



## **Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **GACEC and OAASIS to give “practical, portable, positive hugs” to children and young adults who are homeless or in foster care in Delaware**

*Dover, Delaware-January 12, 2011-* The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) and the Organization of Adult Alumni and Students in Service (OAASIS), are proud to announce their partnership on Project Hug.

“I am proud to support this effort and look forward to helping collect and add items that will help,” said Lt. Governor Matt Denn.

Project Hug is focused on providing warmth, comfort, hugs and smiles for kids and young adults in Delaware who are homeless or in foster care. As we all know, many kids and young adults with special needs are also in foster care or are homeless. Since we can't personally hug each and every one of these kids and young adults, we can try to do the next best thing.

Imagine things that would make you feel warm and cozy. Things that would make you feel as if you were receiving a “portable hug” from someone who thinks you're terrific...cuddly blankets, a special homemade quilt or afghan, pillow pets, Snuggies scarves, gloves, mittens, long johns, flannel pajamas, ear muffs...the list could go on and on. These are the types of practical, portable positive hugs we want to collect and send to as many kids and young adults who are homeless or in foster care in Delaware as possible.

With that in mind, the GACEC and OAASIS are working together to collect cozy, comfy items for these kids and young adults. OAASIS workers will staff several collection centers for items in each county.

The items collected can be dropped off at the GACEC offices on Friday, February 10 from 9 AM to 4 PM or Monday February 13 from 9 AM to 4 PM.

On **February 15, 2012** GACEC and OAASIS will host a reception at George V. Massey Station in Dover, Delaware. Case workers, care givers, dignitaries and other interested parties throughout the state will be invited to the reception. The case workers will be asked to come and select from the items and to distribute them to those that they know need them most.

We would love to collect as many hugs for these kids and young adults as possible. If you would like to give a practical, portable, positive hug to a child or young adult, there are some suggestions listed below about the type of items we are looking for.

We would like to request that the items be new or newly made. Home made, sewn, knitted or crocheted items are terrific. We just ask that they are **new** creations! Items can be for boys or girls, anywhere from newborn to age 21.

We would love to be able to give:

- o Blankets
- o Coats
- o Scarves
- o Gloves
- o Mittens
- o Snuggies
- o Sleeping Bags
- o Pillow Pets
- o Cozy pajamas
- o Comfy, warm slippers
- o Cuddle Duds or Long Johns
- o Ear Muffs
- o Hand warmers (similar to those used by hunters, often marketed as "Hot Hands")
- o Snuggly Socks
- o Sweatshirts or Hoodies
- o Fleece pants
- o Sweaters

We are **NOT** looking for:

- o Anything that can be plugged in (i.e. space heaters, electric blankets, etc...)
- o Candles or anything else that requires an open flame
- o Food

For a list of collection locations, please visit the GACEC website at [gacec.delaware.gov](http://gacec.delaware.gov).

Persons who have items that they wish to donate or who have questions, please contact Kristin Mullen at the GACEC at 302-739-4553, or Joe DiSalvo at OAASIS at 302-739-5556.

We are excited to begin this project, and to hopefully bring a little smile and a big warm hug from afar to a child's life this winter.

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