



23rd Annual
Build A House...Build A Dream! Contest for Kids
March 7, 2026 at

Church Farm School
Exton, PA

About the Event

Now in its twenty-third year, *Build a House...Build a Dream* raises awareness of the home-building efforts of Habitat for Humanity in Chest County.

Fifth-grade students in Chester County work individually or in pairs to build their own three-dimensional, model dream homes. These three-dimensional models are only limited by students' imaginations! In previous years, students have created model houses designed to withstand tsunamis, houses based on spaceships and bongo drums, houses made entirely of pencils and pasta, and energy efficient, environmentally friendly homes. All children receive recognition for their efforts and the top three entries earn prizes. **The contest is free to enter and relies exclusively on sponsorship to raise money.**

Students deliver their models to the Church Farm School, in Exton for display and judging. Students will need to be standing with their dream homes at 9:05am for our panel of judges to speak with them about their inspiration and process. There will be two rounds of judging with contestants being dismissed after each round. The top three dream homes will be announced during our awards ceremony with the top three prizes awarded to the winners. While our panel of volunteers, Habitat board members and other professionals in the community judge the dream homes, we will have raffles, snacks and activities for the students and their families to keep the fun going! The event ends at approximately 12:30pm after all prizes have been handed out.

Since 2002, more than 6,000 fifth grade students representing some 750 schools throughout the area have participated, and the contest has raised roughly a half million dollars through sponsorship to help support Habitat's regional homebuilding initiatives.

How to enter:

This free contest is open to fifth grade students in public, private, parochial, charter, and home schools throughout the Philadelphia area. Students may work individually or in pairs.

Contestants may register online at <https://www.hfhcc.org/build-a-house-build-a-dream> . Entries will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. **Registration deadline is Friday, February 20 or when we reach our capacity of 100 homes.**

Contest Rules:

- Models must be three-dimensional and fit on a base **no larger** than 2ft x 3ft.
- Students must prepare one written description of about 100 words or less explaining why this is their idea of a dream house and highlighting any interesting features. This paragraph should be displayed with their homes.
- Electrical outlets will not be available.
- The use of liquids (water, slime, etc.) is not permitted, as we want to preserve the cleanliness of the contest venue.
- Students must be prepared to discuss their entry with contest judges.
- Model homes will be judged on the following criteria:
 - Originality and creativity
 - Use of materials
 - Appearance and design
 - Independent effort (this is a contest for kids, not their parents!)

About Habitat for Humanity of Chester County:

Habitat for Humanity of Chester County helps hard-working, low-income families achieve homeownership. Habitat homes are not free and are sold to partner families using a no-interest 30-year mortgage. These partner families are chosen based upon their need for affordable housing, their ability to pay their monthly mortgage, and their willingness to complete 200 hours (or 400 for a couple) of volunteer labor, or “sweat equity,” at the construction site. Since 1989, Habitat for Humanity of Chester County has given a hand up, not a hand out, to 191 families thanks to countless volunteer hours and the financial support of our community. For more information, visit www.hfhcc.org.