

The Kindness Cards Initiative

A project for Silver Harbour Senior's
Centre, in partnership with the City
of North Vancouver, City Studios and
Global Stewardship

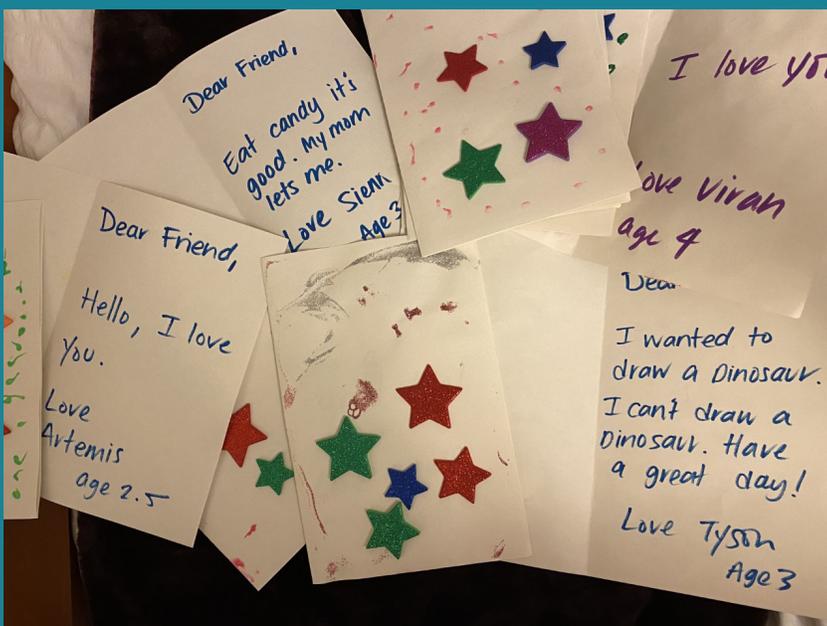
BY KATIE SHARD

The Project

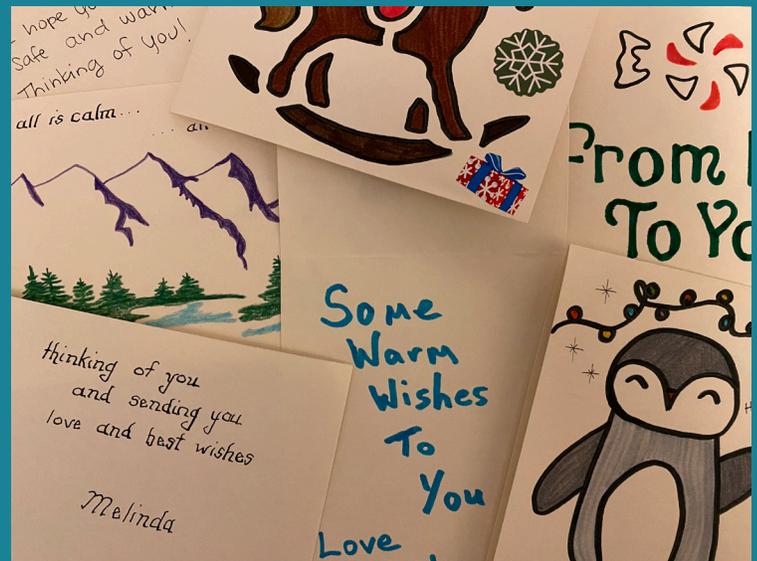
The Kindness Cards Initiative was started with the aim to provide seniors in our community with an uplifting message during these challenging times of COVID-19 isolation. Seniors have been most greatly affected by COVID-19, due to the fact that they are most at risk. This means that many of them have been in isolation for many months, not able to see their families and friends. Giving seniors a Kindness Card is meant to let them know that the community cares and is here to support them, and to hopefully bring them some joy.

My Contribution

For this project, I have been spending my time recruiting members of the community to create cards. I have been working with various units from Girl Guides of Canada, as well as some high schools, daycares and preschools on the North Shore. I have successfully gathered participants from these groups who have enthusiastically made cards, and some still are. The positive response from these groups has been so heartwarming to see. My objective was to gather as many participants as I could, and I believe I accomplished that. I look forward to continuing to spread the word about this ongoing project.



Photos from Treetops Montessori School



Photos from me & my family

Lessons Learned

At first, I spent a lot of time thinking about existing groups that might be interested in participating, based on their organization's existing values. I figured that they would be more likely to respond if I knew this initiative aligned with their values. I found that most schools are not interested in participating right now because they already have a lot of curriculum to fit into their reduced class time, due to COVID-19 restrictions. This meant I had to think outside of the box about who might be willing and able to participate. I briefly tried gathering participants through social media, but quickly fell short. I came to the conclusion that directly contacting people/groups is more effective than sending out a generic social media message. This way people are more likely to participate because it feels more personal. I recommend curating a thoughtful list of existing groups that would be interested in Kindness Cards, rather than sending a message out to everyone and anyone. Something to keep in mind is that not everyone you reach out to will even answer you, but the one's that do will be very excited to participate.

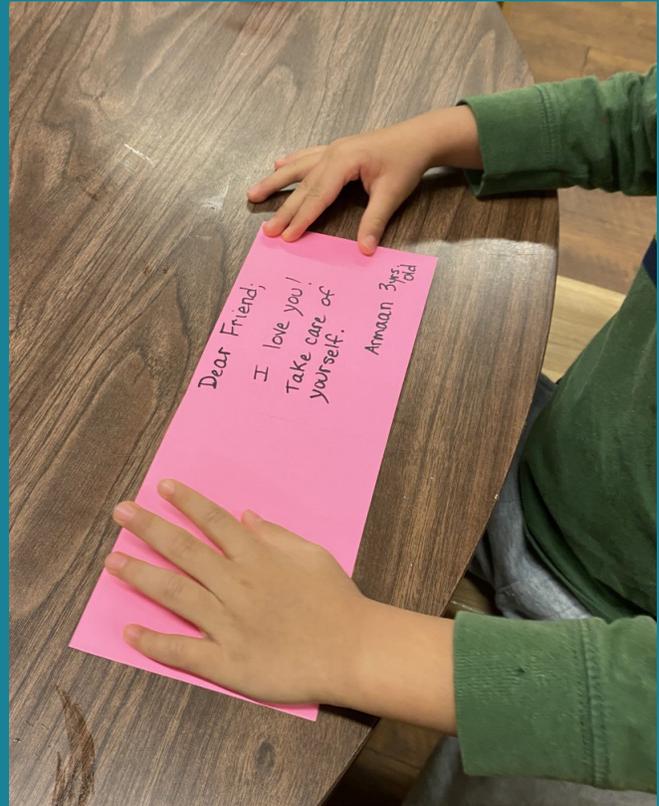
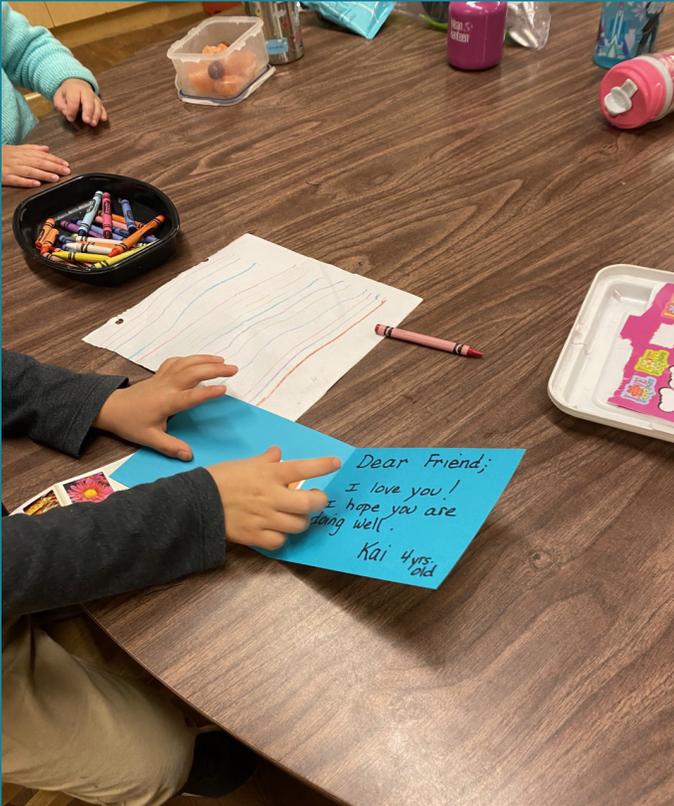
Testimonials

“Kindness Cards are an incredible way to both get involved with the community and help combat social isolation during such difficult times. During the fall, I set up a Kindness Card Collection Box at my high school, Carson Graham. We are currently doing Kindness Card Drives with specific themes to help encourage the student body to participate. We’ve received quite an abundance of cards, including those from a student who set up their own drive in their apartment building. We also set up a specific day where people could meet during lunch to work on cards together. Overall, I believe that every card and action made is extremely meaningful no matter how small. It is easy to disregard the challenges that people face throughout COVID-19, especially they don’t affect us directly. However by taking those small steps, bringing awareness and spending 5mins of your time writing a positive message can go a long way.”

Jasmine W. (Carson Graham)

“Our daycare gladly accepted the invitation to make kindness cards for seniors. As it happened, it fit right into our current living inquiry on kindness and empathy. We have been reading books and having discussions about what it means to be kind. The children have talked about lots of ways to show kindness to others so they were quite delighted to make the cards. We explained to them that the cards were for seniors who are currently not able to see their family and friends and might feel better receiving a card with some kind words. Even though the children are very young, they have a very good understanding that things are different right now because of the ‘virus’ and that it is an especially difficult time for older people. Some children are not able to see their own grandparents or family members. The children were very engaged in making the cards and they drew pictures, decorated them with stickers, and told us what they wanted to write. They thought quite carefully about what to say that might make an older person happy.”
It was a very worthwhile and meaningful project to participate in and we were very grateful for the opportunity.”

Melinda S. (Acorn Early Education Centre)



Photos from Acorn Early Education Centre

Groups

- Girl Guides of Canada
- Acorn Early Education Centre
- Treetops Montessori School
- Sentinel Secondary School
- Carson Graham Secondary School
- My family and friends



Team

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