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To whom it may concern

My name is Peta Oates. I am writing to you as a mother of two daughters.

Breastfeeding has been extremely important to me over the past 4 and a half years mainly because it has enabled me to fully nurture and nourish my daughters both physically and emotionally. Because I had enough knowledge and support, I have been able to breastfeed continuously for those 4 and a half years despite the difficulties I have faced. I was lucky enough to have the support and modeling of my mother who breastfed my younger sister in the 80s and the support of my local ABA group. Even though I had those two sources of support however, when I was faced with an unplanned pregnancy and the decision of whether to tandem breastfeed I had only ever met one other woman who had done this. If I had not met her, and had the opportunity to talk to her and be inspired by her, I may have prematurely weaned my first born before she and I were ready, and before she had turned two, as is recommended by the World Health Organisation. As it was she fed through my pregnancy and then for a further 18 months after that. My daughter and I were extremely lucky. Not every woman in Australia faced with similar circumstances has that amount of support and access to information. I urge you to do all you can to increase breastfeeding rates in this country. See out the experts, listen and make changes.

Peta Oates