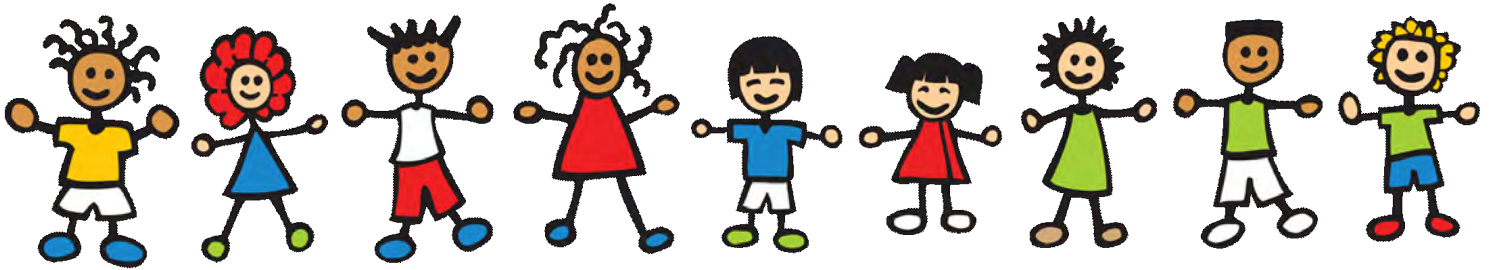


YOU CAN DO SO MUCH

THINGS YOU AND YOUR CHILD CAN DO TO HELP FAMILIES FACING HOMELESSNESS



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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Homelessness impacts neighborhoods throughout King and Snohomish counties. You see evidence of it on the news and on the streets and you know your child sees it too.

Teaching your child about this issue can impact your child's life as well as the community we live in.

Learning about the effects of homelessness, your child can:

- Develop an appreciation for diversity, while recognizing things we have in common
- Become more compassionate toward others
- Participate in nonprofit initiatives

The best way to address homelessness with your child is to keep it simple.

This guide provides some background information, topics to discuss and kid-friendly activities.

HOMELESSNESS TAKES MANY FORMS

HERE ARE SOME FACTS FROM THE DEPT. OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

A common misunderstanding is that most people are homeless due to substance abuse or mental illness. The reality is many families living with children in tents, tiny homes, cars or shelters lose their homes due to a combination of factors: high cost of housing, low wages, unemployment, lack of family support, illness, or domestic abuse. Before you talk to your children, here are some important facts.

Homelessness

Homelessness is defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as an individual or family lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is either a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill); or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. When most people think about homelessness, they think of someone sleeping and living on the streets. But homelessness takes many forms and isn't always obvious. Homelessness can essentially be broken into four categories: chronic, episodic, transitional, and hidden.

Chronic/long term homelessness is a term used for a person who is homeless for long periods usually because they don't have the resources

(family, friends, etc.) to change their living situation. These are often people experiencing ongoing mental health or addiction issues.

Episodic or cyclical homelessness occurs when a person falls in and out of being homeless, many times due to mental illness or addiction.

Situational or transitional/short-term homelessness is defined as a person forced into homelessness due to a life event (loss of a job, disaster, losing a family member who is the breadwinner, domestic violence).

Hidden homeless or couch surfing means sleeping at another person's home. In addition to not having a reliable place to stay every day, this option can cause a burden on the person with the home they are staying. There is no guarantee that they will be able to stay long-term. This population is considered "hidden" because they do not access homeless supports and services, despite their need for them. **For this reason, they do not appear in standard homelessness statistics.**

Babies of Homelessness serves families mostly in situational or hidden homeless situations. Lack of affordable housing is a primary cause of homelessness in families; often one or both parents are working, but not making a liveable wage. Additionally, events such as illness, unemployment, accidents and domestic violence limit the ability to secure stable and affordable housing.

BABIES OF HOMELESSNESS

ABOUT US

Since 2016, Babies of Homelessness has served more than 11,000 children by delivering diapers, pull-ups, formula, and wipes to families in need. As prices for essentials skyrocket, the demand for our services grows. Our diaper bank offers three programs to access services easily and quickly: direct service, partner distribution, and mobile service.

Direct Service: Families experiencing homelessness—living in cars, tent cities, encampments, tiny homes, motels, shelters, R.V.s, or couch surfing—call our intake line and place an order of diapers, wipes, and formula in preferred sizes and brands. We deliver their order directly to where they are.

Partner Distribution: We supply bulk quantities of diapers, wipes, and formula through community partner agencies because clients needing help with diapers have other needs. Each month, case managers submit orders. Our paid full-time operations manager pulls inventory from storage, loads the van, and drops bulk inventory quantities to each agency. Case managers then distribute inventory to their clients. Our easy ordering process, bulk quantity, and delivery service allow case managers to focus on delivering top-notch case management

without worrying about procuring diapers, storing diapers, writing thank yous and tax receipts, or picking up diapers.

Mobile Pickup Service: Four times a month, families pick up a box of diapers, a package of wipes, and, if needed, a can of formula at one of four bus-accessible locations in Everett, Bellevue or Seattle, or Kent. Clients call our intake line in advance to place an order. We provide a month's worth of diapers, where other agencies often times provide only enough for a week.

Our mission is simple, Babies of Homelessness delivers diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and formula and puts them into low-income families who need them. One in three families do not have enough diapers for their kids. The inability to provide enough clean diapers is a silent struggle. Diapers cost around \$100 a month, making them the 4th highest expense for low-income families.

Babies of Homelessness knows we are not solving the major issues that affect families in poverty.

However, something as simple as having enough diapers can contribute to better sleep for parents and children, help parents get to work or school because they can place their child in daycare, relieve stress, and help parents care for their child's most basic needs.

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS

A STARTING POINT ON WHAT TO SAY

Start simply and continue to talk as your child gets older. With a young child, it is important to tell them that they are safe. That while they have a home and food, some children are not as fortunate. Don't force the subject. It is best to wait until your child asks questions about this issue.

When you see a person facing homelessness, talk to your child about how that makes you feel when you know that person doesn't have a place to live.

Talk about how there is not one solution to this situation. Just building more houses is not enough. Families need affordable housing *and* steady incomes *and* family or community support.

Talk about how not everyone can afford an apartment or home and they may live in a shelter, in their car, or outside in a tent.

Talk about the various reasons why people are homeless. People are facing homelessness because they do not have enough money to pay for a house. They might work hard and still not have the money to pay for a place to live.

Talk about how not having a home means there's little room for possessions.

Talk about how children experiencing homelessness can look just like anyone else, but they don't live like everyone else. They do not have a warm bed to sleep in or their own room to play in. Their lives are different, but they are still kids.

Talk about how some people are homeless just for a little while; others are homeless for a longer time, maybe their entire lives.

Talk about children who are experiencing homelessness that are going to school. Currently there are more than 40,000 children facing homelessness enrolled in a Washington state school.

Talk about how some people facing homelessness have families, so they need to take care of their children too and that costs a lot of money.

Seattle has a monthly average rent of \$2,753. That means the average yearly rent cost for a two-bedroom apartment is \$33,036.

To pay that rent and not be rent cost-burdened, a person needs to earn at least \$117,986. – SmartAsset 2019

The wait for subsidized housing in Seattle can be up to three years.

READING LIST FOR CHILDREN

STORIES INSPIRE ACTION

Have your child read a book and then be prepared to discuss the book's message. Many of these books are available at King County libraries.

Picture Books (ages 5-8):

A Haitian Story of Hope: Sélavi: That is Life: by Youme Landowne

A Shelter In our Car by Monica Gunning

December by Eve Bunting

Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting

I Can Hear the Sun by Patricia Polacco

Lily and the Paper Man by Rebecca Upjohn

On Our Street: Our First Talk About Poverty (World Around Us) by Dr. Jillian Roberts

Shoebox Sam by Mary Brigid Barrett

Still a Family by Brenda Reeves Sturgis

Someplace to Go by Maria Testa

The Old Man by Sarah V.

The Can Man by Laura E. Williams

The Lady in the Box by Ann McGovern

Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan

Almost Teen (8-11)

Almost a Hero by John Neufeld

Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate

Hold Fast by Blue Balliett

How To Steal A Dog: A Novel by Barbara O'Connor

Just Under the Clouds by Melissa Sarno

Lizzie Flying Solo by Nanci Turner Stevenson

Money Hungry by Sharon G. Flake

Mr. Stink by David Williams

No Fixed Address by Susin Nielsen-Fernlund

Rich by Nikki Grimes

Roam by C. H. Armstrong

Secret in St. Something by Barbara Brooks Wallace

Stay by Bobbie Pyron

Teen (ages 12-15):

The Lunch Thief by Anne C. Bromley

Teen + Adult Fiction (ages 15+):

Almost Home by Jessica Blank

Can't Get There from Here by Todd Strasser

Smack by Melvin Burgess

Tyrell by Coe Booth

READING LIST WORKSHEET

CREATE YOUR OWN QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AFTER READING

How can you tell if a person is homeless?

If someone told you they were homeless, what would you say?

If you had nowhere to live, where would you go to school?

THINGS YOU CAN DO TOGETHER

PIGGY BANK OR DONATION JARS

Save Your Coins

When your child receives an allowance or gift money, encourage them to share a portion of the funds by creating a donation jar or purchasing a divided piggy bank that allows you to put money into different slots.

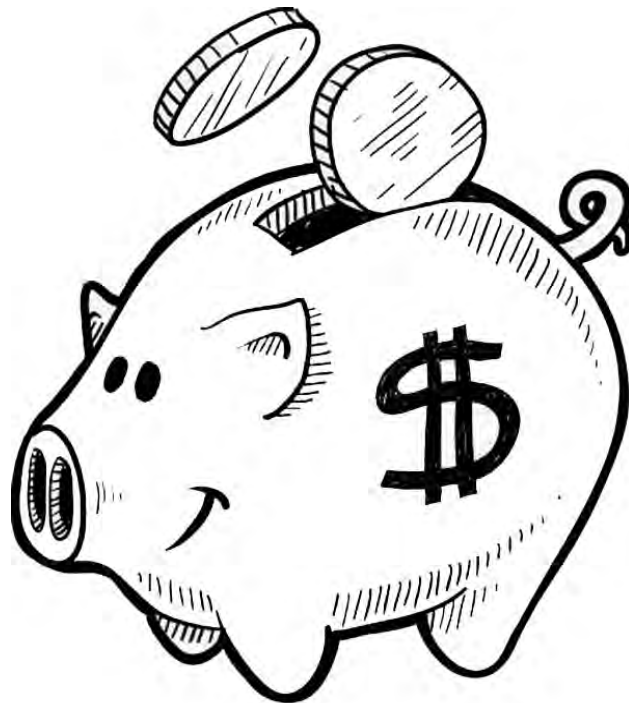
Each time the jar or piggy bank fills up, have your child donate to a local nonprofit (like Babies of Homelessness! 😊)

If you're able, consider matching your child's donation to make the occasion a family event and encourage generosity.

Share your own experiences donating time, money or belongings to charity and how you will continue to do so.

When your child gives, take photos of them and send to Babies of Homelessness to post on our Facebook page. Please sign our photo release to give us permission.

Read your child the thank you note written by Babies of Homelessness thanking your child for his or her donation.



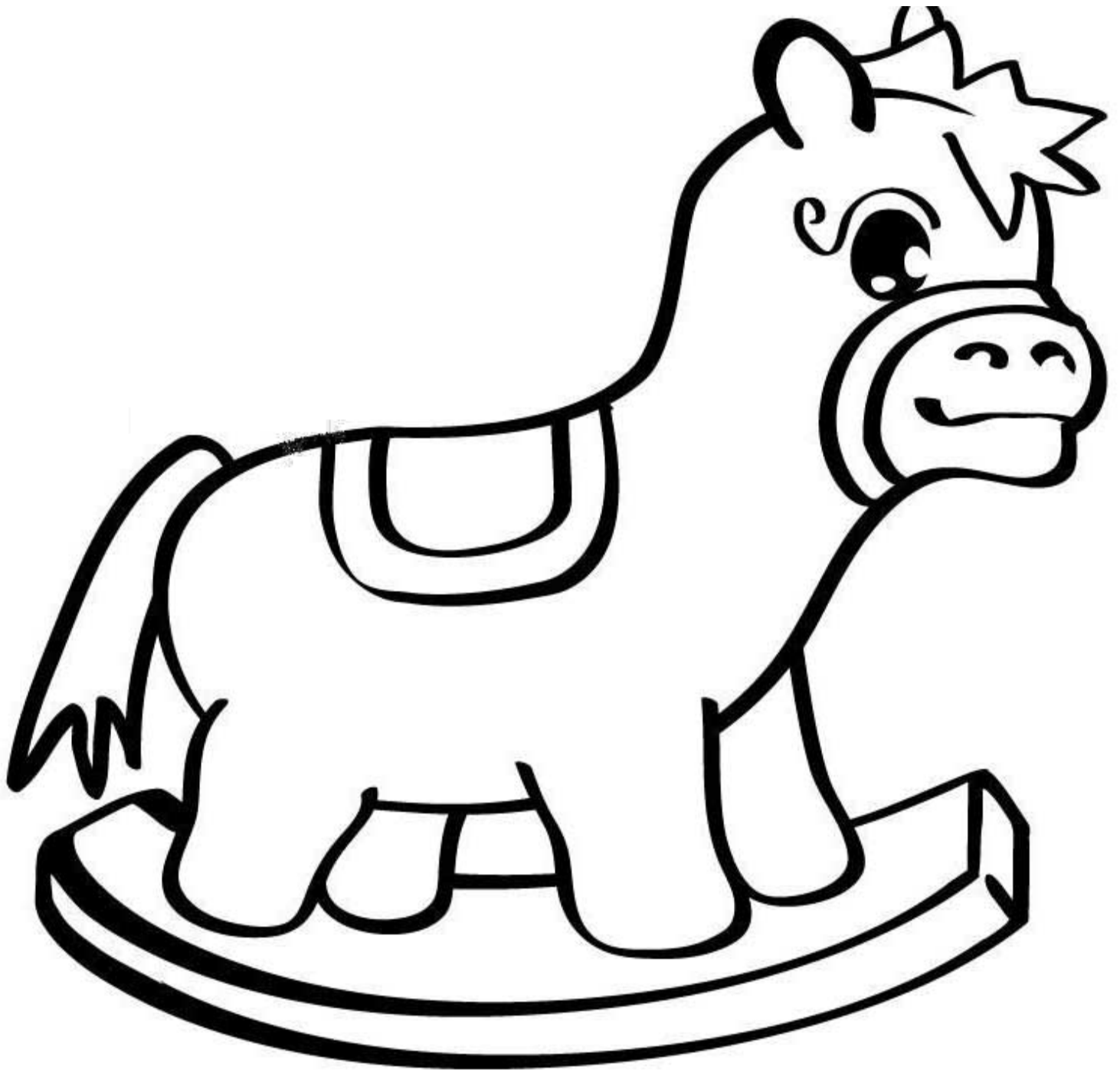
COLOR TIME

DECORATE THE BABIES OF HOMELESSNESS VAN



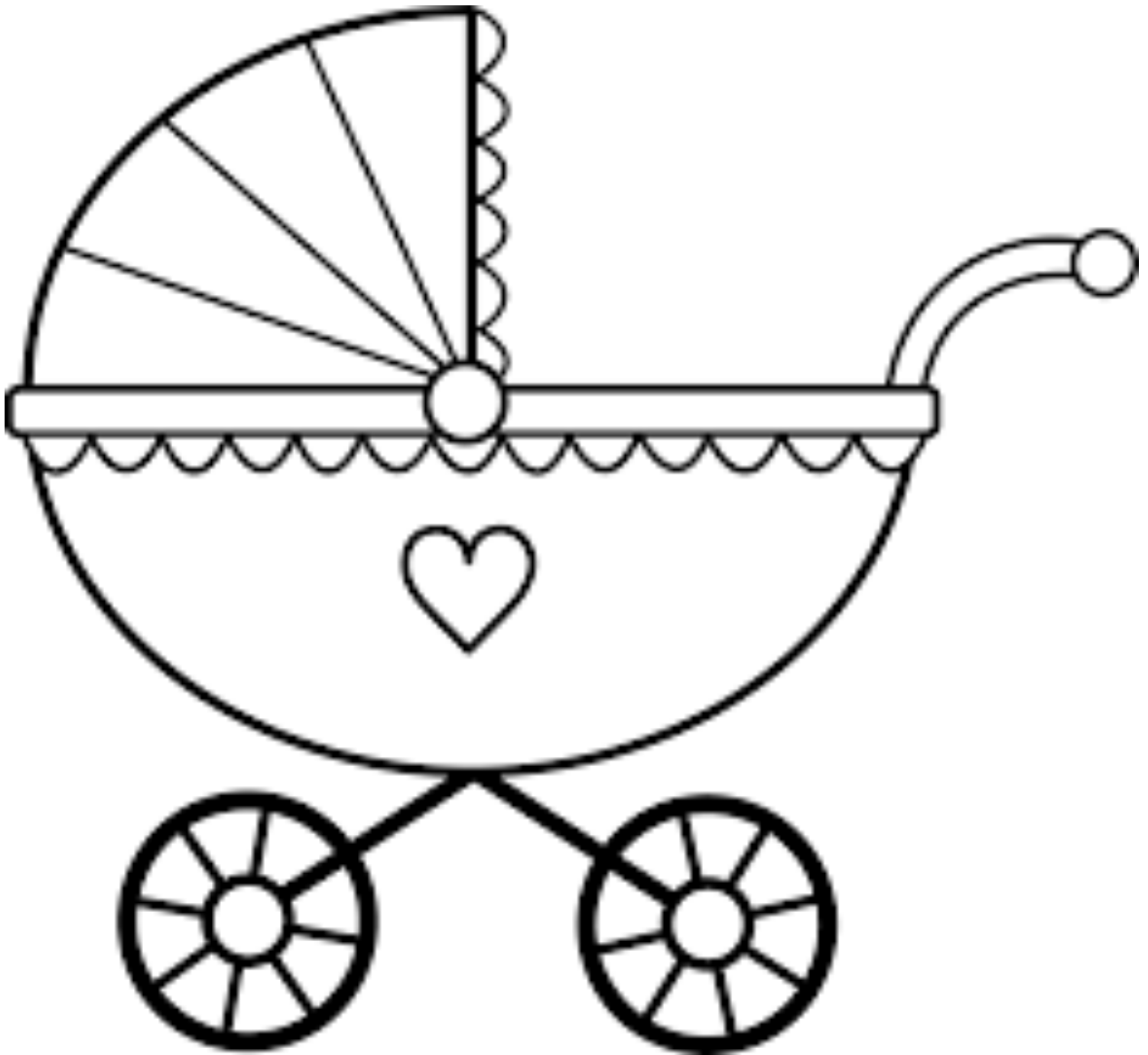
COLOR TIME

DONATE GENTLY USED TOYS TO OUR FRIENDS AT KIDVANTAGE



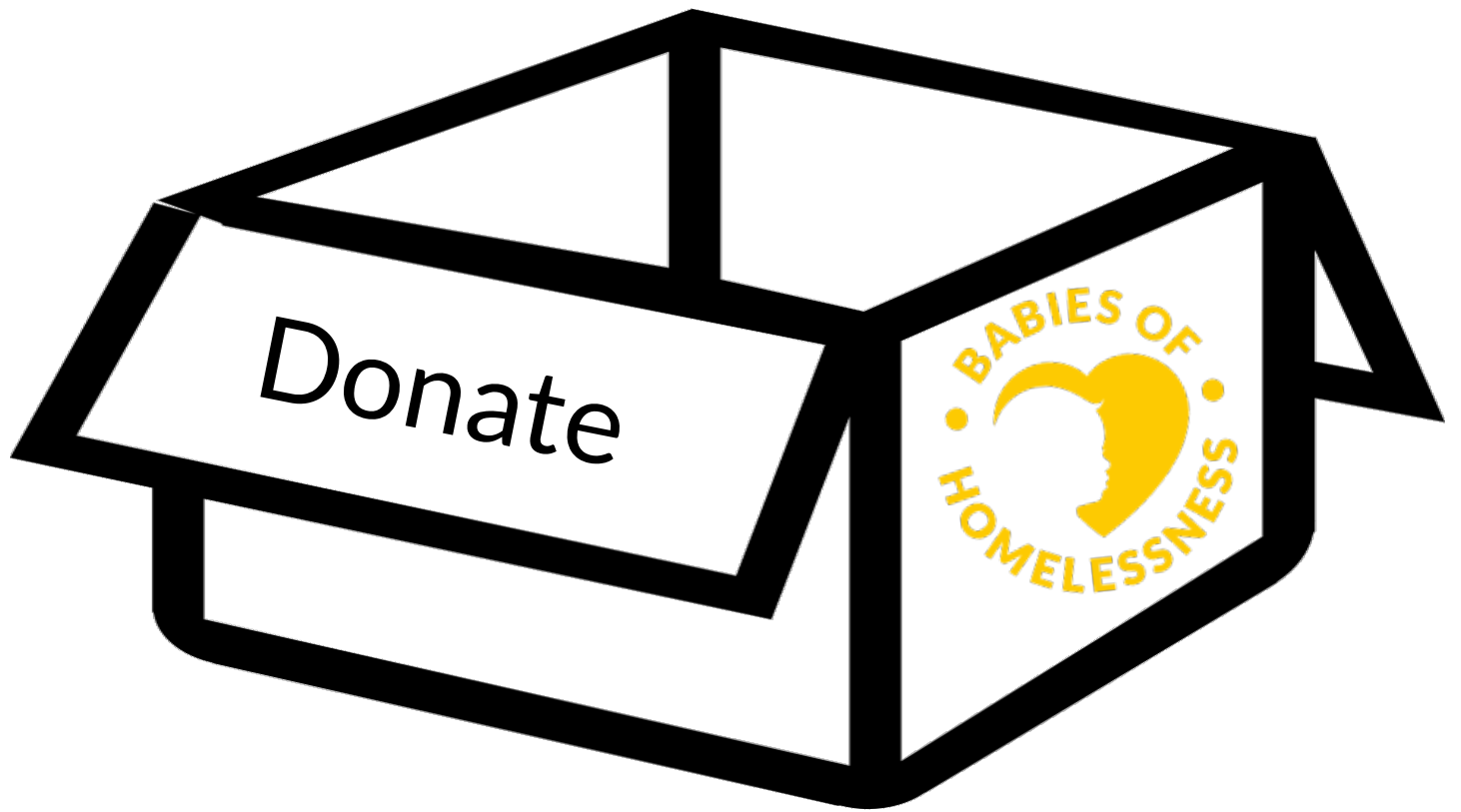
COLOR TIME

DONATE GENTLY USED BABY SUPPLIES TO OUR FRIENDS AT KIDVANTAGE



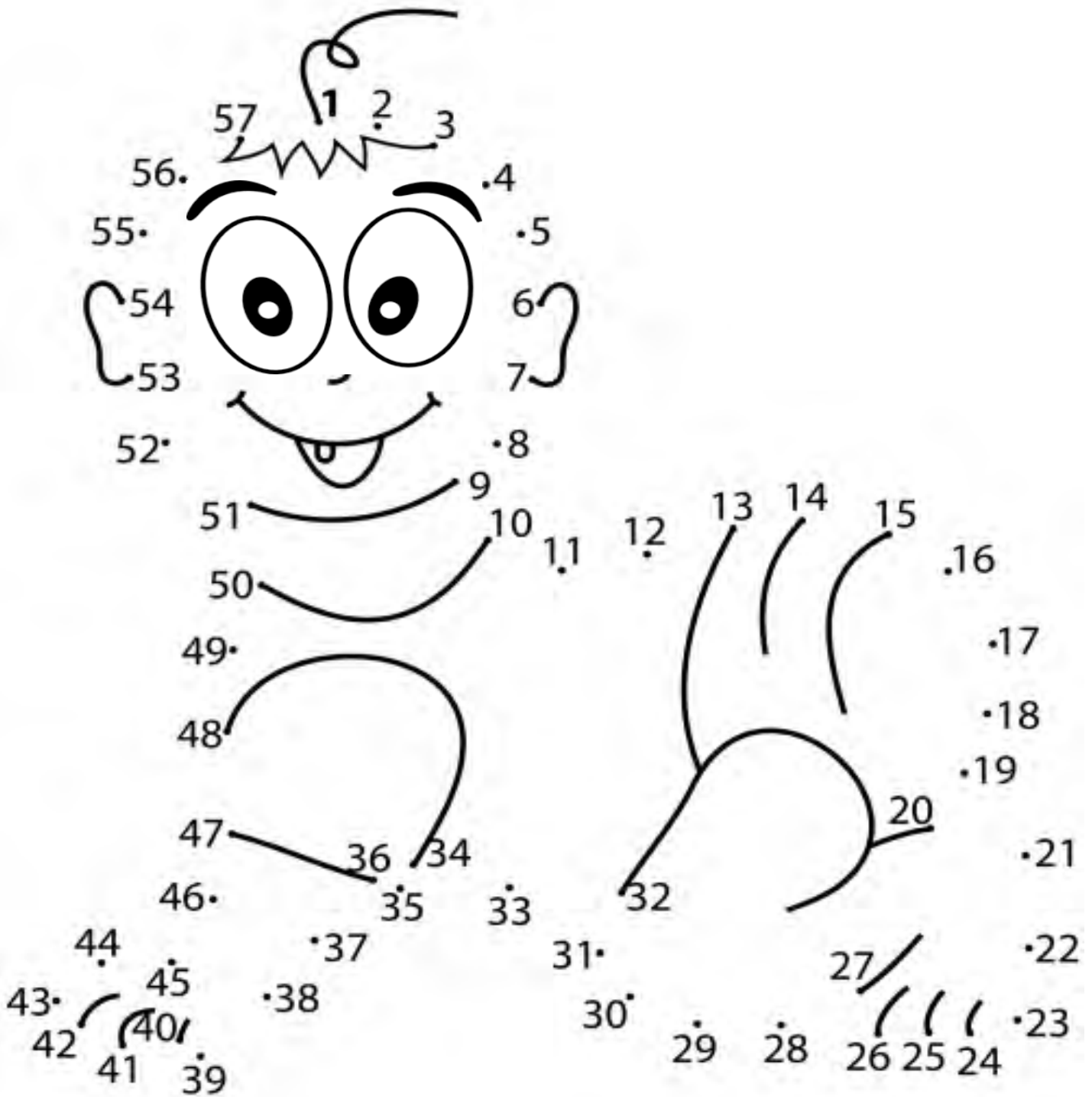
COLOR TIME

FILL THE BOX BY DRAWING ITEMS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE



CONNECT THE DOTS

MAKE THE CONNECTION



ABC ORDER

FILL IN THE BLANK

1) Add one of these letters to each word.

A B C D

2) Write the words again.

3) Color the pictures.



R _____ TTLE

1. _____



_____ OTTLE

2. _____



_____ RIB

3. _____



POW _____ ER

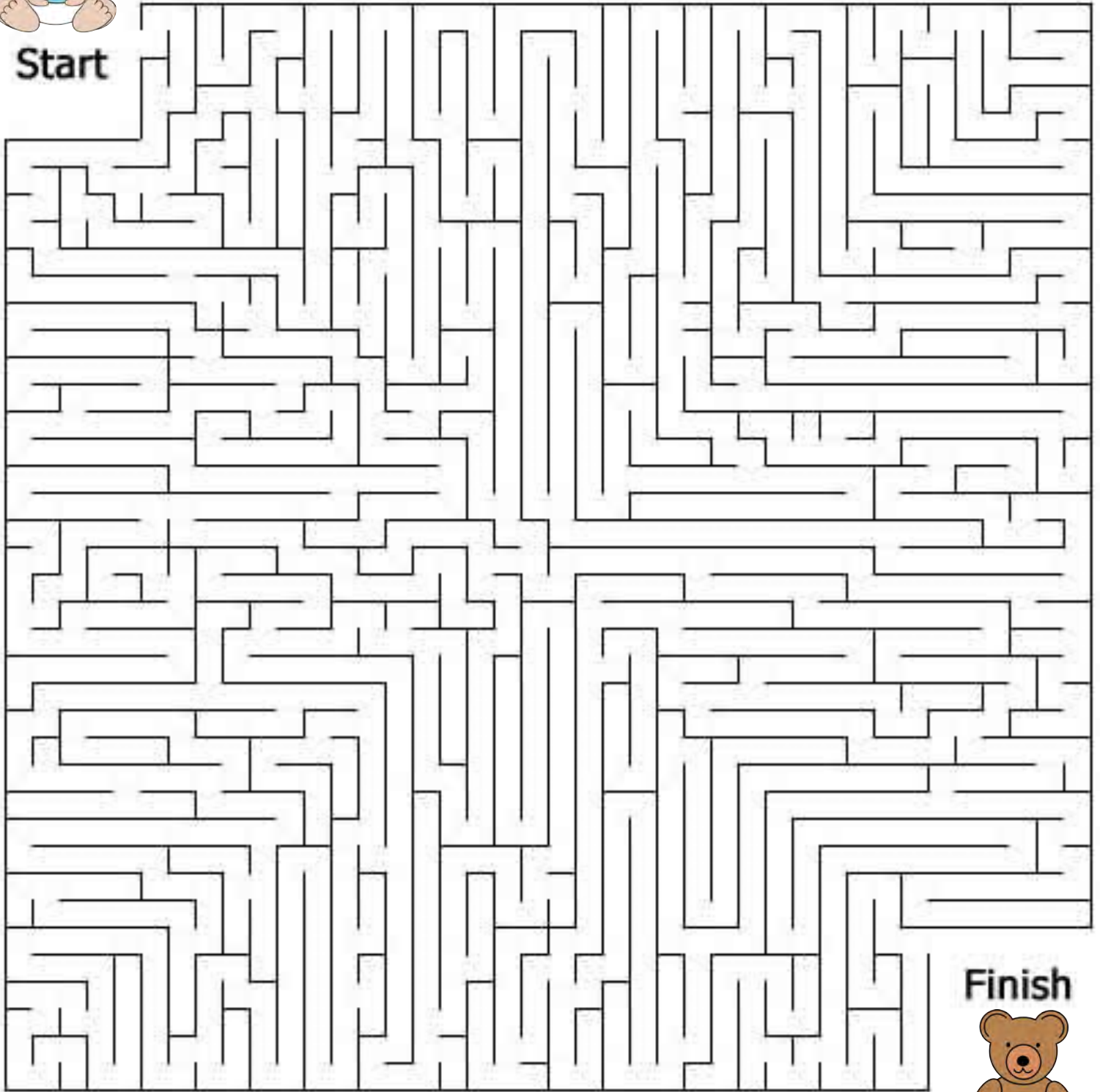
4. _____

A-MAZING!

HELP THE BABY REACH THE TEDDY BEAR



Start



Finish



SHOPPING TRIP

PRICE FOR THESE ITEMS

Buying supplies for a baby is expensive. Diapers can cost around \$80 to \$100 a month, while formula can cost an additional \$140 a month.

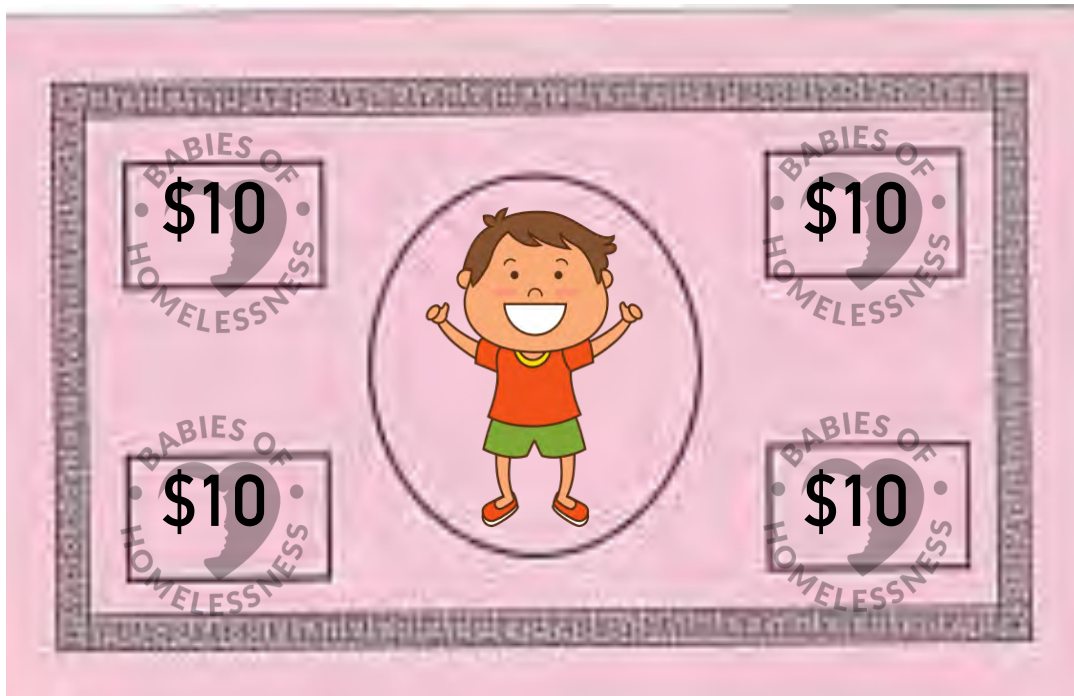
Instructions:

Print the next page and add the price of each item in the box. Give your your child \$10. Have them look at the prices of each item. When done, ask questions about what it costs to care for a baby.

Questions to start the discussion:







Can a person afford formula and diapers with \$10?

The average baby uses 10 diapers a day, how many diapers do you need to buy for a month?



SHOPPING TRIP

FIND THE PRICE FOR EACH OF THESE ITEMS

Item	Description	Price
	A package of diapers	
	A package of wipes	
	Diaper cream	
	Formula	
	Baby bottle	
	Bib	

WHAT WOULD YOU TAKE?

YOU HAVE 15 MINUTES

Ask your child to imagine what it would be like if they had 15 minutes to gather their possessions and leave the house. What would you take?

Instructions:

Set a timer for 15 minutes and have your child walk through the house. Write down on separate piece of paper a list of items or place items in a backpack. Everything must fit inside.

Questions to start the discussion:

Why did you choose the items you selected?

What was the hardest thing to leave?

If you have a pet or pets, what would you do with them?

What would you do if you needed something you left behind?

HOW MUCH DOES A BABY NEED?

IT TAKES A LOT OF STUFF!

Ask your child to make a list of all things a baby might need. How many can you list? Write them down on a separate piece of a paper and then compare them to this list below. Did you get them all? Did you add some not on this list? (Some items are optional.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Activity gym/play mat | Diaper cream |
| Baby shampoo | Diaper pail or trash can with a lid |
| Baby thermometer | Diapers |
| Bath seat or inflatable | Electrolyte drink |
| Bath wash | Feeding pillow |
| Bibs | First aid kit |
| Blankets | Formula |
| Booties | Hats |
| Bottle brush | Highchair |
| Bottle sterilizer | Hooded towels |
| Bottle warmer | Infant tub |
| Bottles | Insulated cooler |
| Breast pump (if breastfeeding) | Milk storage bags (if breastfeeding) |
| Burp cloths | Nail clippers or file |
| Carrier | Nasal aspirator |
| Car seat | Nursing pads (if breastfeeding) |
| Clothes | Pacifiers |
| Comb and brush set | Petroleum jelly |
| Cotton balls | Rattles |
| Cotton swabs | Sheets |
| Cradle cap brush | Socks |
| Crib | Soft books and board books |
| Crib mirror | Thermometer |
| Crib mobile | Toys |
| Diaper bag | Washcloths |
| Diaper covers | Waterproof changing table pad |