

Inspiration BOARD



Lisa Truong's campaign has given away almost a million diapers for needy bottoms.

Let's make sure every baby has the basics

These 5 ideas make helping so easy. Plus, meet one mini-miracle worker who has found out what new moms need most.

Mom of two Lisa Truong admits that she never thought twice about burning through cases of diapers when her sons—now 6 and 3—were tiny. But that was before she learned that a startling one in three American families struggle to afford this most basic item for their babies. When she contacted a Berkeley, CA, homeless center in 2009 about doing a clothing drive, the workers there told her that what at-risk families needed more than clothes—which donors drop off by the bagful—was diapers. Government assistance programs like food stamps can't be used for diapers; disposable ones run new moms up to \$100 a month, and cloth alternatives require more money up front—plus constant trips to a laundromat. “A mom at one of the centers said that she would give her baby less milk to drink so she didn't have to change her as often,” says Lisa. “She just couldn't afford it.” So Lisa organized a diaper drive, and in one month she received a staggering 15,000, which she divvied up among shelters and family resource centers. Now, she has turned that one-time project into the nonprofit Help a Mother Out, and in the last three years, the group has distributed almost a million diapers. To join Lisa's “No Butt Left Behind” campaign and get information on hosting a drive, go to helpamotherout.org/diaper-drive.

4 MORE WAYS TO HELP MOMS AND BABIES:

1 See which supplies new mothers in your city could use most and drop them off at Newborns in Need. Find locations at newbornsinneed.com/our-chapters.

2 Give \$10 to the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) to support a nurse's visit to the home of a low-income first-time mom. Rita Erickson, 31, of Lakewood, CO, was in jail when she found out she was pregnant—but NFP paired her with a nurse who guided her through the birth of her now-3-year-old daughter. “She really taught me how to be a good parent,” says Rita, who's graduating from community college this year. Give whatever you can at nursefamilypartnership.giveo.com/campaigns.

3 Send your kids' gently used gear to Baby Buggy, a charity started by Jessica Seinfeld that passes the goods on to organizations in six cities. Or donate at babybuggy.com; \$50 will provide one needy mom with a high chair.

4 Sponsor a baby in a developing country for \$20 a month—that's enough to provide her mom with prenatal care, birthing assistance, and newborn supplies through Compassion International's Child Survival Program (compassion.com/help-babies.htm). —ALISON STORM