



Caring
Closet
at UMFS

Community Service Projects for the Bags 4 Kids Program

The Caring Closet (“CC”) is a growing non-profit whose primary focus is to nurture dignity and confidence in school-aged children experiencing challenging situations by providing stylish, high-quality clothing and basic necessities to help them thrive. The Caring Closet also offers support to little ones and adults who live in the same home with school-aged children. The CC through its Bags 4 Kids Program serves agencies helping kids transition into domestic violence programs, foster-related programs and temporary housing programs. The following are a list of ongoing service opportunities that support the work of the CC.

If you have any leftover items from your shopping, we will happily accept those as well.

ORIGAMI KITS:

Origami kits are placed in our Care Bags and holiday bags that are distributed to children in crisis in the Richmond area.

Please make 20 origami kits.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 20 origami kits, please keep track of time spent on this project.

Each kit should contain:

- 20 assorted sheets of origami paper (6” x 6”);
- Add three easy patterns per kit. ***Please fold neatly and flat to fit in bag.*** (If you need ideas try www.origami-fun.com)
- Place all in ***quart-sized*** zip lock bag.
- Make an encouraging note card for each kit on 3 X 5 notecard or other fun paper. Example: “You are awesome!” “You Rock!”, “Be Happy!”.
- Write “Origami” on a white label and decorate it.
- Place decorated label on kit or if you don’t have a label, please use a Sharpie or a marker to write Origami on the bag.



CARE BAG KIT:

As a little background, the CC through its Bags 4 Kids (“BFK”) program provides Care Bags to local agencies to use as welcome bags to kids transitioning into their programs. This is an on-going project for us. You do **NOT** need to provide the cinch bag for this kit as we have special drawstring backpacks that we order for this purpose.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 1 Care Bag, the volunteer hours will be awarded as follows: 3 volunteer hours for 1 Care Bag, 4 volunteer hours for 2 Care Bags and a *maximum* of 5 volunteer hours for 3 or more Care Bags. For more than 3 Care Bags, please track your hours and turn in your time spent on the project to me.

Directions: Fill a shopping bag or other bag with:

ITEM:	NOTES:
1 package of ADULT soft toothbrushes (1-2 toothbrushes)	We have lots of teens!
1 full size ADULT toothpaste	Again, we have lots of teens!
1 pack of 10 SKINNY markers or 12 pack of colored pencils	NO Dollar Tree markers please
4 pens	
4 pencils	
A single subject notebook, journal or small notebook	No spiral please.
1 Adult Coloring Book	Can find at Dollar Tree
1 small activity item such as a deck of cards, Uno or a yo-yo	
1 hair brush	
1 <i>travel-size</i> tissue pack	
1 <i>squishy</i> ball or other small <i>squishy</i> fidget	Squishy is key!
1 small squishmallow or similar sized stuffed animal	We don't know the ages who receive the bags so a friend that appeal across age groups is helpful.
1 50 X 60 <i>rolled, lightweight</i> fleece blanket	See picture below
1 reusable water bottle	Bulky water bottles will be too large for bag and all the other items.
3 Encouraging Cards containing a favorite quote and a personal message	Sample suggestions below if needed

Where to Shop: Most items can be found at the Dollar Tree except for the fleece blankets and markers. We do accept colored pencils (but not markers) from the Dollar Tree. Fleece blankets can usually be found at Walmart for around \$7 or sometimes less. In the past, blankets have also been found at CVS or other local pharmacies or online. Please note that the blankets may be more seasonal at the stores other than Walmart.

Ideas for the note of encouragement: Decorate card stock with your favorite inspirational quote on one side and a personal message on the other. Please use markers or colored pencils or colored paper to make the card colorful and fun.

Sample Quotes & Personal Messages: Please see Sample Quote & Personal Message Information under the Encouraging Card section below.

PENCIL BOX KIT PROJECT:

As a little background, each year the CC through its Bags 4 Kids (“BFK”) program provides pencil boxes filled with school supplies to all the students, ages K-12 at Dominion Academy (therapeutic day school, Richmond) and to other agencies that the CC partner’s with to support children in our area.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 3 Pencil Boxes the volunteer hours will be awarded as follows: 3 volunteer hours for 1-3 Pencil Boxes, 4 volunteer hours for 4 Pencil Boxes and a *maximum of 5 volunteer hours for 5 or more Pencil Boxes.* For more than 5 pencil boxes, please track your hours and turn in your time spent on the project to me.

PENCIL BOX KIT: What we need:

ITEM:	NOTES:
1 pencil box (gender-neutral color).	Approx. Size: 2.12 inches (H) X 5.62 inches (W) X 8.38 inches (D)
1 pack of 10 SKINNY markers	PLEASE NO Dollar Tree markers
4 pens	
4 pencils	
3 highlighters	
A big eraser or 4 small erasers to fit the end of a pencil	
Chapstick	
1 travel size bottle of hand sanitizer	
1 travel size package of Kleenex tissue	
A fun note of encouragement from you on a notecard that will fit in the pencil box.	<u>Please TAPE your encouraging note to the inside of the pencil box lid.</u>

*NOTE: I have found pencil boxes locally at Walmart and Staples. Pencil boxes can also be ordered online.

Ideas for the note of encouragement: You are awesome!, Smile!, You are a star!, You are a winner!, You can do this!, You are a masterpiece! *Please use markers or colored pencils or colored paper to make the card colorful and fun.*

Please see below for pictures of past projects to give you an idea of what we are looking for. Also, please note that due to teacher requests, we can **NOT** include scissors, glue sticks or pencil sharpeners.

I do a lot of shopping for this project at the Dollar Tree (but **NOT** for the markers).

The candy items you see in the pictures of the boxes will be added right before delivery so you do **not** need to shop for the sweet treats.

ENCOURAGING NOTE CARD PROJECT:

We place encouraging note cards with a personal message in every bag or box that we give out.

For this project, please make 20 encouraging cards containing inspiring quotes and a personal message. One way to do this would be to create about five cards with a quote and a simple message and then do those over again four times. However, please do this project in whatever way appeals to you.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you would like to make more than twenty cards, please keep track of your time spent on the project.

Decorate card stock or paper with your favorite inspirational quote on one side and a personal message on the other. Please use markers or colored pencils or colored paper to make the card colorful and fun.

Ideas for quotes: (or use your favorites)

- Never, never, never, never give up! - Winston Churchill
- There is something you must always remember, You are BRAVER than you believe, STRONGER than you seem and SMARTER than you think. - Christopher Robin
- You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. - Dr. Seuss
- Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go, they merely determine where you start. - Nido Qubein
- You are enough, just as you are - Meghan Markle
- Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day. - Alice Morse Earle
- Fall seven times and stand up eight. Japanese Proverb
- Nothing is Impossible. The word itself says, "I'm possible!" - Audrey Hepburn

Ideas for personal message: (The messages need to be simple and encouraging). You can pick some of these ideas or use something similar of your own.

- Think positive. Stay positive.
- I am thinking of you!
- You are special! You can do anything! Just believe it is true!
- Keep your head up, you'll make it for sure!
- I hope your future is filled with happiness and brighter days!
- Thinking of you and sending warm wishes your way!



ACTIVITY KIT PROJECT:

As a little background, the CCC through its Bags 4 Kids (“BFK”) program provides Care Bags to local agencies to use as welcome bags to kids transitioning into their programs. We service agencies helping kids transition into domestic violence programs, foster-related programs and temporary housing programs. This is an on-going project for us. We are in the process of adding small games and additional activity items to our bags so we have Activity Kits for volunteers to help us shop and create a fun experience for our clients. These same activity items are also used in the bags for our Christmas/Holiday bag program.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 3 Activity Kits the volunteer hours will be awarded as follows: 3 volunteer hours for 1-3 Activity Kits, 4 volunteer hours for 4 Activity Kits and a *maximum* of 5 volunteer hours for 5 or more Activity Kits.

The Activity Kits should contain:

- Three **small** game items to entertain kids. Some suggested items would be a Rubix Cube, Deck of Cards, Uno or other card game, fidget item or other similar type items. **(Please do NOT shop at the Dollar Tree or similar store for this project.)**
- Volunteers are also to create three encouraging cards containing a quote and a personal message.

Ideas for the note of encouragement: See instructions above under the Encouraging Card Project.

PERSONAL CARE KIT PROJECT:

We are partnering with McKinney Vento <https://nche.ed.gov/legislation/mckinney-vento/> to provide toiletry items to children experiencing homelessness in the Richmond, VA metro Area.

This project is for 3 volunteer hours for providing 5 toiletry kits.

Earn an additional hour of volunteer time for each additional 2 kits.

The kits should include **travel-size** toiletry items.

All items must be new, unused and unopened. (Unused hotel toiletries work well!)

ITEM:	NOTES:
Hairbrush	
Washcloth	
Travel Deodorant	
Bodywash or travel-size bar of soap	
Shampoo	
Lotion	
Chapstick	
Toothbrush and Toothpaste	
Encouraging Card, decorated with an inspiring message and lots of color or stickers	
Put all items in a clear, cellophane bag	

BABY KIT INSTRUCTIONS:

The Caring Closet provides bags of clothing and necessities to children and families in domestic violence shelters, temporary housing programs and foster-related programs. For our littlest clients, in addition to clothing, the CC provides a special bag of baby supplies for each child. We need your help to

shop for these items. [Please use a shopping bag or reusable shopping bag to turn in the items in your kit.](#)

This project is for 3 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 1 Baby Kit, the volunteer hours will be awarded as follows: 3 volunteer hours for 1 Baby Kits, 4 volunteer hours for 2 Baby Kits and a *maximum* of 5 volunteer hours for 3 or more Baby Kits.

If you have any leftover items from your shopping, we will happily accept those as well.

Pick your age group and gender BEFOE you start the kit.
All items must be NEW.

0-1 Years	1-2 Years	2-3 Years
Diaper cream	Diaper cream	Aquafor/ointment
Baby wash (taped)	Baby wash (taped)	Baby wash (taped)
Infant Towel set	Toddler Towel set	Toddler Towel set
2 bottles	Sippy cup	Straw Cup (or water bottle)
1 bottle brush	Snack Trap/Catcher	Snack Trap/Catcher
3 bibs	Packager of Wipes	Package of Wipes
2 pacifiers	Toddler Toothbrush	Toddler Toothbrush
Package of Wipes	3 Encouraging Cards (For Mom)	3 Encouraging Cards (For Mom)
2 Infant hats		
3 burp cloths		
Pacifier clip		
Receiving blanket		
3 Encouraging Cards (for Mom)		

Ideas for the note of encouragement: See instructions above under the Encouraging Card Project.

Hand-tied Fleece Blanket Project:

These hand-tied fleece blankets that are a PERFECT size for the Care Bags we give out to kids in foster care, domestic violence shelters and temporary housing programs.

We are looking for individuals or groups who would be willing to order and make these blankets for us.

Please visit www.myveryownblanket.org to order and get started on your project!

This project is for 2 volunteer hours.

Note: If you are interested in making more than 1 Fleece Blanket, the volunteer hours will be awarded as follows: 2 volunteer hours for 1 Fleece Blanket, 3 volunteer hours for 2 Fleece Blankets and a *maximum* of 4 volunteer hours for 3 or more Fleece Blankets. *For more than 3 Fleece Blankets, please track your hours and turn in your time spent on the project to me.*

Collection Project Opportunities:

The Caring Closet has many off-site collection opportunities that you could organize and implement at your work, school, neighborhood or with family and friends.

Non-clothing opportunities: **NEW** items for our Robert Atack Store that benefits children in residential care on the UMFS campus, **NEW** items for our baby room (diapers, wipes and self-care necessities) or **NEW** items for our Bags 4 Kids program.

Clothing opportunities: Clothing opportunities range from **NEW** underwear for men and woman (we have a supplier for children's underwear) or **NEW** pajamas for kids, to high-quality to **LIKE-NEW** clothing items in specific categories needed to fill holes in our inventory (*this need will vary*).

Please email me at kits@caring-closet.org if you are interested in a collection project for community service hours and I will connect you with the right person at the Caring Closet based on your collection area of interest.

Delivery:

ADDRESS: The CC's Bags 4 Kids project drop location is at the **Hope House** located on the grounds of Shady Grove United Methodist Church at 4825 Pouncey Tract Road, Glen Allen. Parking is located **behind** the Hope House.

DROP BOX LOCATION: You will drop your items in the **BROWN WICKER BIN** on the **LEFT** side of the Hope House porch. The porch is covered and is always open. **PLEASE EMAIL ME to let me know you have dropped off your project(s) and PLEASE put YOUR NAME with the items you drop off.**

THANK YOU for supporting the Caring Closet and its Bags 4 Kids Program. Please contact me with questions at kits@caring-closet.org.

