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To: [redacted]
Subject: [redacted]

To Whom It May Concern:

I saw on this week bulletin that the House of Representatives Health and Ageing Committee is doing an inquiry into breastfeeding.

I am a first time mum and my daughter Angelica is 8 months (born 9 June 2006 at RPA). I found really useful that at the hospital there was a lactation consultant available in the morning to help getting started with breastfeeding. Sadly it appears that not all hospitals have this service. The nurses at RPA couldn't help as much as the lactation consultant (as she's a specialist in the field I guess).

Breastfeeding is a hard and time consuming job which requires commitment and there isn't that much awareness and support from the community. I still breastfeed my baby although I've been back at work 4 days a week since she was 3.5 months old. We have a mortgage to pay and I also prefer to work. In order to breastfeed her I go during my lunch break of 45 mins to the Day Care to feed her and it's not easy (eating my lunch while walking or eating at my desk). I do it willingly since I know the benefits (she's been sick only once which is great considering she's at Day Care).

What annoyed me is that instead of being acknowledged for doing a 'good thing' by keeping breastfeeding her I'm seen as a rare beast so to speak. My mother-in-law gave me formula saying it will be less tiring for me and I notice that people are a bit funny about a child being breastfed after 6 months or even up to 6 months.

Unfortunately the Australian Breastfeeding Association come across as Nazi and crazy women so their message of trying to breastfeed as much as you can get lost. I'm not sure if this will help with your enquiry or not however I hope that more will be done to inform people of the benefits of breastfeeding and helping also working mums to achieve this.

Brochures must be printed and distributed to expecting mums with more information on the benefits (e.g. Allergies, obesity, brain development, etc...) this way they can be fully aware. Also advertising to the community will be good. Australians are becoming lazy and bottle feeding is the easy option (as buying prepared food, not walking, etc...). Maybe you could give more rebate for Child Care for mums that still breastfeed their babies. I guess that sometimes monetary incentives are good and also put more value to what you do in a society driven by 'money'.

Regards,

Federica Rasmi Sakulsuvarn