

New shoes! Nonprofit gets 200-pair donation

Aileen Wingblad Staff Writer 12:26 p.m. EDT August 2, 2016



(Photo: Submitted)

For plenty of kids, a new pair of shoes is a given for “back to school” time.

Thanks to the Michigan Podiatric Medical Association, nearly 200 youngsters in Wellspring Lutheran Services programs will be among those sporting new “kicks” when classes resume next month.

Recently, the MPMA dropped off dozens upon dozens of new athletic shoes at the New Directions Campus of Wellspring in Farmington Hills, which supports the foster care system and kids in residential care with emotional and behavioral issues.

“Children’s feet change quickly as they age,” said Dr. Jodie Sengstock, MPMA director of professional relations. “Improper fitting shoes can aggravate the feet and create sores and other problems. Our goal is to educate the public on how and why to have children in proper fitting footwear and to help some in-need children start the year off on the ‘right foot.’”

Some kids at Wellspring were fitted for the new shoes by Sengstock on “delivery day.” The rest will be distributed to others before the new school year begins.



Campus Director Marie Tolen with some of the shoes that were recently delivered to Wellspring Lutheran Services in Farmington Hills. (Photo: Submitted)

“We feel so fortunate that MPMA has partnered with Wellspring Lutheran Services for this very generous gift,” said Marie Tolen, director of Wellspring’s Farmington Hills campus. “The annual donation of athletic shoes by the Michigan Podiatric Medical Association is so important to our children at New Directions and children in Wellspring foster homes. Every child wants to start the school year looking their best and this donation makes that a reality.

“The shoes donated by MPMA are top quality and our children love the variety of colors and styles. They know that they are going to school wearing the same shoes as their classmates. We serve at least 35 teenagers a year at New Direction which means they go through several pairs of shoes each year. To have shoes on hand when a child comes to live at New Directions is one small but important part of making them feel welcome and cared for.”

This is the fourth year the MPMA has partnered with Wellspring Lutheran Services for the shoe program.

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