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INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Having trouble paying for diapers? Help is available

Having a young child is priceless. But as many parents know, it costs a lot to give a child what he or she needs.

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Take diapers, for example. A one-week supply can set you back about \$18. That adds up to \$936 a year. Many families struggle to pay for this must-have supply every week, according to a study in the journal *Pediatrics* published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The study found that almost one in three moms who had low incomes needed help paying for diapers. Many said they felt stressed out because of it. Some had to borrow diapers from other moms. About 8% of the mothers said they changed their children's diapers less often so their supply would last longer. Doing this can cause infections and skin problems, like diaper rash.

While many families in need can get help paying for baby food, formula and groceries through the Women, Infants and Children program or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, these federal assistance pro-

grams do not cover the cost of diapers. That's why at least 100 "diaper banks" have been set up to provide diapers to families who can't afford them.

The National Diaper Bank Network, a nonprofit organization, is working to set up diaper banks across the United States. It also takes donations and provides diapers to banks. To find a diaper bank near you, visit www.diaperbanknetwork.org/. The website also has information for people interested in starting a diaper bank or offering support.

If there is not a diaper bank near you, your local social services organization or religious group may provide diapers to families. You also can dial 2-1-1, a hotline available in most areas, for help.

If your family could use a hand with diapering needs, don't wait. Get help today for a happy, dry baby and less stress for you.

— Trisha Koriath