



## **Address to Brisbane City Council 7 May 2024**

### **About Baby Give Back**

Baby Give Back's mission is to give children a safe start to life by providing essential items to families in crisis.

We are passionate about improving the welfare of vulnerable families in our community. We believe every child deserves a safe start to life no matter the circumstances into which they are born. The purpose of our service is to help break the cycle of disadvantage for families living in poverty with immediate access to resources and essential children's items. This allows parents and caregivers to better support their child's development and have hope for a better future.

Our goal is to work towards an engaged, equitable community where families thrive. Material basics are an essential domain of Australia's wellbeing framework for children and young people. Children must have the material items needed to develop as an active member of society and Baby Give Back exists to provide material basics to children in their first 2,000 days. We build the capacity of local support networks to walk alongside the people they are working with and remove some of the barriers to social and economic inclusion they frequently face.

Our priority programs include:

- Safe Start Program: Access to essentials for vulnerable mothers who need support to prepare to birth their baby via a Safe Start Box provided in partnership with antenatal care providers.
- Clothing Program: Access to clothing for vulnerable Queensland children (leveraging a circular economy) delivered through existing service frameworks.

These programs are currently delivered through a crisis response approach in partnership with case workers who help us deliver items directly to those most in need and distribute orders through hospitals, domestic violence refuges, Indigenous health services, homeless shelters, refugee settlement services, family support services and government departments.

Looking to the future we are working on scaling our Safe Start and Clothing programs via universal access pathways to ensure access for all vulnerable children. This represents a shift from reactive to proactive early intervention. We are currently delivering our service across

south-east Queensland and our scaling plans include delivering service across all of Queensland.

### **Synopsis of your situation and current operation set up in Brisbane**

Baby Give Back operates from a warehouse headquarters on the Gold Coast and supports families across the south-east. Brisbane children currently represent around 25% of the total children we reach with support each month. In 2023 we supported 2,107 Brisbane children.

We partner with social services agencies, health networks and other charities who are supporting families and working with them to achieve better outcomes. These services include large charities like The Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul, Benevolent Society Micah Projects, domestic and family violence support programs and Indigenous Health Services. Our Clothing Boxes and support packages are often used as a soft-entry engagement tool to help these services better engage the families who need them most.

We have temporary premises in South Brisbane provided by support from ARIA Property Group. These premises are not staffed and we are currently working on setting up some volunteering opportunities and using it as a central collection point for clothing donations. Because we are unable to have these premises open all of the time, it is not a suitable drop off location for the general public. We will have pop up open days there regularly.

We are also planning regular pop up clothing collections in our van across Brisbane.

Our goal is to build a network of clothing collection points around Brisbane so that every Brisbane family who wants to support vulnerable children can donate preloved and new clothing up to size 5.

Why clothing? Because there is enough preloved clothing in the community to solve this problem and the impact and value of providing clothing to vulnerable families is so high. Clothing is a basic human right and base need before a parent/caregiver can do anything else for their child - so it is the item that vulnerable families prioritise spending money on. We can solve this problem and alleviate the financial burden of clothing, allowing families to prioritise food, accommodation and medical expenses.

There are not enough large items (cots, prams and car seats) to meet the need and while these items are still critically important, focusing on clothing and growing this exponentially will allow us to expand impact with our current resources. We still collect these items but work with supporters in the community to manage the logistics in a more efficient manner which will include regular open days at South Brisbane.

## **What you are requesting from the ward offices**

We are asking the ward offices to be collection points for clothing only (not any of the larger items that Baby Give Back also collects).

This will allow us to focus our limited resources and our van on delivering support to more agencies across Brisbane and reaching more children.

Being a clothing collection point will involve the following:

- Set up a collection tub or in your office (we're looking at grant funding to purchase linen trolleys that can be used for this purpose);
- Advertise in your community that you are a collection point for clothing only (images and tiles to be provided by Baby Give Back);
- Direct people wanting to donate items other than clothing directly to Baby Give Back (we are updating our website so that this information will be current).

If you are unable to have your office as an ongoing clothing collection point but you can host our van in the carpark for a pop-up collection, please let us know.

### **Contact**

Carly Fradgley

Baby Give Back CEO and Founder

[carly@babygiveback.org](mailto:carly@babygiveback.org)

0406 301 329