

Dufferin Chapter of Project Linus warms hearts of local children and teens facing challenges

Written By Sam Odrowski

A local not-for-profit group of quilters and blanketeers is providing the warmth of handmade blankets to children and teenagers experiencing illness or difficulty in their lives.

The Dufferin Chapter of Project Linus, established in 2023 by Christine Taylor, consists of dedicated individuals who craft the blankets at no cost to those who receive them.

Since the chapter was formed, over 300 blankets have been donated in Dufferin County.

"All blankets are freshly washed, come packaged in protective plastic bags and include a note card explaining a bit more about Project Linus and their blanket gifts," explained Christine Taylor, Project Linus Dufferin Chapter coordinator. "We simply want to offer something special to comfort a child during a difficult time in their lives."

Taylor, who creates blankets herself, spends much of the first half of the year collecting blankets from generous groups and Project Linus members. During the later part of the year, she drops off the collection of donated blankets to be distributed by organizations.

"The blankets that are provided to the children of this program are a very special gift from members of their community who have quilted, knit, or crocheted blankets with love and care in the hopes that it makes a child or teen feel safe, warm, and cared for during a difficult time in their lives," said Taylor. "These blankets have comforted children in hospital, receiving treatments for illness, they have been provided to children who are grieving the loss of a loved one, to teens who are struggling with mental health, and to any child who may be facing troubling times and could use the comfort."

She added, "It is our hope that these blankets provide them with something of their own that they can wrap up in when times feel uncertain or challenging."

Project Linus recently donated blankets to the women and children that Family Transition Place supports through its emergency shelter.

Caledon Dufferin Victim Services will soon receive a donation of blankets from the local chapter, which are distributed to its crisis response teams and gifted to children and teens at the scene of a crisis.

The local chapter also provides blankets to the Grand Valley Angel and Hamper Program, that provides food and gifts to children and families in need around the holiday season.

Taylor said that her group is actively seeking more avenues to support people in need.

"I am always looking for new community partners that support children and teens in the Dufferin County area, who can help place blankets into the hands of those who may be experiencing serious illness, trauma, or are otherwise in need of comfort during a troubling time," Taylor noted.

The Dufferin Chapter is made up of about 15 individuals who regularly contribute blankets. The chapter also receives regular donations from a group of about 25 people, known as the Sewcial Stitchers Guild in Orangeville.

Taylor said her chapter is always looking for more blankets to donate, and more places to donate them to. She can be contacted at projectlinusdufferin@gmail.com for interested people and organizations.

?There are many ways for someone to get involved with Project Linus Dufferin, of course we are always looking for new blanketeers of all skill levels. You can donate one blanket or as many as you would like ? every blanket counts towards making a difference,? said Taylor.

?If you are passionate about sewing, knitting or crocheting, get your friends and family involved in making blankets too, it is very rewarding. We also accept donations of quilting fabric, yarn and supplies as it helps our blanketeers keep costs down when making a blanket donation.?