



## **Back-to-School Clothing Drive COVID-19 Official Announcement**

*May 7, 2020*

Since our inception, Back to School Clothing Drive has operated with a singular goal, which is summed up in our mission: *"To provide new school outfits and uniforms, backpacks, and school supplies to children in need."* Over the last 53 years we have developed innovative methods to accomplish this, the largest of which is the *"New Clothes, New Beginnings"* distribution. For a week in July, hundreds of volunteers give more than 5,000 Title I elementary school students the chance to go school "shopping." It's a one-of-a-kind event and everyone involved looks forward to it all year.

However, due to the challenges associated with COVID-19, we have come to the difficult realization that it wouldn't be feasible or responsible to host the 2020 distribution event in its traditional format. After many discussions with our sponsors and partners, as well as careful consideration for the health of our staff, volunteers, and the children we serve, BTSCD has developed a contingency plan that eliminates the large gathering, yet still fulfills our program goal of preparing these students for the school year. Over the next few months, we will work with our partner schools to register their students and deliver the items directly to the districts. The students will then receive their packages at the start of the school year.

We realize this isn't nearly as much fun for the kids as a day of shopping, and we're disappointed that we can't interact with them and give them an experience they'll always remember. However, we're confident that in light of the current circumstances, this is the best way we can help prepare them for school, while ensuring their safety and well being.

Rest assured that even though distribution looks different this year, we are still using our resources to help Title I students throughout Arizona. We are immensely grateful for all of our supporters and are hard at work making our 2021 *New Clothes, New Beginnings* better than ever!