

Caledon Community Services, Caledon Fire & Emergency Services team up for Season of Hope program]

Program was formerly known as the Santa Fund

By Zachary Roman

Caledon residents looking to make a difference in another family's life over the holidays can do so with this year's Season of Hope campaign.

On November 14, the Town of Caledon announced that Caledon Community Services (CCS) and the Town's Fire & Emergency Services team are collaborating to continue the program previously known as the Santa Fund.

Now called Season of Hope, the program's goal is to ensure that all families in Caledon have food and gifts for the holidays.

CCS' Director of Communications and Marketing, Donna Cragg, said Season of Hope is CCS' annual year-end campaign and that year-end campaigns are the most critical for any non-profit organization.

She said the campaign was renamed to Season of Hope because what people need most these days is hope, and that the name change also makes the campaign more inclusive.

This year, gift cards are being sought instead of toys and gifts, so that parents can shop for their items they know their kids need and desire. Gift cards of any denomination are welcomed, and all cards will be given to parents and caregivers.

"They know their children best," said Cragg. "It's very well received across the community and by the families struggling, it allows them to make their holidays special."

Cragg said she thinks the transition to gift cards is excellent for many reasons. One example is when donating gifts, people often think about young kids but forget about preteens and teens, who can be harder to buy for. With gift cards, parents can buy their older children a gift they'll really like.

A number of drop off locations have been set up around Caledon for residents to bring their gift cards to. Residents are asked to bring gift cards to one of the following locations by December 7: Town Hall, Caledon OPP, or Caledon Fire Headquarters in Caledon East; the Bolton fire station; Snelgrove fire station; Caledon Village fire station; or the Inglewood Fire Station during their Pancake Breakfast With Santa on December 4.

For addresses and drop off times, visit the Town of Caledon's website.

Residents can also donate to the Season of Hope initiative at ccs4u.org/donate or by donating food items to The Exchange at 55 Healey Road in Bolton.