Increased Comfort, Improved Care: The Power of Volunteer Crafts
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Founder & President
Care Wear Volunteers, Inc.

Professor Emerita
Department of Home Economics
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1990

• Magazine article catches attention

As the Children's Hospital of Akron, nurses used cutout tube socks to cover the infants' heads before volunteers started providing garments that fit, says Marilyn McKinley, director of volunteers. "We now have a crew of volunteers who regularly donate the most creative garments. Besides stockinette caps, volunteers make turn-bottles, caps tipped with big pom-poms, and others knitted in bright neonatal, holiday, and school colors."

Volunteers also are needed to make small mittens to keep some infants from pulling out catheters. In addition, delicate knitted mice can be sewn from soft, fire-resistant flannel materials for the babies. "The babies in our neonatal intensive care unit start out so small, but after they progress through several stages, gain weight, and become healthier, then they go home wearing colorful caps and booties," McKinley says.

"The caps-and-booties program is one of many examples of what volunteers in a community can do to support our children's hospital," remarks William F. Griesemer, president of Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron. "It requires just a small investment of time and money, but it means so much to the families of these infants. The caps and booties provide these families with a special keepsake of their baby's first days in this world. The program also provides a human touch of kindness at a critical time for parents and their newborn child."

Marie Parker, a new mother from Akron, supports Griesemer's comments. Her twin daughters were born last August and stayed in the Children's Hospital neonatal intensive care unit for three weeks. "The caps and booties on the babies help take away some of the stress of the high-risk unit; they help lighten up a serious situation," says Parker. "It's emotionally difficult to see your baby in an intensive care unit, hooked to a monitor and in an incubator. Parents are so worried about their children, but I noticed parents often giggle or smile when they saw their baby wearing a puffy cap."

For the Parker family, the caps brought an additional benefit. "They helped us tell our twin story," Marie Parker says. "Taylor wore a pink cape with a white fluffy hat on it and Brittany had a smaller pink hat."

If you want to give inside this Christmas and all year-round, use your crafting skills to help others by knitting, crocheting, or sewing infant garments for children's hospitals. Instructions and patterns for six projects are given on the next four pages.

For a local listing of hospitals that are members of the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, send in a self-addressed, stamped postcard to NACHRI, Attn: Volunteer Coordinator—Baby Garments, #35, Wylah Rd., Alexandria, VA 22314. You'll not only help keep a precious baby warm, you'll also warm your own heart and busy hands.
1991

- Children’s National Medical Center contact
1991-1997

Recruited others to join

-- *The Frederick News Post* (150)
-- *The Washington Post* (300)
-- *Family Circle Magazine* (3000)
-- *Sew News Magazine*
-- *TV News Broadcasts*
-- Crafting for Charity books, articles, TV coverage, websites, etc.
1997

Incorporation & 501(c)(3) status

--Recognition as a nonprofit organization
--Donations to support printing, postage, etc.
2011-2013

- Retirement
- New website
- Newly revised pattern book
- New office location
2014 Newly Renovated Office
2014

• Expanding number of participants
• Expanding number of hospitals served
• Expanding number of items requested to improve patient care
Participants
Hospitals & Hospital Departments Served
Hats
Booties & Mittens
Full-Term, Toddler, Child, and Adult Sizes
Kimonos
Burial Garments
Walker Caddies & Totes
Shawls & Chemo Hats
Toys
Medical-Surgical Dolls
Cough, Heart, & Neck Pillows & Positioning “Snakes”
Sweaters, Mittens, Scarves
Burp Cloths & Bibs
Adult Clothing Protectors
Volunteers

- Wide range of talents
- Wide range of interests
- Wide range of self-sufficiency
What Volunteers Need

• A very specific list of what’s needed
  [what styles, colors, fiber contents, sizes, etc.]
• Available patterns to make what’s needed
• Delivery information
• Cautions
  [no smoking, no pet hair, no sachet/fragrances, etc.]
• Contact person
  [to answer questions & acknowledge deliveries]
Revised 2014
Pattern & Information Book

- Pdf file
- Knit Patterns
- Crochet Patterns
- Sewing Patterns
- Photo with most patterns

Available on www.carewear.org
Care Wear Volunteers Website

www.carewear.org

- Information
- Measurements
- Hospital List
- Patterns for knit, crochet, & sewing
Contact Information

carewear@comcast.net

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Monday-Friday:
10am to 3pm EST