

Imagine a Thanksgiving without the anticipation of a traditional feast. Or Christmas morning with no expectation of presents. These emotionally charged holidays can be hard enough for adults to get through. But for children who have little to look forward to around a Thanksgiving table or under the Christmas tree, the holidays can seem like nothing but a cruel letdown. And this year, requests from parents for help with Thanksgiving and Christmas were greater than ever before. Like the mom who came in to say that her 15 year old daughter had been told not to expect so much as even one present, and asked if there was any help we could give.



*Little girls hamming it up at the Holiday Party*

Thanks to our friends and supporters 89 families that would not otherwise have had a traditional dinner received Thanksgiving baskets. And the final tally of children who received Christmas presents through our gift giving program was 304! We couldn't have done it without the help of so many community members and businesses—thank you so much!



*Youth on his first snow shoeing excursion.*

As the new year begins, we are paying close attention to the proposed New York State budget. We are cautiously hopeful, as we do not appear to be slated for large cuts in our funding. However, anything can change, and we'll have to wait to see how it all shakes out. Even small cuts in our most flexible funding can impact our ability to support families with their concrete needs.

You may notice when you don't receive our 2009 Annual Report in February as usual. After too many years of postponing or cancelling our Annual Board meeting in February because of bad weather, we have changed the meeting and the publication of the Annual Report to April. We'll be pleased to send you your copy then.

Our upcoming Winter Break activities for youth will include sledding, scrapbooking, bowling, making bird feeders, and the Second Annual Un-birthday party, where youth can practice the social skills they might need when they get invited to a real birthday party.

Thanks again for your support,

Anne Griffin  
Development Director

***Keeping You Informed***