

# **TOUCH QUILT PROJECT PHASE TWO QUILTER INFORMATION PACKAGE**



## **ALZHEIMER *SOCIETY* OF KITCHENER – WATERLOO**

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Office Hours

Monday to Friday: 8:30 – 4:30

## **Welcome to the Touch Quilt Project**

Thank you for choosing to be a quilter for the **Touch Quilt Project** offered through the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener-Waterloo. By creating a **Touch Quilt**, you are joining a network of caring people who volunteer to support those affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in our community. Your support of this project is greatly appreciated.

### **About the Touch Quilt Program**

When people are facing the later stages of Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, the changes in their brain cause them to be more withdrawn and isolated. The later stages of Alzheimer's disease and related dementia can be a lonely and scary experience for a person. They are often confused and disoriented; it is natural that many seek out a comfort item to provide them a sense of safety and security. Many people want to hold something close to them such as slippers, socks, clothes and **Touch Quilts!**

**Touch Quilts** are made up of fabrics with different textures (satin, corduroy, flannel, polar fleece, borg etc.). The purpose of this is to provide sensory stimulation by feeling the different textures, as well as feeling the warmth of the blanket and enjoying the beauty of the quilt. Touching and rubbing fabrics that have different textures helps to reduce stress and anxiety common in the daily lives of people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. **Touch Quilts** also provide a sense of comfort and security, a conversation item, an item that is personal and aesthetically pleasing and an opportunity to reminisce.

In Phase One of the **Touch Quilt Project** every resident in a long-term care facility within the local area was provided with a **Touch Quilt** free of charge. In Phase Two of our project the aim of the **Touch Quilt Project** is to ensure that all long term care facilities have quilts to give every new resident when he or she arrives and to provide quilts to those who would benefit from them who are in retirement homes or still living at home.

### **Getting Started and Choosing Appropriate Fabrics**

The Alzheimer Society will provide, free of charge, a '**Touch Quilt Kit**' that contains 36 or 25 precut squares for you to use to make your quilt. Kits can be picked up at the Alzheimer Society office, or at locations listed on the last page of this booklet. However, if you wish to provide your own fabric, please keep in mind that **Touch Quilts** should have a variety of textures and fabrics. Remember, when putting your quilt together that the 'touch' of the quilt is more important than the 'look'. It is also important to keep in mind that this will be a special gift – so when choosing fabrics, please ensure that they are in good condition, clean, and odour free. For safety reason, avoid attaching buttons or removable parts and ensure that your chosen fabrics are durable and washable and will withstand commercial washing machines that are typically used in care facilities.

### **Completed Touch Quilts**

Completed quilts can be brought to the Alzheimer Society Office on Frederick Street. If you have made quilts with a group or organization, we would be happy to come and pick up quilts if you call to arrange a time and location. Before you hand in your quilt, please complete the donor slip that is on the last page of this booklet. In the **Touch Quilt** kits you will also be provided with a label that is to be sewn onto a back corner of the quilt that identifies that the quilt was donated by the Alzheimer's Society. It is very helpful if **ALL** quilts have a label sewn on the back of them. Please contact us and we will mail or deliver labels to you to be sewn on if you are not using our kits. We appreciate all donations, but we reserve the right to donate your quilt to another organization if we have concerns about the durability of your quilt withstanding the frequent washing in the commercial washing machines necessary in care facilities.

### **Distribution of Quilts**

The Alzheimer Society will continue to donate completed quilts to long term care facilities throughout our area, to some residents of retirement homes, to those involved in support groups and living at home and to those who would benefit from having a **Touch Quilt**. It is due to wonderful volunteers like yourself that we have donated more than 2300 quilts over the last 3 years!

### **Ways You Can Help the Touch Quilt Project**

If you have any of the following materials, please consider donating them to help the **Touch Quilt Project** move forward:

fabric of various textures - preferably washed prior to donating and if possible, cut into 6" squares, large zip lock bags to hold the **Touch Quilt Kits**, a monetary donation to help keep our project afloat.

Spread the word about **Touch Quilts** to your friends and family! Your support is appreciated!



We are available to come and speak to your group to talk about **Touch Quilts** if you would like more information. Please contact us at 519 - 743-1422 ext. 20.

**Thanks so much for your support of this project!**

## Basic Touch Quilt Pattern

There are many ways to make a **Touch Quilt** and you are welcome to make your quilt using an alternative method. The important thing to remember is that the quilt should be made with washable and durable fabrics that will be able to withstand the commercial washing machines typical of most long-term care facilities. The chosen fabrics should have a number of textures (such as satin, corduroy, flannel, polar fleece, borg, etc.). If you are sewing a quilt for a family member, you might consider personalizing it with suitable fabrics that reflect a hobby or career. Fabrics can even be chosen from the person's old clothing. **'Kits' of precut squares are available to quilters who would like to use them and can be picked up at the Alzheimer office or see the list of other locations where kits can be picked up on the donor page.**

To create a finished **Touch Quilt** you will need either: 36, 6" squares or 25, 6" squares, approximately 1 square yard of batting, and a non-slippery material for the quilt backing. **Instructions below will outline 2 different methods of quilting, both patterns share the first 3 steps, with the following steps located underneath the method you have chosen. We strongly suggest you use a one-half inch seam allowance as these quilts may get washed and dried frequently and we don't want the seams to fray apart.**

1. Cut out 36, 6" squares OR 25, 6" squares from your chosen fabrics
2. To make the quilt top:
  - a) Sew 6 or 5 squares together to form one row
  - b) Repeat step above making another four or five rows
  - c) Then sew all five or six rows together to form the quilt top.
3. Layer lining and batting and baste the layers together
4. Quilt methods:

### **a) Stitching-in-the-Ditch Method:**

1. Quilt squares by "**stitching-in-the-ditch**" and bind all edges to finish quilt.  
**To Stitch-in the ditch:** Place quilting stitches in the 'ditch', which is created by the seams of the pieces of each block. Your quilting pattern will also echo your block pattern.

### **b) Tied Quilt Method**

1. Sew layers (i.e. quilt top, batting and backing) together around the perimeter leaving approximately 12" unsewn
2. Turn quilt inside out through the unsewn opening and then **hand or machine stitch** the opening closed.
3. Tie the quilt by hand using yarn, thread or embroidery floss at the intersections or the middle of your quilt blocks. Tie strings in double-knots to complete quilt.

*Sew on the label and pin on the donation sheet. Please contact us if you need labels.*