



Bienestar's Youngest Donor

Maxine Fuhrer is a role model for those coming up behind her. Demonstrating that it's never too soon to start giving back, Maxine, age 6, collected a carload of baby books and intellectually stimulating toys for babies and toddlers and donated them to the Born to Learn program at Bienestar.



Maxine Fuhrer delivering her donation to Bienestar

Maxine is a 1st Grader at Ainsworth School in Portland, a Spanish language immersion program, which calls on its students to conduct two community service projects each year. Maxine adopted the goal of helping children younger than herself. With the help of her mother, Shannon Keane Fuhrer and her sister Alexa, Maxine brought 4 boxes of books and toys to the Bienestar born to learn program that is designed to provide the materials and parental support needed to help children, ages 0 to 3, learn and blossom.

For the new infant & toddler program, Gracie Garcia, Program Services Manager at Bienestar, and Marisela Iniguez, a Bienestar Promotora, were professionally trained by Parents as Teachers so they could pass on the skills to parents in Bienestar’s housing developments.

Parents and babies meet in a monthly group session, and Gracie and Marisela conduct home visits during the month to assist parents as they foster their babies’ cognitive development by reading, singing, and playing with them. Currently, 12 babies and toddlers are in the Born to Learn program.

Garcia commented: “Having a 6 year old little girl donate her own toys and books and collect others from her friends really inspired me. I was so proud of her, and it just shows me that you are never too young to start giving to others. It’s been great seeing how much the babies and toddlers in the program are enjoying them.”



Born to Learn program participants at Sunset Gardens Apartments.