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# Why is access to diapers so important? Austin Diaper Bank reminds us

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Updated September 28, 2017 Filed in [baby](#), [children](#), [events](#), [family](#), [seniors](#).



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We've written a lot about the Austin Diaper Bank in the last month. When Hurricane Harvey hit, you rushed to do something, and one thing that Austin and folks from around the country did was donate diapers. Austin Diaper Bank has now sent more than 780,000 diapers for babies and adults to Hurricane Harvey-affected areas.



*Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center volunteer, Melinda Cook packs stacks of diapers for distribution in 2016 at the Austin Diaper Bank. Jessalyn Tamez / AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN*

Why are diapers such a big deal? They are one of those things not covered by the Women, Infant and Children Program (WIC) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or what we like colloquially refer to as food stamps. They also aren't covered by benefits like Medicare or Medicaid (unless you are a child who has incontinence passed the age of which you should be potty trained).

So, if your family is living in poverty or you're an older adult on a fixed income, you don't get help with buying diapers without having a program like the Austin Diaper Bank. The bank collects diapers and delivers them to 40 different local nonprofit groups from Georgetown to San Marcos. Since it started in 2013, it has donated 750,000 diapers locally.

This week is Diaper Need Awareness Week and to call attention to the need out there, the Austin Diaper Bank is having an open house 4-7 p.m. Friday at its offices at 8711 Burnet Road, Suite B-34. [www.austindiaperbank.org](http://www.austindiaperbank.org)

"Diaper Need Awareness Week is a great time for the public to learn how the diapers distributed year-round by the Austin Diaper Bank make a difference for thousands of Central Texas families who struggle to afford diapers," said Holly McDaniel, the bank's new executive director, in a press release. "Diaper need impacts an estimated

12,000 babies and toddlers in Travis County alone, in addition to a growing number of adults.”

Without clean diapers, babies cannot attend childcare programs, which means that their caregivers cannot go to work. Adults and babies without clean diapers also are at risk for infections and disease.

Come to the bank Friday, drop off some diapers and learn more about the need.

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