



... uniting families ...

H.A.T.S. (Handcrafted And Totally Special)

“Don’t leave this house without your hat on!”

Does this bring back childhood memories of the cool weather months filled with this motherly announcement or some variation on it? How many of us had a special hat, one we considered our favorite (although we would deny it if ever asked)? Maybe it was knit by a favorite aunt to match a new winter coat. Or maybe it was crocheted by a grandmother who had limited fashion sense (what color combinations!) but lots of love. What everyone knew is that a knit hat can warm your head. What we learned is a handmade knit hat can warm your head . . . and your heart as you think of the special effort that was put into creating it.

Several years ago inmates at the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women (NCCIW) began crocheting and knitting hats for their children from whom they were separated. In 2003, a local artist created a display of these hats, hanging them from the ceiling with crocheted lines. Her hope was to have 1,200 hats on display – one to represent each of the women in prison in North Carolina at the time.

About that same time, Mary Stowe from Yarns, Etc. . . became involved. What started out as Mary simply providing the NCCIW with yarn donated by Yarns, Etc. . . customers and other community members grew into creating a partnership with Our Children’s Place (OCP).

For the past three years we have been able to display at alternative markets and craft fairs hats handcrafted by women at NCCIW. People who attend these fairs and markets can make a donation in exchange for a hat, with the proceeds used to support the planning efforts of OCP.

For the women, this partnership provides them with an opportunity (for many, the first such opportunity) to give back to the community, a gesture that will hopefully continue upon their release.

H.A.T.S. (which has expanded well beyond hats!) is an important part of our community outreach and education work. People who choose to make a donation in exchange for a hat or

Please turn over for more information.

other handcrafted item walk away with a tangible reminder of the women and children on whom OCP is focused.

To date, we have had the hats available in various settings including an auction in Chapel Hill and several holiday alternative markets hosted by local faith communities. Our goal is to increase the number of markets we are involved in each year. In the past couple of years we have raised over \$3,000. If you know of other locations/events where we could display the hats, please let us know!

As one example of the true spirit of giving, at one event supporters who made a donation for a hat could ensure their hat had a good home by placing it in a collection bin for young patients at the UNC Children's Hospital.

Thank you for being part of this initiative! We appreciate your support.

KNITTING AND CROCHETING SUPPLY DONATIONS

Interested in donating knitting and crocheting supplies? Please drop off your items at the following locations:

Yarns, Etc. . ., (919) 928-8810
99 South Elliott Road
Suite #2
Chapel Hill, NC

Store hours
Tuesday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Great Yarns, (919) 832-3599
1208 Ridge Road
Raleigh, NC

Store hours
Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Supplies needed:

- Yarn, all weights and colors, full and partial skeins
 - Plastic knitting needles
 - Plastic crochet hooks
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WHAT IS OUR CHILDREN'S PLACE?

Our Children's Place (OCP) is a private nonprofit agency committed to the children of incarcerated parents. We strive to be a leading North Carolina advocate and educational resource focused on these children and the need for a statewide response to ensure their well-being. Our long-term goal is the creation of a residential facility that will allow young children to live with their mothers who are serving a sentence for a non-violent offense.

10/17/11

Our Children's Place
P.O. Box 1086, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 • (919) 843-2670
ourchildrensplace@gmail.com • www.ourchildrensplace.com