



Holidays are about family, happy memories and hope for the future...

But for the 2,000 children in **San Joaquin County** who have a parent in jail, the holidays are often a lonely time.

Imagine you are a child and the holidays are approaching.... Imagine the thought of the holidays without your mom or dad.

Imagine the heartfelt sadness of a child who cannot be with their mom or dad, the shame of having a parent in jail, the secrecy, and not knowing when the family will be together again.

Imagine feeling that alone in the world....

The past four years, Friends Outside provided 350 local children with holiday gifts, and also “thank you” gifts for their caregivers.

This year, we plan to provide gifts for 100 children who have a mom or dad in the county jail, and gifts for those tireless grandparents, aunties and uncles who are caring for them in their parent’s absence.

We can’t do it without your help.

Our process is respectful, and protects the dignity of those who benefit from your generosity. The gift-giving is a festive occasion...a real holiday party ...with holiday treats, music, games, and selection of cozy soft stuffed animals for each child, in addition to their “Friends Outside” gifts.

- Parents who are incarcerated in the county jail tell us about their children’s needs, and we engage the assistance of the caregiver to suggest age-appropriate gifts. We are looking for ideas of what the child needs (i.e. new shoes, a warm jacket) and also what they would like.
- These suggestions are then passed on to the individual, family or group sponsor who does the shopping.

There are lots of ways you can help us bring a little light into a child’s holiday. The attached list will help you decide what you would like to do to be a holiday benefactor.

Help us help a child to know they are not alone in the world, by making their holiday a little brighter.

Your gift will bring a little joy to their holiday season, and bring them hope.

Gretchen Newby, MA
Chief Executive Officer

For more information:
Maricela Gonzalez
Holiday Wish Coordinator
Mgonzalez@friendsoutside.org
209-955-0701

