

## Parker Middle School Students Create Busy Boxes for Local Hospital

**HOWELL, Mich., March 17, 2023** - Eighth-grade students at Parker Middle School recently completed a service learning project to provide Hospital Busy Boxes to Trinity Health Livingston Hospital. The Hospital Busy Boxes are filled with sensory stimulation items, such as fidgets and mind games such as word searches and other puzzles. Students collected donations and created homemade fidgets and mind games to create the Hospital Busy Boxes. Parker Middle School students delivered the hospital busy boxes to Trinity Health Livingston Hospital on Monday, March 13.

The goal of the service learning project was to reinforce a key concept of The Positivity Project, which is the Other People Matter Mindset. This service learning project experience allowed the students to contribute to the local community meaningfully by identifying a need that Parker Middle School students could help to support. To begin, each eighth-grade Patriot Time class submitted a cause they identified needing support within the Howell community. The students then voted on the causes, with Hospital Busy Boxes receiving the most votes. In talking with Trinity Health Livingston Hospital, the students learned of a need for sensory stimulation and memory-aid items for their elderly patients with dementia and other cognitive impairments.

With their project selected, each eighth-grade Patriot Time class selected project managers who then visited sixth and seventh-grade classrooms to share the project and promote the goal of collecting donations school-wide to create ten Hospital Busy Boxes. The students also created an Amazon Wish List to seek donations for the project. Each Patriot Time selected a handmade fidget or sensory project to make for the bags. Projects that were selected included the creation of infinity dice cubes, I Spy Bottles, stress balls, zipper and buckle bracelets, fiddle key rings, lava lamp bottles, word search books, wood bead fidget bracelets, busy binders, and a color sorting clothespin activity. The handmade fidgets and sensory items were combined with the purchased items to create the Hospital Busy Boxes.

“Our eighth-grade students did an amazing job leading this service learning project. The project encompassed several aspects of The Positivity Project and the district’s Portrait of a Highlander. Students embraced the Other People Matter Mindset and also showed leadership skills, relationship skills, and social awareness,” said Stacy Downer, Parker Middle School Student Services Advisor. “The staff at Trinity Health Livingston Hospital were very appreciative of the donation of Hospital Busy Boxes and shared how much patients will enjoy them. We want to express our sincerest gratitude to our students, families, and community members for helping to support such a worthwhile cause.”

The Positivity Project is a program designed to help students build positive relationships and to understand, appreciate, and exemplify the character strengths in everyone. The students learn about a different character strength from the Positivity Project each week.

The 24 character strengths are the foundation of the Positivity Project and range from bravery and forgiveness to integrity and kindness.

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