

**Submission no. 390**

AUTHORISED: 13/6/07 *B*

To whom it may concern,

I was recently angered by a decision made by one of my favourite parenting magazines, *Mother & Baby*, in regards to the WHO code on breastfeeding. I am currently 34 weeks pregnant with my first baby and due to quite a severe thyroid condition, that requires medication once I have given birth, I have recently decided that our baby will be formula fed from birth. This was a decision that was made with the direct input from my primary caregivers and wasn't something that was easy to do. I feel a great deal of guilt and failure and have had many many tears over it. My decision came from a lot of research into how my baby will be affected if my condition goes untreated and together with my husband and health care team decided that the risks were too great both to myself and our baby. When I read about *Mother & Baby* no longer carrying information on formula feeding or anything related to it such as bottles etc...once again my feelings of failure and frustration came back. I have had nothing but 100% support from my GP, endocrinologist, midwife and obstetrician and at no point have they made me feel like I have failed. However when I see things in the media, that seem to condone formula feeding, it makes me feel like I am going to be a bad mother. I am extremely worried about the opinions that I am already going to encounter from family, friends and society as a whole.

I have worked as a registered nurse for over 10 years and fully agree that breastfeeding is the best option for every Australian baby and that women should be fully supported in this. Unfortunately there are some mothers who simply don't have that opportunity as much as we would desperately like to.

I am now directed towards finding the most suitable formula and bottles for my baby and feel very let down that society does not seem to support me in this journey.

I wish to remain anonymous if possible.

Thank you for your time.