SMILE BAGS

After receiving surgery, each child receives a Smile Bag, the perfect gift to cheer up a healing child. Smile Bags are filled with small personal care items as well as toys, stickers and a mirror to see their new smile. We need community volunteers to collect personal care items and sew cloth Smile Bags.

Operation Smile is in need of the following items to include in a patient's Smile Bag:

- Small shampoo (.85 to 1.4 oz size, screw-on top only)
- Small comb (no rat tails)
- New wash cloth
- Bar of soap (small hotel size)
- Travel-sized toothpaste (at least 6 months from expiration date)
- Child-sized toothbrush (single package)
- Small stuffed animal (Beanie Baby® size)
- 8-pack box of non-toxic crayons
- Thin 8.5” x 11” coloring book
- Small square mirror (approximate size 3” x 3”)

Please do not send personal hygiene items such as dental floss, body lotion, and baby oil. Additionally, we will not accept large personal hygiene items considering the volume of items we will need to ship to a medical mission site. We will not accept any type of food product, like candy and gum; shipping regulations prohibit sending food items across international borders.

HOW TO MAKE SMILE BAGS

Smile Bags are 14”H by 12”W, made of sturdy cotton fabric and are closed by a drawstring at the top. The bag is sized to hold a thin, 8.5” x 11” coloring book.

Follow the instructions below to create your own Smile Bag:

Materials:

- Sewing machine
- Iron and ironing board
- Shears or scissors
- Sewing pins
- Brightly colored, sturdy cotton fabric
- Cotton cording or sturdy ribbon for the drawstring
- Thread
- Tacky Glue® or Stop Fray®
**Instructions**

1. Cut your fabric to the desired size. Since your finished Smile Bag will be 14"H x 12"W, you want fabric that is at least 28" + 3" x 12" + 1" (31"x13").

2. Lay your fabric finished side down on the ironing board. Fold one of the shorter edges of your fabric up ¼" and press. Then fold again 1" and press again. This fold will create your casing for the drawstring. Repeat on the other short edge.

3. Sew close to the top of the fold to secure the casing for the drawstring. Be sure to overstitch at the beginning and end by revering your stitches in order to secure them. This is especially important as the seam will be stressed by pulling the drawstring through it.

4. Turn your bag inside out and press seams flat.

5. Fold your bag in half, finished sides together. Pin up the sides, stopping where your casing begins. Sew the sides using a ¼" seam, stopping right where your casing begins.
6. Cut 2 pieces of ribbon or cording to desired length. We recommend a length that is double the width of your bag, with an additional 8" for knotting. Put a safety pin through the ribbon or cord. If it is something that frays easily, wrap it with a little tape before inserting the safety pin. To make it easy to pass through the casing, use the biggest safety pin that will fit through your casing easily.

7. Using the safety pin to hold on to, thread your drawstring into the casing, passing it along inch by inch. Go in one side, through to the other side, and come out where you started.

8. Do the same with the other ribbon, but start on the opposite side this time. When you are done, you'll have the picture below.
9. Tie a simple knot to secure your drawstring by holding the two ends of one string even, forming a loop in the ribbon and pulling the end through. You can make the knot quite close to the bag. Repeat on the other side.

10. Cut the ends of your ribbon off even, an inch from your knot – or closer/further depending on what you want. If your drawstring ribbon or cord might fray, dab it with a little craft glue (like Tacky Glue®) or fray stopping liquid (such as Stop Fray®) and let it dry.

Note: This bag will have exposed, unfinished seams on the inside. You are welcome to finish the inside seams with a zig-zag stitch or serger to make the bag sturdier but this is not required.
GENERAL SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

When you are ready to ship these items, please complete and submit the Service Project Inventory Sheet to accurately record your efforts. We recommend that you collect donations or work with a local business to cover the cost of packaging and shipping the supplies to Operation Smile.

Operation Smile  
Attn: WAREHOUSE/Service Project  
3641 Faculty Boulevard  
Virginia Beach, VA USA

Complete and submit multiple forms if you are shipping several boxes of items. Include completed inventory sheets in each box. Please place the inventory form on TOP of contents in the box. Shipments of multiple boxes should be numbered: 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3, etc. If you would like to receive an acknowledgement for community volunteer efforts and the donation of supplies, please clearly fill out the inventory form with your name, club or group information.

For your records, handmade items have the following values:

- Smile Bags $2.00 USD  
- Smile Dolls $5.00 USD  
- Hospital Gowns $5.00 USD  
- No-No Arm Bands $2.00 USD  
- Quilts, Blankets and Afghans $5.00 – $10.00 USD depending on materials

Smile Bags must be empty when shipped. Additionally, completed arm bands must be shipped without inserts.

It is important when organizing your collection that no items contain religious symbols or markings that may offend our patients’ cultural beliefs. We do not accept toys related to war or violence, such as guns, military action figures, etc. Please keep copies of your inventory form(s) for your records.

Need more information? Email drelations@operationsmile.org or call 888-677-6453, Monday – Saturday 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. EST, Sunday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. EST for assistance.
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER SUPPLY DONATION INVENTORY FORM

Please complete the following information:

Contact Person & Title
Business, Group or Club Name
Address
City, State, Zip
Home Phone
Cell/Alternate Phone
Email

An email will be sent to confirm receipt of your donation to the e-mail address above.

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Total Donation Count:

Total Estimated Dollar Value:

Please use multiple inventory forms, if necessary.

Thank you to our Community Volunteers who are making a difference! You are helping to change a child’s life by sharing your time, talent and resources.