



BETTER FOR YOUR BABY. BETTER FOR YOUR PLANET. BETTER FOR YOUR BOTTOM LINE.

## ***Cotton Tales: Adventures in Cloth Diapering***

August 2010

### **Day Cares that Care**

From the perspective of a parent who chose cloth, the notion of a child care center refusing to work with cloth diapers is similar to an up-scale restaurant using paper plates and plastic utensils. The only real problem with that seemingly ridiculous analogy is that the restaurant wouldn't even have to wash the dishes; like day cares using cloth diapers, the restaurant would simply send the dirty dishes home with the diners for them to wash themselves.

Many local day cares do refuse to work with cloth, and they have the right to do so, just as we have the right to send our son (and our money) to a competing day care that is happy to work with cloth.

Considering that a relatively small percentage of parents on a day care's long waiting lists have traditionally used cloth, I honestly can't blame those who refuse to work with cloth diapers. It is a business decision, even if it is a business decision based on a lack of information about modern cloth diapering. As cloth diapering continues to grow in popularity, day cares will re-assess, and with sales of cloth diapers growing by 30% annually in recent years, that will happen sooner than later.

While I understand that a day care has the right to choose to not work with cloth, I do not understand why they would claim that state regulations prohibit them from doing so. To be clear, the minimum standards for Class A Day Care Centers, as issued by the Louisiana Department of Social Services, make no mention whatsoever of diapering in cloth. If you would like to confirm this, I've posted a copy of those regulations to [http://www.louisianacottontails.com/LA\\_daycare\\_regulations.pdf](http://www.louisianacottontails.com/LA_daycare_regulations.pdf). Or, you can call the state's Department of Children and Family Services (formerly the Department of Social Services) at 225-342-4650. They will be happy to confirm that the decision to accept cloth diapers is left entirely to the discretion of each day care's director.

Any day care that claims that regulations prohibit them from using cloth is either being intentionally dishonest or is demonstrating an inadequate understanding of the regulations they should understand perfectly well. I strongly urge you to ask those day cares which of those statements best applies to them.

There are a number of area day cares that are happy to work with cloth diapers, including First Beginnings, Bright Beginnings, and the Preschool Enrichment Program at First Presbyterian. I'm sure that there are others as well, and as you hear of those please let me know so that I can give them their due!

I do not doubt that the directors of all day cares want to provide the best possible service to the children in their care. But, like most parents today, child care professionals are not immune to the negative preconceptions about diapering in cloth. I firmly believe that I could dispel those preconceptions and convince them to accept cloth diapering within 15 minutes. Unfortunately, my calls to many of the reluctant day cares tend to go unreturned, and that will continue to be the case until parents like you start asking questions.