

Spare some change, change a child

Mike Zettel, Staff

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Of the 950 children who were helped by the Education Foundation's Poverty and Emergency Relief Fund last year, it's the story of one which sticks out for Dara Goulet.

Goulet, program assistant and events coordinator for the Education Foundation of Niagara, said in one of the applications for funding, a school principal wrote of one student whose parents were planning to give him glasses for his birthday in July.

This was in the middle of the school year, Goulet said.

"Glasses were a luxury," she said.

The fund, launched last year, allows the foundation to support personal and school-related needs of less fortunate children.

Goulet said 948 children received assistance through the fund last year, with the majority of them using the money to purchase winter clothing or to attend field trips.

"For some students, needing winter boots isn't a big deal," she said. "But there's a lot of kids in the Niagara region who can't afford that. It's a luxury."

The fund is also often accessed to pay for medication.

Through the fund, students can receive up to \$100.

Nearly all the money for the fund last year came from a one-day change collection, which raised \$25,000.

This year, the foundation is holding Make Change for Children week, during which people will be encouraged to drop off the coins they have in their pockets in boxes distributed to schools and businesses across Niagara.

Goulet said last year, they had boxes at half the schools in the District School Board of Niagara and hope to reach all of them this year.

Make Change for Children week is April 20-24. To make a donation or inquire about setting up a donation box, call the foundation at 905-641-2929, ext. 4107.



Julie Densham and Dara Goulet, of the Education Foundation of Niagara, say the money raised in last year's Make Change for Children campaign helped nearly 950 kids.