

Give Re-useable Nappies A Go!



Information compiled by volunteers from
Darebin's Environmental Reference Group.
www.darebin.vic.gov.au/environment

Join increasing numbers of parents in Darebin

- More and more parents are using cloth nappies at least part of the time.
- Try several types to see which is best for you before buying a complete set. Some retailers offer trial kits containing different types of nappies.
- Baby's size, shape, and gender may influence which nappy is best for you.
- To get started try re-useable at home and disposables for outings, or re-useable during the day and disposables at night.
- Consider using a nappy wash service at first to make it easier.
- Find out more on re-useable nappies from baby experts (nurses, antenatal instructors etc), local retailers and the websites listed on the other side.



Looks after your baby and the environment

- Disposable nappies – even 'eco-nappies' – use energy, water, plastic and paper to produce and transport.
- Around 700 kilograms of nappy waste can be produced by one baby!
- Disposable nappies contributed up to 8 per cent of the weight of waste sent to landfill in Darebin in 2006 and the number of babies being born in Darebin is increasing!
- Nappies sent to landfill produce greenhouse gases and take up to 400 years to break down.
- Disposable nappies can contaminate landfill and water with untreated human faeces.
- Hemp and bamboo use less water, energy and pesticides to grow than cotton - nappies made from these materials are widely available.

Value for money and convenience

- Some parents find cloth nappies are less time-consuming than disposables! Time that you spend washing nappies will be compensated for by time not spent searching for discounted disposables.
- The initial cost of reusable nappies is higher but over time they are better value for money than disposables.
- Re-useable nappies cost between \$150 and \$600 (plus the cost of nappy liners if you choose to use them) while your baby uses nappies. And your next baby is free!
- Disposable nappies cost about \$2,500 - \$3,000 (more for disposable eco-nappies) for each baby.
- After you have found the type of nappy that suits your baby, it can be cheaper to buy a set than purchase nappies individually.

They look cool!

- Re-useable nappies are no longer boring white squares.
- They come in a wide range of styles and colours that look great.
- Re-useable nappies are fitted like disposables so there is no need for pins.



Using less water and energy



It is possible to use re-useable nappies and keep your water and energy use low. Local parents found it cost them less than \$100 a year (less than \$2 a week) to wash nappies using the suggestions below.

- Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for nappy care!
- Use small amounts of a simple detergent (for example *ecostore*)
- Use a nappy liner, scraper or *Little Squirt* hose to dispose of solid waste in toilet.
- Dry pail fitted or pocket nappies by storing nappies that are wet (with urine only or have had faeces removed) in a bucket with a secure lid between loads of laundry.
- Drying nappies on the clothesline saves energy and allows sunshine to naturally bleach and sanitise nappies.
- Put your clothesline where it will catch northern or western sun to line dry throughout the year.
- Purchase accredited GreenPower from renewable sources.
- Buy four star or better energy and water efficient appliances.
- Use rainwater for washing.



***Little Squirt* is a water pressure gun that connects to the toilet water supply (no plumber needed).**

Where can I buy re-useable nappies?

Darebin retailers include:

Chris' Dial a Nappy Ph 9489 3844

205A Victoria Road, Northcote

info@dialanappy.com.au

www.dialanappy.com.au

Offer 30 minute information sessions twice a month and on request to groups.

The Environment Shop Ph 9480 1905

594 High St, Thornbury

info@environmentshop.com.au

www.environmentshop.com.au



Information and online suppliers

- www.australiannappynetwork.org.au A not for profit group of reusable nappy advocates
- www.ozclothnappies.org Community website with answers to questions about re-useable nappies
- www.nurturenappies.com.au Information on health benefits, costs, typical sets of nappies
- www.darlingsdownunder.com.au Mail order supplier based in Victoria
- www.cheekybutts.com.au Mail order bulk purchases and trial kits based in Queensland
- www.babyblossom.com.au Mail order with discount club based in NSW
- <http://nappiescovered.com.au/store/WsAncillary.asp?ID=14> Nappy fabrics and free nappy patterns

See the information sheet *Types of Re-useable Nappies* for more on types of nappies.

Types of Re-useable Nappies

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1. Fitted cloth nappies

Fitted cloth nappies are similar in shape to disposable nappies. They fit comfortably and avoid leaks. Some are 'one size fits most' with velcro or press studs to adjust the waist (no pins!). Other fitted nappies come in a range of sizes. The 'all-in-one' design means fitted nappies take longer to dry than other types.

Fitted cloth nappies can:

- Be used with a separate waterproof cover made of fleece, wool or polyester knit
- Come with a waterproof cover built in (separate cover not needed).
- Have booster layers added to increase absorbency (good for overnight).

Examples are *Cute Tooshies*, *Baby Beehinds*, *Bum Genius* (fitted) and *Cheeky Butts*

A typical set of 20 fitted cloth nappies plus 4 waterproof outers will cost around \$560, plus optional liners.



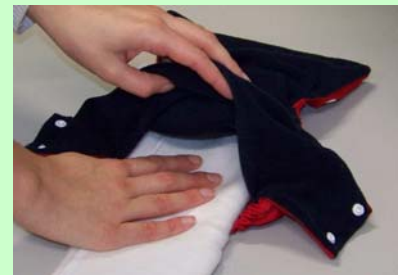
"For our second child we decided to try fitted nappies. We purchased *Bum Genius* nappies online. They look good, dry quickly, are durable, and are as easy as a disposable to put on a wriggling baby." *Nicola and Kyle, Reservoir*

2. Pocket nappies

Pocket nappies have a waterproof (but breathable) outer with a liner sewn together to create an internal pocket. You insert an absorbent layer into the pocket. The absorbent layer is removed before washing which reduces drying time. They come in a range of sizes.

Examples are *Pea Pods*, *Baby Kangas* and *Bum Genius* (pocket type).

A typical set of 20 pocket nappies will cost around \$500 plus cost of nappy liners (optional).



3. Separate nappy and cover system

The absorbent layer (a traditional nappy square, microfibre square, pre-fold nappy or compostable/flushable pad) is completely separate from the outer, waterproof cover. Common examples of these systems are:



Bummis

These are waterproof covers that are used over traditional nappy squares or pre-fold nappies. (Pre-fold nappies have thicker absorbent layers sewn into place.)

A set of 6 *Bummis* Whisper Wraps are \$96 (white) and \$108 (pattern).

Bummis Whisper Wrap nappy covers paired with a flat, pre-folded or fitted nappy were rated excellent or good by parents (who had previously used disposables) in Darebin trial.

3. Separate nappy and cover system (continued)

Weenee pouch pants have a removable inner waterproof pouch that holds the absorbent layer, plus a washable outer layer. Traditional nappy or microfibre squares or *Weenee* compostable or flushable pads can all be used in the pouch pants. Often the outers do not need to be washed and a clean inner pouch can be snapped into the same outer for the next nappy.

A set of 4 *Weenee* outers and 2 additional plastic pouches will cost around \$114.



"We were given a bag of hand-me-down (traditional square) nappies, so *Weenees* were an obvious choice for us. They're cheap, easy to use and look great."
Anne and Adrian, Northcote

A set of 24 nappy squares will cost between \$50 for traditional cloth, \$100 for microfibre (more absorbent and quicker drying), and \$120 for pre-fold nappies. Using optional flushable liners will add to the cost.

Liners make it easier

Flushable, compostable liners (such as *Eenee*) can be used with any re-useable cloth nappy to allow solid waste to be lifted out and flushed. Using liners most of the time for 2½ years could cost several hundred dollars.



Eenee liners were rated excellent or good by parents (who had previously used disposables) in a trial done in Darebin.

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- <http://nappiescovered.com.au/store/WsAncillary.asp?ID=14> Nappy fabrics and free nappy patterns
- www.babyblossom.com.au Mail order with discount club based in NSW

See the information sheet *Give Re-useable Nappies a Go!* for information about environmental and cost benefits.