

Any Baby Can raising money by selling handmade dolls

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Seventeen-month-old Jacob Powell -- who was born with his bladder outside his body -- is alive only because of three surgeries and the dedication of his adoptive parents.

Any Baby Can, an Austin agency that helps families like Jacob's, is raising money by asking individuals and groups to donate \$1,000 each for large, handmade dolls modeled after Jacob.

The dolls will be handed out at a luncheon May 15 at the Hancock Recreation Center. Any Baby Can has received donations for 26 of the dolls and has six still available.

"The money provides crisis assistance for our families," said Lila Carl, executive director of Any Baby Can. "These are families that had a child born with a catastrophic illness or had a child become ill with cancer or something like that. It literally makes them destitute in some cases."

Jacob's family is typical of many of the families that Any Baby Can helps, Carl said.

Jacob's father, Jeff Powell, works as a plumber and his mother, Phyliss Powell, stays home with him, changing his diapers as often as every 20 minutes because of the risk of infection to his surgical wounds. They receive Medicaid for Jacob, but they have hundreds of dollars in expenses that are not covered, such as \$600 in diapers every month, Carl said.

Any Baby Can helps about 300 families like the Powells every year. The agency has done everything from providing emergency grants for food and rent to getting a Boy Scout troop to build a wheelchair ramp for a family whose son has cerebral palsy.

"Our mission is to provide support and crisis assistance to families with special health-care needs," Carl said. "We provide the basic needs so they can take care of their children."

More information about the doll fund-raiser is available by calling Any Baby Can at 454-3743. Also, donations of cribs, car seats and high chairs can be dropped off at 3423 Guadalupe St., Suite 100.

- **CITATION(AGLC STYLE)**

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Caption:

PHOTOThe new **dolls** are modeled after Jacob Powell, who was born with his bladder outside of his body.

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