PRESS RELEASE
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Hygiene is a Basic Need: Bridge To Basics Kicks Off October Awareness Campaign

Minnesota's only hygiene bank partners with local nonprofits to ensure neighbors have access to daily personal care essentials.

(St. Paul, MN) – With nearly half of local food shelf shoppers reporting that they struggle to afford basic soap, toothpaste and personal care products every month, Bridge to Basics – Minnesota's first and only hygiene bank – is launching its inaugural Hygiene Need Awareness Month this October to combat a growing, invisible crisis across the Twin Cities.

The network-wide campaign brings together local businesses, community members, and a collaborative network of more than 75 nonprofit partner organizations to shine a light on hygiene insecurity—an issue affecting thousands of local families and forcing 1 in 10 to miss school, work or skip an activity due to lack of access to these daily essentials..

"Hygiene products are at the top of almost every nonprofit's wishlist because they are foundational for good health, school and work attendance and basic human dignity," shares Rana Khoury, co-founder at Bridge to Basics. "Diaper need and period poverty each receive national awareness weeks, but addressing head-to-toe hygiene insecurity requires a sustained, community-wide focus. This October, we are inviting Minnesotans to join us to ensure no neighbor has to go without the basics."

Strategic Collaboration Minimizes Trade-offs and Improves Access

With rising costs, tight household budgets and federal benefit programs like SNAP and WIC restricted to food, families facing financial strain are forced into impossible trade-offs between groceries, rent and basic hygiene.

Bridge to Basics powers a collaborative network of 75 nonprofit partners—stretching from Stillwater to Chaska—working to eliminate these

trade-offs, keep kids in school, and preserve human dignity. Across the metro, this behind-the-scenes support enables:

- Schools to stock "dignity drawers" and resource closets.
- Food Shelves & Shelters to offer complete head-to-toe personal care.
- Healthcare Clinics to hand hygiene supplies directly to patients.
- Libraries & Community hubs to provide immediate, low-barrier access to essentials.
- Frontline Teams—including social workers, school-based family advocates and Metro Transit Police Homeless Action Team—to offer tangible relief during tough conversations.

As the behind-the-scenes supply partner for these trusted organizations, Bridge to Basics provides monthly inventory at zero cost—allowing frontline nonprofits to stretch their operational dollars further and stay focused on their core missions.

Measurable Impact Across Minnesota

Bridge to Basics hygiene network impact includes:

- 1.2 Million+ personal hygiene items distributed since May 2024 launch
- 750,000+ hygiene products to community programs in 2026 alone.
- $225,000 saved by partner nonprofits in 2026 on procurement costs, freeing up critical funds for direct care.
- 44,000+ Twin Cities neighbors supported through 75 partner organizations

How the Community Can Get Involved This October

Media outlets and community leaders are encouraged to help amplify this issue and share actionable ways the public can participate throughout the month:

1. Donate Funds: Financial gifts allow Bridge to Basics to buy bulk wholesale products. Donations can be made online.
2. Host a Hygiene Drive: Businesses, faith communities, youth groups and more can host their own supply drives using downloadable kits.
3. Shop for Good: Purchase from registries and direct ship to organization.
4. Volunteer: Groups and individuals can sign up for warehouse shifts.
5. Start the Conversation: Break the stigma around hygiene access by talking about hygiene insecurity with friends, coworkers and on social media.

Join Existing Hygiene Drives

Select Bell Bank locations have made it easy for people looking to join an existing hygiene drive. All month long, Stillwater and Woodbury bank locations are hosting a hygiene drive. Community members can drop off new, unopened personal care items during regular banking hours. Additionally, Ridgedale YMCA in Minnetonka and Woodbury YMCA are year-long donation barrel hosts. Donations are also accepted at Bridge to Basics warehouse in St. Paul.

To learn more about the issue, collaboration and how to get involved, visit the campaign webpage and follow Bridge to Basics on social media.

About Bridge to Basics

Bridge to Basics is Minnesota's first and only hygiene bank, operating as a behind-the-scenes supply partner for local nonprofits, schools, and social service agencies. By sourcing, warehousing and distributing essential personal care products—such as diapers, incontinence products, toilet paper, dental care, and deodorant—Bridge to Basics ensures community programs stay stocked so neighbors can access the everyday essentials necessary for health, dignity and opportunity. Learn more at bridgetobasics.org.

Media Note: Visual & Interview Opportunities

- Warehouse Operations & Packing: Capture volunteer packing shifts and order prep activities at the warehouse
- Interviews Available: Cofounders, warehouse volunteers and partner agency directors available upon request

Hygiene Insecurity Awareness Campaign:

https://bridgetobasics.org/shining-a-light-on-hygiene-insecurity-this-october/

https://bridgetobasics.org/

https://www.linkedin.com/company/bridge-to-basics/

https://facebook.com/profile/bridgetobasics/

https://www.instagram.com/bridgetobasics/