

Diaper Distribution Pilot

Iowa



Diaper Need in the U.S.

Diapers are essential for the health and well-being of babies and toddlers, but one in three families in the United States do not have enough of them to meet the needs of their babies. Diapers, alone, can cost 8% of a person's total income if they are making federal minimum wage, and parents and caregivers who don't have enough diapers often can't drop their children off at childcare. This leads to missed days at work and school, missed early education opportunities for toddlers, and an increased likelihood of painful rashes and infections. A lack of diapers is not only a public health issue, it is a formidable obstacle to economic mobility for low-income families.

About the Diaper Distribution Pilot

To help address diaper needs and increase economic security, the [Office of Community Services](#) (OCS) at the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) launched a new Diaper Distribution Demonstration and Research Pilot at the end of September 2022, during Diaper Need Awareness Week. This program, also known as the Diaper Distribution Pilot, channels new funding to expand existing diaper distribution services, through the robust network of anti-poverty services that the OCS already provides through the Community Services Block Grant. The Diaper Distribution Pilot puts another anti-poverty tool in the hands of Community Action Agencies and their partners, as part of their efforts to provide wraparound services for individuals and families with low incomes. The Diaper Distribution Pilot also connects families to economic mobility and family support services such as job training, educational support, Early Head Start, housing services, and more. OCS understands that this Diaper Distribution Pilot is about more than just diapers – it is about lifting a real and tangible barrier to health and wellbeing for low-income families, and about connecting those families with other programs that address the conditions and causes of poverty and help them take steps toward self-sufficiency.

About the Grant Recipient

[Iowa Community Action Association](#) (ICAA) was created as a result of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Since that time, Community Action has become a national network of local agencies that exist to develop local solutions to poverty. ICAA is assisted by the state's 16 Community Action Agencies, which serve more than 320,000 Iowans every year. ICAA services are at the forefront of innovative strategies to empower low-income citizens to become self-sufficient and fully engaged members of their communities.

Using the \$1.2 million awarded for the Diaper Distribution Pilot, ICAA will collaborate with the following local partners:

- [Hawkeye Area Community Action Program](#)
- [Operation Threshold](#)
- [Sieda Community Action](#)
- [Eastern Iowa Diaper Bank \(YPN Iowa\)](#)
- [Northeast Iowa Food Bank](#)
- [Food Bank of Iowa](#)

The partnership between ICAA and these six programs will provide consistent diaper and diapering supplies to the more than 606 children in need across the 18 pilot counties.

Diaper Need in Iowa

- **15.5%** of all children under the age of five in Iowa live in poverty.
- **24%** of all of the children under five living in Iowa live in one of the 18 counties that will participate in the diaper pilot.
- In the 18 counties participating in this project, **9,262 children** receive child care assistance, accounting for 23% of the total children enrolled in Iowa's 99 counties.
- A single-parent household in Iowa spends **41% of their income** on infant care, not accounting for diapers, diapering supplies, clothing for children, medicine, food, or other essential needs.