

Questions & Answers

What's **New** in LWR's Quilt & Kit Ministry?

In 2010, Lutheran World Relief conducted an in-depth evaluation of our Quilt & Kit Ministry. We interviewed more than 450 Quilt and Kit recipients, 21 overseas partner organizations and more than 1,000 of our dedicated quilters and kit-makers throughout the U.S.

We're pleased to report that, overall, our Quilts and Kits are effective and that with a few small tweaks they can do an even better job meeting people's needs.

The new 2011 Quilt & Kit Ministry Guide outlines the changes we've made to the program. See below for more information about how the changes improve the Quilt & Kit Ministry. If you have additional questions or to request a free copy of the Guide, please email lwr@lwr.org or call 800.597.5972.

Q. Do these changes mean that the Kits we've been assembling and donating until now haven't been useful?

A. Absolutely not! We heard from recipients and partners that Quilts and Kits are both effective and affirming. The updates reflect changes in communities and in international standards for relief that have occurred over the years.

Q. Our group already started making Kits this year based on the previous guidelines. Will they still be accepted?

A. Yes! You can still submit Kits completed under the previous guidelines through the end of 2011 and they will still be shipped to people in need.

Q. Our group has some Kits completed already and will be making more using the updated guidelines. What is the best way to pack and label them?

A. Pack Kits separately according to their type, and label the boxes clearly with the specific Kit name (e.g. Layettes for the Kits you've already made and Baby Care Kits for the Kits you make with the updated guidelines). School Kits are the only Kits that will continue to have the same name. In this case, clearly mark your boxes with the updated Kits "UPDATED School Kits."

Q. Why can't we use tote-style School Kit bags anymore?

A. We discovered that children all over the world are much more comfortable with backpack-style bags and find them more practical. In some contexts, the tote-style bags are seen as feminine and draw negative attention to boys who carry them.

Q. Our group purchases tote-style bags for our School Kits instead of making them. Where can we find backpack-style bags that meet the new guidelines?

A. This style is often used in the U.S. for youth to carry athletic equipment. Try your local sporting goods store or search online using the keywords, "buy drawstring backpacks." Before purchasing, make sure they meet the new size requirements (14" x17") and General Assembly Instructions.

Q. Why are pens now included in the School Kits?

A. Teachers, parents and partners all around the world indicated that as students advance in school, they transition from pencils to pens for writing assignments and continue to use pencils for math assignments. The addition of pens makes these Kits more versatile as students' skills develop.



Q. Why isn't construction paper included in School Kits anymore?

A. We heard from kit-makers that construction paper is hard to find and can be expensive. Partners and teachers overseas told us that construction paper isn't always familiar to children and that they can color and do crafts with plain paper. Instead, they requested an additional notebook to help students learn.

Q. Why aren't washcloths included in the Personal Care or Baby Care Kits?

A. Recipients and partners we interviewed indicated larger towels are more versatile.

Q. Why aren't Band-Aids® being included in the Personal Care Kits anymore?

A. Six Band-Aids don't last very long and they go to waste if they get wet before they are used.

Q. What is the importance of the no stains policy on any of the used items in the Baby Care Kits?

A. As a part of the LWR value of accompaniment, we strive to ensure every person who receives an LWR Quilt or Kit is treated with equity, dignity and respect. When people have lost so much, receiving an item that appears cast-off can add to their suffering. Also, imported clothing is increasingly difficult to get through customs in many countries. Even one item that looks suspicious to local officials can jeopardize the status of a whole shipment.

Q. Why aren't Onesies® an option for the Baby Care Kits? Or sleepers with feet?

A. Many moms we interviewed said that their children quickly outgrow Onesies and sleepers with feet. T-shirts and footless sleepers serve the same purpose and last longer on a growing baby.

Q. What is the importance of baby caps or hooded jackets/sweaters in the Baby Care Kits?

A. We heard overwhelming feedback from kit-makers that you felt it was important to keep babies' heads covered. We heard the same message from community health professionals and parents overseas.

Q. Why don't Fabric Kits have needles and buttons?

A. LWR's Fabric Kits are usually sent to sewing schools to train people to make clothing. Since the schools have sewing machines,

providing fabric and thread is the most effective way to help students practice their skill.

Q. It's exciting to see the new changes for such an important ministry. How can I get more people in my congregation involved?

A. Consider including information about the Quilt & Kit Ministry in your bulletin or church newsletter. Lead an adult forum during the Sunday school hour—share the new *Quilt & Kit Ministry Guide* and a copy of the Winter 2011 *Faith in Action* newsletter. Organize an intergenerational quilting or kit-making event to introduce the ministry to your congregation. Others can also take part by generously supporting the Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund (see below).

Q. Some people in my congregation want to help make Quilts or Kits, but their schedules don't allow them to attend our quilting or kit-making sessions. How else can they be involved?

A. Ask your congregation to "sponsor" Quilts and Kits by covering the associated shipping costs. When displaying your Quilts and Kits during your Quilt & Kit Dedication Sunday, pin an envelope to each one and invite members to choose which ones they would like to "sponsor" by inserting the designated Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund amount into the attached envelope. Before sending your Quilts and Kits to LWR, remove the envelopes, compile the funds and send a check to LWR for the Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund. For more ideas to engage your congregation in this ministry, visit lwr.org/beinvolved.

Have a question that we haven't addressed here? Email lwr@lwr.org or call 800.597.5972.

