

# CAPE GAZETTE article, January 2, 2026

## Gift-giving season may be over, but it's still cold outside



Clothing Our Kids helps make sure many of the county's school-aged children are able to dress appropriately during the winter months. It's the time of year for winter coat drives, which is what's going on here. Shown are (l-r) Schell Brothers employee Grace Hoinowski, Clothing Our Kids board member Bob Blouin, Clothing Our Kids board member Merrill Cohen and Schell Brothers employee Joe Rocco. CHRIS FLOOD PHOTOS

**By: Chris Flood**

**December 26, 2025**

### **Story Location:**

Clothing Our Kids  
26582 John J. Williams Highway  
Millsboro, DE 19966

I've had elementary-aged children in the Cape Henlopen School District for years now. Inevitably, around Thanksgiving, I'm a recipient of a district-wide email reminding guardians that cold weather is here and it's time to make sure children are dressed appropriately.

The change in seasons can come quickly, and some parents need to be gently pushed into bringing out the cold-weather bin from the attic. That's the category I'd throw my family into – the don't-want-summer-to-end category.

Some families, no matter how many gentle reminders they receive, aren't sending their kids to school dressed for freezing temperatures because winter clothing is expensive and they can't afford to. That's where an organization like the Millsboro-based Clothing Our Kids comes into play. Founded in 2012, they have provided more than 260,000 items to nearly 41,000 kids. This school year alone, they've provided nearly 12,000 items to almost 1,500 kids.

Clothing Our Kids board members Bob Blouin and Merrill Cohen were at the office Dec. 22, to receive collected clothing from a couple of organizations that had set up clothing drives. They both moved here around 2018 and have been volunteering since. "We're all retired, and this is the need we see," said Blouin.

The organization started out by providing clothes to elementary students, and then middle school students were added three years ago, said Cohen. The thought was there would still be a need as the elementary-aged kids got older, he said, adding the program now works with more than 60 schools in Sussex County.

This year, for the first time, the organization took on high school students. The level of need is always steady, but this year it's been off the charts, said Blouin. It can be a challenge with high school kids because they need adult-size clothing, which can quickly get expensive, he said.

At this point, the annual rush of holiday clothing drives and donations has subsided, but we're also heading into the coldest part of the year.

The needs don't stop just because the holiday season is over, said Blouin.

The best way for someone to help is to volunteer, donate money or organize a clothing drive, said Cohen.

"We only accept new clothing that still has the tags on it," he said. "Some of the kids never get new clothing."

