

Diaper Drive Project



Patricia Romero

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Fugazzy

Building Strategic Partnership

Diaper Drive Project

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Vision

Partner with agencies in the community to help families in need and alleviate the worry of buying diapers. In addition, giving babies the opportunity to be healthy, happy and clean.

When a family is in need and someone wants to help, the first thing they think about is providing food and clothing. Dover is the town where I lived and worked for years. It is a small town that has a lot of food donations and they have been useful for needy families, especially during these times. Infants in low-income families often suffer from infrequent diaper changes. Diapers are expensive (as much as \$112 per month per baby) and they can't be purchased with food stamps. This leads to health problems for the babies. Some of the families struggle to provide the necessary amount of diapers to their child when they leave their babies with a babysitters or child care. The cost is a lot and some families cannot afford it. The problems add up.

I work for a non-profit organization that works with families with babies until they are 3 years old. Part of our program is to provide community referrals to families. Currently the town of Dover uses the North Porch organization as a diaper provider.

North Porch Women & Infants' Centers is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that provides emergency assistance, in the form of baby supplies to mothers and babies in Northern New Jersey. This helps stabilize and improve the quality of their lives. North Porch has centers in Newark, Paterson, and Dover, as well as a satellite center in Hackettstown. We are governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees. Our centers have part-time center coordinators and a part-time program director. Our clients are referred by social and religious service agencies and organizations. They can visit up to four times a year and on each visit receive a week's supply of diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, and toiletries.

North Porch has been helping families through this difficult time where families have lost their jobs and going through a financial situation. North Porch has been able donate to each

family with a monthly donation. The families have shared that it has been very helpful but in reality, they need more than once a month. I have reached out to other programs, such as the Child Family Resources Diaper Bank, to create a partnership with the program I work with, but they said they are not partnering with other programs for now.

I decided to do my own diaper drive and investigate how many churches we have in Dover and nearby towns. I was surprised about the amount of churches I discovered. The first thing I did was contact the church offices and ask them what kind of help they were giving to the families of the town. Many of the churches we're collecting food and offering people a food pantry. I introduced myself and what my purpose of my call was. I asked them for their email to send the information about the diaper drive and about my program.

I prepared a letter from the organization I work with and explained what reason for our missions, which is to help the families of our communities. I sent this information to all the churches that I contacted and hoped that at least one would answer me and start a partnership.

While waiting for the response to my letter for a formal meeting with the churches, I decided to look for information on the internet about other organizations which I could partner with. I found a lot of information and one that caught my attention was an organization that collected 1 million diapers in New Jersey. I was excited upon reading this because I knew that I could do it and collect those boxes and help families in need in Dover or nearby towns as well. I emailed the Huggies Company and found out that they are in a partnership with National Diaper Programs. So, I call them and they directed me to the Zufall clinic in Dover. I left many messages and after many attempts finally, someone answered me. They are not making new

partnerships since they have given enough diapers for the families that come to their center. I search another organization, NORWESCAP Diaper Bank and they are giving supplies to Sussex county. They are not accepting partnerships but they told me that I can do referrals to families in need. I sent some referrals to families to NORWESCAP but it is too far for families that live in Dover.

After two weeks, I received a call from a local church which does a lot of social service to the community. I finally got a meeting with the people in charge. I prepared information such as the number of children we have in the program that I work with. I explained that our program flows as we move families from one program to another according to the age of the children. On the day of the meeting, I got together, introduced myself, and given a tour of the church. The co-pastor, Michelle Smith, explained to me very kindly that the vision and mission of the church was to help the community. They collected food for the food pantries but that they did not know that there was a need for diapers. I gave them my number and explained that I work with pregnant families and children up to the age of three. The program I work for is called Home Based. It is based on weekly home visits. We go to the houses and provide child education, health, nutrition, safety information, social service, mental health, dental health, etc. Our program is to empower families to get ahead and advocate for their families. After a very pleasant talk, she told me that she would write a partnership letter. I offered my services as a trainer for her teachers of young children and that I can help her with her Sunday school teachers. I can give them more guidance on early education. Also, as a certified home educator, I can meet with the families who attend the church and talk about how to provide the children with a safe home. This way the two organizations help each other.

Michelle Smith and I decided to have another meeting to go over the partnership letter. We will work together to collect the diapers, create a group of people that will work with us to store and collect diapers every Sunday or when they may have special events. I will collect the boxes of pamper twice a month. The Church team will do inventory and I will provide them with number of families who have been served. We decided to meet again and bring ideas of collecting boxes of diapers and how to promote donations. I will bring my list and they will bring theirs.

I received a phone call from North Porch and they told me that because of the holidays, they will be provided wipes and diapers for families. They also have formula for infants. I expressed my gratitude and began to do my phone calls to my team so they can refer their families. Great relationships with local organizations are very important because they will have noted you and you may have windows of opportunity. We received formula as a donation from other organizations and if the families that we serve don't use them, we bring them to North Porch so they can donate it to other families that need it. I was so happy that families will be received that and that's something less to worry during these holidays.

I was ready for my meeting with the church and I had a list of ideas on how we will collect boxes of diapers such as:

- Talk to local stores for permission to stand by the door and provide them with a flyer with information of our mission.
- Make a banter to put on our table of information.

- Host a special event in the church.
- Ask some churches to add in their website – donations – in case people would like to donate to the diaper drive.

We will start right away by going to a local store and ask if we can stand outside and promote our diaper drive.

During my weekly meeting with my boss I shared my vision to partner with other organizations to do the diaper drive. I told her that I would like to partner with a big organization that provides diapers for our program for a long period of time. I told her about my efforts to reach out to Child family Resources but they have told me that they were not doing partnership for now. She said that she knew the CEO and that she will send an email that explains our needs. After thirty minutes, I received an email saying that they will be willing to help us. She called the person in charge of the diaper program to set up a day to meet. The same afternoon the person in charge send me a partnership letter for me to fill out. I was so happy about this. I realized that it is a great help if I go around and discuss my efforts with others.

Knowing the benefits of promoting my project, I decided to reach out to the ex-mayor in my town since I hear he continues doing things for my community. I wrote an email to the person in charge of his office. After two days, they replied back and they said that they would love to do that for our families. I couldn't be happier about it. I spoke to them and they explained that they will be working on this and will call me when they have an event to come to collect the boxes of diapers.

The project started to look like it is going to happen. I sent the partnership letter to Child Family Resource. She follows up with an appointment to pick up the first donation. I started to plan who will help me pick up the donation. The day of the donation, I was glad that I have volunteers with a van and ready to come with me to do the pickup. When I arrived to the place I loaded the diaper boxes and we drove to the office happy to start our new program.

I sent an email to my team and told them that we have the diapers boxes in the offices for the families in their caseload. This project is fantastic for our program. My next task is to get a lot of publicity and keep this project ongoing. I was going to create a plan of publicity and I was going to bring this idea to my staff. We took some pictures and posted them to the program website. We also took pictures of families receiving the boxes of diapers and shared with the partnership organization.

It is important to keep working together. I was so glad that I was able to know more about other programs in the community and partner with them. I was so happy to be a reference to other organizations and provide diapers to them if a family they serve are in need. Dover is a small town and it has a lot of community resources for families. I enjoyed the monthly community meetings as it was very interesting and informative to get to know the other programs and share ideas to better serve the community. We had the Health Community and the program that I work with host the event. It was a amazing sight to see all the organizations working together. It was my opportunity to meet other professionals from other organizations and start connecting with them and improve relationships.

On December 15, the church will have the Christmas celebration and they have asked me to come over and promote the diaper event. I did not to hesitate to say yes. I began by creating flyers to promote the diaper drive. This is an important event and I need to make as much publicity as possible. I also need provide information to the people so they can become a constant and/or a faithful donor.

Finding more information about how to better my diaper drive, I found ideas to improve my list of things to do such as:

- Have a diaper collection form
- Diaper drive checklist
- Fact sheet handouts
- Set up a goal of how many diaper boxes, we would like to collect

This project will help a lot of families in my town but my next goal is to help all the families that are in need out of my town too. In order to get big, I need to promote it and to involve more people in the community. I need attend to the connected town meetings and get to know more agencies and to connect with other people. I will promote this project until it is a large thriving program.

References-

<http://northporch.org/>

<https://cfmorrison.org/>

<https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/>

<https://norwescap.org/health-wellness/sc-diaper-bank/>