

ACTIVITY: MAKE GREETING CARDS

Supplies Needed:

- Blank cards and envelopes
- Decorating supplies, such as markers, stickers, cut-outs, stamps, etc.
- Postage stamps

Process:

1. Discuss with your child ways that they make people smile. Think about what you already do in your family and ways you help others in your community. Call a local nursing home or hospital to see if they would be interested in receiving your cards, or visit www.hugsandhope.org or www.makeachildsmile.org for the names, photos and stories of seriously ill children in need of some "happy mail."
2. If you are making cards for children on the above websites, take a moment to read together about one of the featured children. Have your child choose who will receive the card or cards you create.
3. Gather your decorating supplies.
4. Decorate one or more cards. You can write a simple greeting on your card. Do not include "get well" sentiments as some of these folks may be sick for a long time. Instead say "Thinking of You" or "Have a good day."
5. Address and mail the cards, or deliver them to a hospital or nursing home.

Suggested Adult Interactions:

- While you're working, have a conversation with your child about the project. These questions can help spark a discussion.
 - Is there someone you know who is sick and could use some cheering up. What could we do to help out?
 - You're helping someone by making a card, but there are times when you've needed help, too. Can you name a time when someone helped you?
 - How does it make you feel when you help someone? Can you share some examples?
 - How can we help sick people feel better? What cheers you when you're feeling ill?
- If possible, get a tour of the nursing home or hospital where you will be delivering the cards.

Skills Developed:

- Small motor skills when holding a pencil and stuffing envelopes
- Development of writing and reading concepts, such as left to right, top to bottom and front to back
- Use of creative thinking and appreciation of the arts
- Compassion, empathy and kindness

Reading Books:

Ages 4-8:

- *Franklin Goes to the Hospital* by Paulette Bourgeois, illustrated by Brenda Clark
- *Going to the Hospital* by Fred Rogers, photographs by Jim Judkis
- *My Trip to the Hospital* by Mercer Mayer

Ages 9-12:

- *Because of Anya* by Margaret Peterson Haddix
- *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr, paintings by Ronald Himmler

Adult References:

Visit the Doing Good Together website (www.doinggoodtogether.org) to sign up for a free e-newsletter that will provide five creative ways each month that you and your children can make a difference in the community.

Next time you are here:

Each year, the Minnesota Children's Museum partners with Doing Good Together to present *Small Hands, Big Heart: Sparking the Spirit of Giving*, an opportunity for museum visitors to take part in fun, meaningful service learning projects right in the museum. Find out when the next *Small Hands, Big Hearts* event is scheduled.

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Smart Play

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