



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Jonnycake Center of Westerly Invites Community to Participate in Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program**

**Westerly, RI – The Jonnycake Center of Westerly** is welcoming the community to participate in its **2020 holiday-time Adopt-a-Family program**. This annual program ensures that children in need in southern Rhode Island will have plenty of presents and gifts to open during the holiday season.

In 2019, the Adopt-a-Family program provided toys, games, activity sets, coloring books, electronics, clothing, and household/school essentials for nearly 600 children in southern Rhode Island. Throughout fall 2019, donors provided presents and gifts, and groups of volunteers sorted and packed the presents for a large-scale distribution in December. The effort was coordinated by the Jonnycake Center of Westerly's Social Services department, who met with every participating adoptee family to discuss each of their children's specific wants and needs. The donated gifts were matched with local underserved children.

Due to necessary changes in compliance with COVID-19 health measures, the Jonnycake Center of Westerly's 2020 Adopt-a-Family program has been retooled to still provide holiday magic for local children in need, albeit in a different form than in years past.

The 2020 program will focus on providing financial support for adoptee families rather than presenting them with donated physical gifts. Current public health measures do not allow large groups to come to the Jonnycake Center of Westerly to sort the gifts as normal, and the Center itself is unable to accept and process donated toys and gifts on the scale it would need for the program to be successful. For 2020, each family will receive financial support in an equivalent amount to the value of the gifts that each child would ordinarily receive. Distribution will take place Saturday, November 14, and Sunday, November 15, giving registered families ample time to apply the funds toward holiday presents for their children.

"This has been an extraordinarily tough year for so many families in our community, and it's heartbreaking to think that more kids than ever might not have any presents to open during the holidays," said **Lee Eastbourne**, Executive Director. "We're counting on this year's Adopt-a-Family program to be a beacon of hope in a very trying time. Whether you are a family in need of presents, or if you are in a position to help make gifts possible for others, we invite you to participate in this wonderful program. We hope to make the holiday season a little brighter for struggling families in Rhode Island."

- **To register as an Adoptee family in need of presents**, please contact Jonnycake Center of Westerly Social Services. **Call (401) 377-8069 and select Option 1, or email Sarah Cote, Social Services Program Director, at [scote@jonnycake.org](mailto:scote@jonnycake.org).**
- **Families or individuals in need of holiday-time meals**, including Thanksgiving dinner and/or Christmas/holiday dinner, can **contact Jonnycake Social Services** at the info above to learn how to receive assistance for no-cost meals and traditional trimmings.
- **To sign up as a Donor who can help arrange for gifts**, please contact Lee Eastbourne, Executive Director, at **(401) 377-8069, ext. 106, or email [leastbourne@jonnycake.org](mailto:leastbourne@jonnycake.org).**

To learn more about the Jonnycake Center of Westerly, including its Social Services programming, Food Pantry, and public-facing Thrift Store, visit [jonnycake.org](http://jonnycake.org) or call (401) 377-8069. To make a financial contribution in support of the Center's Food Pantry and Social Services, please visit [jonnycake.org/donate-2](http://jonnycake.org/donate-2) or call (401) 315-4584.

**About The Jonnycake Center of Westerly**

The Jonnycake Center of Westerly's mission is to provide a continuum of services in cooperation with other agencies in our service area to assist people through crisis situations and work with each individual to find a path out of dependency toward self-sufficiency. For more information, visit [jonnycake.org](http://jonnycake.org), become a fan on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/jonnycakecenter), follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/jonnycakecenter) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/jonnycakecenter), or call (401) 377-8069.

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