



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico  
Program Title: Nursing Students Support Diaper Ministry  
Program Category: Health and Human Services

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton  
Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration  
Signature: 

### **Program Overview**

The students in the Henrico County-St Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing program used their experience to enhance the health of children in the community by increasing access to diapers for those families who are in need and unable to afford an adequate supply of fresh monthly diapers. This effort will also impact community outreach and improve opportunities for families struggling and in transition. The program will help them with essential family needs while making seeking out and continuing career opportunities easier.

### **Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality**

In 2018, a need was shared within the Lakeside community of Henrico County, Virginia, that needed to be addressed. While this neighborhood has food banks and other resources, diapers are a needed family item not covered by Food Stamps, WIC or other government resources for families. Diapers are expensive; if a family cannot afford them, children may be left in a soiled diaper for extended periods of time, leading to potential health risks. Additionally, childcare facilities require a parent or guardian to provide disposable diapers when leaving their child. Low-income families may be unable to take advantage of free, subsidized, or any childcare provisions if they are unable to afford disposable diapers. Diapers can cost more than \$120 per month. If families cannot get childcare for their children for this reason, they would be unable to attend work or school consistently, contributing to increased economic instability.

Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing, a program supported by Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) in Henrico County, Virginia, has played an important role in supporting this program.

### **How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria**

Through the diaper ministry supported by the Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing, the Lakeside community continues to be served and connected culturally. The program has addressed needs of economic insecurity and possible health concerns. The program has fostered donations of other items, such as formula during a time when there was a formula shortage, donations of baby clothes and children's clothes, donations of toys and car seats. The diaper ministry has increased connections in the community and addressed practical problems.

### **How Program Was Carried Out**

The diaper ministry started in September 2018 at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany was funded by a grant. The ministry aimed to support families in Henrico County's Lakeside neighborhood, providing valuable and needed assistance to struggling families and those in transition. Diapers are an expensive item and can take up a large part of a household budget. The costs can vary, depending on the number of children, their age and total household income. The neighborhood is close to HCPS' Elizabeth Holladay Elementary School and has a large Hispanic population, Arabic-speaking population and other ethnic groups. This was noted to be a large community need based on population figures, national trends and research published by Jennifer Randles in the Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences.

Research demonstrated that a third of U.S. families with children in diapers struggled with diaper scarcity, and the populations most affected were Hispanic families and people of color. Elizabeth Holladay Elementary School in Henrico County has a student population that is 44% Hispanic and 24% Black. More than 70% of students receive free or reduced-price lunches. When the ministry started in September 2018, it served 17 families. It now serves between 40 and 50 families each month. The ministry has also given the community an opportunity to share other needs and connect with other organizations, such as local food banks and HCPS' adult education programs and English language classes. Participating clients can learn about local vaccination clinics and other resources. The diaper ministry has opened opportunities to partner with Elizabeth Holladay Elementary School through community contacts, and enabled the Church of the Epiphany to aid the school in other projects. The Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing has held diaper drives to collect diapers for the diaper ministry as part of their community service projects. This directly helps those in the Lakeside community and furthers the understanding of health needs within the community. The diaper ministry has made community connections and partnerships available and connected participants with other organizations they may not have been able to reach on their own. Before the pandemic, Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing students also created an interactive display on dental hygiene for the children and families who attended, to promote positive oral care.

The objectives of the diaper ministry have been to enhance the health of children through increasing access for families to diapers who are in need and unable to afford diapers; therefore, improving opportunities for struggling families through community outreach and this has continued

to be successful. Many people continue to struggle with unemployment, and the need has continued to be great. The diaper ministry continued serving the community throughout the pandemic, distributing diapers on the third Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. to noon. From June 2019 through December 2019, 452 families were served. In 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of families increased to 682. In 2021, there were 542 families served, and in 2022, 493 families were served, a slight decline. The numbers demonstrate steady growth; the program helps between 40 and 50 families a month.

The diapers are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Diapers are distributed in newborn size to size 6. Baby Wipes are also donated to the ministry which are distributed. A form is completed for each family with their name on it, the number of children they have, the children's diaper size and each child's first name. One bag of diapers is distributed per family, with approximately 90 diapers inside. Depending on the size of diapers the child wears (this depends on how many are in a box it differs by size).

In the beginning, a bag of diapers had been given out for each child in the family in diapers, but the diaper supply was quickly being depleted and could not be sustained; therefore, limits were set. Families were never asked to present identification and only requested their name and child's diaper size to track the diapers for inventory purposes. After each diaper distribution, the numbers are fed into a database sheet. The diapers are inventoried each month and then ordered based on the need and number distributed. Sizes 4 through 6 tend to be in the greatest demand.

The main challenges concerned funding the ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic. There have also been some modifications made in the distribution of the diapers due to the pandemic. For example, in March 2020, during Phase I of the COVID-19 restrictions, two parishioners were assisting with the diaper distribution. Caution was being taken to limit the number of people being exposed to the public and continues to be observed, with a limited number of volunteers assisting, to efficiently handle the distribution of diapers efficiently in a safe and friendly atmosphere. In spring 2020, the decision was made to hand out the diapers, one bag per family, without pulling the forms and documenting each family, to keep the flow of people moving and minimize exposure. We found that, without detailed records, families were returning for more diapers as they discovered the tracking system was not in place. This re-created the issue of the depletion of our diaper inventory. April through August of 2020, four parishioners served in the diaper

distribution, socially distanced, wearing masks and keeping the recipients on the porch outside of the church. The diaper distribution has been very controlled; everyone attending has been very respectful of each other's space.

An additional challenge at that time was that, since parishioners had not been attending church in person, diaper donations had dwindled. Also, one source we had relied on had stopped donating diapers as well, and turned their focus toward other projects.

### **Financing and Staffing**

In June 2019, a grant was received for \$5,000 to the diaper ministry. The cost of sustaining the diaper ministry has been approximately \$2,500 annually. Previously many diaper drives were held through businesses of parishioners, other churches, church projects, and donations from parishioners and the Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing. All have helped to support the diaper ministry. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Richmond Friends Meeting group members donated funds, and other donations continue to support the program. As the diaper ministry has continued, those attending the diaper distribution have also given back. We have had those individuals who have had unused formula donate to the ministry, and found those in need of it during the formula shortage.

### **Program Results**

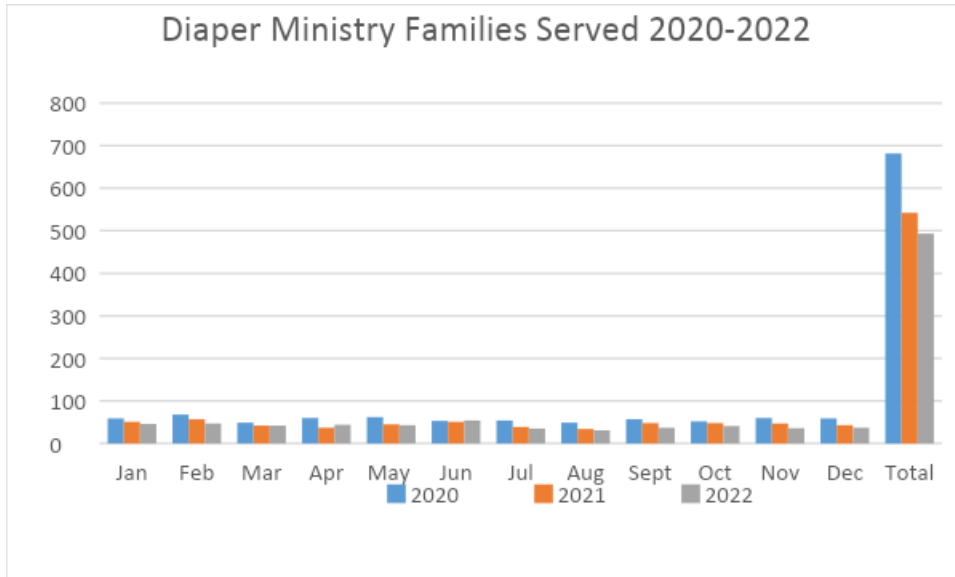
The diaper ministry has continued to grow since its inception in 2018, and has been supported by the Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing since 2019 through diaper drives. Even throughout the pandemic, the diaper ministry continued to support the needs of those in the community, probably more than before. The growth of the diaper ministry has been phenomenal, from the meager beginnings of 17 families to now serving between 40 and 50 families on a diaper distribution day. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, social distancing guidelines were recognized, and volunteers were kept at a minimum, but the diaper distribution continued every month without fail. The diaper drive — with community efforts such as those of Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing — continues to help support the mission of the diaper ministry. Donations of children's clothes were also made and made available to the attendees of the diaper distribution and were much appreciated. Additionally, donations of toys, a car seat and formula were also made available to the attendees of the diaper distribution. All items were met with enthusiasm and taken advantage of by those in need. Toiletries were also

made available that had been donated during the diaper distribution days, and families also benefited from these items.

### **Brief Summary**

In an attempt to help families struggling to get diapers for their young children, the Henrico County-St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing has helped manage a diaper ministry to provide essential supplies for the health and well-being of children in Henrico County, Virginia. Nursing students in the program collected diapers via drives and various forms of community outreach, working with other volunteers, businesses and organizations to ensure an inventory of diapers that would be distributed to the growing number of families in need. Their collaborative efforts were critical in the lives of families throughout Henrico, and they were able to adapt to the challenges of the pandemic as it developed in 2020. They were also able to provide assistance to these families in the form of how to properly care for the hygiene of their children. The program continues to be a successful pillar of its community because of the work of the nursing students and everyone involved.

## Nursing Students Support Diaper Ministry Supplemental Material



Class of 2023, Henrico County, St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing, collects diapers for diaper drive as community service project. They collected more than 78 packages of diapers for distribution.



Families of the diaper ministry come up to pick up the diapers and we just hand them out.

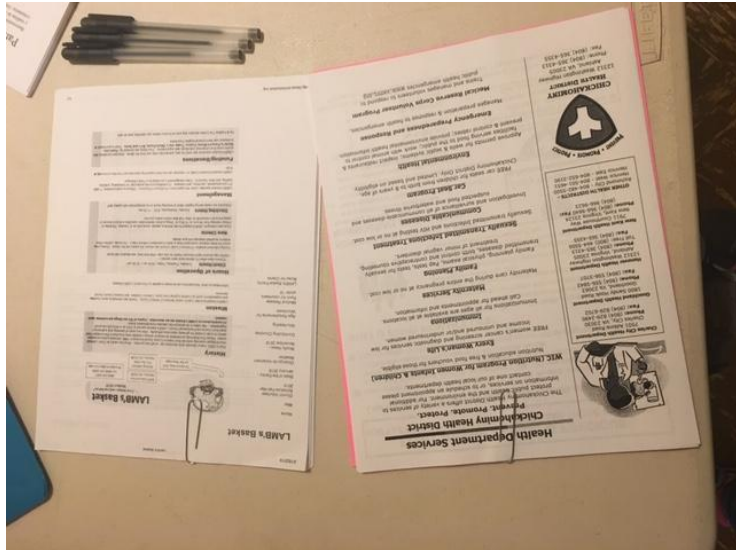




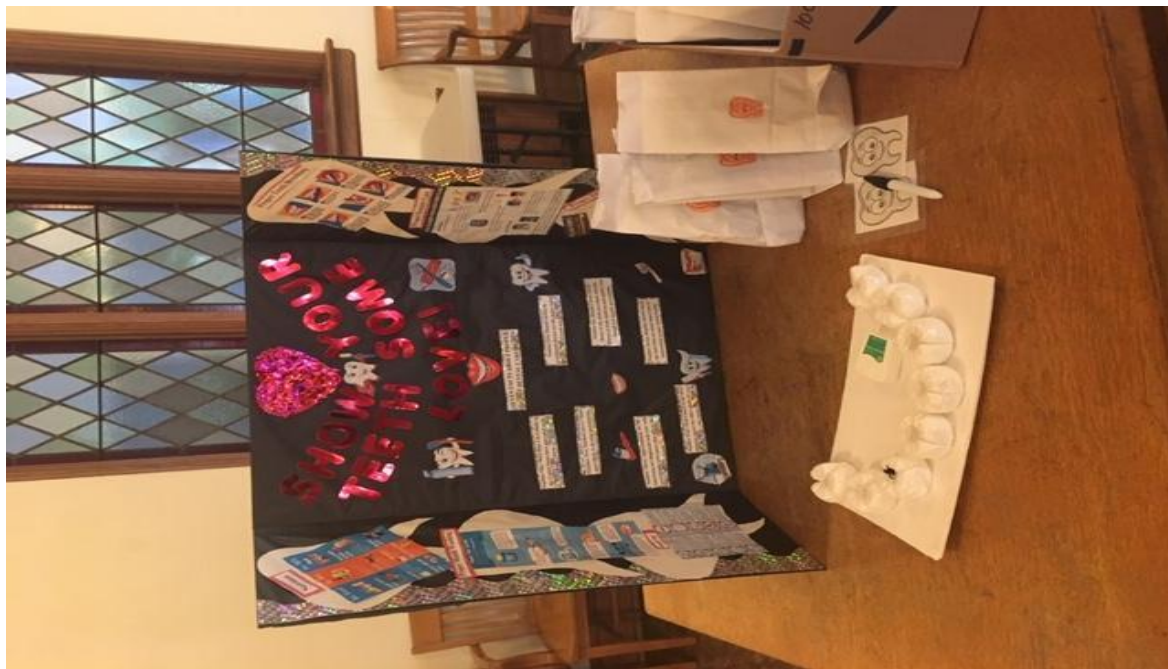
The families drive up and park and come up to the table to pick up the diapers.



Bags lined up in the parish hall waiting to be handed out during diaper distribution prior to the pandemic.



Handouts with information on other needs within the community such as vaccine clinics, food pantries, etc.



Educational materials created on display on dental hygiene created by Henrico County, St. Mary's Hospital School of Practical Nursing prior to pandemic.



On the front porch during a diaper distribution, greeting the community.

References:

Public School Review. (2022-2023. Holladay Elementary School.

<https://www.publicschoolreview.com/holladay-elementary-school-profile/23228>

Randles, J. (2022, August). [Fixing a Leaky U.S. Social Safety Net: Diapers, Policy, and Low-Income Families](#). *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 8(5), 166–183.