



# Rx Kids

A Prescription for Health, Hope, and Opportunity

## CASH FOR MOMS AND BABIES



“Rx Kids is not just a program, it’s a lifeline and a promise of support. It is about coming together and supporting each other.”

ALANA, Rx KIDS MOM

A PROGRAM OF:

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

FURLEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

&

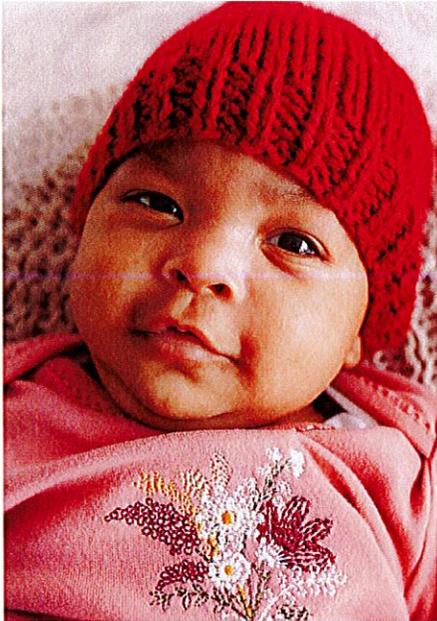
**M** POVERTY SOLUTIONS UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PEDIATRIC PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

ADMINISTERED BY:

**GiveDirectly**

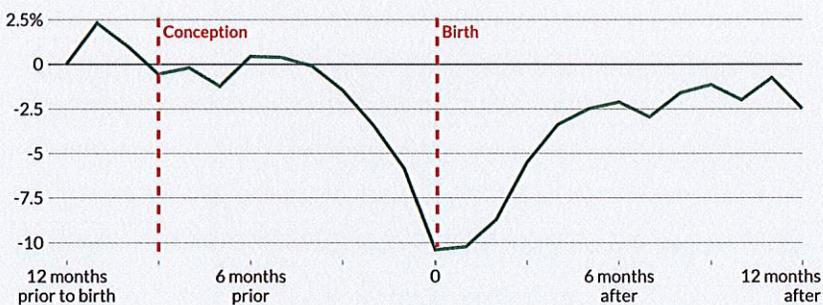
# Rx Kids: Prenatal and Infant Support Program



For many families, income plunges and poverty spikes right before a child is born and remains high throughout the first year. The maternal-infant period is also the most critical window of child development and lays the foundation for a lifetime of health and success.

## Family income drops sharply near the birth of a child

Percentage change in gross U.S. household income compared to 12 months prior to birth



Source: Stanczyk, Alexandra. (2016). "The dynamics of household economic circumstances around a birth." Washington Center for Equitable Growth working paper series.



Washington Center for Equitable Growth. Equitablegrowth.org

**"We never know what life is going to throw at us... Just that extra bit of financial security can go a long way.**

**The biggest reward is knowing that people care that the world isn't as harsh as we sometimes think. There are people out there who want to see us succeed."**

**Kinea,  
Rx Kids Mom**

Launched in 2024, Rx Kids provides support of **\$1,500** during pregnancy and **\$500 per month** for babies during **the first 6-12 months** of life. From Kalamazoo to the eastern Upper Peninsula, the program has already reached over 4,300 families across 20 Michigan communities, delivering almost \$20 million in direct support.

As the nation's first-ever community-wide prenatal and **infant cash prescription program**, Rx Kids is already providing life-changing financial security to an entire generation of children.



# Rx Kids is Across Michigan

From Kalamazoo to the Upper Peninsula, stakeholders across Michigan and beyond are excited about the efficiency and effectiveness of Rx Kids.

With ongoing state support, Rx Kids can bring **health, hope, and opportunity** to even more Michigan communities.



**AUSTIN LOWES**  
SAULT TRIBE CHAIRMAN

“When you bring a baby home, that’s a vulnerable period for families... [Rx Kids] will provide so many benefits to individuals—alleviating so much of that financial anxiety that many families have.”

 Eastern Upper Peninsula Counties

Alger  
Schoolcraft  
Luce  
Chippewa  
Mackinac

 Roscommon County  
Clare County  
 Gladwin County

 Flint: Home of Rx Kids

Pontiac  
Royal Oak Township & Hazel Park  
Kalamazoo  
Ypsilanti  
 Cities of Dearborn, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Inkster, Melvindale, River Rouge

“The City Commission prioritized this partnership with our Rx Kids as a critical component in our efforts to provide abundant opportunities for people to achieve shared prosperity and to help young people thrive.”

**MAYOR DAVID ANDERSON**  
KALAMAZOO

# Rx Kids is leading to healthier moms and babies

Rx Kids is grounded in extensive global and national evidence showing that investing in moms and babies leads to better health outcomes. Now, rigorous research from Michigan demonstrates the program's impact on family financial stability, prenatal care, healthy births, child welfare, and economic development.

Families most commonly spend cash prescriptions on **baby supplies, food, rent, & utilities**

## With a participant take up rate of near 100%, Rx Kids research shows dramatic population level improvements in prenatal care and birth outcomes:

- ♥ Significant [increase in prenatal care utilization](#), with a 9.1% increase in adequate prenatal care, 5.6% rise in first-trimester care initiation, and 1.9% decrease in births with no prenatal care
- ♥ 18% [reduction in preterm births](#)
- ♥ 27% [reduction in low birthweight babies](#), tackling a key driver of infant mortality
- ♥ 29% [reduction in NICU admissions](#)
- ♥ Reduced third-trimester smoking, a major driver of low birth weight and infant mortality

## Beyond health outcomes, Rx Kids delivers economic stability and family wellbeing:

- ♥ 88% of [participants report improved financial security](#). [Zero low-income Rx Kids families reported evictions](#) while enrolled in the program
- ♥ Improved mental health and a 14% [reduction in postpartum depression](#), helping mothers thrive
- ♥ [32% reduction in infant maltreatment investigations](#), improving child welfare and family stability.

Explore the latest impacts and Rx Kids research at [RxKids.org/impact](https://RxKids.org/impact)



### THE SCIENCE OF CHILD CASH BENEFITS

Evidence on the adoption of child cash benefits from a broad set of nations finds that they can improve a range of child health outcomes, with the most robust evidence of health benefits occurring when delivered to children younger than five years and during the prenatal period. **LEARN MORE AT THE LANCET.**

# Rx Kids Saves Money & Strengthens Economies



Rx Kids builds on a significant evidence base showing that outcomes like these can save federal, state, and local governments significant money.



## Preliminary estimates of short-term savings

**Birth Outcomes:** Since Rx Kids started, estimates reveal that Flint had up to 40 less preterm births and almost 70 less low birthweight babies. This resulted in almost 70 less NICU admissions. These health improvements are saving approximately \$6 million/year in health care costs just for Flint births. **If replicated for the whole state, the health care savings would be \$220 million/year in the prevention of premature babies and \$268 million/year in the prevention of low birthweight babies. A portion of these savings also come from the prevention of NICU admissions, estimated to be \$213 million/year.**

**Postpartum depression:** A study in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* found that Medicaid-enrolled new mothers with perinatal depression had \$5,078 more health care expenditures, suggesting that the big reductions in postpartum depression seen in Flint could lead to significant healthcare costs savings.

**Child protective services (CPS):** A study from the *National Bureau of Economic Research* found that an added \$1,000 in Rx Kids-like benefits was linked to a 30% decline in CPS referrals for physical abuse, among other improved outcomes. For every \$1 spent on cash transfers early in life, the estimated ROI in child welfare costs was \$4.20.

**Evictions:** A study from the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* finds that evictions increase homelessness and hospitalizations, reduce earnings and negatively impact credit scores and indebtedness.

## Long-term benefits

**Earnings in young adulthood:** A study in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* found that an added \$1,300 in Rx Kids-like benefits to infants translated into increased earnings of \$2,185 between ages 23 and 28. It also was linked to improved math and reading scores and increased likelihood of high school graduation.

The [W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research](#) issued an [independent report](#) that found that Rx Kids delivers measurable economic benefits to families and the broader local economy, creating hundreds of downstream jobs and millions of dollars circulating through the community.



# Are you ready to bring Rx Kids to your Michigan community?

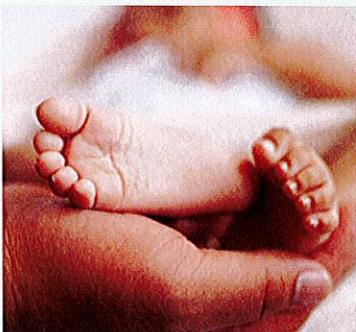


The State of Michigan has made a bold, historic investment in families — supporting the expansion of Rx Kids. Over the next three years, Rx Kids will expand to dozens of high-need communities. Key design elements of the program include:

- ♥ **Innovative public-private partnership:** Rx Kids is an innovative public-private partnership, combining public funding from state, federal, and municipal sources with private support from philanthropy, businesses, and health care systems. In Michigan, historic investment from the state provides the majority of funding, however additional funding is needed to launch Rx Kids in new communities.
- ♥ **Plug-and-play model:** Rx Kids provides the core support – including operations, enrollment, research, reporting, and communication tools. With an established infrastructure, Rx Kids is ready to be expanded and implemented in months.
- ♥ **Low overhead:** Administered by GiveDirectly, the program is streamlined and cost-efficient, avoiding bureaucracy and ensuring that dollars reach families directly.
- ♥ **Local expertise:** Local Community Champions work closely with unlimited stakeholders to support outreach, engagement, and celebration — including hosting Baby Parades.
- ♥ **Bipartisan support:** Maternal and infant health is a bipartisan issue. Babies are our future, and investing in their health means investing in the future of our communities, the economy, and the nation.



Check out the Michigan expansion page on our website ([RxKids.org](https://www.RxKids.org)) or contact us at [Rx-Kids@msu.edu](mailto:Rx-Kids@msu.edu)



*“Compared to the ways that governments typically spend taxpayer dollars to try to alleviate poverty, these kinds of direct cash subsidies are among the most efficient ways that governments can achieve those kinds of goals.” - Michael Van Beek, director of research at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy*

# So Much Love

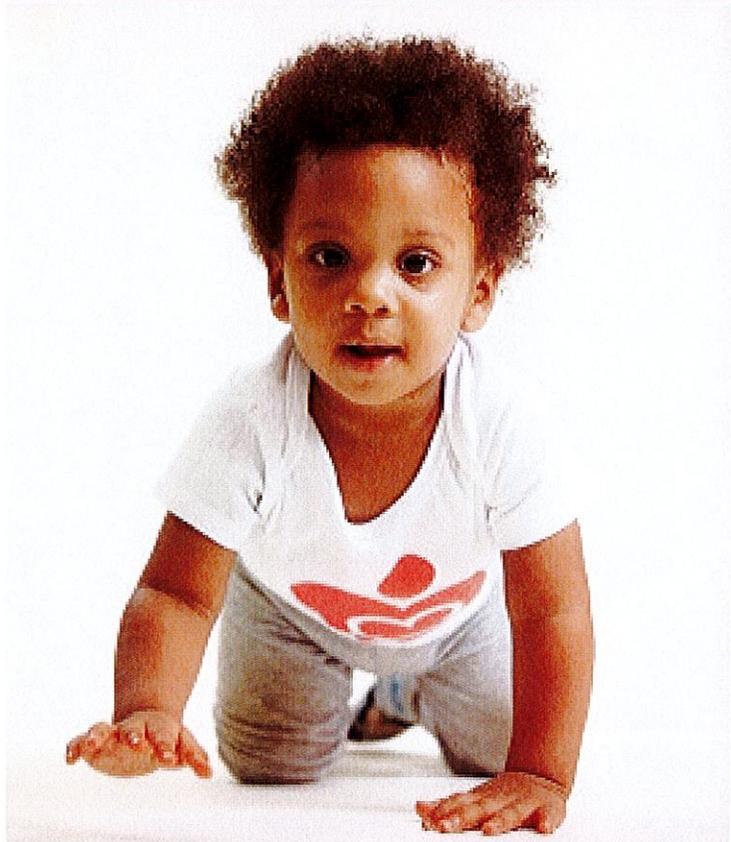
A public-private partnership, over \$400 million has been committed for Rx Kids.



Rx Kids extends a special thank you to all of our individual donors who have been inspired to contribute to Rx Kids.

**“Rx Kids provides a real chance  
at a future for me and my  
children.”**

**TEAGAN  
Rx KIDS MOM**



**“Rx Kids is a prescription for  
health, hope, and opportunity.  
Finally, we have an effective and  
efficient antidote to treat the  
pathogen of poverty. The future  
is bright for our babies.”**

**DR. MONA  
Rx KIDS DIRECTOR**

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**FURLEY  
CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITAL**

**PEDIATRIC PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE**

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Email: Rx-Kids@msu.edu**

**Join the Rx Kids community  
and share the love  
on social media.**

 **@RxKidsUS**

 **@RxKidsUS**

 **@RxKids**



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## Cash for Moms and Babies

Rx Kids is a program led by Michigan State University Pediatric Public Health Initiative, in collaboration with Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, and administered by the nonprofit GiveDirectly. For maximum impact, fidelity, and replicability, Rx Kids is a **plug-and-play program** with central oversight, administration, fundraising, marketing and communications, and evaluation. In every Rx Kids community, we work with a designated local Community Champion and unlimited Stakeholders on outreach, engagement and celebration.

Funding for Rx Kids is a **public-private partnership**; generous support from the State of Michigan is matched with funds from municipalities, foundations, nonprofits, corporations, and individual donors.

### **There are distinct roles in each expansion community:**

- **One Community Champion**
- **Unlimited Rx Kids Stakeholders**
- **One Local/Regional Fiduciary (strongly preferred but not required)**

### **What is an Rx Kids Community Champion?**

#### **Each Rx Kids community has an organization serving as a “Community Champion”**

Community champions are organizations with capacity to support outreach, engagement and celebration in Rx Kids community(s) for a minimum of three years.

Current Rx Kids Community Champions include organizations like: Cradle Kalamazoo, Greater Flint Health Coalition, Local Health Departments, Oakland-Livingston Human Services Agency, City of Ypsilanti.

If a high-need community is selected and match funds are committed, the Community Champion will be provided a summary document detailing the mutual responsibilities they are accepting by playing this role.

### **The roles and responsibilities of the Community Champion are to:**

- Serve as the local champion organization and point of contact (POC). Champions will refer to themselves as the “community champion” of the Rx Kids program.
- Support program launch by collecting sample eligibility documents from local health care providers, compiling local community-specific resources for inclusion on Rx Kids website, identifying local eligible moms/babies to speak at program launch, and supporting outreach to local partners and providers to attend an informational training.
- Participate in Rx Kids meetings/convenings (varies, likely once per quarter).
- Engage and build awareness and support amongst local Rx Kids stakeholders, media, policymakers and families.



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### **Cash for Moms and Babies**

- Distribute and replenish Rx Kids promotional materials to applicable locations (ie: WIC clinics, OB/pediatric offices, etc)
- Promote local Rx Kids success/outcomes on local platforms and with local stakeholders
- Work with Rx Kids to elevate participant stories
- Host and sponsor a Baby Parade (support and toolkit provided)
- Consider hosting other Rx Kids Signature Events (such as Program Kick-off, Baby Parade, Valentine's Day or Mother's Day celebration)
- Work closely with and will consult Rx Kids leadership to support fundraising efforts to secure 3 years of match funding.
- Work closely with and seek approval from Rx Kids communications for all Rx Kids marketing, communication, public presentation and branding efforts. Media events and special events will be coordinated with the Rx Kids team.

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### **What is an Rx Kids Stakeholder?**

**“Rx Kids Stakeholders” are unlimited and represent local maternal and child programs and services, health systems, municipalities, faith and civic leaders, funders, elected officials, nonprofits, and more.**

### **The roles of Rx Kids Stakeholders are to:**

- Disseminate information provided by the local Community Champion and/or Rx Kids team to increase awareness and enrollment:
  - hanging posters and distributing rack cards in their locations/community spaces
  - sharing social media posts, Rx Kids impact dashboard data, research findings, Rx Kids participant stories etc.
- Attend informational trainings and/or meetings that may be convened by Community Champion
- Partner to plan, promote and participate in Rx Kids events (launch event, baby parades)
- Promote Rx Kids values of love, dignity and trust for moms and families

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### **What is an Rx Kids Local/Regional Fiduciary?**

**Rx Kids communities may have an organization serving as a “Local Fiduciary”**

In situations where there will be many local funders and ongoing fundraising, locally raised match dollars may be pooled at this single local/regional fiduciary, improving the efficiency of managing and transferring funds.



Examples of potential Rx Kids Local Fiduciaries include Community Foundations or United Ways. Current local fiduciaries include the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and the Saginaw Community Foundation.

**Once confirmed by Rx Kids team, local fiduciaries may:**

- Establish an Rx Kids Fund and landing page for local giving
- Write grants to local funders, collect funds, and complete required reporting
  - Rx Kids team can support with grant apps/reports
- Ensure Rx Kids team has accurate information on local funders and funds raised.

Prior to the program launch, the local/regional fiduciary will enter into an agreement with GiveDirectly and issue funds at an agreed upon cadence.