

Tips and Ideas as you create Plastic Bag Sleeping Mats.

You can watch the loom instructional video at midwestmission.org/loom. Below are some tips and ideas!

Setup Dedicated space where everything can be left as you come and go is helpful, and good promotion.

- Need 2 tables – one (with chairs) for cutting, one for loom. Need big garbage can
- Loom table needs to be boosted 8-10" so you're weaving without bending over. Bed risers work well.
- Keep the timesheet/clipboard visible. Everyone records time – 15 minute intervals. Mats seem to take about 30 "people hours." Total each sheet – transfer to your site record.
- Encourage to have at least 2 people working each time. This is a fantastic outreach project and doing mission together is a good thing.
- Set up regular times (an hour or so) and invite everyone. Snacks are a good idea.
- Establish a team or 3-4 folk who are comfortable leading - one of them should be present at each weaving session to answer questions, get supplies, monitor check in, etc.
- Publicize on Sunday, on Facebook, the bulletin, newsletter, and put flyers on tables out in the community where folks gather (VFW, Legion, etc) – any way you can. This is a great outreach opportunity.
- Consider setting up in a large, visible space where folks can just weave a strip or two (after church, etc.) Have one of your trained team present to encourage "give it a try."
- Generally it seems that 10 years old+ can weave. Younger kids could work with an adult to monitor.
- Ask folks to bring bags in flat (as opposed to squished into a larger bag).

Cutting and Looping the bags Great job for those who need to sit.

- Weight of the bag doesn't matter; thinner bags just compact tighter.
- Regular, sharp sewing scissors work as well as rotary cutters and mats. Rotary cutters are good for folks with arthritis.
- Cut pieces stack well in shoe boxes, or small plastic bins.
- One person can pop open a cut piece, and either pass along to a looper, or loop with a 2nd piece, depending on how many workers you have.
- Weavers can attach a 2-bag string easily. Long strings of bags seem to be unnecessary and harder to work.
- Loopers might sit between the cutters and weavers – have a tv tray or piano bench for them to work off of.
- Hang the 2-loops over a pew, chair or extra table so weavers can grab them easily.
- We have a partner that will recycle the end-scrap. Keep them separate from trash, bag together tightly and we'll make arrangements to pick up and recycle for you.

Weavers up to 4 at one time on one mat is possible.

- Weaving seems to go better standing up, one person on each side.
- Use bread twisty to secure the 3 side strips to rod in a couple of places. Keeps things together.
- You need to check from time to time where each side is in conjunction with the side eye hooks. Once you're on the other side of a hook, you can't slide strips tighter.
- Be sure to watch the video if you want to weave from both ends. You need to check overs/unders from each end more often, too.

Take a break as a group, even at the end. Admire your work, brainstorm who you can ask to come help next time.

When your session is coming to and end, take time as a group to tidy and clean up.

Bless your finished mats in worship. Hold them up. Find out where they're going to let people know, and take lots of pictures!