



Building a Box of Blessings

By Robert Lerosé



At ages 8 and 5, Dylan and Jesse Clay built a mini food pantry for people in need.

As volunteers at a soup kitchen, Dylan and Jesse Clay realized that there were many hungry people right in their own community.

Their grandma told the boys about a mini food pantry in her town. Someone had set out a box with food in it so that people could take what they needed. “We thought it was a great idea. So we decided to make one,” says Jesse.

Pantry on a Pole

The boys asked their dad to sketch out a design. Their mom bought the wood and other supplies. Together, they built and painted the box and added clear doors so people could see inside.

They attached the box to a pole, then sank the pole into concrete between their fence and the sidewalk. That way, everyone walking along their busy street would see it. They added a sign that reads *The Blessing Box*:

Give what you can. . . . Take what you need.

The brothers filled the box with foods that don’t spoil quickly—things like bottled water, chips, juice boxes, and cans of soup.

Empty, Then Full Again

Soon, the box began to empty. People who were hungry stopped by to take out things they needed.

Jesse and Dylan were happy the box was being used. And they were surprised and excited to find others pitching in to stock it!

“People see that there’s food in it and that homeless people can get it, and they stop to put food in,” says Dylan. From the start, neighbors and strangers have helped keep the pantry stocked.

Everyone Wins

Now Dylan is 11 and Jesse is 8, and their Blessing Box continues to benefit people in

their community—both those who need food and those looking for a way to help out.

“I feel good about it because I want kids to have food and to be successful in life,” says Jesse.

The boys hope that other people will be inspired to put up boxes in their own communities. “Then everyone would have food,” says Dylan.

Highlights is proud to know these Gallant Kids. **4**

