



For Immediate Release

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***Charlotte Behavioral Health Care Hosts Diaper Drive
for Healthy Start Program Babies in Need***

PUNTA GORDA, Fla. (October 1, 2018) – One in three American moms struggle every day to provide their babies with the basic essentials; the first and foremost - diapers. Providing diapers are so critical because there is very little help or public resources that address this issue. For example, food assistance programs (like food stamps) focus solely on food and nutrition and do not cover diapers. There are no federal assistance programs that pay for or provide diapers - not WIC, Food Stamps or Medicare. Non-profit organizations such as Charlotte County Healthy Start Coalition work with families and individuals in crisis and are constantly listing diapers as an ongoing and top priority.

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.

From October 1 - October 31, Charlotte Behavioral Health Care will host their 7th Annual Diaper Drive to benefit low-income families in the local Healthy Start program. Diapers are needed in sizes 4, 5, and 6; baby wipes are needed as well.

Items may be dropped off Monday – Thursday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at the front desk at Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, 1700 Education Avenue in Punta Gorda or at Northside Psychiatric Services' Healthy Start office located at 1032 Tamiami Trail #7 in Port Charlotte.

"We've been fortunate to meet our goal each year, which is a definite blessing to the families we serve in Charlotte County," said Jessica Martell, Office Manager at Charlotte Behavioral Health Care Healthy Start in Port Charlotte. "Our goal this year is to collect 2,500 diapers and 1500 wipes – so we really need your help!"

The items donated from the diaper drive will benefit moms and infants still in diapers in the Charlotte County Healthy Start Program. 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 Kelly Pomerville, director of Marketing and Public Relations at Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, at 941.639.8300 ext. 2275.

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