



JUST SKIP IT!

Skip a meal and feed a hungry child

If you are fortunate enough to have a job that pays a decent wage, there's a good chance you've spent the last two days engaging in excess.

On Thanksgiving, you probably sat around a table with enough food on it to feed a small, third-world village. On Black Friday — a day that retailers are tirelessly pushing to supplant the real holiday — you may have joined the throngs wearing out their credit cards in a mad rush to “save” money.

It's OK. You work hard all year, so you deserve a few days of over-indulgence.

Now that you've gotten that out of your system, it's

time to take a moment to think about the real meaning behind the holiday season.

There are more than a billion people in the world who can't even fathom a feast as bountiful as the one that was probably on your table on Thanksgiving. And they never will experience the abundance of stuff cramming the shelves of the big-box stores throughout American suburbia.

Skip it

At **Skip1.org** you are asked to skip something that you don't really need, and donate the money you would have spent to help feed a hungry child. You can skip a meal, an overpriced latté, or that rich, creamy dessert that you *really* don't need.

Skip1.org was founded by She-

lene Bryan after a life-changing visit to Africa. She and her husband had been sponsoring two Ugandan children through a charity. She started to wonder if the money they were sending every month was having any impact on the lives of the two kids she knew only by the file numbers on their photographs.

She hopped on a plane, flew halfway around the world and tracked down the children in their village. When she saw the tremendous positive impact her donations were making in their lives, she decided it was time to reorganize her priorities. She started Skip1.org with the goal of getting lots of people to make small donations to help feed needy children around the world.

Pick a project

You need to register on the site to donate. When you register, you type in what you're skipping, how much you want to donate, and whether you want your money to go into the general fund or to a specific project. The site claims that 100 percent of all public donations goes directly to providing aid. Skip1.org sponsors food and water projects, such as kitchens or wells, designed to help feed or bring clean water to those in need. The current featured project is a kitchen for an orphanage in Chilca, Peru.

The website has a projects page with information on the projects that have been or are being sponsored. There's a description of each project along with pictures and videos. The amount of money needed to complete each proj-

ect is listed, along with the amount raised so far.

Along the bottom of the Web pages are pictures that link to pages listing what individual donors have skipped, and how much they've given. People are skipping everything from meals, birthdays and eyebrow waxings to manicures and golf games.

Nice idea, nice site

Skip1.org is a well designed website. It has a clean, contemporary look with a pleasant, almost playful attitude. The navigation is obvious and consistent across the site. Tabs across the top of all the pages take you anywhere on the site. It's not an especially broad or deep site, getting its message across efficiently with a minimal number of pages. The typography, images and videos are all professionally done, giving the site a slick feel.

Skip1.org is to be commended for its noble mission of feeding and providing water to underprivileged kids. I'm not sure how much of an impact it's having though. There appears to be only three projects sponsored so far, and there's only a handful of donor links at the bottom of the page. I wasn't able to find on the site when the organization began its work, only that it was after 2003.

Still, every hungry child that is fed is an important accomplishment. And building two kitchens and a well is more than I've ever done for those in need.

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