

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHAMPLAIN VALLEY DIAPER BANK

Good afternoon – I’m Amanda Herzberger, a volunteer leader with the Junior League of Champlain Valley Diaper Bank. We are a women’s volunteer organization that distributes diapers to community service agencies statewide. I am here to ask for \$380,000 in base funding for a staffed, state-sponsored diaper bank to make permanent the efforts of a 100% volunteer organization.

Diaper need impacts one in three families in the United States, and is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant or child clean, dry, and healthy. In Vermont, this amounts to approximately 23% of Vermonters in need of assistance.

Our diaper bank began in 2018 to respond to a long-standing need in our community, with the goal of distributing 100,000 diapers a year to five partners in Chittenden and Franklin Counties. With the onset of the pandemic, demand for diapers increased by 779% percent, and in 2022, we distributed a total of over 879,000 diapers throughout Vermont to 1,900 families per month through 57 community partners. Since our founding we’ve distributed over 2.5 MILLION diapers.

After five years, the diaper bank has grown beyond the League’s capacity to manage it. Last legislative session, the Senate Health and Welfare committee tasked us and other stakeholders to convene a working group to study diaper need in Vermont and identify a sustainable solution. The process concluded with a final report recommending state funding for a diaper bank as the most feasible and cost effective way to address diaper need for Vermonters.

The Vermont Parent Child Center Network is willing to sponsor this project, allowing a state sponsored diaper bank to operate more or less as it is operating now, but with the needed professional staff. This would give continuity to the agencies that have been providing such an important service for their families. The

requested funding would pay for diapers to help families in need, two dedicated staff, and modest operational costs.

It is our privilege to leverage our 100% volunteer organization to provide diapers to those in need across the State of Vermont, but this model is not sustainable. Unless action is taken, the statewide program will end this summer. We hope that you will include a base fund appropriation in the FY24 budget to continue this critical resource that addresses a long-standing need for many Vermont families. Thank you.

Amanda Herzberger
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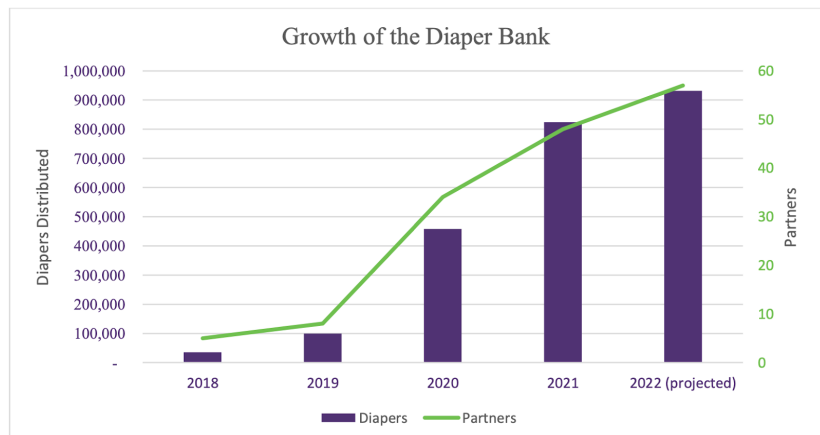
| State Diaper Bank Proposal

Defining Diaper Need

- Diaper need is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant or child clean, dry, and healthy
- Diaper need impacts one in three U.S. families
- It can cost up to \$80 per month to diaper a child
- No state or federal safety-net program specifically supports the purchase of diapers. In fact, many of these programs don't allow spending money on diapers
- Without diapers, infants and toddlers cannot attend childcare. Without childcare, parents cannot go to work or school

History of the JLCV Diaper Bank

In 2018, the Diaper Bank was established by a group of volunteers through the Junior League of Champlain Valley (JLCV) whose members saw a need that was not being met by existing government subsidies or other support programs. Partnering with five organizations and relying primarily on community diaper drives, JLCV succeeded in distributing more than 35,000 diapers and diapering supplies in the Chittenden County area the first year.



Four years later, the JLCV Diaper Bank is now working statewide, partnering with 85 organizations and has distributed more than 2.3 million diapers in total. Since the onset of COVID, JLCV has secured some state funding for the procurement of diapers. Storage and distribution costs are borne by the League, as are the responsibilities of administering the program. The League also continues to fundraise to meet demand.



Why a State-Sponsored Program is Needed

The growth of this program has demonstrated the ongoing need of Vermont families for access to diapers and diapering supplies, and that a volunteer-based system is no longer adequate or sustainable.

Overview of the Solution | Proposal

JLCV is proposing a staffed, state-sponsored Diaper Bank to make permanent the efforts of a 100% volunteer organization. This option is the most cost-effective way of distributing diapers to families in need and leverages existing resources to establish a simple and sustainable model with a high degree of continuity from the existing program. The cost for FY24 is estimated to be \$380,000. We are requesting base state funding.

Frequently Asked Questions | State-Sponsored Diaper Bank

Does this proposal include an expansion of JLCV's existing services?

No. The proposed program will essentially be the same program as that created by the JLCV, but with three important differences: (1) operate as an entity separate and apart from the JLCV; (2) have two paid staffers in lieu of 100% volunteer labor; and (3) include a reliable funding source for discounted, bulk-purchased diapers and administrative costs.

Is diaper need being met in Vermont?

No. Although JLCV distributed over 825,000 diapers to 85 partners in 2022, we estimate that these efforts reach only 23% of Vermont children in need of assistance. Based on a recent survey of agency partners, just 50% of distributing agencies stated that the JLCV Diaper Bank was meeting all of the diapering support needs of their community.

Can the JLCV continue their level of support?

No. JLCV is a 100% volunteer organization based in Chittenden County. Demand for diapers has outpaced JLCV's ability to effectively administer and organize the Diaper Bank, which was never intended to operate statewide. Now is the time to establish a permanent solution to address diaper need in Vermont that can carry on JLCV's work.



Were other models for addressing diaper need statewide considered?

Yes. After reviewing several alternatives, a stakeholder working group including representatives from the JLCV, Parent Child Center Network, Vermont Foodbank, and Vermont Department of Children and Families identified state funding for a diaper bank as the most feasible and cost effective way to address diaper need. This proposal builds on the existing program and we estimate that it could distribute more than 1.25 million diapers a year for approximately \$380,000.



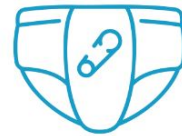
**DIAPER NEED IS REAL.
VERMONT IS NOT IMMUNE.**



Families struggle with
diaper need



Diapers needed
each day per child



The average monthly
cost to diaper a child

UNLIKE FOOD, DIAPERS ARE NOT COVERED BY WIC OR SNAP

Without diapers, infants and toddlers cannot participate in early childhood education programs. Without child care, parents cannot go to work or school and lose the opportunity to succeed.

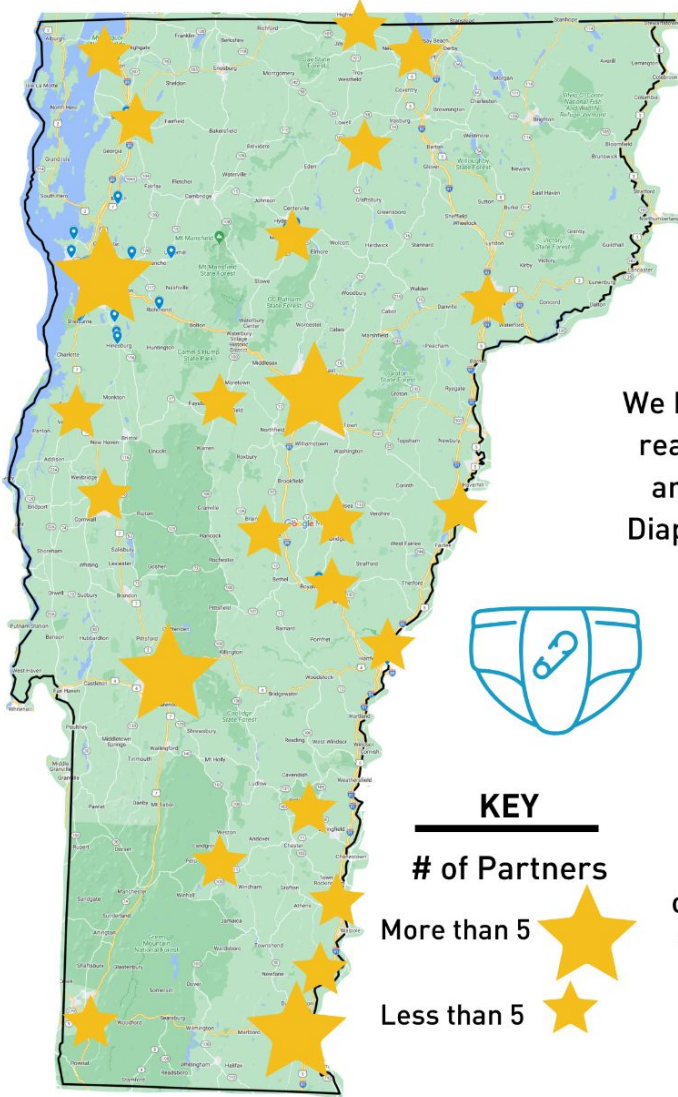
In response to diaper demand during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the JLCV Diaper Bank grew rapidly to meet the needs of Vermont families despite being entirely volunteer run.



Year	# of Diapers Distributed	# of Agency Partners
2018	35,548	5
2019	92,921	8
2020	458,148	34
2021	824,225	48
2022	879,619	57



Diaper Bank Distribution Partners



The Diaper Bank, and access to diapers for families, has been a vital resource for families in our community. When families can access this resource, their stress is minimized and their ability to respond to other needs increases as well. Children are safe, comfortable, and able to play, grow, and learn.
Jackie Reno, The Family Room

We have a good supply of all sizes and our shoppers are really starting to count on this. Diapers are expensive and not covered by any assistance programs, so the Diaper Bank has made a huge difference for our clients with a in diapers. Thank you.
Peter Leonard, Randolph Food Shelf

The Diaper Bank is truly under played when it comes to really acknowledging the worth of the program and should truly get more praise and funding!! It effects our community daily!
Kayla Bapp, Springfield Area PCC



The Diaper Bank has been a godsend to Lund families. They work closely with us to make sure our clients have what they need while they engage in treatment. This program helps to remove financial barriers for families who are working hard to improve their lives and those of their children.
Tricia Coates, Lund Center

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