How These Boxes Are Uplifting New Moms

Maria Berglund believes every mom deserves quality postpartum care, so she launched In Kind Boxes, a volunteer-run 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to providing quality postpartum essentials to new moms in need. She sat down with Jessica Abo to discuss how she's promoting good health and wellbeing among today's families while reducing inequality.

Jessica Abo: Maria, tell us about In Kind.

Maria Berglund: I started In Kind because after having two of my three sons here in the U.S., I realized the true lack of support that families receive here, and I don't think that's fair. So I wanted to do something about it. Also, I was raised by a single mom in need, and we relied really heavily on our community for essentials when we were growing up. That kindness that we received has always stuck with me. I've always tried to find ways to pay that kindness forward, and now I get to do that through my work with In Kind.

How do you find the families who receive your boxes?

The way that we connect boxes to the families who need them is through our partnerships with both organizations locally and across the United States. The organizations that we donate to that are outside of Oregon often find us through social media on Instagram. They reach out and message us and say, "Hey, this is the work we're doing and how can we help connect boxes to families in our area?" If you know of an organization that could use our help, you can reach out to us via our website inkindboxes.org, and I'll do my best to try and help.

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How can people support you?

If you're watching this and our mission truly touches your heart, making a donation to In Kind will have the biggest impact. We use the funding that we receive to purchase wholesale the essentials that we fill our boxes with, and then those are given directly to families because I volunteer my time. Another way that you can support us is to go to our shop page. We have a beautiful postpartum gift box. That is the same box that we donate to families. So when you buy one, we turn around and donate one to a family in need. There's also some new merch that we just posted in our shop. Kindness Matters sweatshirts, and proceeds from the sale of those items also help us provide essentials to families in need. Other than that, just helping us bring awareness to our mission. The more eyes that we get on our work, the more support we gain and then the more families we can help.

Since it's National Smile Day, what makes you smile?

A lot of things make me smile. My children make me smile, my family, getting to wake up every day and do this job. Sometimes I have to pinch myself because I just love it so much. It's just the best job, and I'm so grateful to have it. When I get messages from our partner organizations or from moms that have received boxes and they just tell me how much they love them and how special it made them feel, that is just everything. So those are the things that make me smile.

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