

# Diapers at the Doctor: Parent perceptions of a clinic-based diaper distribution program

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## Background

- Diapers are an expensive necessity
- 1 in 3 US families experiences diaper insecurity
- Traditional assistance programs do not include diapers as a covered expense
- An inadequate supply of diapers can negatively impact caregivers and children

## Community Partner



- **Diapers at the Doctor**
- Launched in September 2020 at the Gardner Packard Children's Health Center (GPCHC) which serves predominantly low-income families
- Caregivers of diaper-wearing children are eligible to receive 100 diapers per month

## Project Description

- Eligibility: Must be an English/Spanish speaker and a caregiver of a diaper-wearing child receiving care at GPCHC.
- Surveys: At pre-enrollment and each 1-month post-enrollment visit to evaluate diaper, financial, and food security
- Qualitative Interviews: Participants who had been in the program for  $\geq 3$  months were stratified into groups based on their utilization of the program
- Interviews were conducted and analyzed through team-based coding and theme analysis

## Outcomes

44 Interviews: 23 English, 21 Spanish

Demographics: 86% Hispanic, 10% White, 2% Native Hawaiian, 1% Black, 1% Asian

Unemployment: 80%  
Median children: 2.56

Financial Insecurity: 68.5%  
Food Insecurity: 43.4%  
Diaper Insecurity: 64.3%

*"Before, I had to get money for rent, get money for electricity, and still get money for diapers and wipes. And now, well honestly, we only buy wipes and well food and electricity. In other words, [having a sufficient number of diapers] it's one less concern." – Regular Participant*

## Lessons Learned

- The COVID-19 pandemic impacted financial and job security of participants
- Receiving diapers offsets some financial strain
- Single-income households struggle financially
- Improved circumstances result in a decreased need for support through the program
- Participation in the program alleviates diaper insecurity
- Receiving diapers impacts caregiver well-being

## Recommendations:

- Addition of more diaper distribution days/times
- Expansion of the variety of sizes available to include pull-ups
- Allow participants to obtain samples in order to determine the best diaper for their child