



Supplementary Submission - Madeleine Love, 6 Smythe St, Benalla Vic 3672 5762 1250

Arising from the Public Hearing in Melbourne on June 7:

"Mothers for whom breastfeeding does not work"

The question on how to protect the feelings and maternal confidence of women for whom breastfeeding does not work has arisen many times in submissions and at public hearings.

I thought it might be helpful to know how the Norwegians protect the feelings of women for whom breastfeeding has not worked, since in Norway these women are certainly in a minority.

From "Hvordan du ammer ditt barn"

- å være en god mor er ikke det samme som å være en ammende mor,
- å være en god mor har mange flere kvaliteter enn bare det å produsere melk,
- å gi et barn kjærlighet og varme, det kan også foreldre uten melkeproduserende bryster (les: blant andre far) gjøre.

Translated:

- To be a good mother is not the same as to be a breastfeeding mother
- To be a good mother has many various qualities than only to produce milk
- Parents without milk producing breasts can also give a baby love and warmth (read: amongst others, fathers)

I write to emphasise that this isn't about mothering. It's about creating the best opportunities in the community to support women's efforts to breastfeed.

I want to put on record, as "just another mother", that I have many things that I can't do for my children. I look on with envy at the skills other women pass onto their children (things I'll never be able to do) whether they are breastfeeding or not. Although it's important for me to believe I'm a "good mother", I have to allow that many non-breastfeeding mothers will do a better all-round-job. In fact I will say that in a self-esteem sense I use breastfeeding to support me when I feel I fail in other areas. I suspect many breastfeeding mothers would feel the same.

I understand that this inquiry is about helping women to regain the physical skills and self-belief that faulty science, inappropriate state intervention, and raved commercialism have stolen from them. It's a "SORRY" effort.

The same, of course, applies for the indigenous women, who suffered one step further and actually had their children taken away from them.

It's about returning babies to their mothers (Indigenous and non-Indigenous - metaphor or real life), acknowledging that they, of whatever race or belief, are the best people to nurture their infants ...that our science, state, and commercial operators, however well-meaning, have failed.

I commend the Chairman and the Committee for linking these two groups together in this Inquiry.

Madeleine Love

ⁱ From the Norwegian Directorate for Health and Social Affairs publication **Hvordan du ammer ditt barn** (How you breastfeed your baby) (2006) – “When Breastfeeding Does Not Work” p34 of the booklet – electronic version published 7/2/2005, last amended 9/1/2007
http://www.shdir.no/vp/multimedia/archive/00004/IS-2092_4513a.pdf

I will send the committee a copy of this booklet.