



**HELP A MOTHER OUT'S
BAY AREA DIAPER BANK
Alameda County
Final Evaluation Report**

Prepared by Public Profit for Help a Mother Out | December 2021

Acknowledgements

The Public Profit team would like to acknowledge the staff at:

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California Food Banks
Central California Food Bank
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
Orange County Food Bank
San Diego Food Bank

Neighborhoods Ready for School Grantees
Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center
Lotus Bloom - Room to Bloom at Castlemont
Lotus Bloom - San Antonio Family Resource Center
Union City Family Center

About this Report

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We also would like to acknowledge HAMO’s diaper program clients for their contributions to this evaluation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

ABOUT DIAPER NEED

All infants and toddlers need diapers – and lots of them.

Infants need up to twelve diapers a day and toddlers need about eight a day.¹ It costs approximately \$18 a week to diaper one child, and \$1,872 per year to diaper two children.² This cost places a huge burden on many families living in the United States.

The high cost of diapers creates “diaper need.”

The National Diaper Bank Network defines diaper need as “the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant or child clean, dry, and healthy.”¹ More than a third of families in the United States experience diaper need.^{1,2,3} When families do not have enough diapers, they are forced to make difficult decisions, choosing between diapers and other necessities.⁴

ABOUT HELP A MOTHER OUT (“HAMO”) AND THE EVALUATION

Help a Mother Out (“HAMO”) works to improve baby and family well-being by increasing access to diapers for families. HAMO’s vision is a day when every baby has a healthy supply of diapers.

Established in 2009, HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank distributes diapers to families through a network of partner organizations. Partner organizations integrate diaper distribution into their current programming for families, which ranges from classes to support groups to home visits to food pantries.

The evaluation was sponsored by First 5 Alameda County, an organization committed to advancing system and policy changes that address structural inequities and support the conditions for families and children to thrive. HAMO engaged Public Profit to evaluate how the Bay Area Diaper Bank enhances existing family support programs and benefits lower-income families in Alameda County.

HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank serves families throughout the greater Bay Area region; this evaluation focuses on the Alameda County component of the Bay Area Diaper Bank with a particular focus on distribution sites that serve as neighborhood hubs in four underserved communities in Alameda County as well as the countywide public health Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Findings

HAMO PROVIDED OVER 4.3 MILLION DIAPERS TO ALAMEDA COUNTY FAMILIES IN FISCAL YEAR 2021.

From July 2020 through June 2021, HAMO provided over 4.3 million diapers to community partners throughout Alameda County. These diapers reached about 2,000 children each month.⁵ Families who accessed the diapers lived in lower-income communities. The vast majority of clients served by HAMO's partner organizations identified as people of color, which is similar to Alameda County's overall population of lower-income residents.⁶

ALAMEDA COUNTY FAMILIES BENEFIT FROM HAMO'S DIAPER PROGRAM.

When families participated in HAMO's diaper program, they experienced improved economic stability, less stress, increased parenting self-efficacy, better child health, and stronger community connections.

Figure 1. Alameda County families are healthier and happier after receiving diapers from the HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank.



Source: HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank in Alameda County Client Survey (Feb-March 2021), n=292.

Families re-allocate their diaper budget to other basic needs.

The diaper program allows families to shift their focus from buying diapers to purchasing other items, such as groceries, rent, and clothing. The diaper program also helps families reach longer-term economic stability by enabling caregivers to work and go to school.

Reliable diapers relieve stress for families.

HAMO's commitment to providing a steady, full month's supply of diapers reduces caregivers' stress. This reliability allows families to plan, rather than face the uncertainty of whether they will need to save money for diapers that month.

"Families are happy and relieved to know that they have a reliable source for diapers...Diaper expenses are the equivalent of a utility bill or two, making this benefit a true relief for many of our low-income families. One less thing to worry about or stress over."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Families are happier.

The HAMO diaper program helps eliminate the stress and worry for many families having to figure out how to purchase diapers. This financial and stress relief enables caregivers to focus on and provide for their child. Being able to meet their child's immediate needs instills confidence in their parenting abilities.

"I am able to feel less stress and therefore be [happier] and enjoy every minute with my child. We feel less stress about having enough money for all of my child's needs."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

Children are healthier.

Caregivers see an improvement in their child's health and comfort when they have access to enough diapers. Caregivers said that having enough diapers helps their children to be more comfortable, sleep better, have less diaper rash, and cry less.

"It has helped with my second child, he has [experienced] much fewer diaper rashes and fussiness because we didn't feel like we had to conserve as much as we did for our first born."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

Caregivers connect with their community and other resources.

Social support and community connection is critical to a family's well-being. Families connect with others when they visit community organizations to pick up diapers, when program staff drop off diapers, or when families pick up diapers for other families.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Access to diapers impacts entire communities.

Partner organizations have used the diaper program as a strategy to help alleviate poverty and build resilience in their local communities. Partner organizations provide the resources and services that many families in their community need. And when numerous families have access to the tools they need, entire communities can thrive.

The diaper program helps fathers build confidence.

The diaper program helps fathers build their confidence as a parent, engage more with their children, and strengthen relationships with their co-parent. Fathers indicated that being seen as a provider and bringing a needed item into the home was important to them.

“A lot of the clients have been laid off and financially [are] going through some challenges. And to be able to [go] into their home with diapers really builds up their self-esteem...being able to provide for your family, especially newborns. And when you do come into the house and you have diapers and that’s an expense, something that is very, very needed. They feel like they get more appreciation from their partners.”

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member



Figure 2. Partner staff members are better able to serve their clients because of HAMO’s diaper program.



HAMO’S DIAPER PROGRAM ENHANCES PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS’ ABILITIES TO SERVE FAMILIES.

In addition to helping partner organizations fulfill a concrete need for families, HAMO’s diaper programs help partner organizations with outreach, retention, and relationship-building.

“[I love seeing] the specific relief when they pick up their diapers. They’re there on time. They can’t wait. And the thanks that we get! It’s my favorite day, because we get to see people, and we get to see the enormity of the relief that this is for families.”

UNION CITY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER STAFF MEMBER

Source: Alameda HAMO Partner Survey (March-April 2021), n=53.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The diaper program is a tool for partner organizations to build trust and deepen their relationships with families.

The diaper program provides opportunities for partner staff to establish trust and build rapport with clients.

“The families feel very supported, and we have been able to create a deeper and more impactful relationship. The families know that we are there for them.”

Lotus Bloom San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

The diaper program serves as an “entry point” for families to gain access to other services and programs.

HAMO’s partner organizations provide a variety of resources and services for families. In some cases, clients would come to pick up diapers, and stay to take advantage of other services, such as parenting and child development resources, mental health services, and housing support.

“For some clients, it’s a beautiful way to keep them connected and engaged, and it makes it so that then they can hear about and get some of the support services that they and their babies really need, [and] that they wouldn’t know about, or wouldn’t know how to get.”

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Providing free diapers allows partner organizations to increase client engagement and retention in their programs.

Partner staff said that clients were more likely to attend programs and meet with program staff if they knew they could also pick up diapers. Additionally, once basic needs are met, families are more able to focus on other aspects of family well-being.

HAMO’s diaper program supports staff satisfaction within partner organizations. Partner staff are inspired by the joy and smiles on their clients’ faces when they come to pick up diapers.

92%
OF CLIENTS SAID
THEIR NEED
FOR DIAPERS
INCREASED DURING
THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC.

HAMO’S MODEL SUPPORTS FAMILIES IN UNFORESEEN EVENTS, LIKE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many families and caregivers to experience financial hardships, making it hard to diaper their children. The pandemic added a deeper layer to the barriers that families were already facing before the pandemic.

The existing infrastructure of HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank supported its partner organizations to meet their clients’ diaper need during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. HAMO allowed partner organizations to be creative and adaptable with their distribution efforts.

Partner organizations collaborated with other local community organizations to get diapers distributed to clients through home deliveries, drive-through pickups, and food pantries. With many families experiencing isolation due to the pandemic, partner staff used diaper distribution as an opportunity to check-in and connect with their clients.

“Diapers were the main anchor when we started contacting families again [after closures from COVID-19]. ‘I just wanted to reach out to let you know, we are back on staff, and we are offering diapers again.’ Families were so grateful. They could share a little bit of what they’ve been through. I feel like that was the bridge to be able to reconnect with families. It’s literally one of the anchors of my work. It’s been a huge impact on myself and families.”

LOTUS BLOOM, ROOM TO BLOOM AT CASTLEMONT STAFF MEMBER



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendations for Policymakers

CREATE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DIAPER NEED.

Diapers are critical to families' health and economic security. Public benefits, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), do not cover or provide diapers, and virtually no federal child safety-net programs allocate benefits specifically for buying diapers.¹ Only one state, California, has taken advantage of the ability to use federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding for diapers.

Tremendous progress has been made to address diaper need in California, yet diaper need persists for too many families. By providing access to diapers, diaper banks offer a critical support to the most economically strained families, create economies of scale for public dollars, and address substantial statewide need.



PROVIDE FLEXIBLE FUNDING TO COMMUNITY-BASED DIAPER BANKS.

Local diaper banks know how to best serve their community based on its needs and resources. Some communities might already have a strong diaper bank that can expand, and others might be best served by adding diaper distribution services to a food bank or a community center.

The flexible funding HAMO received from the state allowed HAMO to engage with organizations in a variety of ways, meeting each organizations' unique needs. The flexible state funding was particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

USE DIAPERS AS A TOOL TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, CONNECT FAMILIES TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY.

The Bay Area Diaper Bank demonstrates that diapers can be used as a tool to support individual families and strengthen the community:

Diapers build and deepen relationships between families and the family support system.

The diaper program provides opportunities for partner staff to establish trust and build rapport with clients when they see each other every month for diaper pickups.

Diapers support longer-term economic stability by enabling caregivers to work and go to school.

Nearly all childcare providers require families to provide disposable diapers. About 23% of caregivers said that receiving diapers allows them to go to or look for work, take their child to daycare, go to school, and/or attend job training.

Diapers create a ripple effect of access to other services.

Diaper programs can be an "entry point" for clients to gain access to other services and programs. Partner organizations use the diapers as an outreach tool to introduce families to their other services.

Diapers help families meet basic needs, and in turn, strengthen the health and well-being of families and communities.

Diapers are an important basic need. Once families' basic needs are met, they can focus on goals like education, career development, and community engagement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendations for Diaper Banks

INTEGRATE DIAPER PROGRAMS INTO EXISTING FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank model demonstrates the added benefit of incorporating diapers into existing family support programs:

Partner with community-based organizations to distribute diapers to families.

Community-based organizations, such as Family Resource Centers and Public Health Departments, already have relationships with families and the infrastructure to distribute diapers. Partner organizations can enhance their current programming for families by adding diapers.

Allow partners flexibility with how they distribute diapers.

Some community partners distributed diapers during home visits, some used diapers as an incentive to attend support groups, and others distributed diapers through a food pantry.

CENTER THE PRIORITIES OF FAMILIES.

Diaper banks should consider the requests from parents and caregivers to honor their dignity and maximize the effectiveness of the diaper bank. HAMO and its community partners adapted the Bay Area Diaper Bank over time to best meet families' needs:

Provide a full, reliable supply of diapers.

Families frequently mentioned the importance of being able to count on a full supply of diapers each month. This was a significant help financially, and it eliminated the need for families to worry about how, where, and when they would get the additional diapers needed.

Treat participants as customers.

Families' experiences picking up the diapers is an important aspect of the diaper program. It's important to engage all partner staff in understanding the diaper program logistics so they can best serve families and make sure families get what they need.

Track inventory carefully so partners can always provide the diaper sizes clients need.

Many partners have limited storage space and rely on receiving frequent diaper deliveries. Diaper programs need strong communication and inventory management systems to ensure they are supplying partner organizations with enough diapers in the sizes clients need.



INTRODUCTION

About Diaper Need

DIAPERS ARE CRITICAL TO FAMILIES' HEALTH AND ECONOMIC SECURITY.



All infants and toddlers need diapers – and lots of them.

Infants need up to twelve diapers a day and toddlers need about eight a day.¹ It costs approximately \$18 a week to diaper one child, and \$1,872 per year to diaper two children.² For a parent earning the federal minimum wage, diapering two children accounts for about 12% of their annual gross income.⁷ This cost places a huge burden on many families living in the United States.



Having enough diapers is important to maintaining a family's physical and mental health.

Families who experience diaper need may face social and emotional consequences, including parental guilt, frustration, embarrassment, and poor parent-child interactions.⁴ When caregivers cannot change their child's diaper as much as the child needs, children are at greater risk of diaper rash and infections, and may experience pain.⁴

In a 2017 nationwide study, more than half of families experiencing diaper need brought their child to the doctor for diaper rash at least once, and about a quarter of those took their child three or more times in one year.²



The high cost of diapers creates "diaper need."

The National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN) defines diaper need as "the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant or child clean, dry, and healthy."¹ More than a third of families in the United States experience diaper need.^{1,2,3} The majority of families experiencing diaper need are employed and almost half have a member who holds a bachelor's degree or higher.²

When families do not have enough diapers, they are forced to make difficult decisions, choosing between diapers and other necessities.⁴ Families may also find ways to reduce costs, such as keeping their child diaper-less, borrowing diapers from friends or family, stretching diapers by not changing their child as often as they would like, and getting diapers from a diaper bank or charity.² These decisions are challenging and became increasingly difficult as the price of diapers rose due to pandemic-related inflation.^{8,9}



Diaper need can limit a family's economic opportunities.

Nearly all childcare centers require families to bring a day's worth of disposable diapers in order to drop their child off.^{1,4} This requirement can prevent caregivers from going to work or attending school or job training. A 2017 nationwide study found that the majority of caregivers experiencing diaper need reported missing work or school during the past month because they did not have enough diapers to leave their child at a childcare center.²

Public benefits, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) do not cover or provide diapers, and virtually no child safety-net programs allocate benefits specifically for buying diapers.¹ California provides \$30 a month for families receiving CalWORKs to purchase diapers, although this is less than what families typically spend.¹⁰ Of the 45 states who have a sales tax, only 10 have exempted diapers, lowering the cost somewhat for families. Thirty-five states continue to charge sales tax on a product that families need.¹¹

INTRODUCTION

POLICYMAKERS HAVE THE POWER TO ADDRESS DIAPER NEED.

Diaper need is gaining policymakers' attention at the federal and state levels.

The DIAPER Act (2011) was the first federal legislation addressing diaper need.¹² Although this did not pass, it introduced the concept of diaper need on a federal level and inspired other diaper-related legislation.^{12,13} Diaper need even caught the attention of President Barack Obama.

"No mother or father should have to worry about keeping their baby clean and healthy because they can't afford diapers. America's parents - and children - deserve better."¹⁴

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

President Obama included funding for diaper-specific research in his 2017 budget.

This was the first time that diapers were included in a federal budget.¹⁵ In addition, during his administration, the White House introduced the Community Diaper Program, which established "an innovative partnership between an e-commerce company, a diaper manufacturer, and local non-profits that [helped] provide free diapers to lower-income families."¹⁴

More recent federal legislation, the End Diaper Need Act of 2021, would distribute grants to organizations that provide diapers and would allow states to use Medicaid funds for diapering needs; it is under consideration by the House of Representatives and the Senate as of fall 2021.^{16,17} Additionally, in September 2021, Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA-13) petitioned congressional leaders to include \$200 million in the Social Services Block Grant to address diaper need.¹⁸

California is leading efforts to support families experiencing diaper need.

In 2015, the City and County of San Francisco launched the first publicly-funded diaper distribution program in the country, partnering with Help a Mother Out ("HAMO") to distribute diapers through the City's network of Family Resource Centers.¹⁵ In addition, California is the first and only state to provide public benefit funds specifically for

diapers.¹⁰ This legislation was introduced by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez and, in 2018, began providing \$30 a month for diapers to families who receive CALWORKS.¹⁰

In 2018 Governor Newsom approved a \$10 million dollar budget supporting HAMO and three food banks across California in providing diapers to lower-income families.¹⁹ Also in support of families experiencing diaper need, Governor Newsom included a sales tax exemption for diapers and \$1.7 million to fund the 5th publicly-funded diaper bank in California in his 2019-20 budget.²⁰ State funding for HAMO and the food banks was recently renewed and expanded to continue supporting these organizations, as well as three additional organizations, through June 2024.

Diaper need among California families persists.

Both federally and in California, progress has been made to address diaper need, however United Way of California estimates that 33% (over 3.5 million) of families living in California do not earn enough to meet their basic needs.²¹ Diapers are a basic need that families must purchase regardless of their financial situation and changing economic conditions. Too often, families are forced to prioritize diapers over other items they may also need. Local diaper banks and organizations providing diapers need continued financial support to meet the substantial statewide need for diapers.



INTRODUCTION

About Help a Mother Out (“HAMO”)

Help a Mother Out (“HAMO”) works to improve baby and family well-being by increasing access to diapers for families. They distribute diapers to families through a network of social service partners including voluntary home visiting programs, facilitated parent support groups, family resource centers, and public health departments. They also advocate for the inclusion of diapers in the social safety net. HAMO’s vision is a day when every baby has a healthy supply of diapers.

HAMO distributes diapers primarily through two programs in the San Francisco Bay Area: HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank and HAMO’s San Francisco Diaper Bank. HAMO also has a third program, the California Diaper Bank, that provides one-time diaper grants for disaster relief and diapers for organizations that do not have a diaper bank in their area.

This evaluation focuses on HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank in Alameda County.

ABOUT HAMO’S BAY AREA DIAPER BANK

Established in 2009, Help a Mother Out’s Bay Area Diaper Bank provides community organizations with an innovative way to meet the concrete needs of children, build trust with families, and offer additional support and services to lower-income families. HAMO’s Bay Area Diaper Bank serves families throughout the greater Bay Area region; this evaluation focuses on the Alameda County component of the Bay Area Diaper Bank.

HAMO distributes diapers to families through a network of partner organizations. Partner organizations integrate diaper distribution into their current programming for families, which includes classes, support groups, home visits, food pantries, and other services.

“The core of our business is really to support families and to keep them coming back to the resources. They have this connection with a family resource center and that’s where they’re getting their diapers. That’s the distribution model.”

Kai Forsley, Senior Program Manager at HAMO

HAMO makes a commitment to partner organizations so they can make a commitment to their clients. In 2019, HAMO received additional funding from the California Department of Social Services to expand their diaper distribution in the San Francisco Bay Area. This flexible state funding allowed for HAMO to formalize an even deeper commitment to their partners and clients. Families now receive a full supply of diapers each month for children up to age 3.

“Since we were leveling up in our distributions, we thought that it would be really useful to be able to go deep in the communities that we’re serving. And when I say go deep, it essentially means we go deep with the families that we’re serving. Our goal is to remove the cost of diapers from the monthly household budget. In most cases, program clients are eligible to receive up to two cases of diapers per child per month.”

Lisa Truong, Founder and Executive Director of HAMO

HAMO sees clients as customers. HAMO provides high-quality private label diapers and forecasts client needs to ensure families can reliably pick up diapers in their needed sizes.

“I feel like that is in the organization’s DNA that we’re always trying to see our clients as our customers... Also, it’s so the experience is more like, ‘here’s a gift to you. This is not a handout. This is a gift for you and your child.’”

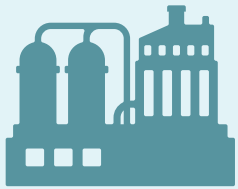
Lisa Truong, Founder and Executive Director of HAMO

“I think that is a key thing about what makes HAMO different is the commitment to families in terms of getting them exactly what they need and in a reliable manner, rather than just whatever’s available and not knowing if it’s going to be available next month and not knowing if it’s exactly what your child needs.”

Lisa Truong, Founder and Executive Director of HAMO

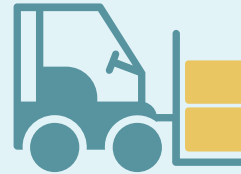


HAMO'S MODEL IN ALAMEDA COUNTY



DIAPER FACTORY

- HAMO has their own private diaper label, ELO Baby Diapers.
- They buy diapers in bulk
- "This is a gift for you and your child." - Lisa Truong, Founder and Executive Director of HAMO



HAMO'S WAREHOUSE

- Created for deliveries to partner organizations.
- Delivers partner organizations diapers based on specific client needs.



COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- Integrate diaper distribution within their current programming for families.
- Partner organizations include; Family resource centers, Public Health departments, Child Care centers, and other community-based organizations.



DIAPERS ENHANCE PARTNERS' ABILITIES TO SERVE FAMILIES

- Builds trust and deepens relationships.
- Serves as an entry point to other services
- Increases client engagement and retention.



FAMILIES BENEFIT GREATLY FROM FREE DIAPERS

- Families can reliably pick up diapers at a place in their community.
- This leads families to be healthier and happier.



Over 4.3 million

diapers provided to alameda county families from July 2020 to June 2021



88%

of clients said that because of the diaper program, they get connected to other resources.



2,000

children in Alameda county served each month.



98%

SAY THEIR FAMILY FEELS LESS STRESSED



97%

SAY THEIR CHILD IS HEALTHIER



95%

HAVE MORE MONEY IN THE BUDGET FOR FOOD



94%

SAY IT'S EASIER TO PAY THEIR BILLS

INTRODUCTION

About the Evaluation

The evaluation was sponsored by First 5 Alameda County, an organization committed to advancing system and policy changes that address structural inequities and support the conditions for families and children to thrive. Given this unique opportunity to evaluate a new state resource that provides families with an essential need, First 5 Alameda funded this evaluation with the goal to advance a body of research that informs advocacy efforts and accelerates long-term, effective policy change.

HAMO engaged Public Profit to evaluate how the Bay Area Diaper Bank enhances existing family support programs and benefits lower-income families in Alameda County. HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank serves families throughout the greater Bay Area region; this report focuses on the Alameda County component of the Bay Area Diaper Bank with a particular focus on distribution sites that serve as neighborhood hubs in four underserved communities in Alameda County as well as the countywide public health Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program.

HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank works with over 66 partner organizations in the region. We selected five of these partner organizations operating in Alameda County to participate in the evaluation activities to capture a range of staff and client experiences. These five organizations accounted for over one-third (36%) of all families served by HAMO in Alameda County.

The organizations included Alameda County Public Health Department's Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MPCAH) unit and select organizations from the First 5 Neighborhoods Ready for School (NRFS) initiative. The participating NRFS grantees included Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center, Room to Bloom at Castlemont, San Antonio Family Resource Center, and Union City Family Center.

Public Profit's evaluation team used a mixed methods approach to gather data from a wide range of stakeholders. First, we conducted a literature review and a document review. Next, we administered surveys and focus groups with diaper program clients and frontline



staff members at partner organizations. Additionally, we interviewed lead staff at partner organizations, HAMO, and California Department of Social Services diaper grantees. Finally, we analyzed family enrollment, participation, and demographic data provided by HAMO and partner organizations.

This evaluation began in December 2019. An interim evaluation brief was released in May 2021 and the evaluation culminated with this final report in winter 2021. As with any evaluation, there are limitations to the data collected by the evaluation team. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted evaluation activities.^a

See Appendix A for a detailed list of evaluation questions, data sources, and data limitations.

^a A parallel evaluation of HAMO's San Francisco Diaper Bank followed a similar time frame. The San Francisco evaluation brief, a combined Alameda & San Francisco evaluation brief, and the interim briefs, can be found at <https://www.helpamotherout.org/impact>

INTRODUCTION

HAMO is part of a statewide diaper initiative thanks to state funding from 2019-2024.

In 2018, Governor Newsom approved a \$10 million dollar budget supporting HAMO and three food banks across California in providing diapers to lower-income families through June 2021.¹⁹ San Diego County Food Bank, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, and Central California Food Bank received this funding in 2019. The Orange County Food Bank received state funding for diapers a year later. The funding was renewed and expanded in 2021, supporting HAMO, these food banks, and three newly added food banks through June 2024.

Prior to receiving state funding, these food banks distributed diapers only when they were donated, yet diapers were one of the most requested items.

“There’s no item for which I received more calls or requests for that we’ve not been able to satisfy, than the request for diapers. For years, I would get calls from women who were frantic - young mothers who had made six, eight, 10, 12 calls. Nobody had diapers. And I would usually counsel them to stop calling and asking for diapers because you’re just going to continue to get frustrated by the answer that you’re going to get. But let us give you food and the money that you would otherwise spend on food, then redirect that to diapers.”

Director of the Orange County Food Bank Community Action Partnership of Orange County, Orange County Food Bank

To reach families with young children on a larger scale, LA Regional partnered with WIC and LAUSD.

The state funding allowed these food banks to become a reliable source of diapers for families who needed them. Since the start of funding, these food banks distributed approximately 55 million diapers as of July 2021. Combined with the nearly 16 million diapers HAMO distributed, these food banks and HAMO collectively distributed approximately 71 million diapers to California families.

All food banks partnered with community organizations to get diapers into the hands of families.

Central California and Orange County Food Banks worked with partner organizations who mainly serve families with young children. They each partnered with about 25-40 organizations. San Diego and LA Regional partnered with organizations serving a broader range of individuals, not requiring that partner organizations have a particular focus on families with young children. This enabled them to partner with over 100 organizations each. Some of these food banks also distributed diapers directly to families through their drive-up food pantries.

The San Diego Food Bank began a marketing campaign to help families reach the services they needed during COVID-19, including diapers.

Food banks primarily delivered diapers directly to partner organizations.

Orange County had their own diaper delivery truck, named Tom-Tom, for delivering diapers to partner organizations, LA Regional added pallets of diapers to their food trucks, and San Diego delivered diapers only when a partner agency requested more than 30 cases. Alternatively, some partner organizations picked their diapers up from the food banks. Partner organizations often received food from the food banks as well.

COVID-19 drastically impacted food bank’s diaper distribution.

Orange County increased the number of diapers they distributed to each family to better support families during COVID-19. Similarly, San Diego saw diaper need double or triple during COVID-19 and adjusted to meet that demand. Central California saw many of their partner organizations temporarily close their doors, causing a significant decrease in the number of diapers they distributed. This was followed by a stark increase in diapers distributed when partner organizations reopened.

“Families with younger children, especially when the pandemic hit, were there to receive food. And the fact that they were able to receive diapers was huge for them... Many of the families were saying that they were there to receive food so they can save money to buy diapers. And then they found out it had diapers! They said ‘ok, now I can maybe pay a bill.’ It was just a huge bonus for them when they found out their regular pantry partner was going to have diapers.”

Director of Agency Relations and Product Acquisitions, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank

INTRODUCTION

Having different distribution models allows caregivers to access supports that match their family's needs.

HAMO and the food banks used different, but complementary, distribution models.

Food banks leveraged their community connections and existing distribution infrastructure. Some partner organizations provided 25 diapers per month to a family while others gave families as many diapers as they needed each month. The number of diapers each partner organization gave out depended on the number of diapers the food bank had available, and partner organizations' storage space and staff capacity.

HAMO focused on meeting a family's entire diaper need.

This enabled them to make a commitment to families – to provide all the diapers they would need each month. Families participating in HAMO could depend on those diapers. Additionally, HAMO exclusively partnered with community organizations that provided services to families with young children.

Continuous, dependable state funding for diapers is needed.

State funding for diapers is now available through June 2024 for HAMO and these food banks. Reduced funding would significantly limit the number of diapers available to families in these counties. In turn, families who depend on these diapers might experience increased financial strain and the negative health impacts of stretching diapers.

"[Diaper banks are] a growing movement. I expect it to continue to grow, develop, and evolve over time. And we need to build some sustainability to that. It's a little nerve wracking that you're not quite sure where they're going to have your core funding...just a few months from now. But food banks had a lot of uncertainty in terms of their funding for a very long time as well, and [then] built sustainable funding. I just see this as a movement, a network early in its infancy and early in its development."

Director of the Orange County Food Bank Community Action Partnership of Orange County,
Orange County Food Bank



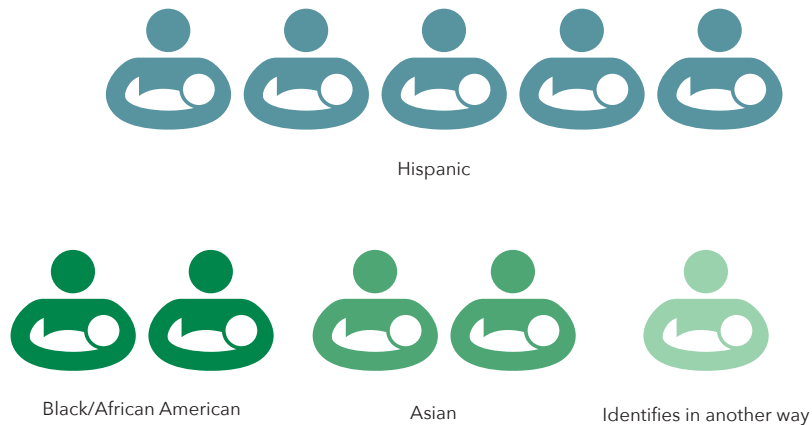
KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

HAMO provided over 4.3 million diapers to families in Alameda County in fiscal year 2021.

From July 2020 through June 2021, HAMO provided over 4.3 million diapers to community partners throughout Alameda County. These diapers reached about 2,000 children each month.²² More specifically, HAMO provided almost 1.6 million diapers to the five community partners included in this evaluation. Families who accessed the diapers lived in lower-income communities.

The vast majority of clients served by HAMO's partner organizations identified as people of color, which is similar to Alameda County's overall population of lower-income residents.²³ Most of these caregivers spoke Spanish or English, and about 1 in 10 spoke Mandarin. Many families reported that their income did not allow them to meet their basic needs; some faced housing insecurity or homelessness in 2020.

Figure 3. More than 90% of clients served by HAMO's partner organizations identified as Hispanic, African American/Black, or Asian.



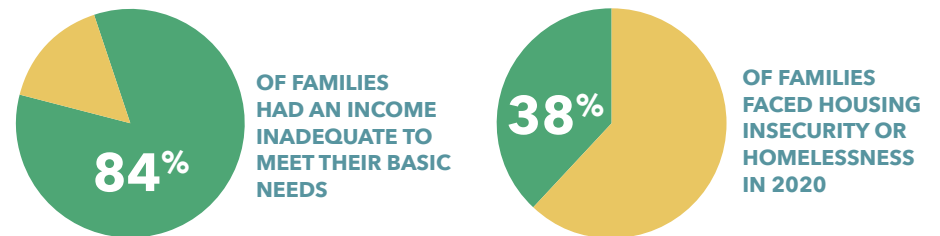
Sources: NRFS and MPCA data (July 2020-June 2021), NRFS n=3,680, MPCA n=768. Race/ethnicity data was unavailable for approximately 8% of MPCA clients and 45% of NRFS clients. Note: MPCA and NRFS data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. See Appendix B for more information about this data.

Figure 4. Alameda County Diaper Program clients most commonly live in...



Source: HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank in Alameda County Client Survey (February-March 2021), n=292. Zip code data was unavailable for 11% of respondents. Note: West Oakland was underrepresented in the Alameda County Client Survey data due to COVID-19-related survey limitations. It is included here based on a partner organization's knowledge of their clients' neighborhoods. See Appendix B for more information about this data.

Figure 5. Many families served by HAMO's partner organizations struggle to meet their basic needs.



Sources: MPCA program enrollment data (July 2020-June 2021), n=462 (left), n=683 (right). MPCA data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. See Appendix B for more information about this data.

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

Alameda County families benefit from HAMO's diaper program.

HAMO's diaper program supports families to live and thrive in the Bay Area. A reliable supply of free diapers contributes to a family's physical, mental, economic, and social well-being. When families accessed and relied on free diapers, they experienced less stress, improved economic stability, better child health, increased parenting self-efficacy, and stronger community connections.

Figure 6. Alameda County families are healthier and happier after receiving diapers from the HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank.



Source: HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank in Alameda County Client Survey (Feb-March 2021), n=292.

Families re-allocate their diaper budget to other basic needs.

The diaper program allows families to shift their focus from buying diapers to purchasing other needed items. Almost all families (94%) said that because of the diaper program, it was easier to pay their bills. This further reduces families' financial stress and helps them to reach economic stability. Families and partner organization staff commonly said that the money budgeted for diapers could now be saved or used to purchase other basic needs such as groceries, rent, and clothing.

"It is a huge help because I don't have to split money between food or diapers. I have the opportunity to get diapers for free and save up."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

"It definitely gives us one less thing to be worried about each month and allows us to use the money that we would be spending on diapers toward other bills."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

HAMO also helps families reach longer-term economic stability by enabling caregivers to work and go to school. About 23% of caregivers said that receiving diapers allows them to go to or look for work, take their child to daycare, go to school, and/or attend job training.

Reliable diapers relieve stress for families.

Parenting young children is an exciting and particularly stressful time, especially when resources are limited. Diaper program clients and program staff recognized that in social and non-profit services, many resources and basic needs items are not reliably available. HAMO's commitment to providing a steady, full supply of diapers counters this trend. About 9 in 10 clients said they receive diapers about once a month. This reliability allows families to plan, rather than face the uncertainty of whether they will need to save money for diapers that month.

BEFORE PARTICIPATING
IN THE DIAPER
PROGRAM,

10%

OF CLIENTS SAID THEY
ALWAYS HAD ENOUGH
DIAPERS.

AFTER PARTICIPATING,

54%

SAID THEY ALWAYS HAD
ENOUGH DIAPERS.

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

"Families are happy and relieved to know that they have a reliable source for diapers...Diaper expenses are the equivalent of a utility bill or two, making this benefit a true relief for many of our low-income families. One less thing to worry about or stress over."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

"Using that last diaper and not having to wait for the diaper to make it last. Having the relief of not running out of diapers helps a lot."

Union City Family Center Diaper Bank Client

Community partners also see how this stress relief can result in long-term mental health benefits for families.

"I have worked closely with many postpartum moms who have said the diaper program has helped lower their stress and anxiety, overall decreasing their chances of postpartum depression."

Lotus Bloom, Room to Bloom at Castlemont Staff Member

63%
OF PARTNER
ORGANIZATION STAFF SAID
THAT BECAUSE OF THE
DIAPER PROGRAM, THEIR
CLIENTS HAVE INCREASED
SELF-ESTEEM TIED TO
MEETING THEIR CHILD'S
IMMEDIATE NEEDS.

child's health and comfort when they have access to enough diapers. Caregivers shift from changing their child's diaper when they can to when their child needs it. Caregivers said that having enough diapers helps their children to be more comfortable, sleep better, have less diaper rash, and cry less.

Families are happier.

The HAMO diaper program helps eliminate the stress and worry for many families having to figure out how to purchase diapers. This financial and stress relief enables caregivers to focus on and provide for their child. Being able to meet their child's immediate needs instills confidence in their parenting abilities.

"I am able to feel less stress and therefore be [happier] and enjoy every minute with my child. We feel less stress about having enough money for all of my child's needs."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

Children are healthier.

Caregivers see an improvement in their

"The diaper program has helped me feel less stress about changing diapers. I don't have to wait until diaper no longer holds more to change it. My baby is more comfortable."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

"It has helped with my second child, he has much fewer diaper rashes, fussiness, because we didn't feel like we had to conserve as much as we did for our first born."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

A few caregivers also talked about how their access to diapers impacted their potty-training experience. They felt less pressure around potty-training their children knowing that they could go back to diapers if their child needed to.

Caregivers connect with their community and other resources.

Social support and community connection is critical to a family's well-being. Diapers are a way for caregivers to connect with their community, especially during a time of extended isolation. Families connect with others when they visit community organizations to pick up diapers, when program staff drop off diapers, or when families pick up diapers for other families.

"The HAMO program is beyond a diaper distribution program. It gave... families opportunities to support each other (picking up diapers for other families who do not have a car) and gave them a sense of social connection and opportunity to advocate for their friends and neighbors."

Lotus Bloom, San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

"I'm so grateful to [Room to Bloom (Castlemont) staff member]. She has been so helpful and resourceful. She keeps my family well-informed about so many resources, especially the diaper program. We appreciate her and the organization overall as a presence in our community."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

Partner organizations play a crucial role in building community, being a place where families get connected to resources and visit people who they know care for them. See the next section for more about how the diaper program enhances partner organizations' ability to serve clients.

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

Access to diapers impacts entire communities.

Partner organizations have used the diaper program as a strategy to help alleviate poverty and build resilience in their local communities. One partner organization distributed diapers to fathers in a violence interruption program. Staff described how the pressure some fathers felt to provide for their families combined with limited options to earn money played a role in their involvement with community violence.

When partner organizations are situated within communities, their efforts permeate beyond individual families and benefit the entire community. Partner organizations provide the resources, services, and basic needs supports that many families in their community need. And when numerous families have access to what they need, entire communities can thrive.

“One of our collaborative organizational partners is a violence interruption program that works with individuals who have been impacted by community violence... [Program staff] work with men who have been involved in homicides, community violence, and drugs... Now they’re regular participants in the diaper [program]... Part of the reason why [some of the men are] out there and involved in the streets is because they’re trying to provide for their family. And so, [the violence interruption program] now offers diapers to their young men if they know they have babies and small children.”

Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center Staff Member

“[We are] located in the community right next door to Castlemont. There’s not really many stores that are available or supermarkets that are close to us. We’re right in the center of east Oakland. So that’s a big reward for us. [There are] a lot of families who are thankful to have essential workers right here to help them.”

Youth Uprising Staff Member, a partner organization to Lotus Bloom Room to Bloom at Castlemont

Fathers benefit from the diaper program, too.

The diaper program helps fathers build their confidence as a parent, engage more with their children, and strengthen relationships with their co-parent. Fathers indicated that being seen as a provider and bringing a needed item into the home was important to them.

“There was one case where the [program staff] shared that the young man he was working with walked into the mother of his child’s home with a box of diapers and wipes and it helped resolve all kinds of drama that was going on between the two of them...So let’s keep these diapers going because it’s helping our young men improve their ability to be strong, active, contributing fathers...This was a very non-traditional route to get those fathers, those very young fathers, many of them are teenagers, engaged in the importance of early caregiving.”

Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center Staff Member

“A lot of the clients have been laid off and financially going through some challenges. And to be able to [go] into their home with diapers really builds up their self-esteem... being able to provide for your family, especially newborns. And when you do come into the house and you have diapers and that’s an expense, something that is very, very needed. They feel like they get more appreciation from their partners.”

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

“There was a dad who came for diapers, very young. He must’ve been about 28, very athletic. When he picked up the boxes, we made eye contact and he said, I never had to do this before. I was always able to provide for my family. His eyes got a little teary. Like those are the types of help that I hope I never have to provide. And yet, it happened again and again and again at the beginning of the pandemic. It was very tough to see in our programming.”

Union City Family Resource Center Staff Member

“Our mission is to disrupt cycles of poverty and trauma and empower families to build strong futures. A part of disrupting cycles of poverty and trauma is by meeting basic, concrete needs and to engage and develop a relationship and allow client families to understand that you really do care for them. You want to work in partnership with them to give them a hand up and not just a handout. What we’re really doing is we’re putting first and foremost the needs of the families at the forefront of the relationship by saying, we know one of the core needs are diapers. And so, if we can lighten your burden financially in that way, then we have this to offer.”

LINCOLN MANDELA FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER STAFF MEMBER

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

HAMO's diaper program enhances partner organizations' abilities to serve families.

HAMO's partner organizations offer a wide range of services that support families and children to live in a safe, healthy, and secure environment. HAMO's diaper program helps partner organizations with outreach, retention, and relationship-building.

Figure 7. Partner staff members are better able to serve their clients because of HAMO's diaper program.



Source: Alameda HAMO Partner Survey (March-April 2021), n=53.

The diaper program is a tool for partner organizations to build trust and deepen their relationships with families.

The diaper program provides opportunities for partner staff to establish trust and build rapport with clients since they see each other every month for diaper pickups. Diapers are a way for partner staff to show they care about their clients' basic needs and that they can offer support with other resources and services. Partner staff acknowledge that providing free diapers may not solve all their clients' problems; however, it does open doors for clients to trust them for support.

"The families feel very supported, and we have been able to create a deeper and more impactful relationship. The families know that we are there for them."

Lotus Bloom, San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

"When recruiting new families to receive R&R [Resource and Referral] services, the diaper program is a great incentive to get the families to know and trust us."

Lotus Bloom, Room to Bloom at Castlemont Staff Member

Once a relationship is formed between partner staff and a family, it makes it much easier for partner staff to support the family with their other needs.

"It has helped me to get to know new clients about their needs. Offering diaper resources has gained their trust in me and they opened up to share their personal struggles. As a Family Navigator, it was very helpful to have this relationship so that I can refer them to appropriate services depending on their needs."

Lotus Bloom, San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

The diaper program helped partner organizations to maintain relationships and communication with their clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, due to the shelter-in-place order because of the pandemic, Alameda County Public Health only operated in-person for diaper deliveries. Diaper delivery was an opportunity for them to check in with their clients during a time of distress and isolation.

"The nurse that communicates with me [name], she goes above and beyond. She calls and checks in genuinely and shows me compassion as well as gives me leads on things that can help better my situation. I was displaced thanks to EDD's [Employment Development Department] freezing of my account and depressed. I appreciate the people that work there. They help others like me have more hope during these crazy times."

Alameda County Diaper Bank Program Client

"This program has helped me see my clients during the pandemic. I deliver diapers to their homes and can see them from a safe distance outside. It also helps client to stay connected when they may otherwise drift away from the program."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

"[The diaper program] has allowed us to continue to maintain relationships and safe social interactions during the pandemic."

Union City Family Resource Center Staff Member

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

Because of the diaper program, partner staff have been able to create long-lasting relationships and trust with clients. Previous diaper clients continue to come back to their neighborhood's family resource center to access and seek out other resources for their family.

"It's a way to build trust and to have a two-year relationship with a family or sometimes a lifetime relationship with families. [Previous diaper program clients] still call me. It was very useful and helpful for all the families."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

"Relationships are built and continue to grow at our site each month that diapers are distributed."

Union City Family Resource Center Staff Member

The diaper program serves as an "entry point" for families to gain access to other services and programs.

HAMO's partner organizations provide a variety of resources and services for lower-income families. In some cases, clients would come to pick up diapers, and stay to take advantage of other services, such as parenting and child development resources, mental health services, and housing support. Diaper clients appreciate that they can access free diapers, a food pantry, and financial and housing support at the same location.

"For some clients, it's a beautiful way to keep them connected and engaged, and it makes it so that then they can hear about and get some of the support services that they and their babies really need, that they wouldn't know about, or wouldn't know how to get."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Because of the diaper program, families become more aware of the services and programs that are offered by their neighborhood family resource center. The Fatherhood Case Manager for the Alameda County Public Health Department said he has had fathers learn about his support group because they saw him distributing diapers to clients at the park. The Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center specializes in mental health resources and services; however, some clients only know them as the "diaper people." The diaper program is an asset to the Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center because it helps staff introduce diaper program clients to mental health and wellness resources.

"Traditionally, we provide counseling and mental health services for youth and families throughout the county. Families know us if they're connected to a school system, child welfare case, or juvenile justice case, but not a regular community member with a small baby that has no mental health diagnosis. They might not know what the big Lincoln blue and gold heart means, but for 0-5 families in West Oakland, they say 'oh, that's the diaper folks', and that's fine because that gives us a point of entry. We have diapers and we have family navigation and have this whole network of resources [for them]."

Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center Staff Member

"Because of social distancing, [the Fatherhood Initiative group] would meet out in the park - I've met two new clients at the park. I had a trunk full of diapers and there were people in the park with their kids. One guy came over and he wasn't a client of mine. And he says, 'Man, you guys are giving out diapers.' I gave him information [about the Fatherhood Initiative] and he said, 'That is a wonderful program. I'd like to be a part of it because the diapers have been a major expense for me.'"

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Providing free diapers allows partners to increase client engagement and retention in their programs.

Free diapers have served as a tool for partner organizations to increase their participation and engagement in other programs. Alameda County Public Health staff said that because of HAMO's diaper program they have seen an increase in engagement and retention among their clients. This incentive helps diaper program clients be more engaged in services and resources they receive from their case manager.

"Clients are more engaged when they know the home visitor will bring an incentive, such as diapers."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Once their basic needs are met, families are more able to focus on other aspects of family well-being. Some partner organizations said clients come to their check-ins and appointments more engaged after receiving diapers.

"I think when you're able to support families' basic needs such as with diaper delivery, you're able to focus on the other parts of parenting. You're able to address child development, depression, and trauma because it's one less thing for them to worry about... I think that it helps us to focus on those bigger, broader needs for parents... and really what we're trying to do to support parenting and strengthen families."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY

HAMO's diaper program supports staff satisfaction within partner organizations.

Partner staff have witnessed joy and smiles on their clients' faces when they come to pick up diapers. The positive attitudes from diaper program clients inspire partner staff to go above and beyond and support their clients even more.

"The diaper program has affected my ability to work with our families in a positive way. It is an amazing feeling to tell a parent who is pregnant and lacking basic needs that HAMO will provide free diapers for three years!!! The glow and relief in the parents' faces are priceless."

Union City Family Resource Center Staff Member

"[I love seeing] the specific relief when they pick up their diapers. They're there on time. They can't wait. And the thanks that we get! It's like my favorite day, because we get to see people, and we get to see the enormity of the relief that this is for families."

UNION CITY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER STAFF MEMBER



KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY



Families' need for diapers drastically increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many families and caregivers to experience financial hardships making it hard to diaper their children.

Ninety-two percent of Alameda County Diaper Bank clients reported their need for diapers increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic added a deeper layer to the barriers that lower-income families were already facing before the pandemic.

"A lot of families are struggling right now on paying bills and keeping a roof over their head."

Lotus Bloom, Room to Bloom at Castlemont Staff Member

"Throughout the pandemic, a lot of the families didn't qualify for any stimulus checks; they didn't qualify for unemployment, or they didn't have any sort of financial help."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Diaper program clients shared how diapers became even more difficult to afford due to the lack of available jobs and limited income. The economic pressures families faced meant that some families and caregivers had to resort to unhygienic or unsafe means to diaper their babies and young children. Partner organizations also shared how the COVID-19 pandemic led to increased diaper need, largely due to more families and caregivers not having the financial means to purchase diapers.

"A dad was cutting up shirts and figuring out how to make cloth diapers. He was really trying to figure out how to best support his family because he had lost his job."

Lotus Bloom, San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

"What we're experiencing as a country and as a community during this pandemic absolutely has impacted our families and their need for having this stable resource."

Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center Staff Member

The COVID-19 pandemic made it hard for families to access diapers and other essentials to care for their family.

When Alameda County mandated a shelter-in-place order, many families found themselves stocking up on essentials and supplies to get by during the pandemic. Due to excessive stocking, many stores lacked diapers and placed restrictions on how many an individual could buy. Furthermore, some families feared going into stores to buy diapers knowing it could expose their children and family to the virus.

"During the COVID pandemic, families were able to receive diapers (and wipes) when it was difficult to go shopping due to lines and fear of exposure."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

"As a parent with a disability, it was hard during COVID, and I can't drive. It was transportation issues and having a newborn and trying to carry diapers is hard."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

Diaper program clients needed additional support and resources to get through the pandemic. For many lower-income families in Alameda County, the need extended beyond diapers. Partner staff shared when families came to pick up diapers, they also requested other essentials such as food, housing support, and personal protective equipment. Partner organizations found themselves giving out other essentials besides diapers.

"We were thinking of how we can provide more physical things for families, food, money, financial assistance, you know, those really, really important resources that not only during COVID, but even before COVID [were needed]. The struggles and the challenges that families are facing are hard."

Lotus Bloom, Room to Bloom at Castlemont Staff Member

KEY FINDINGS - ALAMEDA COUNTY



HAMO's model supports families in unforeseen events, like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Families were appreciative to have the diaper program during a time of uncertainty.

Clients didn't have to worry as much about diapers and could direct their attention to other priorities. And, for many clients that was being able to pay another bill or feed their family.

"[The diaper program] helps me to save money to have for food since in this time of COVID the work has slowed down too much."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

"It is one less expense for us since due to the pandemic we do not have much work and we do have several debts. So, by not buying diapers we can pay a bill."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

For partner organizations, the diaper program was a tool for them to stay connected to their clients during the pandemic. With many families experiencing isolation due to the pandemic, partner staff utilized diaper distribution as an opportunity to regularly check-in and connect with their clients.

"[Diapers are a] very important resource, especially since last year when families lost or decreased their work due to the pandemic. The distribution of diapers during COVID-19 has given me the opportunity to stay connected with clients, especially those who have had newborn babies and meet the infants, even if it is through a window."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

"The diaper program has allowed for me to really be able to provide tangible assistance to families which they have so deeply needed, especially during the financial uncertainty that has gravely affected them during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have been able to obtain new clients, keep families in my program for a longer period of time, and provide them with overall better satisfaction with services they are receiving due to this amazing incentive."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

The existing infrastructure of HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank supported its partner organizations to meet their clients' diaper need during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

HAMO allowed partner organizations in Alameda County to be creative and adaptable with their distribution efforts. Partner organizations collaborated with other local community organizations to get diapers distributed to clients. For instance, the Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center partnered with the Prescott Food Pantry and other local organizations to distribute diapers to families in the West Oakland community.

"We're working with the Prescott-Joseph Center and their food pantry because they're also partnering with the food bank and the World Central Kitchen, and other organizations who were trying to get food and other concrete needs out to the West Oakland community. We just added in our diapers because we were already partnering with them. This is our current approach, and a lot of it was influenced heavily by the pandemic."

Lincoln Mandela Resource Center Staff Member

Some partner organizations delivered diapers to clients' doorsteps, hosted drive through pickups and even met clients at a half-way point to get diapers into clients' hands. They were especially accommodating for clients who were COVID-19 positive.

"From May to July (2020) we were delivering diapers to families' homes. We focused on families that were COVID positive or experiencing symptoms."

Lotus Bloom, San Antonio Family Resource Center Staff Member

"The family resource center has accommodated me. [They] met me at an elementary school for me to pick up diapers. It's been a really big help and they gave me wipes."

Alameda County Diaper Program Client

"Some programs would ask their Community Health Outreach Worker (CHOW) to do the diaper deliveries. The CHOW would spend significant chunks of their time just delivering diapers."

Alameda County Public Health Staff Member

Although HAMO's primary commitment is to respond to their current Bay Area partners' diaper needs, they were prepared and equipped to expand diaper distribution and serve additional local community organizations that saw an increase in diaper need due to the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommendations for Policymakers

CREATE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DIAPER NEED.

Diapers are critical to families' health and economic security. Public benefits, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), do not cover or provide diapers, and virtually no federal child safety-net programs allocate benefits specifically for buying diapers.¹ Only one state, California, has taken advantage of the ability to use federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding for diapers.

Tremendous progress has been made to address diaper need in California, yet diaper need persists for too many families. Local diaper banks and organizations providing diapers need continued financial support to meet the substantial need for diapers. By providing access to diapers, diaper banks offer a critical support to the most economically strained families, create economies of scale for public dollars, and address substantial statewide need.

PROVIDE FLEXIBLE FUNDING TO COMMUNITY-BASED DIAPER BANKS.

Local diaper banks know how to best serve their community based on its needs and resources. Some communities might already have a strong diaper bank that can expand, and others might be best served by adding diaper distribution services to a food bank or a community center. The flexible funding HAMO received from the state allowed HAMO to engage with organizations in a variety of ways, meeting each organizations' unique needs. This ensures diapers can be distributed equitably to all families in need of diapers within their neighborhoods and is inclusive of families who may not otherwise qualify for safety net programs due to income, work, or immigration status.

The flexible funding was particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic, since it allowed HAMO to provide COVID-19 rapid relief diapers quickly to a wide range of partners. For example, HAMO partnered with the Oakland Unified School District to provide diapers to families when they came to pick up food and school supplies.

USE DIAPERS AS A TOOL TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, CONNECT FAMILIES TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY.

A diaper is more than just a diaper. The Bay Area Diaper Bank demonstrates that diapers can be used as a tool to support individual families and strengthen the community:

Diapers build and deepen relationships between families and the family support system.

The diaper program provides opportunities for partner staff to establish trust and build rapport with clients since they see each other every month for diaper pickups. Partner staff said that clients who had previously had challenges staying in touch were more responsive when they knew they could come pick up diapers.

Diapers support longer-term economic stability by enabling caregivers to work and go to school.

Nearly all childcare providers require families to provide disposable diapers. About 23% of caregivers said that receiving diapers allows them to go to or look for work, take their child to daycare, go to school, and/or attend job training.

Diapers create a ripple effect of access to other services.

Diaper programs can be an "entry point" for clients to gain access to other services and programs. Partner organizations use the diapers as an outreach tool to introduce families to their other services. Clients would come to pick up diapers, and stay to take advantage of other services, such as parenting and child development resources, mental health services, and housing support.

Diapers help families meet basic needs, and in turn, strengthen the health and well-being of families and communities.

Diapers are an important basic need. Once families' basic needs are met, they can focus on goals like education, career development, and community engagement. One partner organization distributed diapers to fathers in a violence interruption program because the need to provide for their families was a key reason they had been involved with community violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommendations for Diaper Banks

INTEGRATE DIAPER BANKS INTO EXISTING FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank model demonstrates the added benefit of incorporating diapers into existing family support programs:

Partner with community-based organizations to distribute diapers to families.

Community-based organizations, such as Family Resource Centers and Public Health Departments, already have relationships with lower-income families and the infrastructure to distribute diapers. Partner organizations can enhance their current programming for families by adding diapers. In addition to directly benefitting families with young children, diapers support community-based organizations with an outreach and relationship-building tool.

Allow partners flexibility with how they distribute diapers.

Partner organizations know their community best. Within program guidelines, HAMO allows partner organizations in Alameda County to be creative and adaptable with their distribution efforts. Some distribute diapers during home visits, some use diapers as an incentive to attend support groups, and others distribute diapers through a food pantry.

This flexibility is especially important during an emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Partner organizations quickly shifted their distribution strategies based on public health protocols and office closures. They were able to move quickly since they had freedom from HAMO to make these decisions.

CENTER THE PRIORITIES OF FAMILIES.

Diaper banks should consider the requests from parents and caregivers to honor their dignity and maximize the effectiveness of the diaper bank. HAMO and its community partners adapted the Bay Area Diaper Bank over time to best meet families' needs. HAMO's Bay Area Diaper Bank demonstrates the importance of the following practices:

Provide a full, reliable supply of diapers.

Families frequently mentioned the importance of being able to count on a full supply of diapers each month. This was a significant help financially and it eliminated the need for families to worry about how, where, and when they would get the additional diapers needed. The consistent supply also helped families build ongoing relationships with staff at partner organizations.

Treat participants as customers.

Families' experiences picking up the diapers is an important aspect of the diaper program. Many support programs don't consider the time it takes to access their service, creating a time burden for families. This burden is especially pronounced for people who use public transit, have inflexible work schedules, or lack childcare. It's important to engage all partner staff in understanding the diaper program logistics so they can best serve families and make sure families get what they need.

Track inventory carefully so partners can always provide the diaper sizes clients need.

Many partners have limited storage space and rely on receiving frequent diaper deliveries. Diaper programs need strong communication and inventory management systems to ensure they are supplying partner organizations with enough diapers in the sizes clients need.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. About the Evaluation

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation was guided by the following questions:

Who is participating in the diaper bank?

- What are the demographics of diaper bank participants? How does this compare with the demographics of lower-income families with young children in the region?
- What are the enrollment and participation patterns?

How is the diaper bank being implemented?

- What is HAMO's diaper distribution model?
- What are the distribution strategies used by the other CDSS diaper bank grantees?
- How does this build upon the research on diaper need, diaper banks, and support for families?

To what extent does the diaper bank benefit families?

- How do free diapers impact the budget choices of lower-income families with young children?
- Does having a secure supply of diapers reduce parent stress, improve child health, and improve family functioning?
- How does the diaper bank affect partner organizations' abilities to serve families?
- What are the other ways the diaper bank supports family and community well-being?

DATA SOURCES

The evaluation included the following data sources:

Client Surveys: Administered a brief (~5 min) online survey for diaper program clients in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Farsi, and Amharic. Partner organization staff members distributed the survey link to all diaper program participants. (n=292)

Client Virtual Focus Groups: Conducted 3 one-hour virtual focus groups with clients about their experience with the diaper program. (n=19)

Partner Surveys: Distributed a brief (~5 min) online survey for all staff members involved in diaper distribution. (n=53)

Partner Interviews: Conducted one-hour interviews with main contacts at program partners to learn the ways the organization integrates diapers into programming and services, how diaper distribution has changed pre and post COVID-19, and the ways diapers affect the organization's ability to serve families. (n=5)

Partner Frontline Staff Focus Groups: Conducted 2 one-hour virtual focus groups with frontline staff to learn the way staff distribute diapers and integrate diapers into programming, how the diaper program has affected staff members' ability to work with clients, and the ways staff members have observed families benefiting from the diapers. (n=12)

CDSS Diaper Bank Interviews: Conducted one-hour video-based interviews with the four food banks receiving state funds to distribute diapers to learn their distribution models and strategies. (n=4)

Literature Review: Provided broader context for HAMO's work by synthesizing the research related to diaper need, diaper programs, and support for families.

Document Review: Reviewed documents provided by HAMO and the food banks to better understand different distribution models and strategies.

HAMO Staff Interview: Conducted a one-hour interview with HAMO staff to learn about HAMO's distribution model pre- and post-COVID-19.

Administrative Data: Aggregated and analyzed existing administrative data held by HAMO and its partners. This included client demographics and diaper program enrollment data.

DATA LIMITATIONS

As with any evaluation, there are limitations to the data collected by the evaluation team. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted program operations and evaluation activities. Several partner organizations were closed at the start of the pandemic and all partner organizations had to adapt the way they distributed diapers due to the pandemic. Additionally, HAMO and partners prioritized providing diapers as quickly as possible to provide COVID-19 relief which at times impacted the quality of the administrative data. Client surveys were distributed through email and text messages to follow social distancing protocols. The lack of a hard copy, in-person survey option may have influenced who was able to respond. Additionally, client focus groups were done virtually through zoom which may have influenced who was able to participate.

The evaluation included 5 of the 66 partner organizations working with HAMO in the Bay Area region. While these 5 organizations included a range of organizations, and represented more than one third (36%) of families served by HAMO in Alameda County, the findings might not be generalizable to all Bay Area Diaper Bank partners and clients.

Client surveys were available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Farsi, and Amharic. While this covered the languages spoken by most clients, it does not include all clients. Client focus groups were conducted in English and Spanish with an interpreter. The use of interpreters and translators might have filtered and reduced the full meaning and takeaways available to the evaluation team, limiting this report's ability to accurately reflect and embody non-English voices.

As with any evaluation, this report is limited by researcher bias. The evaluation team members have their own set of histories, understandings, and backgrounds, which inherently affects observations, analysis, and the interpretive findings and themes that emerge.

Appendix B. Alameda County Diaper Bank Demographic Data

Table 1. Alameda County Race/Ethnicity of Primary Caregiver Data by Program

Race/ Ethnicity	# of MPCAH clients	% of MPCAH clients	# of NRFS	clients % of NRFS	clients # of MPCAH and NRFS	% of MPCAH and NRFS
African American/Black	391	55%	332	16%	723	26%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	<1%	44	2%	45	2%
Asian	29	4%	554	27%	583	21%
Hispanic	245	35%	987	49%	1,232	45%
Middle Eastern	1	<1%	NA	NA	1*	<1%*
Multi-Racial (2 or more race/ethnicities)	11	2%	8	<1%	19	1%
Pacific Islander	6	1%	16	1%	22	1%
White	16	2%	90	4%	106	4%
Identifies in another way	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Refused to state	9	1%	NA	NA	9*	<1%*

Sources: Total clients served data at Neighborhoods Ready for School (NRFS) sites compiled by First 5 Alameda (July 2020-June 2021), n=3,680. Alameda County Public Health Department's Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Department (MPCAH) program enrollment data compiled by MPCAH (July 2020-June 2021), n=768. Race/ethnicity data was unavailable for approximately 8% of MPCAH clients and 45% of NRFS clients. Missing data was excluded from the analysis. Note: MPCAH and NRFS data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. Program staff report that the demographics of diaper program participants are generally representative of the total population they serve. *This number is only representative of MPCAH respondents because NRFS did not collect data for this race/ethnicity.

Table 2. HAMO Client Survey Respondent Zip Code by Program

Zip Code	# of MPCAHA clients	% of MPCAHA clients	# of NRFS	clients % of NRFS	clients # of MPCAHA and NRFS	% of MPCAHA and NRFS
94587	0	0%	60	30%	60	23%
94544	14	23%	19	10%	33	13%
94601	9	15%	24	12%	33	13%
94606	5	8%	21	11%	26	10%
94621	7	11%	16	8%	23	9%
94603	3	5%	16	8%	19	7%
94605	4	6%	10	5%	14	5%

Source: HAMO Bay Area Diaper Bank in Alameda County Client Survey (Feb-March 2021), n=292. Zip code data was unavailable for 11% of respondents. Missing data was excluded from the analysis. Note: Zip code is only shown for zip codes where there were more than 10 responses. Note: West Oakland was underrepresented in the Alameda County Client Survey data due to COVID-19-related enrollment and survey limitations. It is included in this report based on a partner organization's knowledge of their clients' neighborhoods.

Table 3. Alameda County Primary Language of Primary Caregiver Data by Program

Primary Language	# of MPCAHA clients	% of MPCAHA clients	# of NRFS clients	% of NRFS clients	# of MPCAHA and NRFS clients	% of MPCAHA and NRFS
Spanish	139	24%	957	51%	1,096	45%
English	399	70%	416	22%	815	33%
Mandarin	1	<1%	212	11%	213	9%
Cantonese	3	1%	118	6%	121	5%
Other (unspecified)	17	3%	54	3%	71	3%
Mam	8	1%	22	1%	30	1%
Vietnamese	0	0%	29	2%	29	1%
Arabic	1	<1%	23	1%	24	1%
Hindi	0	0%	16	1%	16	1%
Tagalog	1	<1%	12	1%	13	1%
Farsi	0	0%	5	<1%	5	<1%
Punjabi	0	0%	4	<1%	4	<1%
Korean	NA	NA	1	<1%	1*	<1%*
Hmong	NA	NA	1	<1%	1*	<1%*
Lao	0	0%	NA	NA	0**	0%**
Mongolian	0	0%	NA	NA	0**	0%**
Pashto	0	0%	NA	NA	0	0%

Sources: Total clients served data at Neighborhoods Ready for School (NRFS) sites compiled by First 5 Alameda (July 2020-June 2021), n=3,678. Alameda County Public Health Department’s Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Department (MPCAHA) program enrollment data compiled by MPCAHA (July 2020-June 2021), n=729. Language data was unavailable for approximately 22% of MPCAHA clients and 49% of NRFS clients. Missing data was excluded from the analysis. Note: MPCAHA and NRFS data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. Program staff report that the demographics of diaper program participants are generally representative of the total population they serve. *This number is only representative of NRFS respondents because MPCAHA did not collect data for this language. **This number is only representative of MPCAHA respondents because NRFS did not collect data for this language.

Table 4. Percentage of MPCAH families who reported income inadequate to meet their basic needs.

% of MPCAH and NRFS	
Families whose income does not meet their basic needs	84%

Source: Alameda County Public Health Department's Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Department (MPCAH) program enrollment data compiled by MPCAH (July 2020-June 2021), n=462. Note: MPCAH data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. Program staff report that the demographics of diaper program participants are generally representative of the total population they serve.

Table 5. Percentage of MPCAH families who faced housing insecurity or homelessness in 2020.

% of MPCAH clients	
Families who faced housing insecurity or homelessness in 2020	38%

Source: Alameda County Public Health Department's Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Department (MPCAH) program enrollment data compiled by MPCAH (July 2020-June 2021), n=683. Note: MPCAH data includes the demographics of all clients served, not only HAMO clients. Program staff report that the demographics of diaper program participants are generally representative of the total population they serve.



Appendix C. Alameda County Diaper Bank Client Survey Results

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1. Number of Client Responses by Survey

	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
NRFS	220	75%
MPCAH	72	25%

Table 2. NRFS Only: Which program do you receive diapers from?

	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Union City Family Center	97	44%
Room to Bloom (Castlemont)	64	29%
San Antonio Family Resource Center	50	23%
Lincoln Mandela Family Resource Center/West Oakland Food Pantry	9	4%

Table 3. Survey Language

	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
English		52%
Spanish		46%
Amharic		1%
Traditional Chinese		1%
Arabic		<1%

Table 4. How many children do you have enrolled in the diaper program?

	Percent of Responses
One Child	77%
Two Children	21%
Three Children	2%
Four Children	1%

Table 5. What is the age of your child? / What are the ages of the children?

	Percent of Responses
0-3 months	7%
4-6 months	11%
7-9 months	6%
10-12 months	13%
13-18 months	13%
19-23 months	9%
10-12 months	13%
13-18 months	13%
19-23 months	9%
2 years	25%
3 years	16%

Source note: Unlike all other survey items that are based on household, this item is based on the number of children each survey respondent has in the HAMO diaper program, n=363 children.

Table 6. About how long have you been getting diapers from this organization?

	Percent of Responses
Less than 6 months	40%
6-11 months	31%
12-17 months	16%
1.5 years to 2 years	9%
More than 2 years	4%

Table 7. About how often do you get diapers from this organization?

	Percent of Responses
Once a month	88%
Every other month	7%
Every few months	3%
Other	2%

Table 8. Before being in the diaper program, how often did you feel like you had enough diapers?

	Percent of Responses
Always	8%
Most of the time	13%
Sometimes	47%
Never	16%
Does not apply to me - I have been in the diaper program since my child was born.	17%

Table 9. Since being in the diaper program, how often do you feel like you have enough diapers?

	Percent of Responses
Always	54%
Most of the time	28%
Sometimes	15%
Never	4%

Table 10. My need for free diapers has increased because of COVID-19.

	Percent of Responses
Strongly agree	55%
Agree	37%
Disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	1%

Table 11. Because of the diaper program...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel less stress.	65%	34%	1%	<1%
My family feels less stress.	64%	34%	1%	<1%
I am a happier parent/caregiver.	59%	41%	1%	0%
My child is healthier.	56%	41%	3%	0%
I have more money in my budget for food.	51%	44%	4%	1%
It is easier to pay my bills.	49%	45%	6%	1%
I get connected to other resources.	42%	46%	9%	3%

Table 12. Having more diapers helps my child/children:
(check all that apply)

	Percent of Responses
Feel more comfortable	77%
Sleep better	59%
Have fewer diaper rashes	46%
Cry less	39%
Have fewer urinary tract infections	26%
None of the above	8%
In another way	2%

Respondents could check more than one response, thus percentages may equal to more than 100%.

Table 13. Receiving these diapers for my child/children allows me to:
(check all that apply)

	Percent of Responses
Reduce my stress	75%
Save money	69%
Pay a bill	58%
Buy groceries	58%
Go to work	12%
Look for work	11%
Take my child to daycare	8%
Go to school or job training	7%
None of the above	1%
In another way	1%

Respondents could check more than one response, thus percentages may equal to more than 100%.

Table 14. How satisfied are you with the quality of the diapers?

	Percent of Responses
Very satisfied	56%
Satisfied	36%
Somewhat satisfied	8%

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- How does the diaper program help you and your family?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the diaper program?



Appendix D. Alameda County Diaper Bank Partner Survey Results

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Number of Responses

	Number of Responses
Alameda	53

Table 2. Which site do you work at?

	Percent of Responses
Alameda County Maternal, Paternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MPCAH) - Department of Public Health	66%
Lotus Bloom - San Antonio Family Resource Center	13%
Union City Family Center	11%
Lotus Bloom - Room to Bloom at Castlemont	8%
Lincoln	2%

Table 3. MPCAH Only: Which MPCAH program do you work at? (check all that apply)

	Percent of Responses
Healthy Families America	26%
Nurse Family Partnership	20%
Building Bridges	17%
EmbraceHer	14%
A different program	14%
Black Infant Health	11%
Special Start	11%
DREAMS	9%
Family Advisory Committee	6%
Fatherhood Initiative	6%
Brighter Beginnings	3%
Healthy Start Case Management	3%

Source note: This item was only asked to MPCAH staff, n=35.



Survey Responses

**Table 4. How are you involved in diaper distribution?
(check all that apply)**

Note. Respondents who only said, "I do NOT work directly or indirectly with the diaper program." or "None of the above" were excluded from analysis.

	Percent of Responses
I distribute diapers to clients.	83%
I enroll clients in the diaper program	60%
I work closely with clients who receive diapers.	60%
I do outreach about the diaper program.	34%
I oversee staff who distribute diapers.	23%
I coordinate with HAMO about diapers.	19%
In another way	8%

Table 5. How long have you been involved with HAMO's diaper distribution at your organization?

	Percent of Responses
Less than 3 months	2%
3-6 months	2%
7-11 months	19%
1 to 1.5 years	13%
1.5 to 2 years	19%
More than 2 years	45%

**Table 6. In what ways does the diaper program affect you and your work?
(check all that apply)**

	Percent of Responses
Increases attendance or participation in programs	87%
Allows me to cultivate longer-lasting relationships with existing clients	85%
Helps me build more trust with clients	79%
Brings new clients into the organization	66%
In another way	8%

Table 7. In what ways have you seen the diaper program affect your clients? (check all that apply)

	Percent of Responses
Increased ability to pay for other basic needs	100%
Reduced parental stress	90%
Reduced parental anxiety	75%
Increased self-esteem tied to meeting child's immediate needs	63%
Improved child health (e.g., fewer diaper rashes and urinary tract infections)	44%
Increased parental access to childcare, employment, school, or job training	27%
In another way	6%

Table 8. How would your program be affected if the diaper program were to go away? (check all that apply)

	Percent of Responses
It would negatively impact our program's ability to serve clients.	85%
Fewer clients would come to our services or programs.	54%
Clients would be less likely to complete our programs.	46%
In another way	6%
None of the above	6%

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- Please describe how the diaper program has affected your ability to work with your clients. Please provide a specific example if possible.
- Please describe the ways you have observed families benefiting from the diapers. Please provide a specific example if possible.
- How can we make the diaper program better?



Appendix E. Interview and Focus Group Guiding Questions

PARTNER MAIN CONTACT STAFF INTERVIEWS

- HAMO's partners distribute diapers in many ways. What are the ways your organization distributes the diapers that it receives from HAMO?
 - › How has this changed pre and post COVID-19? (If applicable)
- For each of the ways you distribute diapers, can you please walk me through a diaper's typical journey step-by-step from when you receive the diapers from HAMO to when the diapers get to a family?
 - › How has this changed pre and post COVID-19? (If applicable)
- How are diapers integrated into your other programs and services?
 - › Are diapers provided at the same time as other items or services?
 - › Are diapers used as an incentive?
 - › Do clients need to participate in a specific program or service to be eligible for diapers?
- Do clients typically receive diapers while receiving other services, or do they generally interact with your organization just to get diapers?
- How do diapers affect your organization's ability to serve families?
 - › What would happen if your organization did not receive these diapers?
 - › Are there any challenges for your organization regarding distributing diapers?
- How has COVID-19 impacted diaper need for your families?
- In what ways have your staff observed families benefiting from the diapers?

HAMO STAFF INTERVIEW

- What are some of the different ways HAMO distributes diapers? (e.g., Core partners, One-time donations, COVID-19 relief?) Why do these different models exist?
- Can you please walk me through a diaper's typical journey step-by-step from the factory to HAMO to the partner organization to the family? How has this changed pre and post COVID-19?
- What does diaper distribution look like at each of the partners in the evaluation (pre and post-COVID-19)?
- How has HAMO adapted to serve partners during COVID-19?

- How is HAMO's distribution model similar to other diaper distribution models? What makes it unique?
- From your perspective, what are the strengths of HAMO's distribution model? What are the challenges?
- What characterizes a successful partnership? A less successful partnership? Does this present a barrier to access for some types of organizations?
- If you could give one piece of advice to someone starting a new diaper bank, what would it be?

CDSS GRANTEE DIAPER BANK INTERVIEWS

- What are the ways that your organization distributes diapers? (e.g., through a network of community partners, at a central warehouse) How has this changed pre and post COVID-19? (If applicable)
- What are the eligibility criteria for families to receive diapers? Are there limits on the number of diapers available in a particular time period?
- Approximately how many families receive diapers from your organization in a given year? Do you have an estimate of how many diapers your organization has distributed to date?
- In what ways are diapers integrated into other programs and services?
 - › Are diapers provided at the same time as other items or services?
 - › Are diapers used as an incentive?
 - › Do clients need to participate in a specific program or service to be eligible for diapers?
- Were you distributing diapers prior to receiving the state funding?
 - › If so, how was that similar to distribution now? How was it different?
 - › When the state funding ends, do you plan to continue distributing diapers?
- How do diapers affect your organization's ability to serve families? What would happen if your organization did not receive these diapers?
 - › Are there any challenges for your organization regarding distributing diapers?
 - › In what ways have your staff observed families benefiting from the diapers?
- How has COVID-19 impacted diaper need for your families?
- What did you think that we would talk about today that we haven't yet discussed?

FRONTLINE PARTNER STAFF FOCUS GROUPS

- Welcome and group agreements
- Introductory questions
 - › What's your name?
 - › What organization do you work at?
 - › What's your favorite type of cookie?
- Key questions
 - › How does the diaper program affect your ability to work with your clients?
 - › How have you observed families benefiting from the diapers?
 - › What suggestions do you have to make the diaper program better?
- Closing questions
 - › How would your program be affected if the diaper program were to go away?
 - › Is there anything else you can think of that we should know?

CLIENT FOCUS GROUPS

- Welcome and group agreements
- Introductory questions
 - › What's your name?
 - › How old is/are your child(ren) in the diaper program?
 - › What is one word you would use to describe your child?
- Key questions
 - › How does the diaper program help you and your family?
 - › What suggestions do you have to make the diaper program even better for the families that use it in the future?
- Closing question
 - › If you had 30 seconds to tell a friend about what the diaper program means to you, what would you say?
 - › Is there anything else you can think of that we should know?



Footnotes

1. The National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN). (n.d.). The Need. Retrieved from <https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/diaper-need/>
2. The National Diaper Bank Network and Huggies ®. (2017). Diaper Need and Its Impact on U.S. Families. Retrieved from <https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Diaper-Need-and-Its-Impact-on-US-Families.pdf>
3. Smith, M. V., Kruse, A., Weir, A., & Goldblum, J. (2013). Diaper need and its impact on child health. *Pediatrics*, 132(2), 253–259.
4. Sadler, L. S., Condon, E. M., Deng, S. Z., Ordway, M. R., Marchesseault, C., Miller, A., Alfano, J. S., & Weir, A. M. (2018). A diaper bank and home visiting partnership: Initial exploration of research and policy questions. *Public Health Nursing*, 35(2), 135-143.
5. Number of children served per month is estimated based on the number of diapers distributed each month and the number of diapers allotted per child. For example, each family typically picks up 180 diapers per month so if a site distributes 18,000 diapers, we estimate that 100 children were served (18,000/180=100).
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7. Calculated by Public Profit. $\$7.25/\text{hour}$ (federal minimum wage as of 07/2020) * 40 hours/week (parent working full time) * 52 weeks (1 year of work) = \$15,080. $\$1,872$ (estimated cost to diaper 2 children for 1 year) / \$15,080 (annual earnings for full-time work at federal minimum wage) * 100 = 12.4% of annual gross income.
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