

Child Care Center Provides Hope During Tough Times

After the state-wide stay at home order was issued by Governor John Carney in March, The Little People Child Development Center opened one facility as an essential child care site at their Newark location.

Families utilizing the site during this time were working longer hours and either did not have time to shop for food, or were afraid to go into the grocery store for fear of the virus. In many cases, it was clear that some of these parents were faced with the incredibly difficult decision of either paying for their child's care or putting food on the table.

Janice Palmer, The Little People's owner, knew she had to do something to help.

After DOT Foods in Bear made a large contribution to the center, Janice conceived the idea of a food drive. From there, Janice connected with BJ's in New Castle, who donated water, distribution bags for the food, snacks, and more.

During the first food drive in late March, Janice's staff and volunteers handed out nearly 13 carloads of food and supplies to the community. "We were astounded by the turnout," said Janice. "We distributed our entire supply to more than 185 people total in under two hours."

The turnout at the food drive was a major indicator that the need was huge, and wasn't going to subside anytime soon. They had to do more.

Janice eventually formed a nonprofit, A House of Hope, to keep the work going, and continued her partnership with BJ's, as well as local All-State, ACME, DOTS, and Costco stores.

During the past few months, A House of Hope has received over \$41,000 in donations, made deliveries to various teams/departments at Christiana Hospital, DE State Police (Troop 2), the USPS, and over 800 families total around the local community. With limited contact to keep safety measure

intact, Janice's overall goal is to ease the financial burden that COVID-19 has put on many families in Delaware.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with food insecurity, please call Little People Child Development Center at 302-832-1891 and leave your name, phone number, and email address to get the latest information on upcoming food drives.