



Choice. Respect. independence.

Holiday Gifts for Residents – Easy Homemade Fleece Blankets

CRI, Choice. Respect. independence. (formerly known as Community Residences, Inc.), is a community-based organization with a focused effort on providing people with developmental disabilities and/or mental health needs the resources, supports and services they need to live their lives with purpose, actively engaged in communities of their choosing. CRI's mission fully supports a person's ability to exercise control of their life's choices, and to live in and contribute to communities of their choosing, as young adults through aging in place. We believe in serving individuals within the communities in which they live & supporting the individual's choices and independence.

Give the gift of "cozy" this holiday season! For this year's holiday gift for CRI individuals, we are soliciting community members make homemade no-sew fleece blankets. Many CRI individuals are sensitive to extreme temperatures, particularly the cold weather. Plus, in the winter time, there is nothing better than snuggling up with a warm blanket to watch a movie or the snow fall outside. Blankets are comforting and a way to make us feel safe. Homemade blankets are a great way to create something personalized that showcases that likes and personality of each individual.

If you have any questions about this project, feel free to reach out to CRI's Volunteer Program Manager, Janet Davison at JDavison@mycri.org.

Thank you so much for making this holiday season special for individuals supported by CRI!

Homemade Fleece Blankets

Supplies

- 2 pieces of 2 yard fleece (aka 6'x4') – ideally two different colors or designs to make it pop!
- Yard stick/Tape measure
- Chalk (not necessary, but helpful for cutting straight lines)
- Scissors (Ideally fabric scissors) or a fabric rotary cutter (you'll need something like a self-healing mat or cardboard to place underneath the fabric when you cut to protect your surfaces)

Getting Started

1. Picking out your fleece is a very important part of the project! Ideally, one side of the blanket has a pattern/design while the other is a complimentary solid color. When choosing the design of your fleece, think of what the residents would like. Some of the residents like Sponge Bob, race cars, trucks, animals, pizza, superheroes, Disney characters, and nature to name a few.
2. Find a good flat surface.
3. Spread out your fleece fabric and cut out two rectangles that are 6' by 4'.
4. Lay one piece of fleece on top of the other. Make sure the edges match as best you can.

5. For the fringe, measure 2" into your fleece at .5" - 1" apart. You can use chalk to mark off your fringes, or you can be creative and use washi tape, painters tape, or masking tape. Or if you are really good, just eyeball it. You will automatically create the 2"x2" squared-out corners as you cut.
6. When cutting, be sure to make the cuts as clean and possible to avoid any jagged edges. This is more an issue when using scissors rather than a rotary cutter.
7. Tie the Fringe – Once the fringe is cut, there are a few ways to bind or tie the pieces of fleece together.
 - a. [Knot Ties](#) – Click on the link for visual reference: <https://afreshsqueezedlife.com/2016/12/01/tied-fleece-blanket-tutorial/>
 - i. Match the fringe from the top layer of fleece with the corresponding one on the second layer of fleece.
 - ii. Tie them together. Make sure the knot is tight and secure so they don't come undone in the wash.
 - iii. Continue around all sides of the blanket.
 - b. [No Knot Ties](#) - Click on the link for visual reference: <https://newlywedsurvival.com/easy-diy-no-sew-fleece-blanket/>
 - i. Flip the strips up and cut a small .5" slit in each strip near where the fringe meets the blanket, making sure to cut through both pieces of fabric.
 - ii. Take the ends of the strip and tuck them through the slit you just cut, pulling the strips through tightly so they lay flat.
 - iii. Continue around all sides of the blanket.
 - c. [Braided Ties](#) - Click on the link for visual reference: https://www.itsalwaysautumn.com/no-sew-braided-fleece-blanket.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=pinterest&utm_campaign=tailwind_smartloop&utm_content=smartloop&utm_term=68175840
 - i. Make a half inch slit in the center of each strip of fringe. If you are using scissors, you'll need to cut the slits in the two layers separately. Do that by folding the top layer of the first strip in half and use sharp scissors to snip a hole. Repeat on the bottom layer but make sure the holes align on the top and bottom strips of fringe.
 - ii. Continue all the way around the edges of the blanket, until all the strips have a small slit cut in the middle of them.
 - iii. Pick up a strip, treating the two layers as one, and turn it sideways so the underside fabric is facing you. Grab the next strip to the right and thread it through the hole in the strip you are holding. Continue threading the next strip to the right through the hole in the one next to it. Go around corners the same way. (Please note this is not actually braiding; it just gives the edge of the blanket the appearance of being braided.)
 - iv. When you get all the way around the blanket and are back to the beginning, separate the two layers of the final strip. Push the underside layer of the final strip through the hole in the very first strip. Push the upper layer of the final

strip through the hole in the under layer. Then push it back through the hole in the very first strip to secure and hide it.

****Don't forget to take a few pictures of the process and your final product to share on social media @MyCRiNow!****

Finished fleece blankets can be dropped off or mailed to the following addresses:

Chantilly HQ

14160 Newbrook Dr, Chantilly, VA 20151

Donation boxes are located in the lobby beyond the double glass doors

Accepting donations Monday - Friday from 8am to 5pm and Saturdays from 10am to 12pm

Arlington/Falls Church Maintenance Office

7297A Lee Hwy, Falls Church, VA 22042

Donation boxes are located in the lobby just inside the front door

Accepting donations Monday - Friday from 10am to 2pm

Richmond

808 Moorefield Park Dr., Ste. 120, Richmond, VA 23235

Accepting donations Monday – Friday from 10am to 1pm