

Remembrance Quilts

How You Can Pay Tribute to Loved Ones Lost to Substance Use Disorder

Each year, many lives are lost to substance use disorders. To help loved ones cope with the loss, DMHAS, Wheeler Clinic, and other organizations throughout the state are offering opportunities to create Remembrance Quilts in memory of those we have lost to addiction. The quilts are displayed across the state—at schools, community forums and other events—to help raise awareness about addiction and the resources available to promote recovery. Family and friends are encouraged to create a square as a tribute to their loved one for the next Remembrance Quilt.

Step by Step: How to Make a Square for the Remembrance Quilt

You don't have to be an artist or sewing expert to create a moving personal tribute remembering a life lost to substance use disorder, but you do have to make a square in order to add a name to the Remembrance Quilts. It's not as complicated as many people think. You can use paint or fine needlework, iron-on transfers or hand-made appliques, or even spray paint on a sheet; any remembrance is appropriate.

You may choose to create a square privately as a personal memorial or you may choose to follow the traditions of old-fashioned quilting by including friends, family, and co-workers. That choice is completely up to you.

1. Design the square

Include the name of the person you are remembering. Feel free to include additional information such as the dates of birth and death, hometown, special talents, etc. We ask that you please limit each square to one individual (exceptions include siblings or spouses).

2. Choose your materials

Remember that the Remembrance Quilts are folded and unfolded every time they are displayed, so durability is crucial. Since glue deteriorates with time, it is best to sew things to the square. A medium-weight, non-stretch fabric such as a cotton duck or poplin works best.

*The finished, hemmed square must be a **13" square with a ½" border**. This means your design will be 12"x12" with a ½" border on each side. If you can't hem it yourself, we'll do it for you.*

3. Create the square

In constructing your square you might want to use some of the following techniques:

- **Applique:** Sew fabric, letters and small mementos onto the background fabric. Do not rely on glue – it won't last.

- **Paint:** Brush on textile paint or color-fast dye, or use an indelible ink pen. Please don't use "puffy" paint; it's too sticky.
- **Stencils:** Trace your design onto the fabric with a pencil, lift the stencil, then use a brush to apply textile paint or indelible markers.
- **Collage:** Make sure that whatever materials you add to the square won't tear the fabric (avoid glass and sequins for this reason), and be sure to avoid very bulky objects.
- **Photos:** The best way to include photos or letters is to print them electronically onto iron-on transfers, iron them on 100% cotton fabric and sew that fabric to the square. You can do this by bringing a thumb drive with the photo you would like printed or emailing the photo to yourself. You can then access your email from the computer at the event and print out the photo.

4. Write us a letter

Please take the time to write a letter about the person you are remembering. The letter might include your relationship to him or her, how he or she would like to be remembered, and a favorite memory. If possible, please send us a photograph along with the letter for our archives.

5. Fill out the *Square Maker Information Form*

This provides us with vital information about you and your square.

6. Send us the square

Once your square is completed, there are several ways to submit it to become a part of the next Remembrance Quilt:

- Attend one of the quilting events that are held across the state.
- Mail your square to the Connecticut Clearinghouse.
Connecticut Clearinghouse
334 Farmington Avenue
Plainville, CT 06062
- Bring the square to your local Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (RBHAO).

Important: No matter how you decide to turn in a new square, please be sure to complete the *Square Maker Information Form* and include it with the square.

How your square becomes part of the Remembrance Quilts

When 36 squares are collected, they are sewn together to form a six-foot square. This is the basic building block of a Remembrance Quilt, and it is usually referred to as either a "6-by-6" or "Block."

Questions?

Email Abby Wood at amwood@wheelerclinic.org

or call the Connecticut Clearinghouse at 1 (800) 232-4424.