



**For Immediate Release**

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**Charlotte Behavioral Health Care Hosts Annual Diaper Drive  
to Benefit Healthy Start Program**

**PUNTA GORDA, Fla. (October 9, 2017)** – Diapers are a basic need for children – as essential as food, shelter, and a parent’s love – yet, at an average of almost \$1000/year, one in three families struggle to afford diapers to keep their babies clean, dry, and healthy.

An average infant uses up to 12 diapers per day, a toddler up to 8 per day. But in low income houses, a baby may be in a single diaper all day or longer. The cost of diapers for a young child can reach upwards of \$100 per month, a stressful amount for vulnerable families living on the edge. Sometimes families have to choose between diapers and food or other essentials for their families.

Jessica Martell, Office Manager at Healthy Start in Port Charlotte says, “When parents can’t afford diapers, they re-diaper less frequently. As a result of being left in a soiled diaper for longer periods, babies may develop diaper rash, which can lead to urinary tract or staph infections. Unfortunately, parents are even sometimes left with no option except to dry out soiled diapers for re-use.”

To help ensure that every child has the diapers they need, Charlotte Behavioral Health Care is hosting a diaper drive. The diapers donated from the diaper drive will benefit moms and infants still in diapers in the Charlotte County Healthy Start Program.

The drive ends on Tuesday, October 31. Diapers are needed in sizes 4, 5, and 6, and baby wipes are needed as well. Donations can be dropped off Monday – Thursday from 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. at Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, 1700 Education Avenue, Building A or from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday – Thursday at Northside Psychiatric Services, located at 1032 Tamiami Trail, Unit 7 in Port Charlotte.

The Charlotte County Healthy Start Coalition is a collaborative effort of doctors, nurses and other area health care professionals that join together to evaluate each pregnancy to help expectant moms have healthier babies, reduce infant mortality and improve the overall health and development of Charlotte County children. Each mom-to-be and newborn is screened to determine the types of services they might need for baby’s HEALTHY START in life.

For more information on the diaper drive or to donate throughout the year, please contact Martell at 941.764-3500 ext. 3121.

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