

The Charlotte Observer
Neighbors of the South

Make holidays festive for needy

By Melinda Johnston

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Birthday Blessings, a local nonprofit that throws birthday parties for homeless children, needs your help with its annual Trim-a-Tree project.

Since its beginning in 2005, Birthday Blessings has provided small Christmas trees and miniature ornaments for the homeless children it serves. The project has grown so big that, this year, it will provide close to 300 trees to families in eight shelters in the Charlotte area.

"For many homeless families, decorating a tree together is something they don't get to do," said Birthday Blessings co-founder Amy Cervantes. "It's a lost tradition for them."

Each month, Birthday Blessings hosts birthday parties at area homeless shelters. Children who have a birthday in that month receive a present, and all children at the party are treated to cake, entertainment and treat bags. For many homeless children, this is the first birthday party they've ever experienced.

In December, birthday parties are intertwined with Christmas traditions. Entertainment includes singing Christmas songs and carols, and decorating tiny trees that each family can take back to the shelter to bring some holiday cheer into their own small space.

More Information

- [Want to help?](#)

Tax deductible donations may be made online or mailed to Birthday Blessings, 200 Clanton Road, Charlotte, N.C., 28217. Adopt-a-party groups are needed for several parties in December. Party bags, presents, and other items are always welcomed. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available year.

Information: www.birthdayblessings.org or 704-846-2329.