

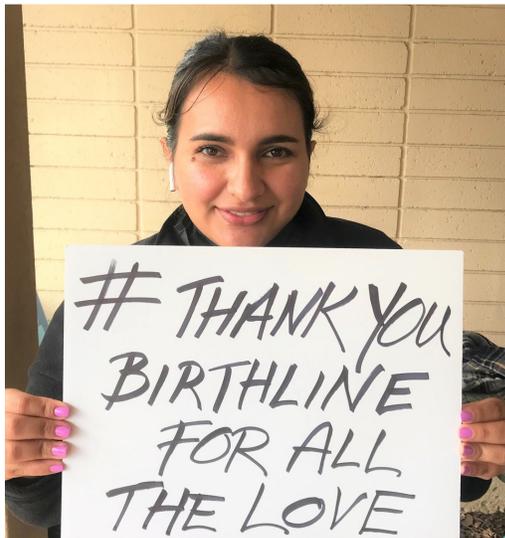


Birthline Bulletin

Everything Life Affirming

Spring 2022

Serving families in need from conception to kindergarten.



Gratitude and Growth



This year has already brought new beginnings and growth to Birthline. Our Executive Director, Samantha Flather, stepped down to pursue other opportunities. We are so grateful for her dedication and service. During her tenure Samantha skillfully navigated the complexities of governmental grants and obtained critical funding during COVID. Thank you, Samantha!

While we search for the right person to fill this position, I have stepped in as interim Executive Director. I have been humbled and moved by meeting many of the vulnerable mothers and children we serve, and it has been a privilege to hear their stories and words of gratitude. One new mother, Christina, shared, "I am very thankful for the extra support from Birthline which impacts my journey to become a better parent." And Melissa said, "Birthline has brought so much love and support when I felt truly alone and empty. I now have resources thanks to Birthline and I am so grateful."

Thank you to our amazing staff, volunteers, donors and community partners for your continued support during these times!

Michelle Twardowski
Board Chair &
Interim Executive Director

Jan & Feb 2022 Impact

55,992	Diapers dispensed
691	Dependent children clothed
460	Clients received case management

From Homeless to Happily Married

In 2020 Kimberly and Danny sought help at Birthline. They had recently moved to San Diego from Tennessee hoping to start a better life with their infant daughter. They were unable to find work, became homeless, and found shelter at St. Vincent de Paul. Birthline's Program Director Jeanne Hansen met with them and helped stabilize these new parents with referrals for County resources, housing, education, and mental health



services. Recently they were able to move out of the shelter and into their own apartment. Both Kimberly and Danny were eager to advance their parenting skills and took classes through Head Start. Kimberly is working on her GED and is taking sewing lessons hoping to start a home-based business allowing her to be present in her children's lives. It is remarkable how far this committed couple has come in improving their lives with the help of devoted staff at Birthline. Kimberly and Danny recently had a beautiful baby boy and then celebrated their marriage vows, on February 22, 2022, in a small private ceremony with Jeanne in attendance. It was a joyful milestone for a very deserving couple.

What's New at Birthline

Just like many of the children we serve, Birthline is growing up! This Spring we will debut our new and improved website which will not only be easier to navigate but will contain information in Spanish to better serve a large portion of our clients. Below is a sneak peek at our new home page. The new site will also make it easier for our community of supporters to access Birthline news, learn about volunteer opportunities, see our current wish lists and donation information, access



this and past newsletters, and more. We are so excited and hope you will visit us often at our new online home!

www.BirthlineofSD.org

AN OPPORTUNITY TO HONOR MOTHERS

A Mother's Day Gift that Gives Twice: *Another Mother*

Birthline invites you to **Love Another Mother** this Mother's Day. This new fundraising campaign will pay tribute to all mothers including the most vulnerable women we serve.

You can make a gift that GIVES TWICE!

When you honor a special mother in your life with a donation to Birthline, you will also fund an uplifting Mother's Day Gift Bag for a deserving mother in need.

Gift Bags will include:

- Walmart Gift Card
- Mother's Day plant for their home
- Indulgence care package of toiletries and cosmetics to help them feel special this Mother's Day

Stay tuned to learn how you can Love Another Mother!



Donor / Volunteer Spotlight: Bob and Janet Greenwell

We are eternally grateful for Bob Greenwell, our CFO, who came to Birthline as part of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps in August 2019. Since then, Bob has given us over 1100 hours to date and has become one of our most trusted volunteers, working closely with the Executive Director and Board of Directors. Bob and his wife Janet believe so much in Birthline's life-affirming mission that they became monthly donors. Despite being parents of six adult children and grandparents to eight grandchildren, Bob and Janet find time to regularly support our cause. Bob shared, "I enjoy volunteering at Birthline because of the dedication of the front-line volunteers and the valuable work they do in supporting women with crisis pregnancies and low-income families with small children." We feel so blessed to be able to count on Bob and Janet's confidence and critical support.



Breastfeeding Program is Vital to New Mothers

Birthline leads the way with free breastfeeding instruction to low-income expectant mothers. This program encourages pregnant moms to give what is best for their baby, their own breast milk. Breast milk is not only nutritious, economical, and readily available, it has been proven that breastfeeding is also good for the mother as it helps to burn calories and produces hormones that create a feeling of well-being for the mother.

This specialized consultation, offered to all new mothers, is taught by Birthline's own Program Director Jeanne Hansen. Jeanne is a nurse and trained breastfeeding consultant. She also evaluates for any postpartum depression which is common among new mothers. Consultations continue with simple phone check-ups that are easy and helpful for first-time moms. Birthline's breast feeding program is an important resource that is integral to the wonderful bonding of mother and child.



Program Director Jeanne Hansen shows a new mother how to hold her baby when nursing.

Partner Spotlight: San Diego Food Bank & Diaper Bank

Birthline is grateful and proud of our long-standing partnership with the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank & Diaper Bank. We are one of a dozen distribution locations for the Diaper Bank Program. A month's supply of diapers for one child can cost more than \$70, which is too much for young struggling families, especially those with multiple children. Diapers cannot be purchased with CalFresh benefits, so some parents try to stretch their supply by leaving babies in wet diapers longer. By providing free diapers to needy families, we not only solve an important piece of the poverty puzzle, but also help them keep their babies healthy and free from severe diaper rash and other health problems. Happy babies means happier families!



Birthline's diaper storage room.

Thank you Point Loma Rotary!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Point Loma Rotarians, led by James Morrison and Shannon Osborne, Birthline was able to purchase five refurbished computers as well as a new laptop. Our office technology had not been refreshed in many years and was sorely slow and outdated. The new devices will help us be more efficient in serving our clients, maintaining our database and keeping up with the organization's current needs.

Birthline Wish List

We rely heavily on in-kind donations to fulfill our clients' needs. Here are our most urgent needs:

- ✓ Pack-N-Play portable beds
- ✓ New infant car seats
- ✓ Pull-up diapers (size 6T)

Grants Update

Last year Birthline was awarded two grants to assist in our efforts of caring for San Diego's needy as an essential service during Covid. Through the San Diego Workforce Partnership and City of San Diego grants, not only have we been able to keep our doors open year-round, but we have also been able to obtain much better information about our client population:

2021 Birthline Demographics

- 48% of the families we serve have a single mother as head of household.
- 42% of women served are immigrants, refugees, or seeking asylum.
- 33% of our clients have a disability or are caring for a medically fragile child.



WE'RE HIRING!

Executive Director

We are seeking an experienced non-profit professional with strong leadership skills and a passion for Birthline's life-affirming mission.

For details please contact Michelle Twardowski at Michelle.Twardo@birthlineofsd.org

Birthline needs YOU!

If you have a few spare hours, please consider helping us in the office.

**Volunteers
Wanted!**

- ✓ Volunteer Coordinator (4 hrs/wk)
- ✓ In-Kind Donations Manager (3 hrs/wk)
- ✓ Interpreters: Arabic, Farsi, Haitian, Creole (Variable hours)
- ✓ Active Members for Board of Directors
Areas of expertise desired: Business, Finance, Human Resources, and Digital Marketing.