

Gear up for baby

Photos and story by Lockie Hunter ♦ WNC Parent contributor

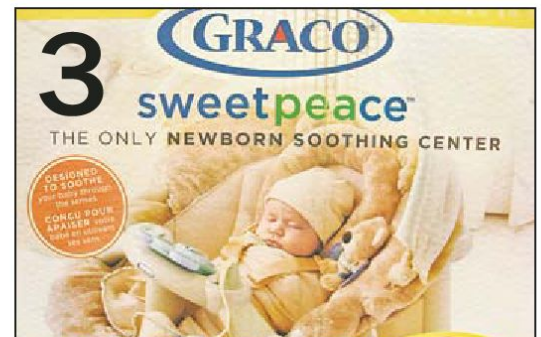
It seems that each day new baby gadgets are appearing on the market. Here are 10 products that stand out from the crowd in their creativity and utility, and where to buy them locally.



1
Activity PlayMat by Gund. "This is perfect for newborn and up," said Thea Youngblood-Sailors at William and Grace. "You can lay the baby on the mat and they can feel different textures. It is perfect for the much needed tummy time. As they grow they can begin to play with the attachments." \$75 at William and Grace, 7 All Souls Crescent, Biltmore Village.



2
Weeblock by Sozo is an absorbent sponge-like cup that fits over a new baby boy to keep him from peeing on you during a diaper change. "The Weeblock is always the hit of the baby shower, especially for first time parents of a baby boy," said Diana Eirhart, retail general manager at Just Ducky Originals. "It is also practical as you can toss it in the diaper bag and right into the wash when it is dirty." \$12 at Just Ducky Originals, 100 Charlotte St., Asheville.

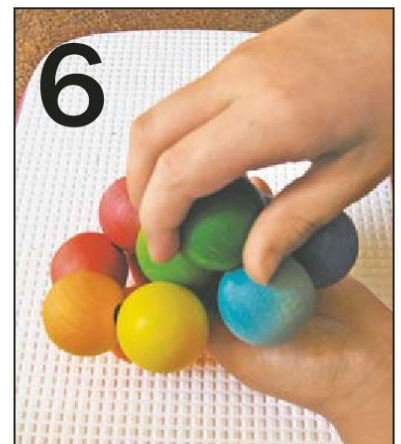


3
Sweetpeace Newborn Soothing Center by Graco helps baby adjust to life outside the womb. Sweetpeace mimics the ways that parents naturally cradle their babies. The four settings create four soothing sensations. \$179.99 at Target, 17 McKenna Road, Arden, and 115 River Hills Road, East Asheville.

The Tuffet Too by Cute As Can Bee. "This is a cover for shopping carts and high chairs in restaurants," said Youngblood-Sailors. "It is 100 percent cotton and machine washable. It completely covers the handle of the shopping cart where babies tend to chew. It protects babies (through toddlers) from germs and provides a soft and safe seat." \$85 at William and Grace.



5
Vicks Germ Free Humidifier is ideal for baby's room as it humidifies the space with a calming mist that is almost 100 percent free of infectious bacteria, molds and spores. The blue dim light on the unit even doubles as a night light. \$89.99 at BabiesRUs, 801 Fairview Road, East Asheville.



6
Grimms Rainbow Ball Grasper by Grimms Spiel and Holz. Wooden ball secured together by a stretchy string. "When you hold them in your hand you can't stop playing. They sound simple but they have been the best seller this season," said Sonja Hernandez, one of the owners at The Littlest Birds, 647 Haywood Road, West Asheville. \$14.99 at The Littlest Birds.

Natural Nurser from Adiri. "Adiri baby bottles more closely replicate the tactile bonding experience of breast-feeding than any other bottle," said Hernandez. "The Natural Nurser Ultimate Baby Bottle is warm to a child's cheek, like a breast, when filled with warm milk. ... Shaped like a breast, [the nipples] encourage the same type of open-mouthed latching that is required for breast-feeding, making bottle feeding and breast-feeding more easily interchangeable." \$12.50 at The Littlest Birds.



Baby Briefcase by Organized From the Start allows the new mom to "file paperwork in one small carrying case from prebirth visits through vaccinations, etc.," said Diana Eirhart, retail general manager at Just Ducky Originals. "The Baby Briefcase makes a great gift from the announcement of pregnancy through a first birthday. It is practical, unique and compact for the busy parents." \$32 at Just Ducky Originals, 100 Charlotte St., Asheville.

One Size Reusable Diaper from Happy Heiny.

"You will find on your one size diaper a total of four snaps on the front," said Hernandez. "This will give you a total of four different sizes for your diaper. This will allow the diaper to fit most babies from about 8 pounds to 35 pounds. An investment that will save you money throughout your diapering time." \$18.95 at The Littlest Birds.



Bundle Me by J. Cole. Tired of stuffing your child into a bulky winter coat or of having to retrieve a blanket that was kicked off in the stroller? This cozy bundler accommodates car seats, joggers, strollers, etc. The bottom piece can be left in the car seat providing a soft and snug cover. Variety of colors. \$39.99 at Babies R Us.

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