

AAUW Annual Report 2019-2020
Mothers Project
May 2020

AAUW has been the major supporter for the Mothers Project since 2013. The Mothers Project started as a small project to provide education and support for low income mothers in Poughkeepsie, and has developed into a multi-program, community volunteer organization. AAUW has been instrumental in our multi-program development, and now continues to provide the main support for the Mothers Project Women's Health Packages program. This Annual Report will describe the Mothers Project Women's Health Packages program. At the end of this report is a short list of Poughkeepsie Mothers Project programs that are now supported by other community partners in Poughkeepsie.

Mothers Project Women's Health Packages program

The Women's Health Packages program has been providing 50 packages per month to low income women in Poughkeepsie relating to monthly women's health themes. These packages contain items relating to the monthly theme as well as health information and information on community resources. AAUW has been providing funding for these packages, and our monthly mothers support group at the Family Partnership has been assembling the packages. The packages have been distributed to new mothers through Hudson River Healthcare, Family Services, and Dutchess County Healthy Families.

There is a women's health theme for each month. One example of a women's health package is the "Holiday Stress Management " package given out in December. This package included a small candle, a small aromatherapy spritzer, a pair of warm socks, a small bottle of hand lotion, information on relaxation breathing exercises, holiday stress management tips, information on community mental health resources, and other tips for stress management during holiday times.

Attached to this report are documents describing the twelve monthly health packages, the items to include in each package, the health information to include, and community resource information.

Budget

I know that budget decisions as well as fund-raising efforts are on hold, but I wanted to put a brief summary of our budget needs for next year here.

The women's health packages have been averaging five dollars per package, and we have been giving out 50 to 60 packages per month, for an average budget of \$250-\$300 per month, or \$3,000-\$3,600 per year.

We also plan to continue our Expressive Art Program at the monthly mother's group meetings, supplies for which have averaged \$30 per month, or \$360 per year.

Mothers Project program during the epidemic

A new monthly meeting for AAUW members had been planned, once a month on a Thursday afternoon, at the Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church on New Hackensack Rd., for AAUW volunteers to assemble these packages, however the coronavirus epidemic has put that on hold. We are looking forward to starting this monthly meeting for AAUW members as soon as group meeting restrictions are lifted.

During the epidemic, we have been giving out Stop and Shop gift certificates, along with "Prescription Cards" for healthy foods recommended to stay healthy during this time. I have attached below the "Prescription Cards", which were developed by our Vassar College interns, who are still working for us from home! I also attached the donation request letter I took to Stop and Shop, they donated three free gifts cards to the AAUW Mothers Project.

Since we are unable to have our monthly mother's group meetings, we have been having weekly virtual meetings, for continued social support and parenting information, and to plan for upcoming projects.

We are working virtually with our Vassar College interns and classes, see the list below for the various projects we have with Vassar College. I would like to mention here that AAUW has an agreement with Vassar College that students can join AAUW for free, so our Vassar College interns have been able to become AAUW members.

Involving more AAUW members in the Mothers Project

I think that the new Women's Health Packages program will enable more AAUW members to be involved in the Mothers Project, through coming to monthly daytime meetings to assemble the packages. If possible, I would also like to be able to let the AAUW membership know more about the Mothers Project through doing a monthly membership meeting program sometime next year, where we could watch the short documentary film made by our college interns last year about the Mothers Project (if I can figure out how to send it to you all I will send it to you first). I would like to talk about the Women's Health Packages program, as well as the other things going on with the Mothers Projects and other community supporters, that AAUW has been instrumental in supporting and helping us to develop.

Poughkeepsie Mothers Project: AAUW program, as well as programs now supported by other community partners

- Monthly new mothers support group at the Family Partnership focused on creative arts and stress management
- Women's Health Packages program
- Mothers Project quilt project to be shown at Glebe House 8/20
- Group prenatal care/postpartum education
- Peer educator training
- Peer educator support for new mothers at group and individual appointments
- Accessible prenatal phone line
- Doula services
- Community connections including Healthy Families, Family Services, DOH visiting nurses
- Educational speakers at prenatal/postpartum groups and monthly support groups
- Short documentary film on the Poughkeepsie Mothers Project
- College interns assisting with group programs and patient education
- Community partner in a Vassar College project on Social Determinants of Health
- Community partner in a Vassar College class on grant writing
- Community Partner in a Vassar College project on Food/Nutrition Insecurity

List of attachments:

- Women's Health Packages Gift bag items
- Women's Health Packages Monthly Health Information
- Women's Health Information Community Resource Information
- Donation request letter
- Protein prescription card
- Fruit and vegetable prescription card

Submitted by Kay Bishop and Lula Allen, Mothers Project Co-Chairs

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