

Stitching Hearts: Palentines edition

The Craft Nerd is inviting anyone interested to make and send cards of love and support to folks using, working in or volunteering for domestic abuse shelters. Volunteers will send the cards in order to arrive for Palentine's Day, the February 13th holiday that celebrates platonic love between friends.

Volunteers will reach out to their local domestic abuse shelters to see if they're interested in receiving cards, but shelters anywhere can also [sign-up requesting any number of cards](#) in any languages. Cards are only sent to shelters that respond to volunteers and are mailed to a secure address provided by the shelter itself.

"A lot of people hate Valentine's Day, but I imagine spending the day in a shelter because the person you love has been abusing you is particularly devastating," Meg Crane, the organizer, says. "That's why we send a little note of love to let these brave, strong folks know we're thinking of them."

This initiative also gets people talking about domestic abuse and what we can all do to put an end to it.

History

This project began in 2014 with store bought valentines being sent to a Winnipeg homeless shelter. The following year, handmade cards were sent to women's shelters across Canada for Valentine's Day. The project has since continued to grow with the following number of cards being sent to domestic abuse shelters throughout Canada and the US:

2015 = 377

2016 = 1,400

2017 = 2,000 +

2018 = 2,000 +

2019 = 2,000 +

2020 = 1,449

Get involved

There are several ways you can help with this project.

1. Send cards to a shelter (or three!)

Connect with your local shelter to see if you can make cards for them! Here's a draft email you can copy, paste, tweak and send:

Want handmade cards delivered to your women's shelter for the February 13 holiday celebrating platonic love between friends, Palatine's Day?

We are more than happy to send cards for ALL people using the shelter, including those of all genders and folks coming in for counseling programs. Just reply with the below information and I'll get them to you.

Shelter name:

Contact person:

Mailing address:

What language(s) would you like the cards in:

In the below counts, please include the number you'd like of each language, if you're requesting multiple languages.

Number of cards wanted for adults using the shelter:

Number of cards wanted for children using the shelter:

Number of cards wanted for staff and volunteers:

You can find more info about [the project here](#).

Thanks so much for all the work you do!

If you do go this route, email megjcrane@gmail.com any photos of the making process you don't mind being shared on social media and the final number of cards you sent out, so we can get an idea of how many were sent.

2. Make cards

If you don't want to make a commitment to send cards to a shelter, you can make cards then send them to me for next year!

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Make cards on your own or get larger groups together to make cards. You can organize a card collection or host a COVID-friendly card making party. I recommended organizers also collect financial donations for their local shelter or incorporate discussions about irradiating domestic abuse into their events.

3. Donate

We like to have some cash on hand to reimburse folks for postage, if they need it, and to send craft supplies to larger groups of makers. You can send donations to the above address, PayPal money to megjcrane@gmail.com or grab something from [our Amazon wish list](#).

4. Spread the word

Tell a friend, share the project on your social media, encourage local feminist groups to get involved. The more people who know and get involved, the more discussions we can have about domestic abuse and the closer we can get to eradicating it.

Card making FAQ

Is there anything that can't be in the cards?

- **No violence:** This could be triggering.
- **No swearing:** Cards could go to children.
- **No religion:** We all have different beliefs.
- **No gender:** People of all genders are victims of domestic abuse and therefore could be receiving one of these cards.
- **Avoid language that could be triggering** or could be interpreted in a harmful way. For example, a card that said "You deserve it," even if coming after a phrase like "Have a great day," could be (and has been) misread to state the recipient deserved their abuse.

What can we put in the cards?

- Inspirational quotes
- Puns
- Words of encouragement
- Collage art
- Anything that would be comforting or uplifting

Due to shipping costs, I recommend making cards that are thin and light.

Should cards be in envelopes?

So shelters can check cards before handing them out, it's preferred they not be in envelopes and at least not be in sealed envelopes.

Can we put extra little things in with the cards, such as bags of tea?

Yes, however if you're not sending cards for each person at a shelter, it would be more fair to send a financial donation or a box of tea for the shelter to set out for everyone's use.

When do cards need to be sent by?

Cards going to shelters need to be sent out early enough to arrive by February 13. The exact date you'll need to mail them will depend on where you're sending from and to. For the most accurate answer to this question, contact your local post office.

If I'm doing cards for my local shelter, can I just drop them off?

Probably not, unless you have a personal relationship with the shelter. Due to privacy and safety concerns, I highly recommend offerings to ship cards to an address the shelter provides you with, which is often a P.O. box or other off-site location.