick the toys and teach them a lesson in giving.

3 Pack a virtual gift for children in developing countries at samartanspurse.org. Starting November 22, you can go online, choose a girl or boy, and pick from a list of goodies that Samaritan's Purse will ship. Last year, 8 million children received holiday gift boxes, including 12-year-old Leuk in Cambodia, who said the coloring book and crayons were the first gift he'd ever gotten.

4 Drop off new, unwrapped presents to Toys for Tots. Donations from corporations were down significantly last year (boo, recession). Find a collection spot near you at toyfortots.org/donate/toys.asp.

5 Give a Hearts for Hearts Girls international doll ($30) to a child. Each doll represents a girl from one of six developing countries, and $2 from your purchase will go to the nonprofit World Vision to educate girls in your doll's country. “It's about teaching kids to play with purpose,” says creator Gina Beebe, a former marketer for Hasbro. Buy yours at hearts4heartsgirls.com.

6 Shop at Ikea from November 1 to December 24, when $1.35 (the equivalent of one euro) from any soft-toy or children's-book purchase goes to kid-centric programs run by UNICEF and Save the Children.

7 Donate what you can to Soldiers' Secret Santa, which anonymously mails Toys "R" Us gift cards to families of deployed soldiers. “I've seen how difficult it can be to make ends meet when a parent is away on duty,” says Brad Boggess, 38, a former Army officer who started the organization in 2007. Since then, the nonprofit has helped hundreds of military families who can’t afford gifts for their kids. Spread the cheer at soldierssecretsanta.org.