

Meijer Teamwork Leads to New, Improved Changing Table Design

In the past, Northeast Ohio resident Marilou Senseman rarely went shopping with her family or left the area for trips. With adult daughter Emily in a wheelchair, weekly grocery runs and vacations are harder for them than most. Few public spaces offer convenient public changing places for adults with disabilities, which previously forced her to use the back of their van or the grass in a public location. Beyond being uncomfortable, this wasn't a dignified solution for her 27-year-old daughter, nor was it feasible for Marilou, who has spinal stenosis.

When Marilou found out that our three new Meijer supercenters opening this year in Warren and Wooster, Ohio and Elkhart, Ind., were adding newly improved, larger, height-adjustable changing tables in the family restrooms, she was thrilled and relieved.

"This Meijer initiative is monumental to us, and the independence this provides means everything to my family," she said. "We're so thankful to Meijer for including these tables in your new stores."

Treating all people with dignity and respect is one of our core values at Meijer, [recently named a "Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion"](#) for the seventh year in a row. Beyond creating a safe and inclusive space all for team members, that belief plays a key role in our diversity and inclusion efforts for customers in our stores.

Carrie Prater, a member of our Meijer Disability Awareness and Advocacy Group (MDAAG) – one of our seven Team Member Resource Groups – worked closely with our Design Team to improve upon the changing table functionality. The team instituted feedback from customers who said they appreciated the larger size, but still needed an easier way for someone in a wheelchair or other disabilities to safely get on and off the tables.

"Everyone deserves to take care of their personal hygiene needs in a dignified and safe manner," Carrie said. "We are proud to offer this for our customers with disabilities and those who care for them."

Carrie worked with the Meijer design team to source the new changing table, which has an easily accessible button to raise and lower the table, for the added convenience and dignity of customers with disabilities and their caregivers. It is also larger than the previous table to be more inclusive of customers of all ages.

"From a store design perspective, we needed to improve the functionality of the table, as well as increase the overall footprint of the family restroom to provide enough space for a larger table, a wheelchair and caregiver," said Jennifer Coffey, Meijer Design Director. "We went above and beyond the current ADA guidelines, including customer and team member input in the process to ensure it was as accessible and user-friendly as possible."

During opening day at the new Warren supercenter, Marilou was incredibly grateful for the end result.

"I don't think any other retailer does this, and I'm just so grateful," Marilou continued. "People don't think about these needs until they are in this situation, and we will continue to be loyal customers because of this initiative."

Additional assets available online: [Photos](#) ⁽¹⁾

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