

HELP CREATE A NEW BEGINNING

The majority of moms and dads leaving prison struggle to find support when they come back to our neighborhoods. As you can imagine, their release is full of both tremendous happiness and high anxiety as they try to begin a new life. An estimated 75% of women and 55% of men incarcerated in Oregon have children. These moms and dads are often **released back to the community with the clothes on their back and a bus pass**, with the hope of reconnecting with their children.

We believe our community can make a difference in supporting families impacted by incarceration!

The idea of the New Beginnings bag is simple: when the parent is released from prison, we imagine every adult receiving a brand new duffel bag full of resources, handwritten notes of encouragement, transportation tickets, gift cards, and other basic necessities created by caring community members to simply say, "Welcome Home." This bag provides the adult with resources as they navigate their new life.

Making a New Beginnings bag is a simple way to show love and appreciation for an adult who has completed their sentence and is coming back to the community. And, it's a great way to involve your community in caring for moms and dads and their children!



HERE'S HOW TO PUT YOUR NEW BEGINNINGS BAG TOGETHER

1. Purchase a nice duffel bag from your local Adidas, Nike, Big 5, Fred Meyer, Walmart or any retail store. You can find an example here:
2. Fill the duffel bag with all the items on the ESSENTIALS list, and a few items from the EXTRAS list.
3. Handwrite a note and place it at the bottom of the duffel bag with an encouraging message such as:
"You are special." "Your community cares about you." "You matter." "You are important." "Made for you with love."
Your message should be easily visible and should not include religious language.
4. Drop off a filled duffel bag at one of the designated drop off locations. To find a location near you, [click here](#).

Please do not drop your New Beginnings bag off at the Department of Corrections.

WHAT GOES INSIDE

Here is a simple guide for filling a New Beginnings bag with creative items. Please include items listed under ESSENTIAL and enough EXTRAS to fill the duffel bags.

ESSENTIALS

- Duffel bag
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Flashlight (with batteries)
- Encouraging handwritten note
- Gift card for groceries and essentials (Fred Meyer, Target, Walmart, etc.)
- Bus pass or tickets
- Food vouchers
- Healthy snacks
- Books
- Movie tickets

EXTRAS

- Seasonal clothing: Socks, Hats, Jackets, Scarves
- Water bottle
- Journal
- Pens
- Headphones
- Blanket

Did you remember an encouraging note?

- Please do NOT include any of the following items:
- Used items
 - Alcohol/illegal substances
 - Religious items

The logo for 'Know Me Now' features a stylized house icon with a red roof and a yellow circle above the text 'Know Me Now'. The background is a dark blue triangle.

Know Me Now