

Baby box birthday celebrated

It's a year since the first baby box was handed out to expectant parents in Scotland. Since then 52,065 boxes have been gifted to families across the country as far away as Haroldswick in Shetland.



L-R – Sarah Morrison with 8 month Chrissie – Children and Early Years Minister Maree Todd – Gillian Steele with 4 month Erin and Councillor Derek Howie, City of Edinburgh Council

9172 boxes have been delivered In the NHS Lothian area in the last year.

The area with the highest number of baby boxes is Greater Glasgow and Clyde where 12,815 baby boxes were delivered. On the Western Isles 199 boxes were sent to newborns.

Now one of the boxes has been placed in the Museum of

Childhood to mark of its significance in the lives of Scotland's babies.



L-R – Alasdair Lawrie and Jennifer Scott with 5 month Hailie - Children and Early Years Minister Maree Todd

Children and Early Years Minister Maree Todd said: “A year on from when the first Baby Boxes were delivered, we can say these boxes are having a real impact on the lives of those who receive them. I’ve heard stories from across the country about how the thermometers have helped parents seek appropriate medical care for their babies, how its contents are providing essential products for babies who arrive early, and much needed comfort for those who might not have family or friends around to shower the little one with gifts when they arrive.

“These boxes demonstrate that, as a society, we value each and every child in Scotland. We’ve had a very successful first year, with 85% take-up, and we want to continue to build on this as we move into year two.

“I’m delighted to have reached this milestone . It’s an honour for everyone involved – from the organisations providing the items to the box packers to the people delivering the boxes – to have been part of something that is having a real impact on the lives of babies and their carers across the country.”□



L-R – Sarah Morrison with 8 month Chrissie – Children and Early Years Minister Maree Todd – Gillian Steele with 4 month Erin

Shelagh Young, Scotland Director of Home-Start UK, said: “Many parents have been telling Home-Start staff and volunteers just how much the items they receive are helping them. Being a parent, especially for the first time, can be overwhelming, and many of the families we work with we work with feel isolated and alone. The Baby Box gives the clear message that every child matters, and that parents are not alone.”□

NHS Lothian Chief Midwife, Frances McGuire, said: “The Baby Box has been a great opportunity for our midwives and health

visitors to chat to expectant parents about its contents and how they can help improve a child's health and wellbeing. Not only that, but the box helps new parents at a time where they may be particularly stretched financially, and can provide crucial support."□

One new father The Edinburgh Reporter spoke with said that he thought the Baby Box was a great concept.

He said : "It is a great idea as we all feel very vulnerable at that stage no matter what our circumstances. Even now some three months on we still use the Baby Box and everything in it."

Although all contents were highly rated, parents thought the most useful item was the bathroom/room thermometer, the ear thermometer and sling. When asked what was missing many could not think of anything but 10% said they would like newborn nappies included.

Three quarters said that a second sheet for the baby box mattress would be welcome and this has now been added.

All photos courtesy of The Scottish Government