

Real Nappy Week 2009 (27th April to 3rd May)

In celebration of the 13th annual Real Nappy Week, Alex Howard gives us the lowdown on choosing and using real nappies.

How did you find out real nappies?

Through my Active Birth classes in Exeter. I was given the number of a Devon Real Nappy Project advisor and when I contacted her she told me about a free trial kit I could borrow. I was keen to get started as soon as possible so arranged for my advisor, Caroline, to come and visit me soon after George was born. She went through all the different types of nappies available and how to use them.



Alex and son George (7 months)

How did you find the trial?

Really useful. Caroline advised me to wash all the nappies beforehand which had the added benefit of being able to compare drying times. I originally liked the bamboo nappies but they took longer to dry than some of the other types so it was good to find that out. I also liked the fleece nappies but, although they are quick to dry, they weren't really ideal for newborns. I ended up going for the prefolds which are ideal as they are reasonably priced, easy to use and dry overnight.

As well as being able to try out all lots of different types of nappies in one hit, I also liked the fact that I didn't get the "hard sell" from Caroline. I wasn't pressurised into making any choices or felt that I had to buy anything at the end of the trial.

How much did your set of real nappies cost?

Well, the prefolds are at the cheaper end of the real nappy market so it really didn't cost that much. My mum got us started by buying a set of 12 prefold nappies with 3 wraps and flushable liners. I bought a few bits and pieces from secondhand and resale websites,



such as www.usednappy.co.uk and Ebay so the total cost has been about £70 in total. We use disposables at night, so that is an extra cost.

Why did you choose to use real nappies?

Our key motivation was twofold. We didn't like the idea of sending so many disposable nappies to landfill and we liked the idea of early potty training which is often the case with babies wearing real nappies.

And how are you getting on with using real nappies?

It's been quite easy really. George is equally content in both real nappies and disposables. He sleeps in his real nappies for naps during the day and seems fine.

We used to use disposables a lot more last year but I made a New Year's Resolution to use real nappies more often at home and only use disposables at night and when we're out and about. We've been very good so far!

The Velcro tabs make changing hassle-free and there are no pins to contend with! George is quite a wriggly baby to change and the Velcro makes his real nappies just as easy to use as disposables.

Washing and drying is easy as well. I wash his nappies every 2-3 days. I tend to wash wet nappies with other clothes in a full load and the dirty nappies I put on a rinse cycle first. I put them out to dry in the spare room. If I do a wash in the evening, they are all dry by the next day.

Would you recommend the trial kit to other parents?

Yes, if you're not sure whether real nappies are for you then use the trial kit to find out. There's a lot of variety out there, it's not just terry nappies, and the trial kit enables parents to try out all the different types in one go.

And finally, any advice for parents thinking about real nappies?

Get Dad involved in the decision making! He'll need to change nappies too so make sure you're both happy with your choice of nappy.

To find out more about Real Nappy Week or to register for a trial kit, phone 0800 328 8175 or visit www.recycledevon.org.