



# Houses for Change

Project Guide

## Project Overview

Modern Woodmen of America is pleased to offer the Houses for Change Project Guide for the use of our youth service clubs. The project guide features tools to plan an easy, worthwhile and successful service project in your community.

### What is Houses for Change?

Houses for Change is a fun, educational craft project with a higher purpose. Modern Woodmen youth service club members design and decorate corrugated cardboard houses, which are used to raise awareness of homelessness.

### What is the purpose of Houses for Change?

Once decorated, Houses for Change are used to collect money from family, friends and others. Each child can use the funds he/she raises to purchase items that are needed by those without homes. The money can also be pooled together to donate to an organization that serves the homeless or to buy more expensive items it needs; for example, tents and sleeping bags.

### What is included in the Houses for Change Project Guide?

In addition to this project planner, the Houses for Change Project Guide features:

- A poster that communicates why this project is important and beneficial.
- A script to help you present the information on the poster.
- A communication template that explains the service project to parents.
- A photo release form template.

### What other supplies do I need to carry out this service project?

Houses for Change (available to order at [imakeanimpact.org](http://imakeanimpact.org)).  
Crayons and/or markers to decorate the Houses for Change.  
Other craft supplies, as desired.

Optional items you might want to have on hand include:  
Modern Woodmen-branded repositionable vinyl signs (available to order at [imakeanimpact.org](http://imakeanimpact.org)) to help you promote this service project to your community.  
Simple refreshments like bottles of water, granola bars or fresh fruit for volunteers.

Keep receipts for any purchases to attach to your activity report form.

### When should I start planning a Houses for Change service project?

Most of the preparation can take place a day or two before the project. *Finding a venue for the event and promoting the project should begin about four weeks before the event.*

## Before the project

**Step 1.** Find and reserve a location for the Houses for Change activity.

**Step 2.** Complete an activity request online at [imakeanimpact.org](http://imakeanimpact.org) at least seven days prior to the event date. *Always obtain approval from the Fraternal Department before making any binding commitments.* Order the corrugated cardboard houses on the activity request.

Youth service clubs can use service project funds or premier achievement award dollars to fund a Houses for Change service project. *No additional funding will be provided by the Fraternal Department or home office.*

**Step 3.** Plan your activity and recruit volunteers. When parents RSVP, ask if they can stay during the activity to help assist.

**Step 4.** (Optional) Purchase light refreshments.

You may use service project money, existing funds or premier achievement dollars to purchase light refreshments for the children, such as bottled water, granola bars or fresh fruit. (Keep receipts to attach to your activity report form.)

**Step 5.** Promote the Houses for Change activity and extend invitations.

*Postcards are not available for service projects*, so be sure to promote the location and time of your activity at least 30 days ahead of time to ensure as many club members and families as possible attend.

You can help spread the word by posting an invitation/announcement on your club's closed-group Facebook page or use the communication template to email parents. You can also complete and email an activity pre-event release to media outlets.

If possible, email, call or text families a few days before the Houses for Change activity to remind them of the event. If desired, you might attach a personalized version of the communication template, which emphasizes how important volunteering is to children's development.



# Doing the project

## Building the houses

**Step 1. Set up the room** at least one hour ahead of time. Include a:

Welcome table/sign-in area.  
Craft table.  
Refreshments table.

Have on hand:

Modern Woodmen attendance sheets.  
One or more copies of the Houses for Change poster.  
A copy of the poster script.  
Copies of the parent letter, if desired.  
Hand sanitizer.  
First-aid kit.

**Step 2. Welcome volunteers.**

Thank volunteers for coming. Ask them to sign in on the attendance sheets. Make introductions if needed. Those who arrive early can help with last-minute details.

**Step 3. Present background information.**

Before the service project begins, use the Houses for Change poster to remind attendees how the fundraiser will benefit those in their community. The poster script can help you present the material. After the presentation, hang the poster in a well-traveled area so everyone is reminded of the information.

**Step 4. Choose the beneficiary** of the Houses for Change fundraiser. Club members should choose based on their community's needs and local organizations that are available to help the homeless.

**Step 5. Give instructions** to volunteers.

Before volunteers start building their Houses for Change, ensure they understand what to do and how to do it.

## Fundraising

**Step 1. Provide fundraising guidelines.** Using their completed houses, volunteers will collect money at home or through a business, school or church. Remind them fundraising should only be done in familiar neighborhoods, and when accompanied by a parent/other adult.

**Step 2. Members will return donations** to the next club activity, either funds raised or items purchased with the money. (Younger children may especially enjoy buying hats, gloves and/or other items with the funds.)

## After the project

**Step 1. Celebrate what has been accomplished.** You might give volunteers an estimate of the total money collected or the number of people who will be impacted by their donations.

**Step 2. Make the donation.** If a representative is present to receive the funds or donated items, ask him/her to address the group about the organization's work and how the donations will be used.

**Step 3. Complete an activity report** online at [imakeanimpact.org](http://imakeanimpact.org) no more than 30 days after the activity and by Dec. 1, attaching receipts, attendance sheets and good, clear photos of volunteers.\*

**Step 4. Promote your successful project** by submitting a post-event release to media outlets and/or creating a post on your club's closed-group Facebook page.

*\*\* If you take photos of children, you can only post them on your club's closed-group Facebook page, and only when parents have granted permission to use their images in photos. Do not tag or otherwise identify individuals in these photos. Individuals who have not signed in on an attendance sheet should complete Photo Release Forms.*

**Step 5. Submit a post-release to local media outlets.** Bring attention to your successful Houses for Change service project and spread the good news about what Modern Woodmen does in communities by completing and emailing the post-release to media outlets in a timely manner.

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