



Annual 2023 Report

On a mission to prevent infant death and improve the outcome of pregnancy in our community.



Healthier
Moms &
Babies



A Letter from the Director



Our current focuses include safe medication use during pregnancy and breastfeeding, maternal mental health and safe sleep education.

This year, Healthier Moms and Babies clients celebrated 384 births and 306 first birthdays—in fact, families who receive our services have better birth and maternal outcomes than those who are not in our programs. At the same time, we’re seeing trends that challenge our birth and maternal outcomes: the families we serve, and our community’s low-income families are returning to work as soon as four weeks postpartum.

In 2023, Healthier Moms and Babies conducted the Infant Mortality Study to understand how our community can better support our most vulnerable residents. In Allen County, six infants die before their first birthdays for every 1,000 babies born. Allen County is also home to the zip code with the sixth-highest infant mortality rate in all of Indiana. Of every 1,000 babies born in the 46806-zip code, 11 infants die before their first birthdays. That’s a reduced rate from previous years—but even one baby lost is too many.

And mental health remains a challenge for moms. Women aren’t learning about postpartum depression until their postpartum visit—once they’re already struggling to manage it.

As a result of this study, we have formed the Every Birth Network for Infant and Maternal Support, which will collaborate to develop community-wide initiatives that address infant and maternal mortality. Our current focuses include safe medication use during pregnancy and breastfeeding, maternal mental health and safe sleep education.

To Healthier Moms and Babies’ board, staff, partners, volunteers and donors—I am ever grateful for your commitment to our mission: to reduce the infant mortality rate in Allen County. Because of your unwavering generosity, we continue to better our community’s future by researching, promoting and supporting the health and safety of today’s—and tomorrow’s—moms, babies and families.

With bold compassion,

Paige Wilkins

A Note from the Board Chair

As a board member for the last six years, and now closing my tenure as board chair, I am proud of what Healthier Moms and Babies continues to accomplish each year.

2023 brought on many new projects and changes for the organization. Notably, our successful rebranding of the organization, and our new mobile diaper outreach vehicle, “The Hopper,” which delivered more than 300,000 diapers and supplies all over our community to those in need.

Healthier Moms and Babies will continue to adapt, grow and innovate to meet families where they are in their journeys—physically, mentally and emotionally. We pride ourselves on serving the whole family, so every baby has the best support system, and future, possible.

We remain committed to reducing the infant mortality numbers in our community and surrounding areas, and we always look to the community to join us, so that more babies reach their first birthdays—and beyond!



In service,

Tabitha Ervin

Board of Directors

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Kara Stevenson, American Electric Power

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Home Visiting

In our home visitation programs, our Nurses and Family Advocates provide education and mentorship to high-risk families early in pregnancy until after the baby is born. By addressing the leading causes of infant and maternal mortality and empowering our moms, dads, and caregivers, we're uplifting our entire community.



384

babies born



7,022

home visits



807

women served

SAN'S STORY

After moving to Fort Wayne, San found herself pregnant with her first child. New to community and the language, San was grateful for her bilingual Family Advocate. San came to Healthier Moms and Babies with no primary care doctor and no connections to community resources. Her family advocate connected her to WIC and helped her schedule her first prenatal appointment; San also received a pack-n-play so that her baby could have a safe place to sleep. At each visit, San was able to discuss best practices with her home visitor, distilling the recommendations of her doctor into clear, actionable steps. With the resources, education, and encouragement of her Family Advocate, San felt more confident and prepared for her baby. She gave birth to happy, healthy baby in September and continues to meet with Healthier Moms and Babies. Thanks to the support of her family advocate, San continues to create a healthier future for her family.



HealthierDads

MICHAEL'S STORY

As a young, first-time father, Michael had limited understanding about infant care, parenting techniques, and supporting his partner through pregnancy. He was connected to HealthierDads to be better prepared for his baby—as well as more supportive for his partner during pregnancy and beyond. Before HealthierDads, Michael didn't have any experience with babies or an encouraging support system. Michael's Family Advocate educated him on the importance of monitoring kick counts, practicing safe sleep, and more, so that he could help his partner have a healthier pregnancy. Because of this support, Michael was able to be more active in his partnership, watching for pregnancy warning signs and being intentional with parenting. Michael continues to be an active participant in HealthierDads, learning from other fathers in the community at each fatherhood group session. The encouragement of his Family Advocate and his fellow dads has instilled Michael with the confidence and parenting skills he needs to be the best he can for his family.

Through one-on-one support and group sessions, HealthierDads provides mentorship, education, and community for dads and partners. By encouraging and supporting the whole family, we're creating a healthier future for all.



62

dads and partners served



28

group sessions



Cribs for Kids

Unsafe sleep is one of the leading causes of infant mortality. We work to understand and resolve barriers preventing our families from creating safe sleep environments. In addition to providing evidence-based education, if they don't have a safe place for their baby to sleep, we help provide a pack-n-play.



172
pack-n-plays
distributed



100%
of families educated
on importance of
safe sleep

ESMERALDA'S STORY

As a young, first-time mom, Esmeralda enrolled in our home visitation program. With no experience with babies or motherhood, her Family Advocate was able to provide education and reassurance through her pregnancy. They highlighted the importance of safe sleep and creating a safe environment. After baby was born, Esmeralda experienced a devastating house fire. While everyone was safe, she lost all her belongings. Her Family Advocate was able to help get clothes for Esmeralda and baby as well as a new pack-n-play. As they navigated their future, Esmeralda was reassured by the support and care of her home visitor. When our Family Advocates and Nurses can provide basic care items that keep baby healthy and safe, like diapers, car seats, and pack-n-plays, our families can focus on both the expected and unexpected of life and parenthood.



Maternal Mental Health

RACHEL'S STORY

In June of 2023 while pregnant with her fourth child, Rachel began meeting with a Healthier Moms and Babies Therapist. Before Healthier Moms and Babies, she was processing her trauma and obstacles on her own. Mental health complications and trauma can have lasting effects on parents, resulting in often stigmatized barriers, like addiction. Through encouraging and healing therapy sessions, Rachel and her Therapist began to unpack the obstacles and emotions of her life story, all while working on maintaining sobriety, rebuilding relationships with family, and rebuilding her life. Her Therapist was able to offer the support and dedication she needed to maintain her sobriety, care for her new baby, and navigate life as a working mom.

Through therapy opportunities, empowerment groups, and perinatal screening policies, we work to support the whole family. Maternal mental health is one of the leading causes of maternal mortality. By reducing the stigma and providing adequate resources, we can make generational change.



192
families served



1,152
sessions completed

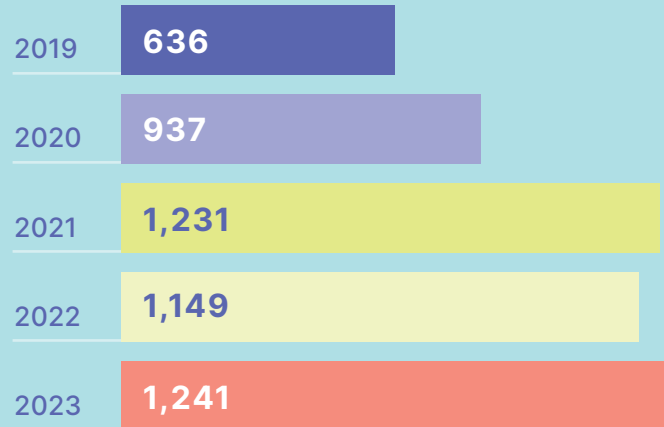


100%
of clients are assessed
for depression
and anxiety

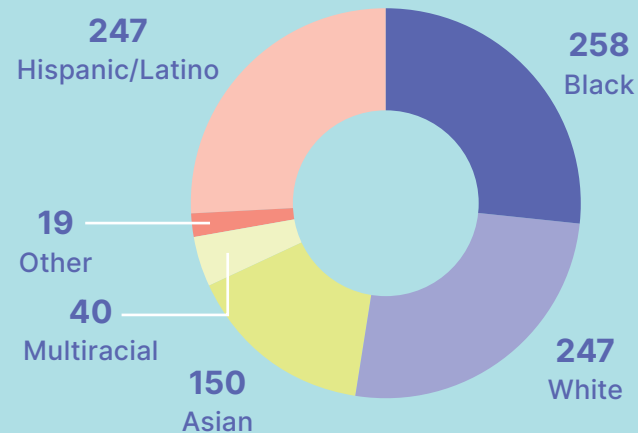


By the Numbers

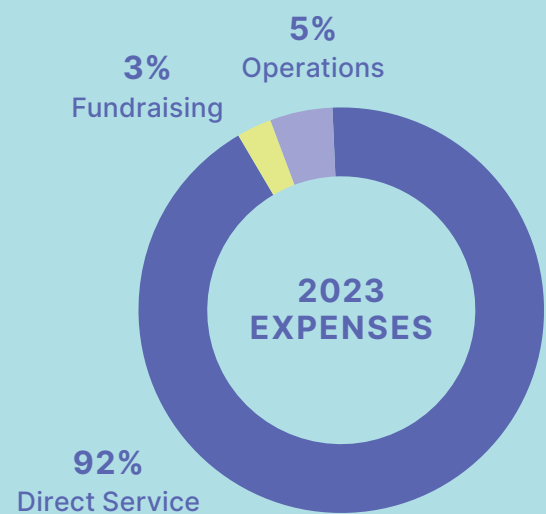
GROWTH OF CLIENTS SERVED OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS



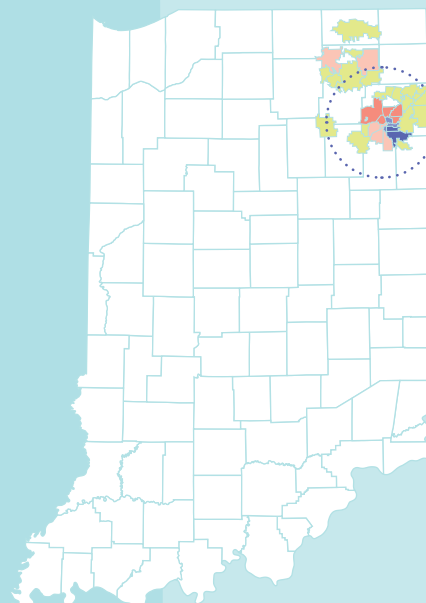
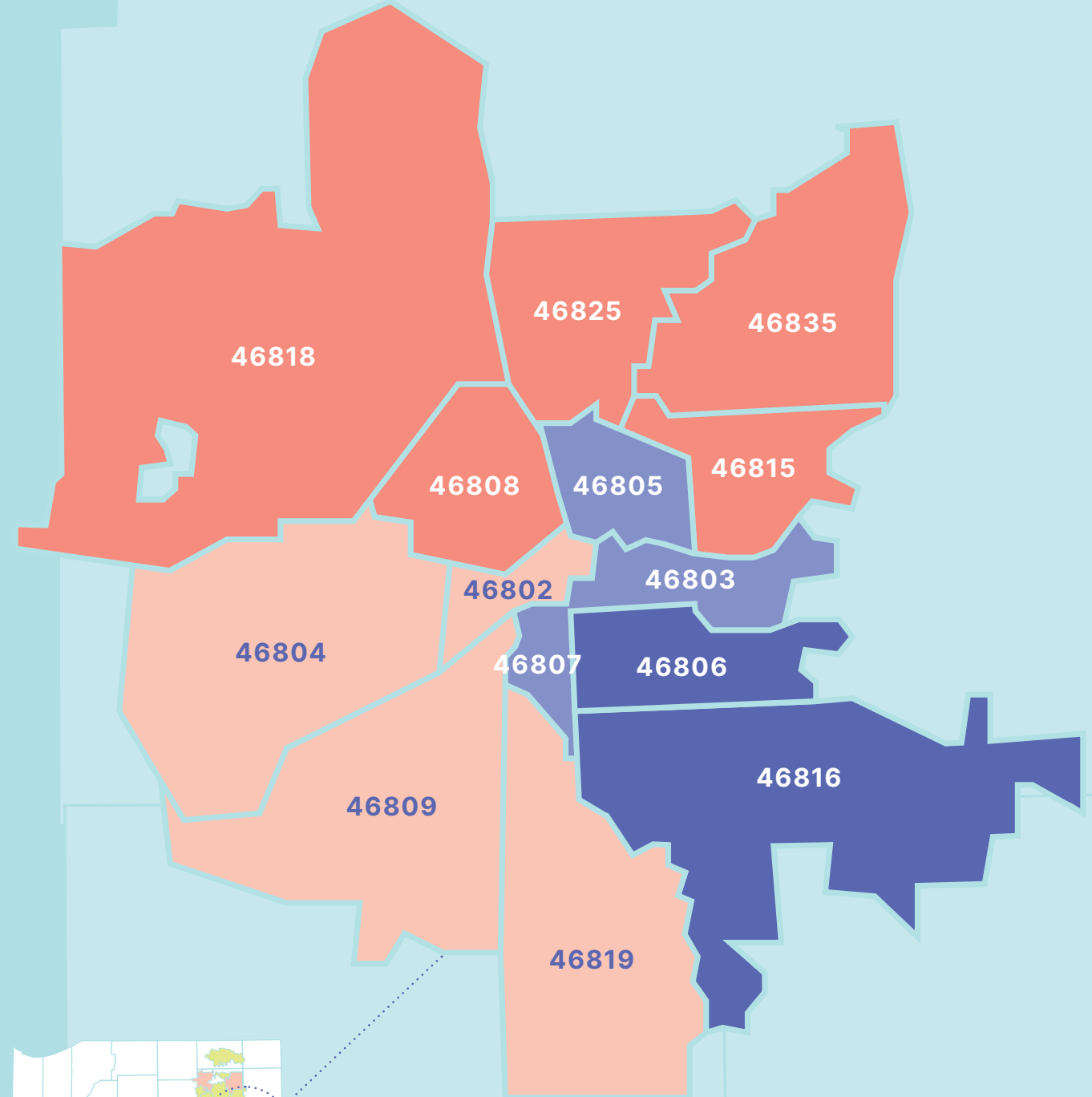
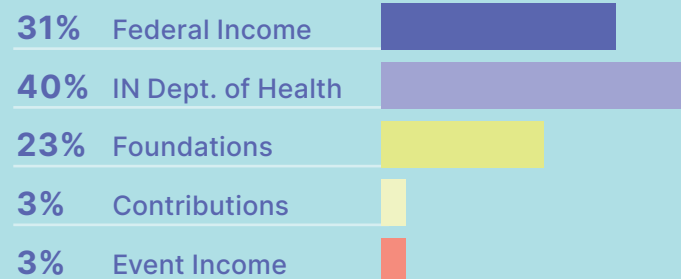
2023 DEMOGRAPHICS



IMPACTS	HMB	Allen County	Indiana	National
Infant Deaths	5	98	522	19,532
Preterm Rate	2%	12%	11%	10%
Sleep-Related Deaths	0	4	104	2294
Low Birth Weight	10%	10%	8%	8%
Maternal Deaths	0	0	60	861



2023 REVENUE



ZIP CODES SERVED

Every client we serve is at risk for poor birth outcomes or infant mortality. However, there are specific ZIP codes that are at even higher risk due to compounding barriers including lack of consistent health care providers, limited transportation, poverty, lower rates of health care coverage, and systematic racism. These ZIP codes include 46803, 46805, 46806, 46815, and 46816.

By prioritizing these ZIP codes, we're working to serve the clients with the highest risk factors. From 2013 to 2015, 46805 and 46806 were both in Indiana's 20 highest infant mortality ZIP codes, with 46806 being the third highest in the state. Now, 46806 is no longer in the top 10 and 46805 is no longer in the top 20. We're working to provide services and support to the families who need it most, because every baby in every ZIP code deserves to thrive.

Own Your Journey

Created for women who aren't currently pregnant, Own Your Journey encourages participants to prioritize personal wellness, achieve their goals, and establish a healthy foundation to Own Their Journeys. By establishing a healthy lifestyle before they become pregnant, they reduce their risk of poor birth outcomes in the future.

JANE'S STORY


When Jane first was referred to Own Your Journey, she couldn't imagine a different journey for herself. After attending a few sessions and participating in events, she began to understand how prioritizing her health and wellness could impact her whole life. Through the Own Your Journey curriculum, the guidance of her instructors, and the encouragement of her group members, Jane began to set goals, schedule doctor's visits, take time for herself, and more. In a session about mental health, Jane found the courage to share part of her difficult story; her instructors referred her to our mental health program so that she could receive the help and support she needed. This program helped Jane gain a deeper understanding of herself and the significance and impact of taking care of her mind, body, and spirit. With the support of Own Your Journey, Jane is taking control of her life and owning her future!




100%
set long-term, achievable goals


73%
women completed a well visit


106
women participants


82
12 week graduates

Diaper Distribution

CHANEL'S STORY

With older children in the home and twins on the way, Chanel connected with our Hopper Mobile Outreach unit. With little support and resources, she was not able to provide diapers and other necessities for her family. This stressor put a strain on her family and her pregnancy—women who have diaper need are more likely to experience mental health complications during and following pregnancy. Each month, she is able to receive diapers and connect with other community resources. Because our Hopper comes to her neighborhood, Chanel is able to receive diapers without the added stress of coordinating transportation or traveling far with her growing family. Since utilizing the Hopper, Chanel has been more able to pay bills, afford transportation, and utilize other resources. She is able to prioritize the health of her current pregnancy and the wellness of her family, all while keeping her baby clean, dry and healthy.

While diapers are a basic need, many families cannot afford to keep their babies clean and dry; diapers are not covered by Food Stamps, WIC, or other government assistance programs. Through distribution at our home visits and our Hopper mobile outreach events, we are able to reduce diaper need in our community, allowing our families to prioritize other necessary expenses, like food and utilities.




6,509
babies diapered


323,560
diapers distributed on Hopper

Doula Support

Our trained Doulas assist our highest-risk clients, offering guidance and advocacy throughout childbirth to ensure they have the healthiest and most empowering birth experience possible.

CING'S STORY

During the early stages of her pregnancy, Cing began receiving home visits from her Nurse Home Visitor. With various risk factors, including being a first-time mom, first-time motherhood, a history of mental health challenges, unstable housing, and complex family dynamics, Cing's situation warranted additional assistance. Recognizing this, her home visitor recommended Cing for extra support during childbirth and connected her with a Doula. Having a Doula ensured Cing never felt isolated, with her needs consistently represented. In the delivery room, Cing's Doula served as a vital advocate, offering guidance and encouragement through a difficult and prolonged labor. The Doula also acted as an additional advocate for Cing, providing guidance and encouragement during a long and traumatic birthing experience. The Doula helped Cing process her experience post-delivery, transforming a challenging day into one filled with positive memories. With encouragement and support from her Doula, Cing never had to navigate her journey alone.



44

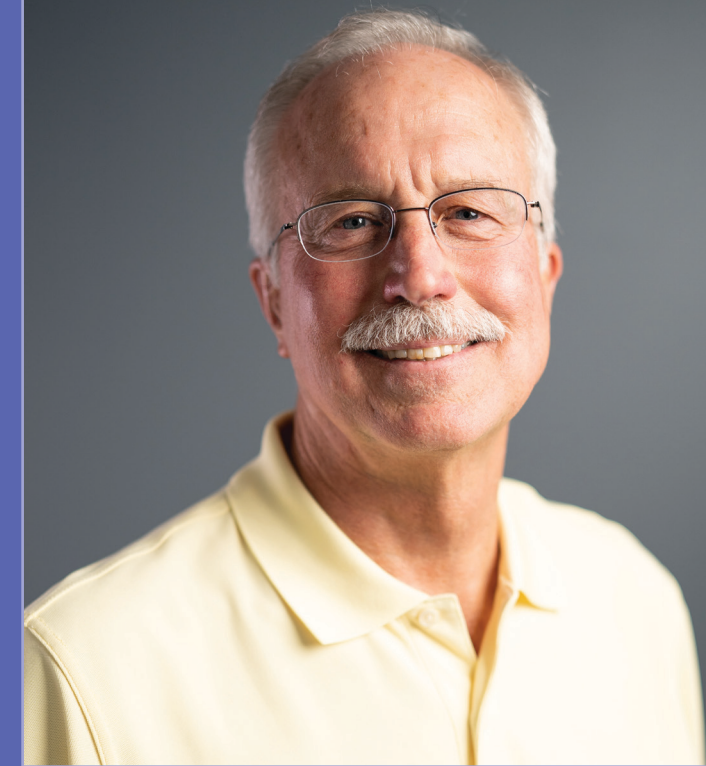
clients received Doula Services



IN EVERYTHING WE DO, WE DELIVER BOLD COMPASSION.

Moved by the alarming Infant Mortality Rates, Andy Brooks has been a long-time investor and advocate for Healthier Moms and Babies. By donating to our mission and serving on our finance committee, he supports our mission and celebrates our outcomes. Andy believes that as we work to address barriers proactively, we're setting up our tiniest neighbors for lifelong success. When you support Healthier Moms and Babies, you're delivering bold compassion to the families that need it most.

“Our families can thrive thanks to the dedication of their neighbors.”



Andy's Donor Impact

Cheryl's Volunteer Impact

WE WORK TO PROVIDE THE BEST SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR OUR FAMILIES, UPLIFTING AND SUPPORTING THEM EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

Our outcomes are not possible without the support of our entire community. Our volunteers drive our mission and help us deliver bold compassion every day. Cheryl Dunn began volunteering with Healthier Moms and Babies in the fall of 2022. Her passion for maternal and infant health and reducing diaper need led her to Healthier Moms and Babies. Thank you to all of our 2023 volunteers for dedicating over 400 hours of your time and service!

“It's all about improving the lives of others, whether it is a kind word, or a smile, words of encouragement, kindness, acceptance, accessibility, or diapers.”





Fighting for Firsts

Last year, we hosted our third annual Fighting for Firsts fundraising campaign and celebration. Throughout the month of October, 10 community Champions spread awareness, raised funds, and fought for firsts. On November 3rd, we celebrated the success of our champions and raised more dollars for our families. A special thank you to Martrese Causey for sharing her story and to all of our donors who help us fight for firsts all year long.

Donations Raised: Over \$40,000

Grand Champion: Gabe Clark



Diaper Dash

In September, we hosted our 7th annual Diaper Dash 5K Family Fun Run. We welcomed new and returning families, runners, community members, and more for a causal morning walk, run, and stroll. This year, we introduced the Joey Race to encourage our youngest dashers to “hop” into our mission. Thanks to our great dashers, we collected over 2,300 diapers and wipes for our families!

Dashers: Over 150

Funds Raised: Over \$6,500

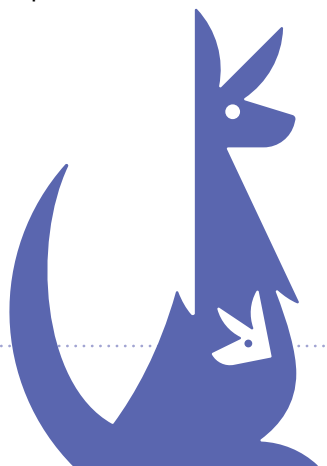


Community-Wide Diaper Drive

For our third annual Community-wide Diaper Drive, we had another incredible year. Thanks to our 64 donation drop sites and hundreds of community members and donors, we gathered over 115,000 diapers and wipes. This support helps us reduce diaper need in our community and create a healthier future!

Diapers: Over 48,000

Wipes: Over 62,000



Foundations

- 3Rivers Credit Union Foundation
- Arnold Foundation
- AWS Foundation
- Benjamin H Smyser Foundation
- Bowker Foundation
- Charles Kuhne Foundation
- Charlie Tippmann Foundation
- City of Fort Wayne
- Dekko Foundation
- Edward M. Wilson Foundation
- English-Bonter- Mitchell Foundation
- Fort Wayne Children's Foundation
- Fort Wayne Health and Education Foundation
- Ian and Mimi Rolland Foundation
- Magee- O'Connor Foundation
- Mary Cross Tippmann Foundation
- Michigan Public Health Institute
- Noble County Community Foundation
- Parkview Health Foundation
- PHP Foundation
- PNC Foundation
- Schaefer Foundation
- St. Joseph Community Health Foundation
- The James Foundation
- The Journal Gazette Foundation
- Wood Richardson Foundation
- Zollner Foundation

2023

Sponsors

- Anthem
- MDwise
- MHS
- Three Rivers Federal Credit Union
- Women's Health Advantage
- Old National Bank
- Fort Wayne Pediatrics
- Ash Brokerage
- Aqua Indiana

To see our full list of donors, please visit:
healthiermomsandbabies.org/2023-donors

Sponsors

Foundations



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Bold Compassion.