

Diaper drive for teen moms

BY FLORENCE LOYIE, EDMONTON JOURNAL OCTOBER 8, 2009



Danielle Gerbrandt, left, with eight-month-old son Zachary, and Melissa Baird with four-month-old Benjamin, at Wednesday's diaper drive launch.

Photograph by: Ed Kaiser, The Journal, Edmonton Journal

A baby can go through 200 diapers a month, which can add up to a tremendous cost for financially strapped teen parents trying to build a future for themselves.

On Wednesday, a local centre for pregnant and parenting teens launched a diaper drive in support of some 600 young parents the nonprofit agency Terra works with each year.

Called Baby Heroes, the campaign's goal is to collect 5,000 boxes of diapers from sizes newborn to toddlers and help raise awareness in the community of the challenges teenage parents face daily, said Terra executive director Karen Mottershead.

"What we are doing is twofold," she said. "We are collecting the diapers because they are very expensive, and if we can help young parents redirect their dollars for food and winter coats for their kids, then that is a great thing. We also want to help the community better understand that these are young parents and they do need community support."

It's not uncommon to hear of a baby going through 200 diapers a month, and with a box of diapers ranging in price from \$35 to \$50, depending on the brand, the cost can add up. "That is money that can go toward education, clothing and food--the basic necessities," said media spokesman Marcus Gurske.

About 90 per cent of Terra's teen parents have poverty-level incomes, Mottershead said.

"Every day, teens at Terra are working hard to build a bright future for themselves and their children. By donating a box of diapers during the campaign, people in the community can be heroes for these young moms and dads as they raise our next generation of caring Edmontonians," campaign spokeswoman, Marie Stelmach, said in a release Wednesday.

The campaign runs until Oct. 25. The main drop-off location for donations is Centre Fountain near the Bay in Phase 1 of West Edmonton Mall. Kids Furniture Gallery and Bon Ton Bakery have also volunteered as drop-off locations.

Terra has been operating since 1971. Programs offered include individual counselling, parenting support, housing support and prenatal classes. For more information visit www.terraassociation.com

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