

Marine Toys for Tots Foster Care Program Creates Room for Joy

TRIANGLE, VA, UNITED STATES, May 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On May 5th, our Nation observed National Foster Care Day—a powerful reminder that hundreds of thousands of children in foster care need stability, encouragement, and a community that stands firmly behind them. Marine Toys for Tots is answering that call through its Foster Care Program, a mission grounded in one simple but profound belief: a single act of generosity can create lasting impact and make Room for Joy in the life of a child who needs it most.



“

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*Lieutenant General Jim Laster,
USMC (Retired)*

For many children and teens entering the foster care system, life changes in an instant. They are often removed from everything familiar and handed a single bag to carry their belongings—a stark and heartbreaking reality faced by more than 400,000 at-risk children, including those in foster care, across the United States. This National Foster Care Month, Toys for Tots is shining a light on these young lives and the extraordinary difference supporters can make in helping them navigate uncertainty with dignity and hope.

In 2025, the Marine Toys for Tots Foster Care Program partnered with organizations across the country to deliver

emotional-relief packages to nearly 375,000 at-risk children, including those in foster care. Filled with toys, books, backpacks, and educational resources, these packages do far more than provide comfort in the moment—they serve as a powerful reminder that even during times of upheaval, there is still Room for Joy.

“Our Foster Care Program is about far more than delivering toys or books—it’s about restoring hope, creating moments of stability, and reminding foster children that they truly matter,” said Lieutenant General Jim Laster, USMC (Retired), CEO of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. “Because of our donors, we’re able to create real Room for Joy for children navigating the foster care system—one transformative gift at a time.”

The impact of that generosity reaches far beyond a single moment, often shaping the trajectory of a child's life in ways that last for years. Few stories illustrate this more powerfully than that of United States Marine Corps Lance Corporal Taylor Bills.

LCpl Bills grew up surrounded by instability, moving between parents, watching his siblings enter child protective services, and navigating a childhood defined by uncertainty. Yet even in those difficult circumstances, he found moments where there was Room for Joy—often sparked by simple acts of kindness and giving. He began volunteering with local foster care organizations and later with his local Toys for Tots Chapter, experiences that left a lasting impression.

He recalls standing in a school gym during a Toys for Tots distribution event, surrounded by tables of toys. As children—many of whom reminded him of his younger self—walked away smiling with something of their own, he felt a deep sense of connection and purpose. “I recognized some of the kids, and being able to watch them come through and then get a smile on their face was really heartwarming,” LCpl Bills shared.

That moment became a turning point. Determined to rewrite his future and serve as a role model for children facing similar hardships, he chose to enlist in the United States Marine Corps.

His journey is a powerful testament to what generosity can do. From a childhood marked by instability to a life defined by service and purpose, LCpl Bills found hope because others stepped forward when it mattered most. For children in foster care, one act of kindness can do more than brighten a day—it can help shape a future and create lasting Room for Joy.

“Just because you can't see what's right in front of you today or tomorrow doesn't mean that something good isn't there,” said LCpl Bills. “So don't give up... you are in control of your future, and it's not too late to do something great.”

To learn more about the Marine Toys for Tots Foster Care Program or to donate, visit:
<https://www.toysfortots.org/programs/foster-children/>.

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