



Capital City Kiwanis Club

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Capital City Kiwanis Club Shows Love to Local Families Facing Diaper Dilemma Donates Thousands of Diapers to Two Local Programs

TALLAHASSEE- “One way parents show their love for their children is by providing for their children’s needs; unfortunately, one in three families still struggles to meet one of the most basic needs of their infants and toddlers – diapers,” said Bob Henderson, President of the Capital City Kiwanis Club. Today, the Capital City Kiwanis Club donated almost 9,000 diapers to Healthy Families Gadsden/Leon and the Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition to help families in need.

According to a recent study published in *Pediatrics*, a top American journal focused on children’s health issues, 30% of low-income families lack an adequate supply of diapers and 8% of them resort to reusing soiled diapers on their children. The inability to afford diapers, and strategies to stretch diapers when supplies run low, can have significant physical consequences for infants and toddlers.

“Infants and toddlers sitting in soiled diapers over long periods are likely to suffer severe skin rashes, staph infections, yeast infections and even chemical burns. They can also develop urinary tract infections that can lead to serious kidney damage resulting in scarring, poor growth and high blood pressure,” said Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition Executive Director Kristy Goldwire.

“Research shows that parents who cannot afford an adequate supply of diapers experience significant parenting stress and are also more likely to struggle with depression. On top of all of this, they are likely dealing with a baby that is very fussy because of the discomfort of a constantly wet and dirty bottom,” said Healthy Families Executive Director Carol McNally.

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Parenting stress and maternal depression are proven risk factors for child abuse and neglect and other poor childhood outcomes. Healthy Families Florida is a nationally accredited voluntary home visiting program proven to prevent child abuse and neglect in 98% of children in the high-risk families served. “Because we are in the families’ home environments on a regular basis, we see first-hand the impact that donated diapers can have on relieving parenting stress and improving childhood outcomes,” said Healthy Families Gadsden/Leon Program Manager Pam Banks.

Diapers are a necessity for every infant; but, diapers are not covered by programs like SNAP and WIC. “Many of the families we serve through Healthy Start are living in poverty. Infants typically require up to 12 diapers per day and toddlers about eight, which quickly adds up, costing parents more than \$1,000 a year – a considerable expense, especially for low-income families already struggling to make ends meet,” said Goldwire.

“While cloth diapers may be a cost-reducing solution for some families; they are impractical for our families who are experiencing financial hardship for a couple of reasons,” said Banks. She said most of the families her program serves would not be able to adequately wash soiled cloth diapers because they do not own washing machines and, due to sanitary concerns, few Laundromats will allow people to wash diapers in their machines.

Members of the Capital City Kiwanis Club will continue collecting diapers year-round to be distributed to families participating in local Healthy Families and Healthy Start programs. There are three ways for local community members to get involved in this effort:

1. Consider joining a Kiwanis Club in your area, there are 14 clubs here in Tallahassee alone.
2. Drop diapers off at the office of The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, 111 N. Gadsden Street.
3. Contribute to the diaper drive with an easy online donation at <http://capitalcitykiwanisclub.org/?p=29>.

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