

A conversation with Mariella...

Open Door Baby Box Volunteer



Mariella

I am a mother of a young child, an Ecuadorian immigrant, and an Open Door volunteer.

I came to the U.S. ten years ago in order to have more opportunity and take care of my family. I've worked a lot

of jobs since I came to N.Y. — a supermarket, a restaurant, and also a factory. Now, as an Open Door volunteer, working on Baby Box, I get to do something to help other mothers get a better life. I am very lucky to be part of this team.

Being a mother has been very powerful for me. When I had my baby, I was so worried about how I could get what I needed to keep him healthy. Having a place like Open Door where people are interested and help you makes all the difference.

You can't imagine how excited the pregnant women are when they come in and see the box — it's like, Wow, I get all this?. One mom from

the Dominican Republic found out through the Baby Box tutorial about car seat safety. She told me that in her country they didn't use car seats. They didn't know about them and they couldn't afford them. Here there

I love to see their faces because I know how much they need these things. But more than that, **BABY BOX IS A WAY TO TEACH MOTHERS ABOUT HAVING A HEALTHY BABY.**

are programs to help new moms get free car seats. She kept saying how grateful she was that she could potentially save her baby's life.

Another mom didn't know about the importance of vaccines. One of our pediatricians spoke with her at a Baby Box education class and, afterwards she said, *I'm not going to miss any of my baby's shots.*

She told me that because of Baby Box she also knows that she's not supposed to have her baby sleep with her, but in a new Baby Box or separate crib.



Mariella reviews sleep safety guidelines with Baby Box "mom to be"

They come for their boxes, they have a chance to talk to other moms, to doctors and social workers, to learn about nutrition and how to keep their babies safe.

... IT'S REALLY SOMETHING WONDERFUL TO SEE AND BE A PART OF.

Another woman said that she was afraid of being depressed after having her baby because so many moms had "after baby sadness." What she didn't know is that postpartum depression is common and there are ways to manage it better. She felt so much safer. All these things may seem small to people who know this... but it's very big to people who don't.

We launched Baby Box just a few months ago and have already given away 75 boxes. That's a lot of families we are helping... and we're just getting started. I am so happy to be part of this community and show that I can also do something important.