



Help the Homeless Patch Program

This patch is for Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors and was created in 2010 as part of a Gold Award Project. All grade levels must complete Requirement #1. Brownies must complete at least 2 additional requirements; Juniors must complete at least 3 additional requirements; Cadettes must complete at least 4 additional requirements; Seniors and Ambassadors must complete at least 6 additional requirements. Upon completion, patches may be purchased at Promise Provisions Girl Scout Store, 7007 Idlewild Rd., Charlotte, NC 28212

1. Learn the Facts

Go online and research about homelessness. How many people are homeless every year? What are some of the main causes for homelessness? When you think of a homeless person what do you picture? Is that a fair assessment of all homeless people or a generalization? Find out the statistics of different races, ages and genders of people who are homeless. In what states is homelessness most common? Discuss your findings with your troop and share anything surprising you read or something new you learned.

2. Be Thankful

Make a list of everything for which you are thankful. Get creative and make a poster with pictures of everything you wrote down. Share this with the other girls in your troop. Did you have anything in common? Think about all the troubles a homeless person faces and how little they have. Write a thank you card to your parents/guardians and let them know how grateful you are for your blessings and everything they've provided for you. Give it to them and tell them how much you appreciate everything they've done for you.

3. Make a Care Package

Go online and find agencies in your community that need donations. With your troop, have a food drive or collect other items needed. Donate the collected items to that agency.

4. Community Outreach

Now that you've learned about homelessness, go and do something about it! Find a local church that hosts Room at the Inn or programs at other organizations/community agencies and volunteer to help. Work with the program administrator to find out what you can do. At Room at the Inn, you could be a greeter at the door, arrive early to set up beds, make and bring a dessert, or help serve dinner. Talk with the homeless people and enjoy the opportunity to help serve others and learn something new.

5. A Day in the Life

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to be homeless? What would you miss the most? For this activity, try to put yourself in the shoes of a homeless person. You might consider, for example: sleeping in a sleeping bag, giving up all electronics, giving up snacks before meal times, and only having one set of clothes to change into. See how long you last without the luxuries of everyday life we so often take for granted. How did this make you feel? Discuss with your troop what you gave up and what homeless people sacrifice every day.

6. Money Wise

Find out the percentage of homeless people who have jobs. How hard is it to support a family on minimum wage? How much is rent, plus the cost of utilities and groceries? Compare how much money a high school dropout makes to a high school graduate. What about a high school graduate compared to a college graduate? Discuss the importance of an education and how it can benefit you throughout life.

7. Plan a Visit

Find a nearby agency, such as the Salvation Army, and volunteer to visit children in need. Play games, sing songs and/or make a craft with them. Bring a snack to share with the children.

8. Tell Others

What have you learned about homelessness that you didn't know before? What surprised you or was interesting? Make a poster or brochure to share with others in your community. Spread what you've learned with others to raise their awareness of homelessness as well. Tell schoolmates, friends, and family members about what you're doing and educate them on how they can help.

9. Write a Letter

Write an encouraging letter to a homeless boy or girl. Since you will not know who your letter is going to, address the letter "Dear Friend." Tell them how you've been learning about homelessness and that you have a new respect for their situation. Tell them you care about them and wish them well. Remember that what these children are going through is tough. Mail the letters to a nearby agency and get your leader to write a cover letter to the director, asking them to distribute the letters to the children.

10. Journal It

Over the course of completing this badge, what have you gained? Consider your initial thoughts on homelessness and how you view it now. What has changed? Write about your thoughts and feelings along the way.