

Submission no. 389AUTHORISED: 13/6/07 *B***Subject:** Breastfeeding story

I am 19 years old and my daughter was born on the 13th of April 2007. My entire pregnancy I wanted to breastfeed and I assumed they're would be no problems. Its a learnt skill so with assistance anyone can do it, right? WRONG!!! My daughter was given to me to feed whilst my spinal was still in effect (I had a c-section because she was breech) so I could not actually feel my nipples. The midwives attempted to help her attach and asked me if it hurt to see if it was alright, I couldn't feel anything so I didn't complain. When she came off my breast (after a very short time) we realised she wasn't sucking but chewing... I was left with bruises on both nipples. This process was repeated for two very long days and she was slowly getting more jaundiced. The problem was she couldn't attach because I have flat nipples, that combined with her small mouth meant breastfeeding was going to be near to impossible. I got to a point where I actually had a panic attack when it came time to feed her cause I was afraid of the pain and of failing. I had to sign a form to allow the midwife to give her formula. This broke my heart. The next morning I had a wonderful midwife. She brought in the breastpump so I could express and feed my daughter from a bottle. She still needed formula for a couple of feeds til my milk came in. She is now almost 7weeks old and I still express for every feed. It is hard and very tiring because instead of feeding her and going back to bed I have to sit up for at least a half hour to express. The looks I receive in public giving my daughter a bottle breaks my heart, people naturally assume its formula, not something I put a lot of effort into getting. I intended to feed her like this for as long as possible, at the very least six months.

The hospital provided good support so I cannot reccomend any changes in the respect however I feel greater antenatal education is important. I also feel the people in my situation or others who need to express (apart from work reasons) should be able to get a rebate or something on the cost of hiring a breastpump. I also thing breastpumps should be more widly available for hire as when I attempted to attain one I was going to have to travel a 30min drive just to get one. Maybe councils could have them available for hire, not just chemists and private companies.

Thank you

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