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**GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE GREAT NAPPY DEBATE**

It’s official - New Defra LCA report confirms reusable nappies are best for the environment.

* **Reusable nappies produce 25% less CO2 than single-use disposable nappies**
* **Based on the figures in the report, if every child in the UK in nappies used reusable nappies instead of single-use disposable nappies it would save the equivalent of 700 million car miles of CO2 – that’s nearly 3000 journeys to the moon in a car!**
* **The environmental impact of production was over 90% lower for a reusable nappy than for single-use**
* **The environmental impact of the end of life disposal of a single-use nappy is nine times higher than for that of a reusable nappy**
* **The LCA report shows that even when factoring in washing and drying, reusable nappies are still the best nappy choice for the environment**

This week, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has published a new Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) report focusing on the environmental impact of single-use disposable nappies and reusable nappies in the UK.

The technical data concludes that reusable nappies are significantly better for the environment than single-use nappies, which have a higher carbon footprint.

**Guy Schanschieff, Chair of the Nappy Alliance & Founder of Bambino Mio commented:**

*“Many thanks to Defra for commissioning this report which shows, as we’ve always known, that reusable nappies are better for the environment than single-use. Now that the government knows this too, what are they waiting for? It’s time for a national strategy on nappy waste and for policies to be put into place to support reusable nappies to create a better world for future generations.*

*For too long, the damaging effects of single-use nappies have been overlooked, despite them being a significant contributor to plastic waste in the UK and globally. Recognising this, other countries are taking legislative steps to address their impact. The UK, often considered a leader in the global fight against plastic pollution, seriously risks falling behind its international counterparts if it doesn’t choose to act urgently on single-use nappies to support carbon reduction targets.”*

The new report is extremely positive for the reusable nappy industry and a beacon of hope for the planet, as the results clearly prove that if more parents use reusable nappies instead of single-use nappies the carbon impact on our environment would be heavily reduced.

Today’s LCA has assessed modern reusable nappies which come in a range of styles and are as easy to use as single-use nappies. Reusable nappies can save parents hundreds of pounds and use 99% less raw materials than single-use nappies so, they save our environment too.

**Dr Charlotte Lloyd, Lecturer and Research Fellow in Environmental Chemistry commented:**

*“It is great to see this updated LCA published by Defra, hopefully it will give parents the up-to-date information that has been lacking to help them make an informed choice about nappies for their children. Single-use nappies can be a source of nutrient, chemical and plastic pollution in the environment and with every child using around 7,000 nappies in their lifetime the switch to reusable products would dramatically reduce the impact.”*

The majority of the environmental impact for single-use nappies comes from the production and end of life stages, which are not within the control of consumers. Whereas when using reusable nappies, the power to reduce carbon footprint even further (25%) is in the hands of the consumer via a variety of simple techniques, including:

* + Re-loving nappies – extending the lifecycle of nappies by using nappies on multiple children, gifting to family and friends, donating or reselling for others to buy second hand
  + Opting for green energy - renewable sources such as solar panels
  + Mindful washing routine – wash on lower temperatures, wash with other items and air dry instead of using a tumble dryer

**Continues Schanschieff:**

*“There is a lot of greenwashing in the disposable nappy industry, including so called ‘eco-disposables’ which are still bad for the environment and false hopes around single-use nappy recycling pilot schemes which don’t really work, they aren’t a solution and they actually increase CO2.*

*We need the government to ensure they support promotion of reusable nappies because they are the clear* *solution to the problem of single-use nappy waste and will heavily reduce carbon emissions – just imagine the positive impact on our planet if people no longer used disposable nappies.”*

The Nappy Alliance is asking the government to:

* Produce a National Nappy Waste strategy, with the objective of reducing single-use nappies in landfill or incineration to an absolute minimum.
* Use the powers of the Competition and Markets Authority and Advertising Standards Agency to prevent misleading green claims from single-use manufacturers and nappy recycling companies.
* Use the powers contained in the Environment Act 2021 to bring about the positive environmental change we need.

It’s time to change nappies for good, to ensure we leave a thriving world for future generations. Further details on the findings of the LCA can be found in the final report and the summary report [here](https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectId=20622).

**-ENDS-**

**WORD COUNT:** 812

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

* For more information contact The Nappy Alliance: [info@nappyalliance.co.uk](mailto:info@nappyalliance.co.uk)
* For images or exclusive comment from Guy Schanschieff, Chair of the Nappy Alliance & Founder of Bambino Mio please contact: [victoria@bambinomio.com](mailto:victoria@bambinomio.com)

About the LCA:

* LCA is the global standard for assessing the total environmental impact of a finished product and takes into account all aspects of a product’s ecological footprint including resource and energy consumption, emissions to air, water and land, as well as health & ecosystems, and more.
* The Nappy Alliance provided support to DEFRA in production of this research, including samples of products, true data, and advice on usage.
* To note - The LCA has not included nappy recycling in the scope of the study because data was not made available to DEFRA’s contractor. Data from a nappy recycling project in Italy indicates that only 30% of materials from single-use nappies is recovered when nappies are recycled, leaving the remaining 70% to go to landfill or incineration.

About the Nappy Alliance

* Guy Schanschieff is Chair of the UK Nappy Alliance (founded in 2003). The Nappy Alliance is a consortium of British independent manufacturers and distributers of reusable nappies and associated products, and advocates for the widespread adoption of reusable nappies in the UK. The Nappy Alliance do this through the provision of information and support to policymakers, healthcare professionals, caregivers, and others, for the benefit of the environment, children and future generations.
* The members of the Alliance are: Bambino Mio, Baba + Boo, Cheeky Wipes, Close, Little Lamb, Muzlinz, The Nappy Gurus, The Flats Company and The Washable Nappy Company.
* The average baby uses 5,000 nappies up to potty training (weighing up to 120kg), the majority of which will go to landfill – nearly 10 million of them every day in the UK alone!
* The composition of a disposable nappy means that some elements will take multiple lifetimes to degrade. The plastics used on nappies are Polypropylene (liner to stop wetness) and Polyethylene (prevent leaks), along with elastics, tapes and adhesives to secure the product. Together these make up over 60% of the materials used in a nappy. (Environment Agency).