

Hon Mr Alex Somlyay MP, Chairman  
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing  
House of Representatives  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

30 April 2007

RE: Response regarding submission number 63 to the Inquiry into Breastfeeding

I would like to register a complaint regarding some offensive wording contained within submission number 63, specifically the sentence "Unfortunately the Australian Breastfeeding Association come across as nazi and crazy womens so their message of trying to breastfeed as much as you can get lost [sic]".

It is unfortunate that some members of the public have a negative perception of the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA). My primary concern is that perpetuating such negativity may discourage mothers from seeking the support of the ABA when and if they need it.

The majority of work conducted by the ABA to support, promote and protect breastfeeding is done so by trained volunteers who give generously of their time and effort.

The actions and words of individuals should not be interpreted to represent the views and policies of the ABA. There are many individuals who are passionate about breastfeeding support, promotion and protection and not all those individuals are subscribers to the ABA. The ABA Code of Ethics specifically instructs against being "dogmatic or fanatical" in relation to breastfeeding.

I have attended many ABA meetings and in my involvement with the ABA, I have not met anyone who fits the description of "nazi and crazy". Perhaps it is possible that many of the misguided perceptions are held by people who have had limited contact or involvement with the ABA.

May I suggest that any Mother who has not attended an ABA meeting do so, to participate in, and benefit from, the support network which has helped so many Mothers since its foundation in 1964.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts in relation to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Marazakis