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KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—A local entrepreneur with European roots has started a business that aims to bring safer, sounder and more stylish sleep to babies and young children across the globe.

On Feb. 6, Uta Preston launched the retail website for Little Fishkopp (www.littlefishkopp.com), a children's clothing brand specializing in sleep bags for babies and toddlers. The brand's mission is to make organic and eco-friendly clothing in colorful Nordic designs reminiscent of Preston's upbringing in Northern Germany.

A sleep bag is a wearable blanket for infants and toddlers. It's worn over sleepwear and zips up the front, leaving the child's head and arms free. A Little Fishkopp sleep bag is a safer alternative to loose blankets, as it can't be kicked off or pulled over a child's face. It helps babies sleep safely and snugly and gives parents peace of mind.

"Sleep bags have been used in Germany for many years. I slept in one myself when I was a baby," Preston said. "They're safer and warmer than blankets, and a great bedtime routine. When I had my children in the U.S., I discovered sleep bags weren't easy to find. The options available weren't organic, and the designs weren't particularly exciting, so I decided to come up with a solution."

Preston, who has an MBA and experience as a management consultant, tested the concept during a Knoxville Entrepreneur Center (KEC) boot camp in 2013. She spent most of 2014 working with designers, manufacturers and organizations that certify safety ratings and organic materials. The company's name is a nod to her native land. "Fishkopp," which translates as "fish head," is slang for someone from the German North Sea coastal region where she was raised. A kid from that area would be a Little Fishkopp.

Little Fishkopp's bright, vibrant and 100% certified organic cotton sleep bags are for newborns and toddlers up to 3 years of age. They come in a variety of sizes and thicknesses to accommodate different seasons and climates. They're available locally in Knoxville at Bliss downtown on Market Square and can be purchased by customers worldwide at www.littlefishkopp.com.

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