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A pay its forward
kindness campaign

ANNIE'S KINDNESS BLANKETS

ANNIE'S STORY

Our Annie was a kind, caring, and loving woman. Her laugh could make everyone smile and her hugs were like being wrapped in a kind of love that would make you never want to let go. Annie was amazing inside and out, but she, like so many silent warriors, struggled with mental illness. Even though so many in her life tried to remind her of all the love she was surrounded by. She lost her life to depression on March 30, 2015, changing our lives forever.

OUR MISSION

Since losing Annie, we have made it our mission to help others know they are not alone in their struggles. To remind them that it's okay to not be okay and you can talk about it. We have vowed to be the voice to help stop the stigma surrounding mental illness, depression and suicide. We want people to not feel alone in this world. We want to show the world that with one simple act of kindness you could help save someone's life. We have learned through our journey, by telling our story, Annie's story, we are opening the door for others to know they are not alone and it's okay to not be okay.

Most importantly it is okay to reach out and ask for help.

AKB

Six months after Annie's passing, we needed something to heal our soul while helping someone else. We decided to make 35 fleece no-sew blankets in honor of her 35 years in this world. Each came with a label affixed on them that speaks a little about Annie and a lot about being kind to others. We placed each Annie's Kindness Blanket in its own tote bag, and we donated them to 35 people we thought may need an everlasting hug. The outpouring of support and love we received after was truly humbling. We knew that we needed to continue sending as many everlasting hugs to as many as we could. We could feel the kindness and support each blanket gave to its recipients and the flood of inspiring and positive messages we received told us we had to keep moving forward.

We started having blanket making events where people from many communities came to help make blankets to send out to more people in need of an everlasting hug. Families, Girl Scouts, Eagle Scouts, individuals and an army of different organizations wanted to help. We realized these events were not only helping make everlasting hugs for someone in need, but they were also becoming a safe place to have open, safe and healthy conversation surrounding depression and mental illness. Most importantly, we found it was a place where people felt not so alone.

To date, we have sent close to 7,000 blankets across the globe and we couldn't have done it without our team and our amazing volunteers. Whether it is requesting a blanket for someone in need, giving a blanket to someone, helping to make an everlasting hug, donating, or sharing our story on social media. Big or small all these acts of kindness are truly helping someone in need be reminded they are loved, and they are not alone.