

Project Linus

Providing Security Through Blankets

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Project Linus-Kids Helping Kids Presentation **4/18**

The Project Linus presentation consists of several sections which include:

- *History of Project Linus
- *Introducing Linus
- *Stories of children who have received Project Linus blankets
- *Two projects where groups can make Project Linus Blankets

HISTORY OF PROJECT LINUS

In December, 1995, a woman in Colorado was reading the Sunday paper. She saw a picture of a little girl clutching her blanket. The article told how the little girl was comforted by carrying her blanket to the hospital for her treatments and procedures. This little girl with her blanket was the inspiration for an all-volunteer organization that has grown from one blanket to over 350 chapters nationwide. Since 1995, we have donated over 6.7 million blankets to critically ill and traumatized children. Each child is able to choose their very own blanket and keep it forever. There is a label sewn into each blanket with a picture of Linus and his blanket along with the message "Made with tender loving care for Project Linus."

LINUS

Project Linus was named after Linus, the Peanuts character because he always carries his precious "security" blanket. What does "security" mean? How does it make him feel? Warm....safe.... protected....loved. One of the best answers we have received to that question is----it makes him feel like he has his best friend with him all the time!

STORIES OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE RECEIVED PROJECT LINUS BLANKETS

Read the stories before sharing them with your group to ensure that they are age-appropriate.

**Whitney, age 14, wrote a letter to Project Linus after she received her Project Linus blanket. She broke her back while swinging upside down on her swing set. She had two surgeries and was facing another one. Whitney became very sad after being in the hospital for such a long time. Then she received a Project Linus blanket. She wrote to us that it gave her comfort when she needed it, it dried her tears when she cried, but most of all it gave her courage to go through another surgery and the long road of recovery. The person who created the blanket put a lot of love into it as she worked on it. Whitney could feel that love and it changed her life.

**There was a unhappy 3 year old boy at the hospital. The nurses tried everything to cheer him up-toys and games and even ice cream- nothing could cheer him up. They brought in the Project Linus wagon piled high with blankets. He chose one that was made of six crayons of all different colors. He was even crabby as he directed the nurses to smooth any wrinkles in the blanket when she put it on his bed and the crayon points had to be near the pillow. All of a sudden, the little boy went to the back of his hospital room and took a running leap onto his bed, wrapped his new crayon blanket tightly around him and gave the nurse the biggest and the first smile he had had since he came to the hospital!

** A seven year old boy had just been diagnosed with a very serious disease. He was confused, sad and angry. The nurses came in to give him a Project Linus blanket and he chose a fleece blanket that had been fringed and tied around all of the edges. The little boy took one of the fringes and rubbed it between his fingers all day. It was the only thing that soothed and calmed him in the midst of a very scary day.

**A little girl chose a bright pink blanket. She immediately cuddled the blanket with a big smile on her face. When asked why she was smiling, she stuck out her hands and said "my new blanket matches my nail polish!!!" Her mom had tears in her eyes because, for one minute, her daughter was happy and it touched her that someone who didn't know her daughter took so much time to make a blanket for her.

**There was a mom of two little boys. As she left the house to go to the hospital to deliver her third child, she promised her boys that she would be bringing home a

new baby. The new baby was too sick to come home with the mom. The baby had been given a Project Linus blanket to comfort him. The mom remembered her promise to her sons who were waiting at home to meet their new baby. The mom didn't have to walk in the house empty handed. She had the Project Linus blanket which she was able to tell her children belonged to their brother. He couldn't come home to them yet, but he sent his blanket to them to remind them that he would be home soon.

******A very special little boy was named Mitchell. He lived with his Grandma. Mitchell was in the hospital and received a Project Linus blanket. The hospital photographer took a picture of Mitchell. When he gave the picture to Mitchell's grandma, she was so thrilled because it was the only picture she had of her dear grandson Mitchell!!!

Ways your group can make Project Linus blankets

Quilt Squares

*Squares of bleached muslin are provided by Project Linus using our Fabric Exchange Program. Each yard of fabric yields 16 squares. Divide the number of squares that you need by 16 which will result in the number of yards you should purchase to participate in our fabric exchange. For example, if you need 32 squares, you will buy 2 yards of bleached muslin. The bleached muslin should **not** be cut into squares, but must be washed, dried and ironed before exchanging with Project Linus.

*Discuss the different things that the participants can draw on the squares. Remind them to think about things that would bring happiness to a child in need of comfort. Names and a happy and hopeful message can be included on their squares.

*Use permanent fabric markers to decorate the square

*Squares must be "heat-set" before returning to Project Linus by ironing or putting in a hot dryer for 30 minutes.

Fleece Blankets

*Detailed instructions for creating fleece blankets are available on our website www.projectlinuschicago.com or can be mailed/emailed to you.

Some important things to consider when making a fleece blanket:

*Purchase 1 1/2 yards of fleece for each blanket. Project Linus does not provide the fleece.

*The hospitals and shelters request that only **ONE LAYER** of fleece be used for the blankets. Double-layered fleece blankets are too warm for the children and too bulky for storage.

* The pattern of the fleece should correspond to the size of the blanket. If the fleece pattern is appropriate for a baby or toddler, a smaller blanket should be created. If the pattern is suitable for an older child, please make a larger blanket.

*The selvage or rolled edge which is found on both sides of the length of fabric must be removed and the fabric should be squared.

*Fringe can be cut on two ends of the fleece or on all four edges. The fringe can then be tied or left as is. Please tie the knot in the middle of each piece of fringe. Do not tie two pieces of fringe together.

* **BLANKET MUST LAY FLAT** before donating to Project Linus. If the fringe is tied too tightly, it becomes bowl-like requiring the blanket to be re-made by Project Linus volunteers.

GENERAL BLANKET GUIDELINES

We do not accept blankets made or stored in homes where someone smokes. The residue of the smoke can be hazardous to children whose lungs are compromised by illness

We accept blankets that are squares or rectangles with each side measuring 36 inches or longer.

If there is a pet in the house where the blanket is made, it must be washed, dried thoroughly and placed in a plastic bag before donating it to Project Linus.

Anyone making a Project Linus blanket is using their imaginations to create the designs, their hands to draw and most of all their hearts.

**Any questions, contact Judi Goldman at 847-498-3987 or
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