

Christmas "overflow" fair

Activity inspired by a CSDM (*Commission scolaire de Montréal*) school



One wintery Saturday morning, the school principal, teachers and parent volunteers hold a large gathering. Its goal: to collect and distribute free clothing and toys to students' parents.

How to proceed:

- 1- The committee sends a letter to students' families asking parents to be so kind as to pick out all clothes, winter accessories, winter sports equipment and toys that are no longer being used.
- 2- Three weeks before the date of the fair, the committee puts out large cardboard boxes near school exits so that parents can use them for clothes and other items they are willing to donate.
- 3- Three days before the fair, a reminder sheet is sent home with each student, repeating event information to parents and guardians. Also, each child is given five coupons exchangeable for five items of clothing/accessories of his or her choice, the day of the fair.
- 4- In the school gym, the day before the fair from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., parent volunteers arrange clothing on hangers and racks (10) borrowed from a community centre or a local resource centre.
- 5- Tables are also arranged in the middle of the gym, where classes can have their own stands.
- 6- At 9 a.m., it's time for last-minute preparations before letting in the crowd between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
- 7- The long-awaited moment starts at 9:30 a.m. Families are allowed into the gym, where racks are arranged in order of age. That way, families will have access to a few pieces of free clothing for themselves or their children.

A few tips:

- Make sure a janitor is on hand.
- A parent or teacher must supervise operations. Each person's role must be clearly defined.
- Email addresses are essential when organising such an event.
- The principal's approval is necessary.
- Leftover clothing should be given to a charitable organisation.
- Plan a snack for volunteer parents at noon the day of the fair.

Good luck!