Upcoming Drives & Events

In April, donate diapers during the CommUnity Baby Shower!
Learn more at builtbycommunity.org /shower

Wednesday, June 12
Radisson Hotel & Conference Center
1220 First Ave.
Coralville, IA 52241

This unique event gives participants a glimpse at the scope of hunger in Johnson County.

Guests will be randomly assigned to various income levels, determining which meal they receive.

We encourage guests to come prepared to experience a variety of meal possibilities, which could include no dinner at all.

Tickets & Information: builtbycommunity.org/hungerbanquet or contact Julia Erickson at julia.erickson@builtbycommunity.org or (319) 351-2726 ext. 105.
Have you heard the news?

Last month, we made a major announcement. For nearly 50 years, our community has helped The Crisis Center build critical programs and services from the ground up, making The Crisis Center the primary resource for people experiencing emotional, material, or financial crisis. With your generous support, we will continue to address these needs within the community.

Now we’re at a turning point. Our services have evolved over the past few years to serve a larger community—locally, statewide, and nationally. In that time, we’ve discovered our name can be a barrier to those seeking our crisis services. It’s also prevented us from securing millions of dollars in funding in the past five years alone.

On February 25, we announced that The Crisis Center changed its name to CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank—or CommUnity for short—to better reflect both who we serve and how we serve.

The name “CommUnity” has roots in our founding and everything we do. Our organization was founded by members of the community, is financially supported by the community, is staffed by volunteers from the community, and serves the community. Volunteers remain the heart and soul of our organization.

CommUnity combines two things that are central to our mission: first, providing critical and life-changing services that have emerged directly from our community, and second, the unity of our clients, leaders, staff, volunteers, donors, and partners.

We are united in a common purpose: to provide a welcoming and empowering resource for those seeking services and support for emotional crisis, food, basic needs, and disaster recovery.

We will continue to provide food assistance to more than 1,000 Johnson County families each week. Our Mobile Crisis Outreach Program will continue to support Johnson County and the surrounding communities, and we will continue to provide 24/7 support for individuals experiencing emotional crisis.

We thank you for championing our cause and advocating for us. We hope you’ll celebrate this change and help us increase awareness around our new name.

To learn more about our name change, impact, and mission, please visit our website, now located at builtbycommunity.org, or contact Sara Sedlacek, Director of External Relations, at 319-351-2726 ext. 108 or sara.sedlacek@builtbycommunity.org.
Farmers composed 90 percent of the United States labor force in 1790. More than 200 years later, that population has dropped to 2.6 percent. Food production never stopped growing, but the industry has changed, consolidating small family farms into significantly larger operations and leaving only a small sect who continue to depend on this lifestyle. Farmers often bear financial and political burdens of this lifestyle in emotional solitude and it is causing farmers to die by suicide at alarming rates across the world.

Farmers dedicate every day to producing the world’s food; yet often wake up every morning facing financial stresses which might eventually force them off of land that often feels like part of them. In rural areas, this is magnified by stigma and lack of resources for managing this extreme stress. There are many sources of stress for farmers: uncertain climate, finances, political conflict, and health care issues, to name a few. Ultimately, though, it is the feeling of social isolation that drives so many to suicide.

When farmers do talk about the stressors in their life, the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) at the University of Iowa found that they are most often reaching out to their faith leaders. CommUnity, formerly The Crisis Center, has worked with GPCAH to coordinate a Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training for faith leaders in rural areas.

We have also received funding from the Washington County Riverboat Association and the Cedar County Coop to lead QPRs in Washington and Cedar Counties in the coming months. By training members of the community who are already being called on during stressful times in suicide prevention, we hope to create awareness and opportunities for intervention.

It’s still difficult for many farmers to access invaluable mental health resources, but the kindness of community can be enough to save a life. Look out for any changes in the ones you love and be sure to always ask genuinely and listen sincerely to how friends, family, and even acquaintances are doing. And if you or someone you know is in crisis, CommUnity crisis services staff and volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year by calling or texting 1-855-325-4296 or chatting at www.iowacrisischat.org.

We are also available to provide community education and training across the state. Visit www.builtbycommunity.org/training to learn more about hosting a training in your community.
Addressing Diaper Need During CommUnity Baby Shower

April showers bring May flowers, and this April we’re asking YOU to bring diapers to our month-long CommU-nity Baby Shower!

Around 900 families request diapers from CommU-nity per month. At this time, we’re unable to guarantee that we’ll have diapers in stock when families visit. Why is that? If you’re a parent, you know - diapers are expensive!

We need your support to help make sure that children have clean, dry diapers. Babies who remain in soiled diapers too long are exposed to negative health risks and parents experiencing diaper need are more likely to miss work or school.

Diapers don’t expire and they’re in high demand, so we pay the same for diapers as you do. Because of this, we rely purely on diaper drives and donations to supply diapers for our Food Bank families year-round.

That’s where you come in!

April is our month-long CommUnity Baby Shower. There are several ways you can help!

• Hold a diaper drive at work or school
• Bring us diapers that your children have outgrown (yes, diaper packages can be opened!)
• Set up a monthly Amazon or Target subscription delivery of diapers directly to CommUnity
• We’re in need of all sizes besides newborn, with size 4 being the most in-demand

Diapers can be dropped off at CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank, 1121 S. Gilbert Ct., Iowa City on Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and until 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Did you know?

• 1 in 3 American families report experiencing diaper need
• Disposable diapers can cost $70 to $80 per month per baby
• No state or federal child safety-net program allocates dollars specifically for the purchase of diapers
• Most childcare centers, even free and subsidized facilities, require parents to provide a day’s supply of disposable diapers.

(Source: National Diaper Bank Network)

Share your story for CommUnity’s 50th Anniversary celebration!

We are asking former clients, volunteers, and board members to share their story with us about what role CommUnity has played in your life.

Contact Julia Erickson at julia.erickson@builtbycommunity.org, (319) 351-2726 ext. 105