At Operation Warm, we are deeply committed to the communities we serve, and we recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic affects not only our own team, partners, and supporters, but also the children and families we serve. We know that the families who receive our coats are already economically at risk: part-time and service industry workers, refugees, English Language Learners, and others without significant savings or resources.

These families depend on the services provided by nonprofits on the frontlines within vulnerable populations. Having funding available to keep our programs functioning when demand rises will be essential to the success of our upcoming season. We anticipate that low-income families will be the hardest hit by the effects of the pandemic on our economy – so the kids will need you more than ever this year.

The goals of our A Warm Welcome to the Library Program remain the same:

1. Support Strong Family Development so that all families have access to quality services and all members of the family are nurtured, encouraged and secure.
2. Develop Healthy and Thriving Children and Youth by providing connections to community resources that help individuals thrive physically, socially and mentally.
3. Develop a Literacy Culture and Climate so that parents and children can experience the life-changing impact of education.

We firmly believe that libraries have an essential role to play in providing aid to families during this crisis. As COVID-19 continues to cause uncertainty, we would like to assure prospective partners that Operation Warm is running at full speed and will remain vigilant in our mission.

As we have in response to numerous challenges over the past over 20 years, we are designing programs and building creative solutions to ensure that we are poised to help serve impoverished children in local communities. We are already working with our library partners to establish contingencies if locations are unable to physically accommodate visitors this fall and winter, need to manage drive-by coat distributions, or need to lower in-person interactions. At this time, we anticipate being able to fully utilize any funding committed to this program during the 2020-21 year.
COVID-19 Notes

- We understand that the number of families seeking out basic needs has increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that libraries continue to serve as a vital resource for local communities.
- During this crisis, libraries are eager to promote new services that are particularly valuable: digital resources, curbside pick-up / delivery programs, benefit sign-up processes, remote learning opportunities, and virtual library card registration.
- As we have in response to numerous challenges over the past over 20 years, Operation Warm will offer re-imagined coat giving programs that will allow us to meet the influx of need for coats expected in our communities - in accordance with current health and safety guidelines.
- A reminder that Operation Warm coats are brand new and are shipped individually wrapped.

A Warm Welcome to the Library: Three Event Models for the 20-21 Season

- Traditional: Library is open, and coats can be distributed in person at a physical library location.
  o Children can select coats in person via a timed ticket system to maintain social distancing.
  o Volunteering opportunities provided at the discretion of the location.

- Contactless Delivery: Coat and literacy materials are distributed outside the library location.
  o Drive-through model (in a parking lot) or outside tables.
  o If an event cannot take place: The library can promote its digital services via information packets handed out with coats.
  o If a library cannot do pre-registration with sizing, an order can be put together using our sizing guides, or a template coat order with a variety of sizes will be sent.
  o Coats can be distributed on a first come first serve basis.

- Basic Service Collaboration: Coat and literacy materials are distributed at a collaborative location where children and families are already receiving services.
  o Examples: foodbank, school lunch program, etc.
  o Same event parameters as our Contactless Delivery Model.

Other Program Considerations

  o Survey responses show that libraries are involved in community crisis response, working to meet the educational needs of students and researchers, reporting increased use of digital services, and anticipating future demands.
  o COVID-19 crisis response: of respondents involved in community crisis response, the majority reported new partnerships and sharing accurate community information and resources.

- Operation Warm is currently reviewing the following book alternatives to offer a simplified program. This will allow for easier implementation in a year where there may be reduced staffing / volunteering.
  o Replacing the funding for books with 24 additional coats.
  o A digital partnership with an online reading comprehension provider.