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**From:** Stephanie Mulligan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 May 2019 3:55 PM  
**To:** recyclinginquiry  
**Cc:** Stephanie Mitten  
**Subject:** Recycling Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to present my idea for waste management in Victoria. Taking a year of maternity leave from my work as a medical doctor, I became passionate about how I could make a difference from home and discovered the wonderful world of modern cloth nappies. I have since learnt disposable nappies to be one of the major contributors to landfill and I think we have an excellent opportunity to address this by supporting parents to transition to cloth nappies.

In my opinion, the major barriers to cloth nappy use are a) education and b) cost.

In hospital, from the moment a baby is born they are placed in a disposable nappy, the parents are shown how to do this and from there a journey with a disposable nappy begins. It is definitely more difficult to use a modern cloth nappy, there are many styles and brands available and they require carefully considered washing to ensure they remain hygienic for their lifespan. However, once this is known, a supply is established and a washing routine finalised, they really only add perhaps an additional ten minutes to ones day to prepare the nappies to be washed and fold them for use once washed and dried.

Modern cloth nappies are also expensive, with the cost of one nappy more than a regular box of the supermarket brand leading disposable. As it is recommended to have approximately 20 nappies per baby, the start up cost can be approximately \$600. Whilst this money is reclaimed many times over in the lifespan of the nappies, which can last through until toilet training for multiple children, this is a significant investment for parents at a time when many items are competing for purchasing to set up a home for a baby.

I won't go into the benefits of cloth nappies over disposables or the nuances of washing technique, though there are amazing online resources dedicated to this, but I will suggest you consider a) education programs for parents of children using nappies and b) consider subsidising the cost of establishing a cloth nappy supply to significantly reduce landfill. A child is in nappies until on average age three, so there are many opportunities to target parents in the early years and not just the newborn period.

Kind Regards,  
Dr Stephanie Mulligan  
Moonee Valley Council Sustainability Champion