

## **VOLUNTEER FROM HOME**

As we support the health and well-being of our communities through social isolation, we recognize that the desire to help others by giving back remains strong. In addition, the needs of our neighbors and communities grow in times of crisis. We are committed to helping meet those needs while taking the appropriate precautions to keep people safe.

DIYs are a great way to keep our volunteers engaged as we practice social distancing. It is volunteering done at home, off-site and still being able to actively contribute to the community.

### **List of DIY guides available:**

- Dinner Baskets/Lunches
- Homemade Masks
- Cozy Cocoa Kits
- Seniors' Activity Kit
- Hygiene Kits (and Menstrual Products Kits)
- COVID Protection Kits
- Cards for Frontline Workers

### **Contact information:**

If you decide to do one of the DIY volunteer activities, please contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list of relevant agencies you can deliver your items to.

### **Social Distance Practices:**

Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 by making a conscious effort to keep a physical distance between each other. Physical distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. With patience and cooperation, we can all do our part.

This means making changes in your everyday routines in order to minimize close contact with others, including:

- avoiding crowded places and gatherings
- avoiding common greetings, such as handshakes
- limiting contact with people at higher risk (e.g. older adults and those in poor health)
- keeping a distance of at least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others, as much as possible

### **Health and Safety Considerations:**

Please follow the Health and Safety guidelines set by the Province of Nova Scotia. When building kits, we recommend that you wear masks and wash your hands frequently. Sanitize all items before delivering them to an agency. Don't volunteer if you're sick or if you've been directed to self-isolate. You can learn more by visiting: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/>

## DIY GUIDE TO CULTURE SPECIFIC FOOD HAMPERS

### **#UNIGNORABLE Issue: Food Security**

Many seniors, individuals and families during these times are struggling to access healthy food. Many are unable to cover all their essential costs and pay for basic healthy foods. Food insecure households may be forced to put their food budget towards other pressing expenses. United Way supports programs to improve access to high-quality, affordable, nutritional, and culturally- appropriate food in areas where it is needed most.

### **Description**

Everyone deserves a wholesome meal. Caring for our neighbors is key to a strong community. Show someone you care by gifting a meal to a family in need. Create a dinner basket to supply all the ingredients needed to make a homecooked meal.

### **Supplies and Approximate Budget (Dinner Basket Example)**

- Jar of Pasta Sauce (\$2.50)
- Spaghetti Noodles (2.00)
- Parmesan Cheese (\$2.50)
- Salad Mix (\$3)
- Salad Dressing (\$2.50)
- Basket/Bowl (to hold ingredients) (\$8)

**Total: \$20**

### **Supplies and Approximate Budget (Sandwich lunches)**

- Cheese slices (\$3.00)
- Cold cuts (\$5.00)
- Cucumber (\$1.00)
- Tomato (\$3.00)
- Ziploc bags (to hold individual sandwiches) (\$4.00)

**Total: \$16 (for multiple sandwiches)**

### **Directions**

- Arrange all the ingredients in the basket or bowl.
- Leave a note in the basket, such as “Dinner’s on Us! Or ‘You are loved!’ Or ‘Enjoy!’

You can choose to do any dinner you wish; this is just an idea to get you started.

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate baskets/lunches to one of our local charities in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO HOMEMADE MASKS

### #LocalLove in a Global Crisis

There's no denying that more individuals and families than ever before are in crisis because of COVID-19. And the network of agencies we support is reaching a critical breaking point. Some of the ways we can offer hope during this unprecedented community crisis is by spreading some #LocalLove.

### Description

Many supplies are needed to assist our front-line workers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. You can help by creating homemade face masks to help supplement their limited supply.

### Supplies

- Sewing machine and thread
- 100% cotton fabric (preferably double-layered with a tight weave)
- 1/8" flat elastic or 4 fabric ties made of the same fabric
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Straight pins

### Cutting Your Material

For an adult-size mask:

- Cut one fabric rectangle 16" long and 8.5" wide
- Cut two 7" pieces of elastic (or up to 8" for a larger adult size)

For a child-size mask:

- Cut one fabric rectangle 14" long and 6.5" wide
- Cut two 6" pieces of elastic

For elastic ear loops:

- Adult: Cut two 7" long pieces of elastic or up to 8" for a larger adult size)
- Child: Cut two 6" long pieces of elastic

For fabric ties (if you aren't using elastic):

- Cut four rectangles 18" long by 1.75" wide. Fold the long sides to meet in the middle, then fold in half again to encase the raw edges. Stitch down the length of the rectangles along the edge to create the ties. Ties can be cut slightly shorter for a child mask.

### Instructions

- Cut fabric to adult or child size indicated above.
- With the fabric's pattern facing up, fold in half by bringing the two 8.5-inch sides together. Sew along the top edge with a ¼-inch seam allowance. This will create a tube.
- Turn the tube inside out so the right sides (pattern facing up) are on the outside. Press flat. Fold the two non-seamed edges inside ½ inch to create a folded finished edge. Press to smooth.
- To make the pleats, measure 11 ½ inches up from the bottom of the long edge and mark with a fabric pen or chalk. Make another line 1 inch above the previously marked line. Fold the top (seam edge) down to the first line making a crease. Flip the piece over, fold the crease edge down to the second line and press. Pin in place.

- Repeat the previous step two more times to create two additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  pleats. For further guidance on this step, watch this step-by-step tutorial: <https://buttoncounter.com/2018/01/14/facemask-a-picture-tutorial/>
- To attach the straps or elastics, place the pre-measured elastics or ties at the top and bottom of the mask between the two layers of fabric and pin.
- Sew the sides of the mask and trim the threads. Your mask is now complete!

**Reference Sites & Video Tutorials:**

<https://sarahmaker.com/how-to-sew-a-surgical-face-mask-for-hospitals-free-pattern/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCJcE-r7kcg>

<https://buttoncounter.com/2018/01/14/facemask-a-picture-tutorial/>

<https://www.craftpassion.com/face-mask-sewing-pattern/>

**Donate**

Deliver and donate masks to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO COVID PROTECTION KITS

### **#LocalLove in a Global Crisis**

There's no denying that more individuals and families than ever before are in crisis because of COVID-19. And the network of agencies we support is reaching a critical breaking point. Some of the ways we can offer hope during this unprecedented community crisis is by spreading some #LocalLove.

### **Description**

Hygiene Kits are always in high-demand, especially in this time of crisis. Create kits that have supplies that can last for at least a month so people in need have what they need to maintain good hygiene.

### **Supplies**

- Face Masks
- Gloves
- Disinfectant cleaners
- Cloth
- Body Soap
- Laundry Detergent

### **Directions**

- Collect items in plastic Ziploc bags
- Get creative and write an encouragement note with your own personal greeting. Example 'Thinking of you' or 'Share some of your kindness today too'

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO WRITE A NOTE TO FRONTLINE WORKERS

### **#LocalLove in a Global Crisis**

There's no denying that more individuals and families than ever before are in crisis because of COVID-19. And the network of agencies we support is reaching a critical breaking point. Some of the ways we can offer hope during this unprecedented community crisis is by spreading some #LocalLove.

### **Description**

Show your #LocalLove to frontline workers who selflessly continued to provide essential services to the members of our community and especially to those in vulnerable situations.

### **Supplies**

- Card stock
- blank white cards and envelopes
- Cutting tools like scissors
- An X-ACTO knife or a paper trimmer
- Paper-friendly adhesive
- Additional supplies for cards you choose to make

### **Directions**

- Get creative and write an encouragement note with your own personal greeting. Your note can include messages of encouragement and gratitude! Example 'Thinking of you' or 'Thank you for being a front-line hero!'

### **Card making ideas**

<https://www.mybluprint.com/article/easy-card-making-ideas-that-take-30-minutes-or-less>

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO COZY COCOA KITS

### **#UNIGNORABLE Issue: Senior Isolation**

With widespread anxiety across our community there is an increased need for mental health support especially for vulnerable seniors. United Way funds a broad range of services aimed at increasing access to mental health services and strengthen support networks to reduce social isolation.

### **Description**

Help spread cheer by creating Cozy Cocoa Kits for older adults. These kits will warm their hearts and make their days brighter.

### **Supplies**

- Box of 8-ounce jelly jars (12 pk): \$8.50
- Roll of holiday wrapping paper \$4.00
- Box of mini candy canes \$3.00
- Box of hot cocoa packets \$3.00
- Bag of shredded gift filler \$4.00
- Scissor
- Ruler
- Pencil

**Total:** \$23.50 (Makes 12 Kits)

### **Directions**

- Fill the jelly jar with a handful of shredded gift filler-just enough to cover the bottom of the jar
- Put one hot cocoa packet and three mini candy canes in the jar on top of the filler
- Place the metal flat disk on top of the jar
- Cut a 6 inch x 6 inch piece of wrapping paper
- Place the wrapping paper square on top of the flat disk
- Screw the ring on the jar.

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO SENIORS' ACTIVITY KIT

### **#UNIGNORABLE Issue: Senior Isolation**

With widespread anxiety across our community there is an increased need for mental health support especially for vulnerable seniors. United Way funds a broad range of services aimed at increasing access to mental health services and strengthen support networks to reduce social isolation.

### **Description**

Help spread kindness and joy by creating Activity Kits for older adults. These kits will give seniors a chance to be active and occupied during long days of isolation.

### **Supplies**

- Crossword Book
- Post Cards
- Coloring Sheets
- Puzzles
- Pens
- Sugar free candy / treats
- Letter pad
- Tote bag

### **Directions**

- Arrange all the supplies in a tote bag
- Leave a note in the bag, such as "Thinking of You! Or 'You are loved!' Or 'Enjoy!'"

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!



## DIY GUIDE TO HYGIENE KITS

### **#UNIGNORABLE Issue: Homelessness**

Many people in our community are living in extreme housing poverty and must accept unsafe, undignified or inadequate housing as their only option. Others must make difficult choices between shelter, food, clothing, and other basic necessities on a daily basis. Between 1,500 and 1,700 individuals use shelters in Halifax every year. Additionally, 19,565 households are living in extreme housing poverty (spending half or more of their income on housing) and could be at risk of homelessness. United Way's funding provides a range of supports to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as well as to help people transition to or maintain housing.

### **Description**

Hygiene Kits are always in high-demand, especially in this time of crisis. Create kits that have supplies that can last for at least a month so people in need have what they need to maintain good hygiene.

### **Supplies**

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Shampoo & Conditioner or Shampoo 2-in-1
- Body wash
- Hand wipes or sanitizer
- Band-aids
- Comb or brush
- Soap
- Socks

### **Directions**

- Collect items in plastic Ziploc bags
- Get creative and write an encouragement note with your own personal greeting. Example: 'Thinking of you.'

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!

## DIY GUIDE TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

### **#UNIGNORABLE Issue: Poverty**

When people have to choose between buying the menstrual products they need or paying for other necessities like food, medication and transportation, they are facing period poverty. Period poverty affects the lives of women, children, transgender men, and non-binary identities. Without access to appropriate menstrual products, people might not feel comfortable leaving their home which means they are missing out on work or school. United Way funds programs that meet immediate needs and help people move out of poverty.

### **Description**

Often ignored is the urgent and continuous need for menstrual products. These items are not very affordable and becomes an expensive necessity for women and trans individuals in vulnerable positions. Our agencies always have a high demand for these products and supply is always short.

### **Supplies**

- 1 x package of Pads
- 1 x package of Tampons
- Deodorant
- Body wash

### **Directions**

- Collect items in a basket, Ziploc bag, or grocery bag.
- Write an encouragement note to the recipient. Example: 'Thinking of you.'

### **Donate**

Deliver and donate kits to one of our agency partners in your area. Contact Ambuj [alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca](mailto:alaroiya@unitedwayhalifax.ca) for a list!