

I have had this Inquiry brought to my attention and thought I would tell you my story.

My son was born via emerg c/s at 37.5wks in Sept 2005.

The midwives at the hospital "showed" me how to attach my son to the breast, but having a tiny baby and big engorged breasts meant that my nipples were severely cracked and bleeding. My son was loosing weight and I had it suggested to me that I was not producing enough milk. With my cracked nipples (and the fact that no midwife or lactation consultant could see why that was so) I decided to try and express. My first expression (from one breast only) was over 300mls.... my son only needed 45mls so my milk production was not a problem. Over a week of consultations with lactation consultant and local Maternal Child Health Nurse no one could tell me what was wrong.

After 2wks of expressing full time, I realised that in the previous 3 days I had only had 45mins sleep, I was on the verge of a breakdown and made the hard decision to go to formula.

My issue is that there is not enough support for women in making choices. There is such a push for breastfeeding (even though they could not help me with WHY things were not working and I was heading towards PND) that I felt lost... the Aust Breastfeeding Association would not help and the Child Health Nurse was very discouraging (which is not what you want to hear when you have wrestled with the decision in the first place)..... the most frustrating thing was the LACK OF INFORMATION in relation to Formula in order to make an informed decision.

As to health... I was the only mother out of my mother's group who did not breastfeed for a minimum of 6 months.... ironically my son has been the healthiest out of all the children.

I find it interesting that many of the "proclaimed" benefits of breast feeding have been recently challenged with recent research which is not mentioned.

I am now pregnant and expecting my 2nd child in August. I will attempt to breastfeed my child, but if not I will use formula.

I also take exception to how formula is portrayed as being a type of 'poison' you are giving to your child by those who were fortunate not to have many/any issues with breastfeeding. It does not make life for those of us who have made the hard decision to go to formula easier.... mother's suffer from enough guilt without being attacked for 'poisoning' their child.

Regards,