

Mother Blessing Kit: a unique alternative to a baby gift shower

By Gretchen Howard
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Longtime Black Mountain residents Erin Gore and Sally O'Neill honor mothers not just on Mother's Day but all year round with their business, Mother Blessing Kit. Both mothers of two young boys, the two came up with the idea for the business in 2004 after a Mother Blessing celebration for Gore's first son.

"A Mother Blessing is an alternative to a baby gift shower – it is an ancient ceremony honoring a woman's journey and transition into motherhood," O'Neill said. "The celebration uplifts and empowers the mother while bathing her with positive, loving and nurturing energy. It is a special time to focus on and celebrate the mother whether it's her first or subsequent pregnancy."

After attending, hosting, and receiving many Mother Blessings, Gore and O'Neill knew what elements they wanted to include in their packaged celebration for mothers. The Mother Blessing Kit provides everything needed for a memorable event for eight participants: a blessing guide, invitations and envelopes, handmade beeswax blessing candles, a mother blessing poem, birthing bracelet beads, wire and clasp, blessing scrolls and hemp ties,

a henna tattoo kit, and organic massage lotion. Additional items are available for individual purchase if there are more than eight attending the celebration. The Mother Blessing guide helps participants navigate through the entire Mother Blessing ceremony and leaves room to personalize the event to any spirituality or birth plan. The botanical cardstock invitations explain the purpose of the Mother Blessing and allow for

custom details.

The beeswax blessing candles are locally handmade in Black Mountain and are meant to be lit during the ceremony. Guests may take their candles home and relight them when the mother goes into labor.

The keepsake blessing poem is intended to be read aloud at the celebration. Also included in the kit is an assortment of colorful beads in a keepsake pouch. Guests string the beads into a bracelet while sharing blessings, words of advice, and stories that will benefit the mother. During the birth she can wear the bracelet and draw strength from the friends and family who helped create it.

A colorful assortment of paper serves as blessing scrolls. Each guest may write down their blessings for the mother and her baby, and the mother can revisit them through her birthing and par-

enting journey.

The henna tattoo kit allows guests to be creative and apply designs to the mother's belly. Guests may also receive a tattoo, symbolizing the connection during the special time. The temporary tattoo lasts one to three weeks.

Finally, a massage lotion of organic and natural seed oils and organic botanical extracts is included to pamper the mother with a hand or foot massage to shower her with relaxation.

"The Mother Blessing Kit

may be customized for adoption, surrogacy, planned cesarean, or any other entrance into motherhood," Gore said. "It may also be tailored to a mother of any spirituality."

All products in the kit are organic, all natural, handmade, fair trade, recycled, and renewable. The kit is sold for \$80 on Mother Blessing Kit's Web site, www.motherblessingkit.com.

For more information on Mother Blessing Kit, call 669-1198 or email info@motherblessingkit.com.



Photo provided by Gretchen Howard

(above) Sally O'Neill and Erin Gore with their Mother Blessing Kit.