

Care Boxes From Home

Card makers check list and guide

Firstly Thank You very much for help with our project, the number of cards you can make does not matter, I am excited to get anything, your work is a value to the project.

Main Themes for Cards

- Valentine's Day (Large Amounts Needed)
- Easter (Minimal Amount please)
- St Patrick's Day (Minimal Amounts Needed)
- Mother's Day (Large Amounts Needed)
- Father's Day (Large Amounts Needed)
- Halloween (Minimal Amount please)
- Christmas (Large Amounts Needed)
- Happy New Year (Minimal Amount please)

Deadline dates for these items will be available on email Please note Christmas/New Year ones are need ASAP

General cards work well

General cards—both masculine and feminine designs—are most adaptable to any occasion; they are perfect for a hello or can be sent as a get well, sympathy, weddings, anniversaries, babies, or lots of other letter-writing reasons. These can have sentiments like "thinking of you," "my friend," "hello," or a poem, or no sentiment at all. The largest percentage of the boxes we send (with the exception of the Christmas holidays) are general cards.

Love or Miss You cards

These are often requested by our heroes, and we don't get nearly as many Miss You cards as we could send. Half our service members are married, and the other half likely has someone at home holding onto a piece of their heart. Think about how perfectly a "missing you" message fits what they want to tell their loved ones!

Birthday

Another theme we get a requests for are birthday themes. It's great to pack up a selection of birthday card styles for whatever type of person that the hero's unit is writing home to—masculine, feminine, adult, child, funny, or serious. Some card makers use the sentiment "celebrate" and make it a cheery card without cake or gift boxes—and those can be used for both birthdays and other occasions to celebrate with a card (like graduations, promotions, etc). We can always use more birthday cards than we currently get that are appropriate for children; around half the service members have kids at home!

Less-common themes

You may have noticed we don't ask specifically for certain less-common card themes like weddings, sympathy, get well, congratulations, or new babies. It's not that we won't send them or don't need any; we do get some of each and that's fine—we do want to put a few into each box. But if we put 20 sympathy or wedding cards into a package. For a small group, the likelihood of them knowing 20 people getting married right away is quite small! We trust that, if we only include one or two wedding cards and they need an extra, they can use a blank or thinking of you card for that extra occasion.

Glitter

The top question (aside from "Where to send the cards") is about glitter!

The reason behind our "no glitter" requirement may help to clarify things. It's not about the shiny aspect of glitter. It's about the *messy* side of it!

Many of our deployed heroes live in very primitive conditions. Primitive as in no showers for a couple weeks. No laundry. Nowhere to get cleaned up. And if they open a box of cards and get sprinkled all over, they might have absolutely nowhere to get rid of all that mess; they may not even realise it's all over them. And if they have glitter on their uniforms it can put them at risk — it can make them visible to night vision goggles, and that is just not a risk we're willing to take!

It's clearly hard for crafters to deal with making cards without glitter; we do realize that. However, we realllllly ask that you set it aside — but we do appreciate your efforts to abide by what we need to do to keep our heroes safe!

And for those who absolutely can't stand having *no* shimmer, here's a list of products/techniques that we get asked about a lot. The rule of thumb is: does it flake or sprinkle off the card when touched? And not just touched lightly, but give it a good rubbing and see; if your hand is shimmery, do not send it.

Glitter products that are NOT okay:

- Any glitter that flakes or sprinkles off the card.
- Manufactured embellishments with glitter *that flakes or sprinkles off*.
- Papers with glitter that *flakes or sprinkles off the paper*.
- Embossed glitter that isn't completely heated and sealed, and therefore *flakes or sprinkles off the card*.
- Tubs, buckets, and bottles of glitter adhered with liquid or other glues are generally not acceptable because *they do flake off*. It's not possible to completely adhere every flake. Please just put the tubs away, thanks!

Glittery products that ARE okay:

- Papers with *embedded* glitter - some of the DCWV and other brand papers have the glitter practically sealed in.
- Stickles with *embedded* glitter. *No flaking off*.
- Spica pens with *embedded* glitter. *No flaking off*.
- Embossing powders with *embedded* glitter, as long as it's *well-embossed*. *No flakes*.
- Pearlized inks, papers, and markers as long as there is (say it with me) *no flaking off*.
- Other shiny embellishments and supplies that may shimmer but *do NOT flake off*.

Card "fronts"

Many crafters trade just the "front" of cards to share design ideas with each other (and save themselves cardstock!) Consider turning your card-front stash into cards for our heroes to write home on!

We will gladly accept donated card fronts; please know that during heavy shipping times, however, shippers may not have time to make cards out of all the fronts that are sent in. If you can get a group of friends to get together to fold some cardstock and glue like crazy, that would help; otherwise your card fronts will visit the "[Card Hospital](#)" until time permits converting the fronts. So if you're sending especially for a close-deadline, they may not make it out in time.

Dark Cardstock Liners

We've seen some really beautiful liners placed in cards made using dark cardstock, so thought it was high time we shared these great ideas! Some folks decorate them with stamped images on the corners, others use plain paper....get creative!

First — what colours need a liner? Assume that a soldier may only have a pencil to write with. We sometimes send boxes of Bic pens, but we never know where the cards will end up and what writing implements will be available. Please feel free to add pens when sending your cards to us remember we use Bic as you know they are going to work the cheap ones tend to hit & miss with working!

Line just one side: Cut a piece of white or light coloured paper or cardstock just smaller than the card size, and adhere it to half of the inside of the card. If you stamp a sentiment (in white, or something that shows up) on the right, adhere the liner on the left so our heroes have somewhere to write—they don't have white or gold pens on the battlefield! Sometimes people stamp matching designs on the inside liner too.

Line both sides: give a hero a little more room to write by lining both sides! Beware cards with strips of ribbon across the front, can become lumpy if the ribbon is continued across the inside too. Maybe then line can be made of cardstock.

Folded liner: Use cardstock or other paper, and adhere one side to the card; note that if you adhere both sides, it sometimes gets lumpy or hard to fold back in half, so adhering to one side eliminates that problem.

We really do appreciate those who add a liner to their cards; many times our shippers end up with a "card hospital" with cards in need of TLC, and the biggest injury for them is not having a liner!

Best card size: 10cm x 15cm

The preferred size for cards for our boxes are 10cm x 15cm cards as they fit into C6 envelopes cards These are achieved simply by using a piece of cardstock cut in half and folded. (Either direction, a vertically-opening or horizontally-opening card, both shown at right).

There's a reason we do request this size — both as a benefit to our heroes, to Care Boxes From Home, and to you!

Benefit to our troops

The more cards, the merrier, as far as our heroes are concerned — the more cards we get into a box, the more families at home get to hear from their loved one! The C6 size cards fit the most into the boxes used by Care Boxes From Home and that's enough to get us to encourage cardmakers to keep to this size or smaller!

Benefit to Care Boxes From Home

We try to be as efficient in our packing as we can, getting the maximum cards in a box, to use donations as wisely as possible. When we have larger cards, we tuck them in one end; if they were C6, would allow for another whole row of cards!

Larger cards could also be laid across the top — but the top is reserved for [AnyHero letters](#) for our men and women, so if we fill it with large cards, we'll have little space for those. (Those little airspace corners you see get filled with treats like nutrition bars or crackers—no space goes to waste with our shippers!)

Benefit to YOU!

The benefit to you, the card maker? As long as we have donated envelopes or enough finances donated to purchase envelopes, you can send in your C6 sized cards without envelopes! We found a source for very inexpensive envelopes; and have even had some donated. Thanks Statman

The bottom line

So, if you'd like to help with making the most of our donated shipping dollars so we can get the most cards possible in a box—go for the C6! And include a little donation in your box to cover envelopes for your cards and the purchasing of boxes....ship the creativity and leave the envelopes to us!

Handmade cards only

Our "no store bought cards" restriction seems like an arbitrary attitude toward donated cards that are printed by a manufacturer. But please let us explain — we have a number of reasons we're no longer able to accept them except as AnyHero letters.

Un-useable cards

When Sandy at OWH (Operation Write Home) first began this whole project in the USA, she accepted store bought cards. And not only did she receive a lot of them — she also received a lot that were completely un-useable! We had thousands and thousands of Father's Day cards for grandsons, We've Moved cards, Happy Birthday to a 6 year old (hundreds and hundreds of them), and Merry Christmas to a first cousin. (Yes, they really do make them!) The likelihood of a unit deployed overseas having a need for that kind of specific card is very very small!

Quantity and time factors

She also were given crates and crates of store bought from estate sales, and it took massive amounts of time to process, sort, and determine what among them was even able to be used. Many were yellowed, damaged, or so dated that a hero wouldn't be too likely to actually use them. The time spent on

these was taking a toll on our shippers, and giving less time and attention to our beautiful handcrafted cards.

Hero feedback

Out of all the feedback Sandy gotten from our heroes, one of two negatives had to do with store bought cards. Last Christmas she had so many cases, they were sent one large battalion one box of handmade and one box of store bought. And they told us that no one used the store bought, and they ended up on the burn pile! It was so sad. Sandy had tried to share with a group large enough that they might be happy for store bought cards, but OWH hearts broke at the thought that they believed we sent them goods that were less than our best — they knew OWH handmade cards, and that clearly made our decision: no more store bought cards.

The bottom line

So we ask that you find another charity that might wish to use store bought cards you've collected, or perhaps cut the pretty images off the front and use them on your own cards. You can use store bought cards for AnyHero letters, however — there are NO restrictions on those! Take them to your local group, school, or church and ask folks to sign them for our heroes!

Tip for card making groups

A great idea—each card maker who brings cards to your card making party can fill out their own packing slip, and enclose it with their cards. That way everyone makes it onto our card maker list, not just the one mailing the cards for everyone at the party. Brilliant, eh?

AnyHero cards: Q&A

News from the home front—even from strangers—is a treasure to those far from home. "Hero Mail is great," says one Chaplain. "I go out and pray with the soldiers before missions and I hand out Hero Mail." Letters are distributed to those who rarely get mail, or to those most in need of encouragement the day the box arrives. "It helps to know that we are remembered!"

Following are a number of the most often-asked questions about these letters.

"Why are they called AnyHero letters?"

When a letter is addressed to AnyHero, it can be given to someone from any branch of service; a note written to "Dear Soldier" is appropriate for someone serving in the Army, but since many of our contacts are with mixed units, using "Dear hero" as the salutation gives them the freedom to pass it on to whoever needs encouragement the most.

"How often do you send these?"

In every box, if we're able! That means weekly we need more cards and letters.

"How do I even know what to say in a letter?"

If you've got the gift of gab—or if all you know is how to write "thanks" and sign your name!—you can write a letter that will encourage a deployed service member! Letters can be long or short, on a card or a piece of typing paper, chatty about life at home or just a brief message of gratitude. Just

keep it upbeat—even a fun weather report, a story about something your child said, or a clipping from the funnies brings a little piece of home to a faraway land! Poems that have been written by yourself or others are also great.

"Do I sign my note with my full name?"

You can do whatever you feel comfortable with; preference is at least first name and hometown/state, but you can put your contact information in a letter as well. Those who receive it may or may not write back, but it's possible you could get a message back.

"Can I write just one?"

You bet! We'd love to receive one AnyHero letter in every box of donated cards if we could! The more love from across Australia we can share, the better.

"How do the letters get distributed?"

Each of our boxes of blank cards goes out with a package of Hero Mail; the contacts who receive them then share the mail with those who get the least mail from home, or to someone struggling and in need of extra encouragement. Some post all the mail on a notice board for everyone to see; others tuck a note into their pocket to carry with them on missions.

"Can my kids draw pictures to send?"

Absolutely! We hear from so many heroes who love to hang up kids' art on the walls around them. Please refer to our school and scouts post for guidance for your children at end of page, whether you're own, your school, or a scout troop.

Do you have a class of school children who might like to do something too? Have them write letters, and create a label to put on each one with the school's address on it so that our heroes can write back if they get time. You never know what one little action in a classroom can start! (Maybe raising a whole new generation of heroes, too!) maybe add a self addressed envelope too; no postage is needed as our Heroes have free post home

Card hospital avoidance: 10 ways to help out

What's a "card hospital"? It's the cards that our shippers set aside for a time, cards that need a little extra help. Dark cards needing liners, embellishments falling off, really odd sizes that we have to scramble to find an envelope for. And the poor hospital beds get full!

As we get into the holiday season, we want to try to get the cards processed and packed quickly, and eliminate stay overs in the hospital! Last year we processed and mailed 35,000 cards in the 3month holiday window---and this year will be even more. So the more you can "help a sistah out," the faster we can get your beautiful creations out to our heroes!

1. **Are you sure I can't use Glitter?** Many of you have seen our requests not to send glitter cards. It's especially hard during the holidays, we know, and it's a temptation we need you to resist! A little glitter (some stickles in the star on a tree or some Spica pen on a gift box) is ok, but we really mean a *little!* If it rubs off on your hand, don't send it please! It takes us time to sort those out.
2. **Can I use dark cardstock?** Yes! But if you can't see Bic pen written on the cardstock, please please please

put a liner in the card. Otherwise our shippers have to sit and do that.

3. **How about handmade envelopes?** We're receiving more and more of these. (Is this a trend? Cool!) And while they're okay as long as they'll last in the mail (if they're from thin magazine stock, please be careful, we don't want our heroes letters to be shredded and not make it home to their families!), we're getting a LOT that have no adhesive to seal them with. Please take care of that on your end, we just don't have the time.
4. **What about envelopes in general?** We had some donated ones for a while, and some of our shippers still have some left and will keep people notified if more are needed to be sourced
5. **What kind of special packaging can I use?** Keep it minimal! Plastic sleeves have to be removed, so if shippers need to take them each out of a sleeve, that's a lot of time.
6. **Why the C6 card size request?** We've emphasized C6 cards or smaller because they're best to get the most cards in a box for our heroes. When we receive larger ones, they each take up the space of two cards when we line up rows - and that's just not too efficient when we want to get as many in a box as we can. So if you're able to keep to C6 cards, it really really does help. Note: Square envelopes are quite expensive, so if you send squares, please provide envelopes, thanks!
7. **Does my \$1 donation really help?** Absolutely! Even a dollar makes a difference, when we all pool our resources together. We treasure each of you who are able to help out! Those who can give more, we appreciate you so much!
8. **Do I have to stamp the card backs?** If you have a Care Boxes From Home stamp and can stamp them, please do! Some folks use labels or handwrite the name - those are great options too. We love to hear from families who email after receiving a card from their hero. If you don't have a stamp and plan to order one, please email mandie_m@bigpond.com Thanks! Actually looking into stamps right now so for now please just add Care Boxes From Home with my email address and please add card made by (and your name & state)
9. **Should I pack each card with its envelope, or separate?** If your card is stamped on the back, tucking the back of the card inside the envelope is helpful. If not, we need to take it out of its envelope anyway, so a stack of cards separate from a stack of envelopes is just fine.
10. **Do I have to include the packing slip?** That slip itself isn't necessary, but the info on it is! Please provide your contact info and the quantity of cards inside the box; *counting them* slows down processing, so if you've assessed what's in there first, it makes our job go more quickly. The slip also helps

us when doing data entry to track your cards, so we appreciate when you include it.

So there you have it, 10 tips to help out.....and what's so amazing is the wonderful folks who have been asking these things because you wanted to make life easier for our shippers! You're awesome!!! We truly appreciate all the efforts you all go to for our heroes...thank you all!!!

Make some friends, make some cards

Our emails have been hopping with people wanting to do more, so this week we've been featuring ideas to get you all more involved! Today's idea is to check out our **card maker list** and see if you have some friends you didn't know you had! The web address for this will be added soon

Check out our Card maker List and....

- **Do we have you listed correctly?** (names are only added as cards are received)
- **Do we have your blog or online gallery linked?**
- **Is there someone in your town?** (email us and we'll try to contact the other person. We will only connect you if both parties agree to share email addresses! If they have a blog, go visit and leave them a hello!)
- Email mandie_m@bigpond.com with corrections.

Once you meet your new friends...

- **Schedule a card making party together!** Take turns crafting at each others' homes, or find a mutual location (a store, a VFW hall, a church?). Each bring two friends and some snacks, and it's a party!
- **Go shopping together** — save some cost and split reams of cool colours of cardstock or large quantities of ribbon)
- **Mail your boxes together** — fill large box together and split costs! (If you want to be counted separately for the donations, fill out two packing slips, thanks!)
- **Brainstorm** ways to get your community involved. Are there fairs coming up this summer? Clubs you can recruit to write letters? Scouts needing a service project who can fundraise for OWH with a carwash?

Endless ideas are out there — go make some friends!

Kids of almost all ages

Ages for our service members' kids are varied. Little kids love to hear from Mums and Dads overseas as well as their big brothers and sisters; if you've got great ideas for teen cards—those seem to be the hardest for most folks, so give them a try.

To kids, not from kids

Note that these are cards *for* children—not cards *to* "mummy" or "daddy" from a small child. We don't have too many kids serving overseas in our military, so cards to Daddy aren't very helpful.

Making multiples of one design

Some crafters *love* to make one design again and again. Others only do that when in a hurry to fill a box or meet a goal. And some have told us many hurdles they had to overcome to meet that goal they'd set. So...here's a little info for you on making many of the same design.

What happens to multiple cards?

We're happy to receive multiples. Four or five of a card, up to ten or twenty have been made by some. We mix them up with others' cards in a number of boxes so they go to as many people as possible.

Typically we try not to put more than a few of one design in a box. We love to create exciting "eye candy" for our heroes as we can when they look through your cards! Many service members are deployed in areas where all they ever see are khaki and brown everywhere, so if our boxes arrive with lots of color and styles, it's an added thrill for them.

Free yourself from quantity-pressure!

Please don't let yourself be pressured by a goal you've set—either a particular number of cards, or to fill a particular size box. We've noticed some folks try to send hundreds—which is fantastic—but do remember that thousands of others are also joining in this work. No single person should ever feel pressure to set super-high goals, and then suffer creatively because of it. A package of 20 cards you've enjoyed making can be just as fulfilling—if not more—than 100 you couldn't stand finishing. And others are out there making cards as well, so we're all in this together!

We all have to constantly remind ourselves that cards aren't a life-or-death item for our heroes. If we lose perspective and feel like a hero's communication with their loved ones depends solely on us (and often the letters are an 'extra' since most of them do have at least occasional email access)—the pressure can overwhelm our joy, and that would be a tough state of mind to inspire anything creative!

When to mass produce?

1. Crafters who *love* to make many of one design. If you really do enjoy it, go for it!
2. Card making parties—especially with newbie crafters. Having them copy one design is often most efficient!

When *not* to mass produce?

1. When you're feeling pressured by a goal you set for yourself, size of a box you're trying to fill, or commitment you made to one of our shippers. Breathe deep....and just relax.
2. When you're no longer having fun! If tying one more ribbon makes you want to scream—put it down. Go make a unique card, even if it takes 5 times the amount of time as that one card. It's okay; give yourself permission to be creative!

3. When a holiday deadline is looming. Try making general cards instead, and let yourself relax about when that box gets in the mail! Holiday cards that arrive past the deadline WILL be sent out the following year, so your efforts aren't ever wasted.
4. When you're sending a box riiiiiiight at the end of a deadline, it's toughest for us to mix identical cards with others. We begin sending that holiday a few weeks prior to our published deadline, so if you send 400 of the same card on the last day—we may only have those to send in the final boxes.

So be freed of pressure. Give yourself permission to lower that goal. Use a smaller box or envelope, and enjoy the craft that you love so much. This is supposed to be *fun!*

The dangers of glitter

Twinkle twinkle little star ... that may be a sweet song, but we need to keep our heroes from twinkling!

Our no-glitter restriction is one that's been tough on a lot of our card makers; who doesn't like a little bling? Well, we have very important reasons to stay away from glitter, and once you know, you'll start looking at that bottle of glitter with a new perspective: safety!

Visibility at night

Night vision goggles are in common use on battlefields, not just by the Australian & U.S. military, but by enemy forces as well. What kinds of things can these devices see? Anything shiny stands out. If our heroes open a box of cards with glitter on them—they can get it all over their uniforms. Some of our contacts are in forward-deployed areas where a shower or laundering is rare, sometimes weeks between opportunities to clean up. Even if it's practically invisible to their own eyes, a uniform with glitter all over it will shine and twinkle across a mountainside in Afghanistan, and make our service members visible to the enemy.

"But are there options for just a little sparkle? Please?"

Some of us (the writer of this post included!) need to sit our inner child down and let her know she can't play with the glitter bottle. But if she needs her "fix," here' are a few suggestions for you! But remember, in all things, moderation—our heroes are too important to us to risk their health and safety!

Adhesive or glue-on gems

Add a little twinkle with a well-placed gem!

Twinkling H20s

These are watercolours that have a sheen to them; the company is going out of business soon, so if you need some colours, shop soon!

SOME papers with glitter

There are a few papers that have glitter that is sealed; be certain that it will not flake off, even if you abuse the paper a little. Our shippers will check them when your cards arrive, but it helps if you don't even send ones that flake off.

Spica pens

These pens put a *tiny* amount of sparkle on within the thin ink used. The only caveat about these pens—if you try to color a large area or color a spot over and over, the built-up sparkle WILL flake off after drying. So use it sparingly, just a little to highlight the centre of a flower or a tiny area.

Thanks for protecting the health and safety of our service members!

Schools and Scouts

Our heroes love getting cards and letters from young people! Their pure and heartfelt messages—and their spelling of "solgers"—encourage everyone to smile!

AnyHero cards, letters, and drawings are a wonderful activity to teach the importance of saying thank-you, the value of honouring service to our country, and the kindness of sharing their heart with someone else far from home. It's a great activity for classrooms, scout troops, Sunday schools—or keeping little fingers busy while Mum makes cards for our heroes to write home on.

"What is the best way to get children involved?"

Service members' preference is to keep these cards and display them in their living spaces, so we recommend AnyHero cards and drawings rather than having children making blank cards to write home on.

"Will the service members write back to the children?"

Maybe. There are no guarantees that service members will write back, but some love to do that for children. If a school or scout troop would like the possibility of a reply, write the school or an adult's address on the cards or letters. The address can be written on each card, or printed on a label and placed on each one. (NEVER put the child's home address on any letters, unless you are the parent of that child and approve giving out your own child's information.)

"Should children sign their letters?"

For their protection, first name only, and age, optionally hometown.

"Are there any restrictions for kids' art?"

No glitter, and no violent imagery; everything they make should be smaller than or fold down smaller than 8.5 x 11. Otherwise—anything goes!

"I'm new at working with kids, how do I get started helping them to make cards?"

See our "Step by Step" guide below:

"Can my kids do other things with Care Boxes From Home as a service project?"

Yes! Utilise the talents and goals your children already have—your group may be able to meet another badge requirement or fulfil a service goal, while raising monies to sponsor shipments to our service members! Combine activities that the children already like to do, and teach them the value of community service at the same time. Some suggestions:

- A car wash could generate funds to cover the children's craft supplies for their AnyHero letters.
- A bake sale can meet a scout badge requirement while covering your group's shipping costs to mail their cards to Care Boxes From Home.

- Any fundraising project can raise funds to help Care Boxes From Home mail boxes to our heroes! We can provide a thank-you certificate at your request.
- Hold a community card signing!

Step by step: Making AnyHero cards & letters with children

Gather supplies ahead of time:

1. For cards: prepare cardstock by cutting to 8.5 x 5.5 and pre-folding. (This allows 2 cards from a standard letter-sized piece of cardstock.)
2. For letters: provide lined paper or blank copier paper. Email me for a copy of the PDF with some letter-writing templates the children can also color.
3. For paintings or drawings: finished size should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 - or it should fold down to smaller than that size.
4. Art supplies: **Do not use glitter.** Kids can use pencils, crayons, markers, stickers, paints, rubberstamps, foamies - kids get creative with any materials!
5. Safeguard tables and floors from messes!

Prepare the children for what they'll be doing:

1. Talk with them about a soldier's life in terms they can understand: they're far from their families for a long time, and they love to know they're not forgotten and that we're thankful for them.
2. Ask the children to think about what they're free to do because of what our heroes do - they are safe, they go to school, they live with their families, they have a great future ahead of them, and they don't have to be scared.
3. Help out little ones - Some leaders write a sentence on a chalkboard to help little ones with words and spelling; some will write a list of the hard-to-spell words and the children can write their own letters with that help.

Guide them as they create and write.

1. Positive messages are best - thank you, we appreciate you, come home safe.
2. Avoid violent war imagery. Little boys especially like to draw tanks, soldiers, and guns; some of this imagery is loved by deployed heroes, however please avoid bloody scenes, drawings of dead bodies, guns pointed at people, shooting. Keep it upbeat!
3. If making get well cards for injured heroes, please do not let the children draw any guns, tanks, or helicopters. Wounded warriors do not need to be reminded of what they've just been through.
4. Suggested things to draw: Patriotic imagery—flags, stars, kangaroos, drawings of home—the child's family, home, school, or neighbourhood, hobbies and activities they like, anything from daily life
5. Have children sign their work. First name only, and age (optional: hometown)
6. Send packets of AnyHero cards and letters to any of our shippers. Please be aware that cards for any holiday should be postmarked at least 4 weeks prior to that holiday (please email me for current deadlines); this allows time for the shippers to have them packed into our regular boxes of blank cards and mailed to the hero contacts.

Card making Parties: We're seeking your advice!

We'd like *your* input. We're regularly asked for ideas to help people put together their own events...and many of *you* have knowledge to share! From large crop-style gatherings to small groups of friends, what have you learned about hosting an event? What's worked well? What pitfalls can others avoid?

Here are a few questions to start the discussion - feel free to answer what you can or add other tips of your own! If you're thinking of hosting an event and have questions, post those in a comment as well and maybe someone will have an answer!

1. What's the optimum number of participants?
2. What's a good ratio of experts on hand to help new crafters?
3. Have suggestions on physical setup? (supplies, tables)
4. Do you have ideas on ways to get supplies donated?
5. Do you ask people to bring some basic supplies? (scissors, paper cutter, adhesive)
6. What works for advertising your event?
7. Do you prepare cards/kits ahead? Or turn people loose?
8. Or do you invite people to bring their own cards/ideas/supplies/projects?
9. Snack suggestions? (mmmmmm! Don't forget the important things!)
10. Do you have photos of your event we could share?
11. What local businesses/clubs could be approached for help?
12. What have you learned *not* to do? (if you'd prefer to share a sticky subject privately, [email us](#) and we can put a politically-correct spin on it for you!)

Once we get some feedback we'll compile your suggestions into a simpler blog post...maybe even assemble a downloadable packet or flyer posted on our site! Thanks in advance to all of you party hostess experts for your valuable input!

Also as a side note:

I am happy for people who make cards to get the acknowledgement, if you would like I can send a copy of the Logo and you can add the following to the back of the card or insert it into the card on a separate sheet of paper

*Card Supplied by
Care Boxes From Home
careboxesfromhome.weebly.com*

*Proudly made by
Name (your name & state)
Email address(yours if you like)*

Any questions?

Feel free to email me at

mandie_m@bigpond.com

or to call me on 0409407418

Please send cards to

Amanda Mason
Care Boxes From Home
30 Blackwood Drive
Melton South Vic 3338

Please note once we have built a large enough base of card makers, we will be having people in every state accepting cards, this will help keep postage down

Special Thanks to Sandy From Operation Write Home, who gave me the idea for this and had kindly allowed me to use her information in making this guide. Thanks Sandy your wonderful!!!!

Care Boxes From Home

30 Blackwood Drive
Melton South Victoria 3338

PACKING SLIP

Please enclose this form so we can let you know your package was received!

Name _____

Organization (if any) _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Email _____ Donation\$ _____

Enclosed: # of cards _____ Hero Mail # _____

Notes _____

*Note to cardmakers: **No glitter please**; All shipping donations make a huge difference —even just a few dollars!*

Heroe Mail: Please feel free to write a letter or more to troops deployed and enclose them with your cards

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