

FOCUS North America Care Kits

The Challenge

Homeless men, women and children, the working poor and those living in cramped transitional motels that we serve often go without the basic necessities most of us take for granted. In the struggle to find food and a safe place to sleep people find it difficult to acquire basic items such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, and toothbrushes. Without the right supplies, simple hygienic activities such as brushing their teeth or washing their hands can prove to be a real challenge.

Basic hygiene supplies are necessary also to maintain not only one's health but a sense of dignity and confidence. Access to basic personal supplies can give those we serve a greater sense of self and a brighter outlook on life.

With just a few hours of do-it-yourself volunteering, you can put together hygiene kits for the people. These kits include simple, inexpensive items that can be picked up when grocery shopping or with a quick trip to the dollar store. By giving these basic supplies to the homeless, you can help them avoid physical and dental health problems. Perhaps even more importantly, you can help them retain their dignity during a trying time in their lives.

How to Make a Difference

Step 1 – Gather a group of friends to help you and select a time and place to make the Care kits. Before you begin putting together the supplies decide how you will distribute the Care Kits:

- *Drop off:* If there is a FOCUS Center or FOCUS Partner ministry in your area
- *Donate through the mail:* If there is not a FOCUS NA Center or Partner ministry in your area it may be easier to drop a package in the mail and let FOCUS NA volunteers in our national service office distribute the kits where they are most needed. Mail your packages to: FOCUS North America 3101 Troost Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109.
- *Keep a few for your local needs:* In addition to what you are donating for distribution by FOCUS North America you may want to keep a few Care Kits in your car to give directly to people you come in contact with or keep some on hand at church or work for distribution. When a homeless person or someone in need asks you for assistance, you'll be prepared to help them out in a quick and easy way. Please make sure to include these kits also in the total donated to FOCUS North America on the **Donation Summary Form**.

Step 2 – Gather materials

Decide which of the Care Kits listed below you are going to assemble and begin collecting the supplies as your schedule allows. Many people find it easiest to collect items for one type of kit at a time. Don't feel that you have to spend a lot or that you have to buy everything all at once. You may want to pick up a few extra items each time you go grocery shopping. Here is a printable **Shopping List** you could keep in your car or share with others.

You may want to print out this **Collection Bin Flyer** and place it on plastic bins around your church, office or local coffee shops, etc. Or, consider spending your lunch break at a local dollar store. You'll find everything you need for the kits at very cheap prices there. You may also want to get your friends and neighbors to help you out with donations of unopened items they have on hand. The more people you can involve, the easier and cheaper the project will be. Soon, you'll be ready to make the Care Kits.

Step 3 – Assemble the Care Kits

Once you've gathered the necessary items, it's time to organize your Care Kits. Bring some food, some good music and make it fun! First group the items by product in boxes or shopping bags to make a simple assembly line. Be sure that the caps are tight to prevent spilling when the Care Kits are moved. You could also consider including a short special note of encouragement for the person who will ultimately receive your kit.

Please make sure that all the kits contain only the listed items in the required amounts to make distribution easier. Lastly, when the kits are assembled label the outside of each individual kit with a permanent marker boldly to indicate what kind of kit it is (using abbreviations is fine). In the case of Homeless Urgent Care Kits, be sure to also mark if it is for a male or female.

Step 4 – Ship or drop off the Care Kits

Once all the Care Kits are assembled use this **Donation Summary FORM** to indicate the total kits and types being donated. Now simply mail the boxes of kits or drop them off at your local FOCUS Center for distribution.

You'll be glad knowing you've made a difference in the lives of struggling men, women and children in this simple, inexpensive way. Thank you for caring!

FOCUS North America “Care Kits” Shopping List

Infant Care Kit

Package in a plastic shopping bag tied closed loosely

- 1 Fitted crib sheet
- 1 Crib blanket
- 1 Baby bath soap
- 1 Baby lotion
- 1 Pacifier
- 1 Baby brush & comb
- 1 Wash cloth
- 1 Diapers packet (medium sizes preferred for versatility)
- 1 Box diaper wipes
- 1 diaper rash cream tube
- 1 can of powdered formula

Homeless Urgent Care Kit

Package in a 1 gallon zip lock bag

- 1 Small Shampoo
- 1 Small lotion
- 1 Small hand sanitizer
- 1 Toothbrush
- 1 Small toothpaste
- 1 Small stick deodorant
- 1 Small bar soap
- 1 Travel facial tissues
- 1 Small roll toilet paper (crush the roll so it lays flat in the kit)
- 1 Pair new socks
- 1 Pair new underwear
- 1 Small hand towel
- 1 Box feminine hygiene products (mark kit as “Female” on the label)

Motel Family Care Kit

Package in a small cardboard box lightly taped closed

- 1 First aid kit - bandaids, gauze, thermometer, etc (**no medicines please)
- 1 Paper towel roll
- 1 Kitchen sponge
- 3 Kitchen towels
- 1 roll kitchen trash bags
- 7 Powder laundry detergent packets
- 3 Toddler cups with lids
- 5 Washable plastic cups and plates
- 1 Liquid dish cleanser
- 2 Hand sanitizers
- 1 Spray disinfectant
- 2 Rolls toilet paper
- 1 Small dish drainer rack

FOCUS North America Care Kit Donation Summary Form

Dear Friends at FOCUS North America,
Please accept this donation of Care Kits to be distributed to those most in need.

Total number of Care Kits Assembled: _____

Type of Care Kits Assembled:

- _____ Infant Care Kits
- _____ Homeless Urgent Care Kits
- _____ Motel Family Care Kits

Please send confirmation that you have received this donation to:

Organizer Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

If applicable:

Church/ organization _____

If Church, Clergy _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please send thank you notes to these volunteers who helped gather items and/or assembled the kits (attach typed list or email list to FaithB@FOCUSNA.org).