

Diaper Banks Provide a Concrete Support for Washington Families

Diaper need has been called an “invisible public health crisis” that impacts 1 in 3 children in the US. Diaper need impacts the physical, mental and economic health of families. Diaper banks address families’ need for diapers and other critical items by collecting, warehousing and distributing diapers and other products in a service area. They are embedded in their communities and coordinate with networks of community partners to respond to the needs of their communities. Some diaper banks are co-located with food banks.

In late 2022, Strengthening Families Washington (SFWA) contracted with six diaper banks that provide services in communities served by Home Visiting Services Account home visiting programs. Each diaper bank was assigned home visiting programs in their area and funded to provide diapers and supplies to those home visiting programs for their families. These partnerships are supported with federal American Rescue Plan Act funds and state concrete goods funds. SFWA has also funded these six diaper banks to provide products to any families in need in their community, not just home visiting families.

Diapers and Basic Supplies are Concrete Supports

Having access to tangible goods and services help families cope with stress, particularly in times of crisis or intensified need. They have been shown to reduce or buffer the effects of risk, stress or trauma. When families can provide the basics, their ability to focus on other essential aspects of family life improves.

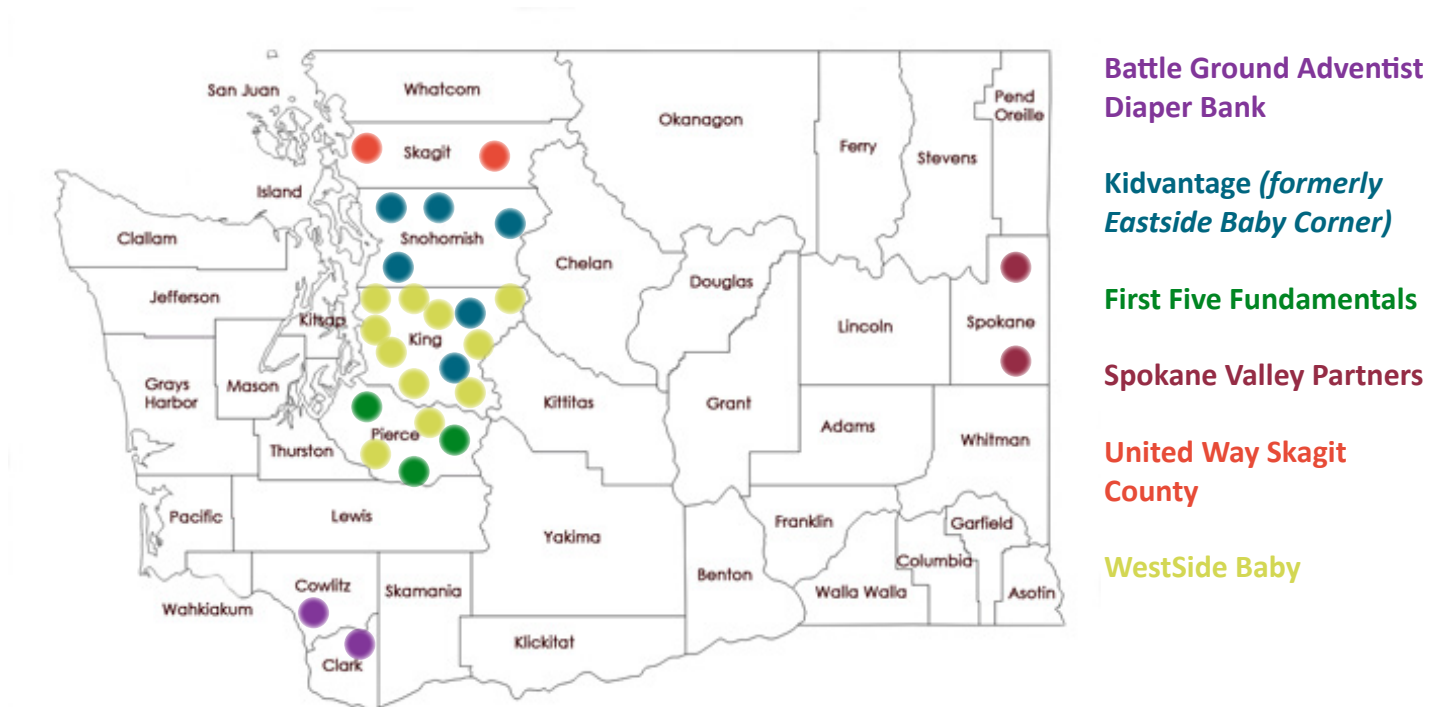
Concrete supports in times of need: Access to concrete supports and services that addresses a family’s needs and helps minimize stress caused by challenges



“For the first time ever our program has enough diapers for families! This has never happened before in our program or our agency. Thank you so much for helping keep our families clean, warm, and safe during this unprecedented time.”

Communities Served

Six diaper banks are partnering with 23 home visiting programs across the Puget Sound area (Pierce, King, and Snohomish counties), Southwest Washington (Clark and Cowlitz counties), and Skagit and Spokane counties. This partnership has provided diapers and other critical supplies to more than 700 Washington families per quarter.



These six diaper banks collaborated with almost 200 community partner organizations, funded by SFWA with state concrete goods funds, to distribute a variety of needed goods. From June through September 2022, goods were distributed to an estimated 6,000-8,000 families.

Families receiving these goods included low-income families relying on food banks and diaper banks, as well as families served by the partner organizations that helped distribute the goods.



These Partnerships make a Difference

- "I would like to share the happy emotions that I can appreciate in client's faces when they learn that they are able to receive donations for their children, particularly when they are at risk of becoming homeless and having difficulties paying for their utility bills as well as not being able to afford diapers for their child. Clients are eager to receive the donations in the coming week. Thank you Eastside Baby Corner for helping some clients to meet their needs to provide the best care for their children."*
- "Costs for diapers are rising as well as the need in our community. This program has motivated other families to join our home visiting program."*
- The diaper banks stretch funds through bulk purchasing and are able to access hard-to-find products including items impacted by shortages and supply chain interruptions. They have helped families obtain formula and meet their children's nutrition needs during the national formula shortage.*
- Some diaper banks have also provided car seats to families. Car seats are an important safety item that can often be out of reach to families because of the cost. "Because of the high cost of this crucial safety item, caregivers often have to transport their children without a car seat or use a seat past its intended use for their child's weight/height."*