

Magazine gives moms fashion tips

Kyodo News

A woman with her hair dyed bright brown and wearing fake eyelashes and dark eyeliner is pictured on the cover of I LOVE mama, a monthly magazine targeting young mothers who want to keep up with the latest fashion trends.

Its popularity has risen since the first issue was published this spring by Inforest Co. in Tokyo. Its circulation now stands at about 200,000 copies.

In the magazine's unique lingo, single moms are called "shin mama" for short and leaders of mothers' groups are dubbed "mama-sa daihyo."

About a dozen subscribers appear each month, although they pay for their own makeup, clothes and travel expenses.

"I cooked steamed rice using chestnuts I picked with my child," wrote a reader from Nagano Prefecture. Another in Saitama Prefecture touched on the fresh air she enjoys in her local district.

Subscribers do not cut corners in housekeeping or child rearing, cooking their own meals three times a day to save money.



For fashion-conscious moms: A 25-year-old mother holds a booklet recommending homemade baby food during a photo shoot with her son for the monthly magazine I LOVE mama. KYODO PHOTO

Most of the subscribers only purchase ¥10,000 or less worth of clothes a month, wearing items priced in the hundreds of yen or shopping at fashion emporium Shibuya 109 when it has a sale.

Its features are popular, too. When the magazine covered teen moms in the September edition, many said they were worried whether they could teach their kids properly because they hadn't attended high school.

In another article on the low birthrate, one mother spoke of how she came to adore her child more than she had imagined possible. The magazine also features mothers' farming experiences in rural areas and other events nationwide.

"I made friends via the magazine and I live a full life," said Natsuki Tajiri, 21, a single mother.

"I think the magazine became popular because we featured the actual lives of 'gal mothers,' " said Ayako Yamashita, 39, editor in chief of the magazine. "We want readers to feel that it is great to become a mom."

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