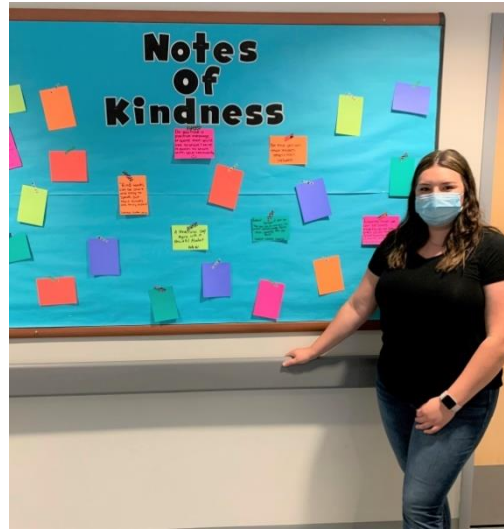


Athena Magarvey, Community Youth Worker



In the Photo: Athena sharing notes of kindness

Athena understands the importance of being connected for well-being. So when the pandemic forced a temporary closure of the North Dumfries Community Health Centre (the Hub@2958), she immediately understood that the interruption of services could have a huge effect on participants she served. Virtual programs were offered, but they came with unique challenges as some participants were not comfortable joining with a camera in their home.

Athena decided, "It was time to do the best that I could."

Hopping into her car with a "bucket of smiles", Athena drove around Ayr waving and greeting residents, from a safe distance, to let them know she was thinking about them. She would place a rock, painted with bright and cheerful words, into gardens and on lawns. "The rocks," Athena says, "were anonymous, subtle affirmations of kindness to boost spirits and act as gentle reminders that no one is alone."

But she didn't stop there! Athena delivered postcards with inspirational messages of hope and belonging and created a new bulletin board in the entrance of the North Dumfries Community Health Centre where visitors can post "Notes of Kindness".

"No matter what is going on in the world," says Athena, "I think we can choose to find things that bring us joy, and share them with others. Staying positive and finding things that bring us closer to each other is what helps form a sense of belonging and community."



