

MEDIA RELEASE

23 November 2020

“Bags of Joy” to bring happiness to children and young people this Christmas

Photo opportunity:

What: Preparation and packing of Bags of Joy

Who: Bags of Joy Founder Jessy Malham, packing Bags of Joy for Ballarat children and young people

Where: The Y, Barkly Square 25 – 39 Barkly Street

When: Friday 11th December between 4-5pm or Saturday 12th December between 10am-12pm

It's that time of year again with Christmas quickly approaching. Amazing young woman and Founder of the Boxes of Joy campaign, Jessy Malham, is hoping that again this year, the Y will be able to provide gift packages at Christmas time for children and young who may not otherwise receive anything during the festive season.

In October 2015 at age 19, Jessy contacted the YMCA and proposed her idea of providing shoeboxes filled with gifts for disadvantaged and vulnerable children at Christmas. “From a young age I have always had the desire to help others, that is what brings me the upmost joy,” said Jessy. Jessy had been struggling knowing that so many children in our community were not as fortunate as herself, something that was particularly marked at times like Christmas.

The Y Ballarat team loved Jessy's idea and supported her to make it happen and the rest is history, with the program now in its sixth year.

Jessy is now 24 and 2020 sees a revamp of the concept by using large gift bags instead of shoeboxes, hence the name change. However, each package will still contain just as many gifts!

Jessy and the Y are appealing to the generosity of the Ballarat community for donations to fill the bags. Gifts are required for babies through to young people up to 18 years which should be small enough to fit in a gift bag. Ideas include active play items (e.g. balls, skipping ropes, bubbles), personal products (e.g. soap, toothpaste, deodorant, hair products), educational items (e.g. books, stationery) or a 'special gift'. This could be a gift voucher, a pair of headphones, jewellery, a small stuffed toy, anything!

Donations are being accepted up until Friday 4th December at the Ballarat Y's corporate office at Barkly Square, 25-39 Barkly Street with access through the front entrance on Barkly Street.

Larelle Kuczer, YMCA Youth & Community Impact Manager said, “As 2020 comes to a close, we see the end of a year which had a huge number of challenges for so many people. Many

THE Y BALLARAT

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We believe in the power of
inspired young people

more people are experiencing hardship, which means more than ever before, Bags of Joy can make a real difference to a child or young person and bring some of the joy of Christmas”.

Bag packing will be completed by Jessy, Y Ballarat team members and volunteers all volunteering their time on Saturday December 12th, with the bags distributed via local agencies and organisations soon after.

Local schools, welfare and youth organisations are encouraged to register children and young people who would benefit from a Bag of Joy by contacting ballarat@ymca.org.au

Contact

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