

Healthy baby diaper drive helps families in need

Written by The Bridgeport News

Tuesday, 11 October 2011 17:05

United Way of Coastal Fairfield County is holding a healthy baby diaper drive to help families struggling to make ends meet.

As the cost of basic needs rises and unemployment worsens, more families are facing the difficult choice between providing food and housing or diapers for their babies.

Low-income families who rely on WIC and SNAP (food stamps) are unable to use those coupons to purchase diapers, creating problems that compound what they are already faced with.

Their babies often spend the entire day in a single diaper. Without clean diapers, babies are too uncomfortable to play and learn, and are at greater risk of health problems.

Cindi Bigelow, President of Bigelow Tea, has become a champion for the diaper drive to raise awareness of the issue and help collect 50,000 diapers during October. This issue and the struggle it creates for mothers is near to her heart.

"A mother worrying about how she can get diapers for her child is something that I have witnessed first hand", Bigelow said. "I have a beautiful young woman who lives in New York that has been in my life since she was 7. She is now 23, single and a mother of a 2 year old. Every month she struggles to be able to afford the diapers she needs for her young daughter. Having enough diapers for my children was something I never worried about, but she struggles almost daily with that simple need."

A central focus of United Way's work in education, income, and health has been finding ways that contribute to the healthy, sound development of young children.

The first three years in children's early brain and social development is tied to the early relationships they share with parents and caregivers. Constant crying from being left in a dirty diaper increases the likelihood of abuse and creates a barrier to a comfortable bonding process.

Families who are working and still barely making ends meet need to rely on daycare to keep their jobs. Infants need up to 12 diapers a day and toddlers up to eight a day, and daycare providers require an adequate supply of diapers. With diapers costing \$100 a month or more, the issue becomes overwhelming.

United Way's goal is to collect 50,000 diapers. Community participation during October will help ensure that babies start life healthy and ready to learn.

There are multiple ways people can become involved. United Way will provide resources, tips, and materials to make a diaper drive a success. To find out more, visit unitedwaycfc.org or call Sara German at 203-339-6310.

United Way of Coastal Fairfield County serves Fairfield, Bridgeport, Stratford, Westport, Trumbull, Easton, Monroe, Weston, Norwalk, Wilton, New Canaan and Darien.