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News Release

For Immediate Release

Cloth diaper resources available to the community

After falling out of favor for decades, cloth (or "real") diapers are coming back into vogue with mothers, families and infant health experts.

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department is playing a role locally, as one of the partners in the Cloth Diaper Collaborative of the Ozarks. The Collaborative pulls together three different groups already providing various types of support for cloth diapering parents – the health department, the Diaper Bank of the Ozarks, and Cover Your Bum. Cover Your Bum is a local cloth diaper loan program. The Diaper Bank provides disposables to families in need, but also encourages them to consider cloth diapers.

The SGCHD handles cloth diaper education and facilitates the monthly Southwest Missouri Real Diaper Circle group meetings. The next meeting is at 6 p.m. tonight, Thursday, Dec. 12, at Cox North, 1423 N. Jefferson in the Fountain Plaza Room (Cox College entrance). The classes alternate between day and evening times each month in order to better reach busy parents. The media is invited to attend.

"Cloth diapers are healthy for the baby, healthy for the family's finances and healthy for the environment," says Cheryl Blevins, a public health nurse with the health department who works heavily on infant care issues.

These diapers are healthy for babies because they experience less diaper rash and tend to get changed more frequently. Cloth diapered babies tend to be potty trained by the age of 2 as opposed to about age 4 for babies in disposable diapers. The longer a child stays in diapers, the more the cost rises for parents.

"Many people think that cloth diapering is difficult until they try it," Blevins says. "It's easier than you think. You just have to adjust. It only adds about two loads of laundry a week to your regular routine, which at current CU rates is about \$100 for two years, versus about \$1,600 to \$2,500 for two years of disposable diapers."

The cost of cloth diapers is an initial investment of about \$100 to \$400 depending on what style a parent chooses.

The Diaper Bank of the Ozarks is current experiencing an increase in requests and having trouble meeting that need. In the past week alone the Diaper Bank saw three families that were choosing between buying food and buying diapers. Cloth diapers can be a great alternative for such families.

"The Collaborative responded to those needs this week and got the families into cloth diapers," Blevins said.

For more information on the Collaborative, the Read Diaper Circle and cloth diapering in general, contact: Cheryl Blevins, Public Health Nurse, (417) 864-1496; or Mike Brothers, Public Information Administrator, (417) 874-1205.

More information on the Diaper Bank: <http://diaperbankoftheozarks.org>

More information on Cover Your Bum: www.coveryourbum.org