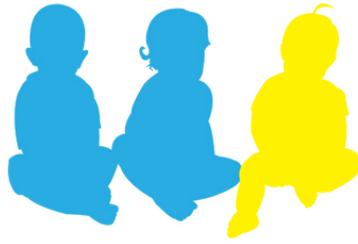


IDAHO DIAPER BANK.ORG



For Immediate Release

Caldwell Idaho Diaper Bank Merges with the Idaho Diaper Bank

Idaho Diaper Bank Nonprofit Provides Assistance to 1 in 3 Idaho
Families Experiencing Diaper Need

BOISE, ID, October 21 — With at least one in three Idaho families struggling to provide babies and toddlers with a daily supply of clean, dry diapers, the Idaho Diaper Bank (IDB) has launched the first ever statewide diaper bank and has gained membership in the National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN).

On October 16th, the Caldwell Idaho Diaper Bank steering committee, led by Luise Lonergan, unanimously voted to merge with the Idaho Diaper Bank. *“This move is consistent with the commitments made as part of two grants awarded to us by the Idaho Episcopal Foundation and the Caldwell Community Foundation. We promised to seed a start-up diaper bank in Caldwell that could develop into a statewide service model- and we achieved that today!”* said Lonergan.

The IDB aims to distribute over 1 million diapers annually to Idaho families in need. To date, over 20,000 diapers have been distributed to families in Canyon County, via partnerships with three Caldwell nonprofit agencies. These include a partnership between St. David's Episcopal Church and St. Clare's Food bank, the Caldwell Seventh Day Adventist Community Center, and the Salvation Army of Caldwell/BabyHaven program. All three sites now become the first Idaho Diaper Bank partner recipient agencies, in addition to partners in Boise including The Cathedral of the Rockies Boise First United Methodist Church, Giraffe Laugh Early Learning Centers, and BabySteps: A Ministry of St. Michael's Episcopal Cathedral, A Program of Family Advocates in Boise (and opening in Caldwell Spring of 2015).

“At BabySteps, we’ve supported mothers who had so few resources that they recycled their babies’ diapers and reused them after they dried,” comments Allison Demarest, Director of BabySteps. *“We believe that no parent should ever have to feel so desperate. Partnering with community agencies, such as the*

Idaho Diaper Bank, helps ensure that together we can meet the most basic needs of young children in our community.”

The IDB is currently welcoming additional partner recipient agencies. Applications are available online at www.idahodiaperbank.org. To qualify, partner sites must provide diapers directly to clients free of charge, record basic demographics about how many babies and/or families are served by the diapers provided, and they must designate a volunteer who can place and pick up monthly online diaper orders, offered free of charge by the IDB and distributed out of its Meridian, Idaho warehouse. New partner recipient agencies will be activated as resources allow.

Partner recipient agencies vary in how they serve clients; For example, many food pantries provide supplemental emergency diaper relief. Other partners, including BabySteps and Salvation Army BabyHaven, conduct incentive-based educational programs focusing on healthy families becoming more self-sufficient, starting at pregnancy. In exchange for class attendance, parents receive credit for supplies such as the free diapers provided by the Idaho Diaper Bank. *“I’ve learned our clients are strong. They push through and they find ways to move on and take care of their family,”* says Lt. Kristy Church, Caldwell corps officer and program coordinator for the Salvation Army BabyHaven program, *“Our prayer is that we can continue to provide for the need of our clients with the partnership and support of the Idaho Diaper Bank.”*

The IDB is also seeking committed volunteers to help with warehouse logistics, conduct Diaper and Dollar Drives, and to help increase diaper crisis understanding and diaper donations throughout the State. Easy to use toolkits with guidelines and fundraising materials, and online donation information, are available at www.idahodiaperbank.org. The success of the IDB hinges on the generous donations of time, dollars and diapers from the community at large.

Why Diapers?

It is clear that our community can work together to help address the silent crisis in Idaho known as Diaper Need. *“Acknowledging the issue is the first step as many people are not even aware that disposable diapers, which cost \$100 or more a month, can’t be purchased with food stamps or through the WIC program,”* remarked IDB Founder and Executive Director Shawna Walz. In addition, cloth diapers prove challenging for many families because most childcare facilities and coin operated laundromats will not allow them for sanitary reasons.

Diapers are a small thing, but not having them can impact big things¹:

- Loss of income: Parents can't leave their children with a childcare provider because most providers require parents to provide a day's worth of disposable diapers for their children.
- Diaper rash and infections: Prolonged periods in soiled diapers leads to severe diaper rash, staph and urinary tract infections, and other health issues.
- Parental stress and infant abuse: Research has substantiated correlations between under-diapering and shaken baby syndrome. ² The prolonged crying of an unchanged, uncomfortable baby increases stress for parents struggling financially, and can contribute to shaken baby syndrome and other incidents of infant abuse.
- Mother-Infant bonding: An insufficient supply of diapers adversely affects parents feeling of self-worth and pride in being a good provider, thereby negatively impacting parental bonding with the baby and it also stresses the parental relationship.

It is critically important to promote awareness about Diaper Need in Idaho. The outcomes of providing diaper supplements to families in need and providing access to reliable supplies of clean diapers are very significant. These outcomes include:

Healthier Communities - Dirty diapers can make us sick and spread hepatitis A, viral meningitis, and severe bacterial diarrheas. Not having diapers adversely affects a mother's feelings of self-worth and can negatively impact the mother-child bond

Happier Babies - Frequent diaper changes prevent painful diaper rash, loss of appetite, staph, urinary infections, or renal failure. Access to clean diapers is an essential BASIC NEED.

¹ American Academy of Pediatrics Journal, "Diaper Need and Its Impact on Child Health." Megan V Smith, Anna Kruse, Alison Weir, Joanne Goldblum. Dept of Psychiatry and Child Study Center. Yale School of Medicine. July 2013."

²National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome & Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, September 2007. <http://www.dontshake.org/pdf/What-Is-All-That-Crying-About.pdf> And, A Coordinated Response to Child Abuse and Neglect: The Foundation for Practice

Financial Independence and Early Care & Education - A supply of clean diapers are required to attend most early childcare programs; without them, children miss out on educational opportunities and parents can't attend work or school. Students that participate in early childhood education are 2.5 times more likely to go on to higher education. ³

About Idaho Diaper Bank: IDB exists to provide diapers, diapering supplies, and advocacy to families in need via third party, collaborative partner agencies. These agencies serve infants and families and can include childcare centers, crisis nurseries, domestic violence shelters, food pantries, and faith-based organizations. By being intermediaries, IDB limits duplication of services, reduces administrative expenses and works collaboratively to solve a basic human need at the community level.

The IDB is a 501(c)3 nonprofit public charity and a member in good standing with Cribs for Kids® and a member of the National Diaper Bank Network. The vision is to procure and distribute over 1 million diapers annually throughout Idaho to ensure that the 35,000 babies living in poverty and/ or low-income families remain clean, dry, healthy and happy.

More information on the Idaho Diaper Bank and diaper need is available at www.idahodiaperbank.org, and on Facebook ([facebook.com/IdahoDiaperBank](https://www.facebook.com/IdahoDiaperBank)) and Twitter (@walz_s).

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³ *Economic Impacts of Early Care and Education in California*. UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education. 2011