

Wrapping Up with Care

Project Linus Blanket Making



Project Linus accepts new, handmade, washable blankets to distribute to hospitals, shelters, etc. to give to children who are seriously ill or traumatized. Comfort is provided to the child and his/her family knowing that strangers care enough to make a blanket - plus the blanket is a little "security" for the child in a difficult time. The NCHS Project Linus Club met weekly after school so those students could learn skills to make blankets to donate to the county organization. They also secured the school cafeteria and organized and planned a community-sewing event on Oct. 28, 2001 (National Make A Difference Day). Over 70 people gathered to work together making blankets or accepting donations. By the end of the project, 372 blankets were made and donated!

Best Practice 1: What recognized community need was met by your project? The need for this project was determined by the county organization of Project Linus. The construction and donation of the blankets met physical and emotional health needs for recipients. Initially, the thought was to comfort children with the blankets, but, their families were also comforted as indicated by the many thank you notes received by Project Linus. In addition, the "blanketeers" who made the blankets enriched their lives by helping others.

Best Practice 2: How was the project connected to the school curriculum and curricular objectives? Students who are enrolled in Needlecrafts or Clothing classes increased their sewing skills, however, Project Linus Club members are not required to be in either of these classes. Certainly organization, planning, following through, and teamwork are skills students enhanced through the activity. These skills help students in EVERY class (and life!).

Best Practice 3: How did participants reflect on their experiences throughout the project? The project was informally discussed at each meeting as students completed their blankets. We celebrated the Make A Difference Day numbers at meetings following Oct. 28.

Best Practice 4: How did students take leadership roles and take responsibility for the success of the project? Students stayed after school and came early to help set up for Oct. 28. Two students, Jaclyn Raver and Jamie Ridgely attended the Hampstead Business Association luncheon in early October to explain the project and request donations. Many students and their families spent the Saturday sewing. Students continue to be involved in weekly meetings where blanket construction and labeling donated blankets is done.

Best Practice 5: What community partners were worked with on this project? A number of businesses in Northern Carroll County, Westminster, Hanover, and York donated food or door prizes for Oct. 28. Several businesses and churches donated money.

Best Practice 6: How did you prepare and plan ahead for the project? We began the Project Linus Club in the spring of 2001. We decided to hold the "Make a Blanket Make a Difference" event and reserved the school for Oct. 28. As soon as the school year started, we formed committees and went to work with plans for the event in addition to making blankets at the meetings.

Best Practice 7: What knowledge and skills did students develop through this project? Hopefully, students learned more about the county and national organization of Project Linus. They learned organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and sewing skills.

