



Stouffville's Elena Frocione is organizing this weekend's fundraising event to help 9-year-old Dominican Republic native Dalexis, who suffered burns to her hands and most of her upper body as an infant.

Weekend thrift sale helps Dominican burn victim

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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When Elena Frocione heard about a nine-year-old girl in the Dominican Republic suffering from extensive burns to much of her upper body, she could not just ignore her.

Ms Frocione decided to do something to help little Dalexis who "wants to be a princess, like every other nine-year-old girl".

The Whitchurch-Stouffville resident is holding a thrift sale this Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Lemonville Community Centre, 13453 McCowan Rd.

Donated new and gently used items will be sold.

All money raised will go toward surgeries for Dalexis, who is in constant pain because her skin is so badly burned it does not grow with her, according to Ms Frocione.

"In Canada, something like that would never happen because of our health-care system," she said.

Dalexis lives in a tin shack she shares

with five other people in Higüey, Dominican Republic.

She was burned at 18 months old in a house fire that also took the lives of her four-month-old brother and 18-month-old cousin.

The family is too poor to afford Dalexis' medical care or even send her and her three siblings to school.

The education system is free, according to Ms Frocione, but students must wear a uniform, which costs about \$50.

"Without an education, they aren't going to go anywhere," Ms Frocione said, noting Dalexis has not been to school for five years.

Ms Frocione heard about Dalexis and her plight last summer while on vacation in the Dominican. She returned in November to meet Dalexis and her family.

"It was heart-wrenching," she said.

Ms Frocione will return to the Dominican April 3 and plans to bring with her the proceeds of the sale and set up medical appointments with local doctors to help Dalexis.

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