

Submission to Parliamentary Committee on Breastfeeding

I wish to register my support for any parliamentary initiatives which would support the importance of breastfeeding of infants. I am a 68 year old mother of seven children and 26 grandchildren and one great grandchild, and have felt that the benefits of breastfeeding have added a dimension to my mothering and have advantaged my children and grandchildren considerably in their emotional, intellectual and physical development.

Bonding of mothers and babies is greatly enhanced by breastfeeding. I have experienced this in my own life and consider it of paramount importance. I benefited from affiliation with "Nursing Mothers of Australia" when my last two children were born after a ten year gap, and found the counselling services offered by other women who were committed to the benefits of breastfeeding, and the monthly newsletter, immensely valuable. Any activity on the part of mothers who group together for the purposes of enhancing their experiences in breastfeeding and in supporting each other in the activity should receive consideration by this committee.

New mothers need special help to establish effective breastfeeding practises as the difficulty of learning techniques which will support successful breastfeeding are not always easy, and come with some challenges. This causes many new mothers to give up and the advantages are lost, sometimes to several generations.

I feel concerned that the encouragement and advertising that promotes breastfeeding substitutes, especially in indigenous communities, will have long term effects on the health and development of Australians.

Signed

Lois Jeffrey