

Luis' Story:

Helping a Grieving Father

December 2, 2017 was one of the happiest days of Luis' life: he became a first-time father when his twin boys, Lenny and Luix were born. But only two weeks later, his joy unexpectedly turned to grief when his wife, Valeria, developed a blood clot in her heart and died suddenly.

Reeling from this enormous loss, Luis had to immediately think about what to do for his babies. Originally from the Dominican Republic, he doesn't have much family in this country except for his mother and sister. They are both limited in the support they can provide, as his mother is older and his sister works full-time and has a family. The social worker at the hospital provided a list of resources for Luis, and he immediately called Baby Basics, a program of Children's Aid and Family Services.

"The program is important, and it provided my boys and me with significant help when I needed it most," he says. "I felt frustrated and desperate when I called. They gave me diapers, wipes, clothing, toys and supermarket gifts cards, which allowed me to stretch my budget. It's hard to tell this story. I'm tearing up thinking about how Baby Basics helped me in my hour of need. It's difficult to explain to someone who hasn't gone through it."



"Being a father is beautiful. Baby Basics helped me to be a better father because they gave me help when I didn't have any."

Luis works in transportation and earns too much money to receive government assistance, yet all of the expenses related to caring for newborn twins were difficult to meet on one income. Baby Basics provided a desperately needed safety net for him and his babies when they had nowhere else to turn for help.

The twins are four years old now, and they are happy and outgoing, a testament to the love that Luis and his family have poured into them. Typical preschoolers, they are full of energy and love to talk. "Sometimes they talk too much," Luis jokes. When he is off from work, Luis takes the boys to the park and they play football, basketball, and baseball.

"Being a father is beautiful," Luis says. "Baby Basics helped me to be a better father because they gave me help when I didn't have any. From the bottom of my heart, I appreciate everything the program and its donors have done for us."



Did You Know...

1 in 3 Families Struggle to Afford Diapers?



Not having enough diapers is often a silent problem that affects many low-income families with babies. And all it takes is an unexpected emergency — a job loss, illness or car repair — and the effects on the family's finances can be devastating. There are no government safety net programs to address this need.

Our Baby Basics program is a true lifeline:

It provides free formula, diapers and other essentials to low-income families in Bergen, Passaic and Essex Counties. Without this vital program, families might have to ration diapers and change their babies less frequently, often leading to diaper rash and a host of other health problems. Additionally, many child care centers require families to bring a supply of diapers; the inability to afford diapers can prevent parents from working, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

You can help these struggling families and their babies by making a gift today either using the enclosed remittance card or online www.cafsnj.ejoinme.org/donate-now.

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Together, we are changing lives.

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Please give as generously as you can using the enclosed envelope or online at www.cafsnj.org.

Thank You!

Host a Diaper Drive!

Leading a Diaper Drive is also a meaningful service project for Girl/Boy Scouts, Rotary Clubs or other service groups, corporations, schools and religious or faith-based organizations.

Download a Baby Basics toolkit at www.cafsnj.org/baby-basics/#toolkit

Baby Basics Toolkit

