



BBB of Greater Kansas City 2011 Holiday Wise Giving Guide

The BBB Wants YOU To Make Smart Giving Choices This Holiday Season!

Many individuals and families make holiday giving a part of their celebrations as a way to remember those less fortunate, to teach their children about caring for others, or even as a way to receive last-minute tax deductions before year's end. Charities often depend on end-of-year giving to keep their financials in the black. We want you to know how to make sure your holiday giving makes a difference.

Responding to Natural Disasters and Humanitarian Crises

Many in our metro were personally touched by disasters in Reading, Kansas and Joplin, Missouri. Natural disasters around the world have left many in great need. As you consider donating money to meet the needs of people who are suffering, here are some tips.

1. Be cautious when giving online.
 - ◆ Do not respond to emails from individuals and/or organizations you don't know asking for help.
2. Find out if the charity has an established, on-the-ground presence in the impacted areas.
 - ◆ An area hit by a disaster often has a charity community that was in place and working on meeting various needs before a disaster struck. These organizations, already familiar with a particular people and with the networks needed accomplish their missions, may be the best charitable investments. New organizations arising after a natural disaster or humanitarian crisis, while likely well-intentioned, may not be as efficient.
3. Find out if the charity is providing direct aid or raising money for other groups.
 - ◆ You may just want to skip the middlemen.
4. Gifts of clothing, food or other in-kind donations.
 - ◆ While these gifts are well-intentioned, before donating items, make sure that the organization processing the donations has the ability to transport and distribute these types of donations. The most cost-effective way to donate to relief efforts is usually by donating money.

Smart Giving Basics

1. Do not give cash; always make contributions by check and make your check payable to the charity, not to the individual collecting the donation.
2. Keep records of your donations (receipts, canceled checks, and bank statements) so you can document your charitable giving at tax time. Although the value of your time as a volunteer is not deductible, out-of-pocket expenses (including transportation costs) directly related to your volunteer service to a charity are deductible.
3. Don't be fooled by names that look impressive or that closely resemble the name of a well-known organization.
4. Check out the organization with the local charity registration office (usually a division of the state attorney general's office) and with your Better Business Bureau.

Below is a list of local charities that have been reviewed by the BBB according to the [Standards for Charity Accountability](#).

Accredited Charities

The following local charities meet all 20 BBB Standards of Charity Accountability and have been awarded the Kansas City BBB Charity Seal.



[Harvesters – The Community Food Network](#)
[City Union Mission](#)

The following organization also meets all 20 Standards:

[Angel Flight Central](#)

Additionally, the following national charities based here the Kansas City metro area are accredited by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance:

[Children International](#)
[Christian Foundation for Children and Aging](#)
[Outreach International](#)
[PKD Foundation](#)

Other Charity Reviews

The following local charity voluntarily submitted information to the BBB and have been reviewed BBB. For a variety of reasons, they do not meet all 20 Standards.

[Brain Injury Association of Kansas and Greater Kansas City](#)

Nondisclosures

The following charities have chosen not to respond to BBB requests for information.

[Kansas State Troopers Association](#)

[Saint Luke's Hospital Foundation](#)

[Salvation Army \(Independence, MO\)](#)

For more information on making wise giving choices, check out the BBB's [Tips on Giving](#)

The BBB reports on charities that the public has us asked about. If your favorite charity is not listed with us, click [here](#) to inquire about that organization. Organizations can also register themselves by visiting our [registration page](#).