

# Donations for Diapers campaign helps local children in need

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*(Photo: Joe Sienkiewicz, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)*

The Post-Crescent, The Green Bay Press-Gazette and The Oshkosh Northwestern are once again raising money to distribute diapers to families in need in their communities.

Diapers distributed by the Fox Cities Diaper Bank, Brown County United Way and Oshkosh Area United Way benefit low-income families and children with special needs. Donations will be accepted through Oct. 8.

Wendy Hein, program director for Outagamie and Winnebago Counties Early Intervention Birth to Three program, said 60-65 percent of the families her organization sees qualify as low-income. But the thread that ties all of them together are the services their children receive to help spur developmental growth.

"The children that are eligible for our program are experiencing delays in their development. There's a very wide variety of reasons why children are eligible, ranging from a child who's not yet talking or walking when expected, all the way to a child with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy or autism diagnosis that leads to delayed development," she said.

Outagamie and Winnebago Counties Early Intervention Birth to Three is one of several organizations that distributes diapers from the Fox Cities Diaper Bank, a partnership between the United Way Fox Cities and Kimberly-Clark Corp. More than 800 babies receive diapers each month through the Diaper Bank.

The Post-Crescent launched the campaign in 2011 to collect supplies and money for the Fox Cities Diaper Bank. The Press-Gazette and The Northwestern joined the fundraising drive in recent years to help babies and families in their respective communities.



The Oshkosh Area Community Food Pantry received a donation of 50 pallets with 100,400 diapers on them from Gannett Co., and Kimberly Clark Corp. in Oshkosh on Sept. 24. The diaper were distributed to nine food pantries in the area. (Photo: Joe Sienkiewicz, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)

During the 2018 campaign, Kimberly-Clark Corp. has donated \$50,000 worth of diapers to be spread across the three communities.

About 350,000 diapers are distributed annually by organizations in Brown County, said Dan Wadle, community services liaison for Brown County United Way.

The Fox Cities Diaper Bank distributes 300,000-400,000 diapers to families in need annually, according to data provided by Nanci Micke, vice president of marketing and communications for United Way Fox Cities.

"The Fox Cities Diaper Bank is an initiative of United Way Fox Cities, and we are the first to say that the success of the program is because many partners are involved in the framework of collecting, storing and distributing the diapers," she said. "We have the added good fortune to have thousands of volunteers dedicated to helping us make the process work."

The struggle for basic necessities like diapers is among many worries for parents of a child with differing abilities, Hein said.

"We work with kids with special needs, so families already have a lot that they're dealing with, so to be able to help them out (with diapers) it's just one extra service or support we can provide," she said.

For parents who struggle to make ends meet, receiving diapers ensures their children can attend daycare and they can go to work, said Juli Meulemans, program coordinator for Community 2000 in Seymour. Community 2000 is also a distributor for the Fox Cities Diaper Bank.

"If a family is working and the children are in diapers, they are not allowed to go to daycare unless they provide diapers at daycare. They can't just give them a cloth diaper or let it go," Meulemans said. "They have to stay home from daycare if they don't have diapers, and that means that person will now miss work. It's huge to keep that employment stability."

### **How to help**

- Donations accepted through Oct. 8
- Readers in Appleton and the surrounding areas can donate online at <http://www.unitedwayfoxcities.org/>.
- In Green Bay and the surrounding areas, visit <http://www.browncountyunitedway.org/diaperdrive/> to contribute.
- Readers in Oshkosh and the surrounding areas should visit <http://www.oshkoshunitedway.org/diapers> to donate online.