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**Reload this Page Why did you stop breastfeeding your FIRST baby?**

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**Breastfeeding, Bottlefeeding and Solids** No matter which way you feed your baby, if you need some advice or support, post your questions here.

**View Poll Results: Why did you stop breastfeeding your first baby?**

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Baby self-weaned		30	26.55%
Advice of family / friends		0	0%
Advice of Maternal Health Nurse / Paed / Midwife		8	7.08%
Nipple or breast damage or issues from breastfeeding		18	15.93%
Lack of support		10	8.85%
Issues with your partner (i.e. partner not comfortable with bf or wanted formula)		0	0%
Own concerns over milk supply / quality		14	12.39%
Past sexual abuse or psychological issues		2	1.77%
Public Embarassment / body issues		2	1.77%
Mother-led reason / Mother ready		29	25.66%

Voters: 113. You have already voted on this poll



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June 4th, 2007, 10:09 AM

#1



**BellyBelly**  
Administrator

Join Date: Feb 2003  
Location: Melbourne  
Posts: 7,790

BellyBelly Forums ~ Pregnancy, Birth & Baby > Baby > Breastfeeding, Bottlefeeding and Solids > Why did you stop breastfeeding your FIRST baby?

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### View Full Version : Why did you stop breastfeeding your FIRST baby?

**BellyBelly**

June 4th, 2007, 10:09 AM

One more poll - to find out why you stopped feeding your first baby. Please be honest, this too will be submitted to parliament and I would love for them to know what is going on with feeding rates from a community perspective...

**Sherie**

June 4th, 2007, 10:20 AM

I voted for 'Nipple or breast damage or issues from breastfeeding' but could also have voted for 'lack of support' and lack of help and access to LC's would have been another one if it was there.

I had feeding issues with Lindsay from the start. I was never told how hard BF would be - I always assumed that it being the most natural thing in the world to do should also be the easiest - I was VERY wrong. Every feed hurt and I put it down to having extremely sensitive nipples during pg. The midwives told me that it should settle soon and that yes, establishing BF would be a bit hard on them. For my entire hospital stay of 5 days I didn't have a single BF that did not hurt me and the one time I did start to feed with no pain, the midwife told me that if it didn't hurt he was attached wrong and promptly pulled him off and put him on again which did hurt. I tried many positions with him and the hospital's in house LC came and saw me and gave me some great tips but he simply would not latch properly no matter how much we tried. I had full and painful breasts and I literally curled my toes everytime he attached and started sucking. When I left hospital the first three days home were horrible. I had cracked and bleeding nipples, he still wasn't attaching properly and I cried those three days and I wished that he had never been born and I remember telling DH that I want it to go back to being the two of us again. He was supportive, but adamant that I continue to BF, so while I did have his support, I didn't have the support necessary to overcome the problems.

**Shannon**

June 4th, 2007, 10:26 AM

I voted lack of support.

As I mentioned in the other thread, it was drilled into us to breastfeed for 6 months in those days (1999), so I thought I had paid my dues in that respect. Also, I had had attachment issues from birth, which were never picked up or corrected at the hospital, instead of looking at me feed, they gave her formula feeds instead so she gained back her birthweight quicker. Only by luck did I sort it out myself after coming home. I was always concerned about my supply, because of the comp feeds I don't think I had a good routine going to be honest, and would regularly just give her a bottle (apart from her usual one at night) if I felt empty, especially toward the end.

*One other thing which I am a bit embarrassed to admit as to why I weaned her was the 'trend' factor of bottlefeeding. We live in a very consumer driven society, and the bottle feeders got this whole section of the baby aisle in the supermarket with tins of formula, bottles & teats galore, bottle carriers, with the 'cute' factor going for them. It was almost 'trendy' to bottle feed over breastfeed. Well, to me it was.*

**Flea**

June 4th, 2007, 10:30 AM

I said lack of support though my main issue was oversupply. Major, major oversupply. I had no knowledge of how to handle it and I found it very hard to get help. Most people said "you have TOO much milk? Wow wish I had that problem". Gee thanks.

Basically it was so bad that I couldn't feed her anywhere other than at home because there was milk everywhere, practically drowning her. Let down was so strong I could shoot milk 6ft across the room and I could pump 200ml in one sitting and still feed her straight after....it was a very messy problem.

Everyone said it would get better and I stuck it out until 8 weeks and it was getting worse...I couldn't do it anymore.

If I'd known then what I know now I could have sorted the problem fairly easily for her as I did with my second baby. Aah well the benefit of hindsight :lol:

**Phoenix**

June 4th, 2007, 10:47 AM

I put lack of support as it was the closest to what the reason was. My eldest was 23mths and we were only feeding maybe 1-2 times a day usually at home. One day he was a little off colour but I was ill and at the Drs. In a surgery full of patients he yells from the other side of the room "Mummy booboo please" the looks I

got were enough to melt glass. I wasn't strong enough to stand up for what I thought was right and I didn't really have any support from anyone to tell me that I should keep going. Since then I am very involved with ABA (nearly finished counsellor training YEAH!!) and am much more confident in doing whats best for my kids. DS2 is now 23mths and can keep going. As I told the committee when they were in Cairns. I will wean him before schoolies week!!!!

**Flowerchild**

June 4th, 2007, 10:51 AM

I had such a damn struggle breastfeeding my first baby... It was horrendous - when we finally got it right I wasn't going to stop until she decided she wanted to. My first baby was almost 3 when she weaned of her own volition... It was time for her then I guess... By then I was ready too...

I did the same with my other children also...

**Tegan**

June 4th, 2007, 01:08 PM

I said lack of support.

I was 18 and knew nothing about breastfeeding. I didn't even know anyone with a baby or yong child. The midwives didn't help at all and when i did ask i swear they rolled their eyes behind my back. They just seems so annoyed that i was asking for help. So, knowing no different i switched Lily to formula when she was 2 days old.

**Marydean**

June 4th, 2007, 01:28 PM

I voted "Baby Self Weaned". I am delighted to say after a very rocky start, we went from strength to strength and made it through until 2 weeks short of 18 months, when DD self weaned. However, I can see it all could have gone horribly wrong, especially since the hospital staff gave me erroneous information. Lucky for me I had the support of ABA counsellors and an LC I had met by chance several weeks earlier.

I also attribute the unconditional support of my DH for my success, it also meant that I approached feeding in public with confidence and was \*never\* approached by critics, only by ppl commending me for breastfeeding. I think collectively, we need more imagery of women breastfeeding visibly in public to create an atmosphere of public acceptance, also so that breastfeeding becomes the 'social norm' by virtue of being the most visible form of infant feeding.

**Jelvie**

June 4th, 2007, 01:31 PM

Nipple or breast damage or issues from breastfeeding

It was actually that my son had an unusual tongue and couldn't attach causing incredible nipple trauma and repeated mastitis (6 times in 10weeks). My other two bubbas breastfed beautifully and both self weaned at 12months.

**ticklish**

June 4th, 2007, 01:48 PM

Hi,

I wanted to vote TTC but there was no "other reason" option. After more than 12 months with no AF, I decided I wanted a chance to a least give DS a sibling. I have fertility issues and felt that I really just needed to get me right without the extra pressure of breastfeeding and having no cycles. If I wasn't TTC, I'd probably still be going if DS wanted to.

THANKS.

**bon**

June 4th, 2007, 02:00 PM

I don't know if any of the options really apply to me...I don't know if I want to assign responsibility for my decision to stop breastfeeding to anyone else KWIM? I mean, there were a range of factors/emotions at play that influenced my decision, which I have gone into previously so I won't repeat myself. But I guess in the end it came down to the fact that I just didn't want to do it anymore. I won't say "couldn't" do it anymore because technically I could, but it did feel at the time like I couldn't do it, physically and emotionally. So in that sense, I was the reason I stopped breastfeeding. I guess 'had enough of breastfeeding' would be the best response for me then.

**Yael**

June 4th, 2007, 02:52 PM

My son self weaned at 15 months, I was 3 months pregnant, and my milk supply had dropped, and i just let him go at his own pace and didn't really try to stop him weaning though - it was a bit rough having a few complications whilst pregnant and still bf. Was a bit sad when he gave it up though!

Like somebody else said, it could have gone horribly wrong, i had eczema there anyway, flatish nipples, then thrush and nipple vasospasm. I ended up seeing a private LC, and everything was fine from there, but if it wasn't my own self drive, i don't think the MCHN or even the midwives in hospital would have cared that much if i had stopped early on. My GP was pretty good though.

I'm just so proud i made it so far, and we weaned very gently (and as an aside, never had any pain/mastitis etc from weaning at all, but my niece is a few weeks older than my son, and my SIL decided to wean overnight, and is having a lot of problems with engorgement and pain etc, so i think the slow self weaning was better on me!). The main reason why i was determined to let him self wean was that i didn't want him to get upset when he saw the baby being fed.

**Sammi-j**

June 4th, 2007, 03:08 PM

Mason self weaned at a tad over 12 months. I was only just a matter of weeks PG with Angus so who knows if it was just his time or there was other factors at play like PG hormones or drop in supply. I didn't want to stop breastfeeding him at all and cried when he rejected me.

**Roryrory**

June 4th, 2007, 03:23 PM

I had the same thing with Flynn when I got pg but he was 9 months old. I said "mother led weaning" because I feel if I had have pushed it I could have keep going but being tired with pg and working and trying to express it was too much, together with the constant crying from Flynn because he was hungry and wanted more....

I was very sorry to have weaned but just didn't think I could physically keep it up - maybe if I was not working and able to sleep 12 hours a day and not have to run a house I could have done it (yeah right :)

**Mads**

June 4th, 2007, 03:30 PM

I haven't voted yet as I'm still breastfeeding, but just have a suggestion... I noticed in one of the other polls or threads about breastfeeding, that medication for the mum was something that came up quite a bit. Maybe that could be added as a choice in this poll? 'Mother-led reason' just seems very broad when there are so many other reasons on the poll. And I'm sure many of the mums who stopped because of medication feel that the choice wasn't really theirs, that it was out of their hands IYKWIM?

**Astrolady**

June 4th, 2007, 03:39 PM

I went for own concerns over milk quality / supply.

Kameron was not gaining weight at a fast enough rate and "looked" sickly even though he wasn't, so I assumed that my milk wasn't "strong" enough or I didn't have enough of it to keep him sustained and eventually weaned him onto formula at 6mths old.

Love

**mbear**

June 5th, 2007, 07:58 PM

DD#1 self weaned at 8 months. I think if i knew then what i know now, i probably could have persevered and gone to 12 months like i originally wanted too. But being a first time mum and all, i guess i didnt know any better.

I stopped b/f DD#2 at 12.5 months.....so i guess my wish did come true...

**aussienic**

June 5th, 2007, 08:07 PM

I voted mother led. I am embarrassed to admit this and I can't believ how selfish I was. I quit smoking as soon as I found out I was pregnant but started again when I had Ethan. At 3 months my husband said to me either quit smoking or breastfeeding and I made the terrible choice to quit breastfeeding. I regret it. Nothing I can do about it now though..

I think more needs to be said about the dangers of smoking and breastfeeding.. I see it to often now. Thankfully I quit smoking over 4 years ago now..

**Berry**

June 5th, 2007, 08:09 PM

I voted for baby self-weaned. By 14 months, he was having one breastfeed per day, each morning - more out of habit than anything else. We relocated to America for a few months at that time and with the different time-zone, he no longer had an urge to breastfeed in the morning. He was also too old to have any

need for breastfeeding, in my opinion, and so was glad he self-selected to stop at that point.

**anney**

June 5th, 2007, 08:12 PM

I voted Mother Led (but not mother ready). I b/f dd for 18 months and as we were TTC but having no luck, we thought we should wean in case it was having an effect on our ability to conceive. still no luck conceiving so sort of sorry we weaned.

**hoobley**

June 5th, 2007, 10:15 PM

I'm not Australian so I dunno how useful it is but....

I didn't answer the poll as I didn't fit anywhere.

I started giving DD one bottle of formula from 4 months because I wasn't managing to pump enough for her to take with her when she went to her dads (no let-down for the pump) and he was FFing her, and I was concerned she'd get bellyache from suddenly having formula for 24 hours when she was used to BM. My milk supply started to drop off after 5 months due to a thyroid problem and my taking the mini-pill. One weekend she stayed 2 nights with her daddy (he was on holiday from work) and when she came home on day 3, despite pumping ever 4 hours when she was away, I had nothing. I managed to re-lactate over that week to give her 3 feeds a day myself, but this quickly reduced to 1 despite my best efforts and I weaned her at 7 months, by which time she was refusing to suck long enough for let-down.

In retrospect I was really quite ill (lost 20kg on my pre-PG weight) with my thyroid and stress of moving with a tiny baby and it was a miracle I fed as long as I did.

With #2 I hope to be in a more stable place and BF for the whole first year at least :)

Bec

**~Jo~**

June 5th, 2007, 11:28 PM

I voted mother led...Jess was 19.5 months old and I was in the early stages of pregnancy with Emmy...the wriggling toddler on tender nipples was too much...think I'd persevere now though but at the time (I was 21..it was enough!)

Jo

**Anna\*\***

June 5th, 2007, 11:54 PM

I haven't fully weaned my first as of yet, but will be doing so for my own health (weight issues and very run-down) in the next couple of months - my DH and I would also like to TTC another very soon and I have both genetic and fertility issues to contend with so wish to get started asap. I hope that once I wean my DS, my periods will return soon after.

I had planned on continuing into Xander's 2nd year, but it is very likely he will be weaned before his 1st birthday.

I would love to continue if it weren't for the above reasons... I have had wonderful support from nearly everyone, access to great information, no major problems (only a bub that wanted to feed every 1.5 hours up til 6 months) and a 'easy' baby as far as BF'ing goes (latched on well from straight after birth). I consider myself very lucky as breastfeeding just came to me as naturally as I had imagined it would prior to the birth.

**Ryn**

June 6th, 2007, 01:52 AM

I would hope no-one ever stopped feeding their child (well, maybe when they're 45 and you want them to finally leave home). The title of this thread did surprise me until I read it LOL!

But for breastfeeding, I intend to let DS self-wean; amazingly, my previously anti-BFing DH has done a complete U-turn in the last couple of months and wants that to happen too. But then, I'm healthy and we're not TTC. We'll have to see how it goes, when he gets to 3 I may start pushing the weaning issue if he hasn't.

**Monchika**

June 6th, 2007, 09:01 AM

I wanted to vote TTC. I was on IVF to conceive Mikey and had terrible trouble conceiving, so when Mikey was 12 months, I weaned him so that I could start on IVF again for our second baby, which consequently took over 1 year to conceive. He is now 6 months and I am breastfeeding him.

**mgm**

June 6th, 2007, 09:18 AM

I weaned DS just before he turned 2. He was an all-night feeder and by the time I weaned him he didn't want to feed in the day at all. My reasons were twofold: I hoped by night-weaning him he would sleep longer stretches, and I was TTC and hoped weaning would help. Would have BF for longer if it weren't for these two issues. Establishing BF when DS was born was incredibly difficult, so once I got everything working well I was just so relieved and happy that I could feed.

This is off the topic, but the constant shift-changes of midwives in hospital made it really difficult and if I hadn't been so committed to the idea of breastfeeding I would have given up. Each one had a different opinion about why DS wouldn't attach properly, ranging from the shape of my nipples (DH was sent out to buy useless nipple shields) to the shape of DS's mouth. In the end what worked was hiring a midwife to come help me at home - it took her just two hours to get DS feeding properly. I'm sure a lot of her success was due to the timing as my milk was perhaps slow to come in properly, but getting CONSISTENT advice in hospital would have helped A LOT, as would having been able to stay there until breastfeeding was established.

Kelly good luck with your presentation! Breastfeeding is one of my life's proudest achievements and, I believe, the greatest gift I have given my son.

**gobblygook**

June 6th, 2007, 09:27 AM

I weaned my first cos she was biting so in a word - TEETH! She was teething and her upper teeth were coming through.

**lucky\_mummy**

June 6th, 2007, 09:29 AM

I couldn't answer any of these. I weaned because I was 3/4 of the way through my next pregnancy, my daughter was 2.75yrs old, and it had been agony the whole pregnancy to feed. I kept saying ouch, she decided there was no milk and stopped trying.

Linda.

**cindyb**

June 6th, 2007, 09:29 AM

I voted mothers choice - Although she had cute herself down to 2 feedes by 12 months i fed her untill she hit 14 months and by that stage i was 5 months pregnant and made the decision to stop due to incredibly sore nipples!!

Like some of the other girls i found i too was shoked at how 'unnatural' the process was with feeding and how much it hurt to begin with, you definately arent told any of that in your antinatal classes (i suppose they dont want to scare you) but luckily for me and i assume for most, the pains subside within a few days/weeks and it does become 'natural'. It just looks like it is so easy to do in the movies and books etc.

Now i am feeding number two and have no problems at all

**Flowerchild**

June 6th, 2007, 09:31 AM

MgM I don't think the change of shift thing is off topic. I have heard so many many many women site this as a reason for difficulty b/feeding. Continuity of care (I believe) is an incredibly important (I would go so far as to say that successful outcomes can - but not always hinge on it) factor in satisfying outcomes in pregnancy/birth and early parenting.

If you have one care provider giving you information and support you feel more confident and this is passed on to your child. When we feel confident and sure (which yhou do with wonderful one on one support - usually) we handle things better.

I remember with my first ababy I transfered from homebirth to hospital. This was 1995 and it was the RWBH policy that babies could not be in the beds with their mothers. Due to an epidural headache I couldne't move without intense and incredible pain. An old old old midwife kept taking my baby when I would doze and put her in the cot. I would struggle to get her back... It was the only way I could feed - lying down with her... There was no thought to individual cses it was just this is it... It was horrible. This baby had been a part of me for nearly 10 months and suddenly she had to be in a plastic cot beside my bed!

So, what I am saying \*as I climb down from my soapbox!\* is that is is so very very valid the lack of continuity... :hug:

I would also like to say I think it's wonderful hearing all of the personal stories - we all make decisions at the time that we feel are right - sharing them is so helpful to us and others I think. :hug:

**hannahfroodo**

June 6th, 2007, 09:34 AM

I voted 'mother-led reason'. Like Ticklish, my decision to wean was because I want to TTC another baby. Although I am still technically breastfeeding (I am feeding just once a day when DD wakes up). I have been gradually weaning her over the past month and plan to have her weaned completely in the next couple of weeks. She will be 12 months old then anyway. I have fertility issues and my Dr won't prescribe clomid while I am breastfeeding. If I hadn't wanted another baby, I would still be breastfeeding.

**pip2jays**

June 6th, 2007, 09:35 AM

I voted own concern over milk supply.. I was feeding twins and one was going great guns with no problems but the other was having a hard time with latch and feeling satisfied. As they were both born at 35 weeks it took 2 weeks to get them organised, but we did it. they had one breast each that they exclusively fed from. Back in their day there was no ABA forum there was just a static website and phone support, with rostered councillors also doing e-mail support. I had called several times but could not get much help over the phone for my very bad oversupply, the e-mail support was no better as I got no reply as the internet was relatively new, I did not qualify for home visits from midwives as I had my babies out of state, and the only Independent LC I could find forgot to show up. So with constant feeding expressing and still hungry baby (one of them) I started to wean one night at midnight with his first bottle of formula. It was very gradual from there as I still got up to pump every 3 hours and then that slowly stopped too. Unfortunately for my other baby I also weaned her at the same time as she had been sleeping through from 8 weeks so I didn't want to wake and pump just for him when he was happy on the bottle.

**Ambah**

June 6th, 2007, 09:46 AM

I voted for lack of support - although this was combined specifically with attachment issues. Although if I was more supported, as well as being given more information and options during those early days of BF when my milk had not yet come in, it may not have become so difficult.

**Amanda\_Jane78**

June 6th, 2007, 09:50 AM

I voted Mother led... I was completely selfish. I had given up smoking as soon as I found out I was pregnant and chose not to smoke during breast feeding as well... My baby was 7 months old and I selfishly chose to stop breast feeding her and start smoking again.... This time will be different though... I have been a reformed smoker for 3 years!

**Dee2811**

June 6th, 2007, 09:52 AM

I stopped breastfeeding due to a combination of blisters on my nipples and lack of support. I was in hospital for 6 days with my twins after having had an emergency c-section. I was given all sorts of different advice re breastfeeding whilst I was there from 'only ever feed for a maximum of 20 mins' to 'feed until they choose to stop even if it takes hours'. One feed lasted for about 2 hrs! One of the boys had no problems but the other wasn't sucking properly and I ended up with blisters on my nipples. Due to having the two I couldn't give one breast a rest for each feed so the blisters just got worse. Every breast feed was painful. By the time I got home I was dreading the time when I would have to feed the boys as it was so painful. Eventually about 2 days after I got home I decided it was just too hard and that we would bottle feed.

Looking back if I had been given better advice at the hospital I may have been able to breastfeed for longer. I think that perhaps a nipple shield should have been suggested and someone should have also spent longer ensuring they were attaching properly. Sometimes the nurses would come in and attach the babies but never really took time explaining exactly what I needed to be doing.

**katiepie**

June 6th, 2007, 09:55 AM

For me it was mother led. I started weaning my little girl at 6 months, i was not happy about my decision but i felt like i had no other option. Our society/culture does not support long term feeding of babies. I had to go back to uni and to continue breastfeeding her while she was in the care of someone else just seemed too difficult. Where was i to find a place to express and store my milk? along with missing out on my classes while i had to do this. You don't hear or see anyone doing this and it would be the same situation if i had to return to work, we have to pay our bills, our home loans, our insurances, etc. Again at my work a predominantly female workforce i have never seen or heard of anyone breastfeeding their baby while coming back to work, there is no where private or anywhere clean enough to store breast milk as well as keeping the pump clean and sterilized. Its hard enough to find a decent and clean feeding room in a shopping centre. Breastfeeding babies for at leased the first year and beyond just needs to become the accepted norm. All workforces need to step up and accept mothers coming back to work while continuing breastfeeding and have facilities in place to foster this or mandatory maternity leave should be enforced. Shopping centres need to make baby feeding rooms a clean and comfortable place to feed our babies. Formula should be put on prescription so if your having troubles you are made to see a doctor first and

correct support teams be recommended so that you can see someone that day not in two weeks time!! I think i could go on and on but i have to stop now :-)

~Shoegal~

June 6th, 2007, 09:57 AM

I stopped breastfeeding at 16 months because I felt it was enough!

alkemy

June 6th, 2007, 10:10 AM

I am self weaning as my milk supply dropped dramatically at 6 months as I got my period. I still due 1-2 feeds of BF but I will drop that too soon as I am wanting to take hayfever tablets and cant when BF.

My bubs is now 7 months. Thankfully I had alot of help at the hospital and even though the lilttle one didnt latch on properly I just used nipple shields and didnt worry about it. (as bubs found it easy on the 3rd day of birth to attach to the nipple shield).

The little one attached by himself after a few weeks when I decided to take the shield off (I took a shield off whilst feeding with the nipple was protuding and he attached easily).

I think as mothers and women we put more pressure on ourselves. I found the pressure from other women the hardest thing. Are you going to bf? How long for? Are you giving him enough blah blah blah....It really is hard for some women and I totally understand that. I had one or two friends who had reminded me before I gave birth that bf is not easy and you have to just keep trying as its not always a 'natural' thing. Otherwise I think I may have given up.

I also think its quite hard to take a little one out whilst BF. There really arent terribly many places you can BF comfortably other than shopping centres.

all the best  
Alkemy

alkemy

June 6th, 2007, 10:11 AM

I am self weaning as my milk supply dropped dramatically at 6 months as I got my period. I still due 1-2 feeds of BF but I will drop that too soon as I am wanting to take hayfever tablets and cant when BF.

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I also think its quite hard to take a little one out whilst BF. There really arent terribly many places you can BF comfortably other than shopping centres.

all the best  
Alkemy

bubbaangle

June 6th, 2007, 10:15 AM

i wanted to breast feed both my babies. however my first baby just wouldnt attach properly and i tried for 3 and a half weeks. every time she was due for a feed it was horrible i was so sore and cried all the time during feeds. i attended several breastfeeding classes and lactation consultants but it didnt help at all.i spent the first 3 and a half weeks of her life in tears and i regret it now, if i had just put her onto formula it would have been better for the both of us. when i did put her on it i had alot of guilt because everyone says breastfeeding is best for your baby. my second baby was better she went on pretty much straight away but this time she was just not getting what she needed. i spent most of my days with my boob in her mouth. this was not easy as my first baby was only a yr old and needed alot of attention too.

i think its up to evey mother how they want to feed their baby, there shouldnt be a right or wrong way. we should not be made to feel like a failure if we cannot do it. lets face it we all know its not easy.

there certainly needs to be some support out there for women who cant or dont want to breastfeed, we shouldnt be made to feel like we are in the wrong and thats what all the information we read or see on tv or



even are told by doctors ect...  
we do the best we can.

**\*Jessica\***

June 6th, 2007, 10:20 AM

I felt uncomfortable feeding in public, therefore making it inconvenient. I didnt b/f in front of anyone really except my DH. So if anyone was over, I would close myself in a room, frustrated that I was bored (my own fault!!!). I also had an over-supply problem. Let down at times was ridiculous, thus again making it hard in public. Umm, honestly, it frustrated me that I had been pregnant for 9 months, not drinking, and that had to continue. Silly thing is I really dont drink much, but it is so nice to have the option! I only blame myself, I disliked feeding from the start, it was soooo painful. After you've just had a baby, the last thing you want is more pain, but I didnt know that was 'normal'. I just wish people would explain it hurts like hell, but it does go away. I did persevere, but quit at around 3-4months. This time round I am so much better at it, feeding in public, over-supply is managed, am going great, looks like I will reach my 6month target easily!!! Poor Aidan didn't get as much as Tate though. It is one of the hardest things I have ever done, am so proud of myself for making it 3months, I think women that b/feed are AMAZING!!! Not many of my friends do, but of those that do, I tell them all the time how proud I am of them. I think it is important to do that, not done enough either.

**jgal**

June 6th, 2007, 10:27 AM

After about 10m it got very difficult to feed in public. My son has always been big for his age so probably looked older, I don't know. But I got lots of nasty glares, and comments liek "Your STILL breastfeeding?" and "How OLD is he?". I was also back at work and had nowhere to express milk in a quiet and private spot other than the TOILET! I don't believe that is a sanitary place to be preparing a baby's bottle, and definitely not comfortable to sit there on the loo, in the cold pumping away for 30mins or more. So I switched to cows milk for day feeds so I didn't have to express and then my supply suddenly dropped to an unsustianble level as I was only giving the one feed at night. My workplace does have a policy on providing a spot to express by my manager didn't know about it and all he could suggest was the toilet. (It is a male dominated workplace and I was the first woman in my department to have a baby - there are only two of us girls in teh department).

**Karen75**

June 6th, 2007, 10:36 AM

I stopped b/feeding at 4 weeks due to mastitis that turned into an abcys. Absolute agony. I would rather go through labour again and I am not exaggerating one bit! I agree with bubba angel, there needs to be alot more support for women who can't or choose not to breast feed. I am 26 weeks pg with my second and am leaning towards bottle feeding from birth. I don't want to go through the pain and tears again and won't be able to look after my 2 year old properly if all I'm doing is sitting in a chair crying....  
I too felt guilty but am much stronger this time round. I know that I'm a good mum and bottle feeding will make me happier so that can only be good for my new baby and my little boy.

**shell\_l\_d**

June 6th, 2007, 10:42 AM

My answer isn't one of the 'available poll answers' :)

Weaned at 6mths so could go back to work part-time, as simply couldn't afford not to (unpaid maternity leave & a mortgage).

My dept is all males & 1 female, there are a couple of females in the admin dept but that's it, i didnt feel comfortable to be expressing whilst at work & also my daughter was starting to get teeth, so thought it was as good a time as any. Although since weaning her, she has been sick so many times that I often wonder if I weaned her too soon, then again, she is in day care when I'm at work.

**sushee**

June 6th, 2007, 10:58 AM

With Ariani, it was very much self weaned, but with Shay it was lack of supply. I still persisted for 5.5 months until I was told - by my very pro-BFing MCHN - that he wasn't thriving. I felt like I was BFing 24 hours a day trying to get my milk supply up and it didn't seem to help.

I suspect though that with Shay, I had a 19 month old toddler, a new house, no family support and a difficult marriage, and it was very much the stress that scuppered my efforts. I wish it had been easier to find help for my other issues,, and that may have helped with the BFing.

With Zaki I BFed him and co-slept until he was 18 months old, and then my mum and her sisters came for a visit, and they told me he was far too old to still be BFing, and I gave into the pressure to wean.

Charlie was mother-led, and I had really good reasons, but now I wish I hadn't stopped when I did.

**~Bron~**

June 6th, 2007, 11:03 AM

i don't think i have yet :lol: my 8.5 yr old had a feed yesterday.

**sarah066**

June 6th, 2007, 11:05 AM

I voted own concerns over milk supply

Like many others BF was excruciatingly painful and I had cracked, bleeding nipples from day one! Every midwife said 'it shouldnt hurt she's not attached properly' and promptly reattached her but it still hurt. I persevered until DD was 10weeks old then stopped because I didnt have enough milk despite trying everything suggested to me to increase supply. I have since learned that my diabetes could be a reason my supply was so poor.

**colego**

June 6th, 2007, 11:38 AM

Sorry, this was my first post and I messed it up.

**colego**

June 6th, 2007, 11:41 AM

Hello,

I'm still breastfeeding (my son is 23 months), but the comments from others are getting increasingly difficult to cope with. Friends, family and acquaintances ask me or my partner if I'm still breastfeeding (which unless they are prepared to be supportive I find quite intrusive), and when we say yes they feel within their rights to make negative or hurtful remarks. We have had comments like (said 'meaningfully' to partner about my still breastfeeding when the babe was 17 m.o.) 'Don't you think that's STRANGE?', and (to me) 'You'd better stop immediately, before you start damaging him psychologically', 'What, are you STILL feeding him? What are you doing to the child?', 'Have you stopped yet? Don't you think you'd better stop soon?' as well as lots of eyerolling, exchanged glances with others, btching about 'sick little dyads', and about mothers who 'won't let go' or who want to foster an 'unhealthy dependency' in their children, etc. etc. A few months back, it got to the stage where I felt like some kind of freak who was harming my child. Thank God for the Australian Breastfeeding Association and their fantastic counselling service. It took just one call to realise how very negative and unsupportive most people had been (although not all; my best friend and my mother-in-law have been fantastic), and how it just wasn't their business anyway. But I still find it incredibly difficult to be asked constantly about something that in my opinion is a private matter, and to be judged harshly for my response. I think it's so important to support women in whatever they do, whether it be bottle- or breastfeeding, through choice or necessity or whatever. I've had the joy stripped from my day so many, many times over the matter of feeding, and I imagine many, many other women have too. And on those days when you're struggling, the negative comments make the struggle just that much harder. To end on a bright note, I do love those older women, who, when I was still brave enough to breastfeed in public, would say, with a world of feeling and experience behind the words, 'Good on you, love!'

Thanks for reading this.

**annef6722**

June 6th, 2007, 11:44 AM

stopped bf as baby started to bite down on the end of my nipple and it hurt!!

thanks  
anne

**~\*~fish~\*~**

June 6th, 2007, 11:53 AM

I chose the nipple damage/breast damage. But could have chosen lack of support as well.

It all began with extreme nipple damage, then mastitis. I started expressing full time from about 5 days old. Was going well till another bout of mastitis at about 6 weeks of age. Was extrememly ill and lost my supply to a drop of milk. (was unable to express because of being ill). Decided to try to get my milk back. Expressed day and night, every 2 hours for another 5 weeks to try to get my supply back. Was never able to get the feeds past approx 30% breast milk (70% formula).

I gave up from exhaustion. I could no longer continue to express, day in day out.

Looking back, if i had more support, more knowledge, i may have been able to get past that hurdle, and tried to get my daughter to re-attach to the breast.

**mytw0girls**

June 6th, 2007, 11:56 AM

I was lucky. Joined ABA when my first daughter was 3mths old and had heaps of support from the other

mums. My daughter weaned at 20mths and told me after missing a few days of feeding that the boobies ran out of batteries. It turned out that not long after she weaned we were expecting another baby and her sister is still feeding at 8 and half months.

**PlonkeeMumma**

June 6th, 2007, 12:05 PM

I voted lack of support but it was mingled in with lots of other reasons. My DS#1 was born by emrg c/s and every time i tried to feed him my c/s scar was absolute agony. I felt like i was being ripped open again every time i fed. i understand that this is quite rare but so few of the midwives understood and didn't beleive me. I can only think that they thought my bb hurt so much that i didn't want to continue. They did hurt horrendously as well but that would have been copeable with if not for the scar pain. I ended up in not a very good mental state as i didn't hold my baby much in the first few days except to feed so everytime i was near him i was in lots of pain which i don't think did anything for the bonding. Each midwife had a different method of trying to latch my son on as he had attachment issues also but the lack of consistency didn't help at all. I left hospital after 7 days and was only just managing to feed him by myself. When i got home i tried expressing and that scar pain wasn't so bad then. I ended up bottle feeding EBM for 4 weeks then gave up and FF. Even though the scar pain was fading after a few weeks i was not in any fit mental state after it and after going to a weigh in and talking to a midwife she thought i was having a rough time and when i said i didn't know what i was getting my son for Christmas she suggested a tin of formula. In no way do i blame this midwife for my ff as by then i was so close to it anyway from spending hours and hours expressing and she had been far the most understanding of any of them. I wish someone had suggested to me trying breast feeding again rather that expressing as my scar pain wouldn't have been there then so i could probably have done it but stupidly didn't think about it myself. So my son had my milk for 6 weeks then was formula fed and he did do well. I was lucky with my second son as he was fantastic at attaching and i had no scar pain so we are still going and he is a year old on saturday.

Wishing you all the best Kelly!

Julie x

**Rish**

June 6th, 2007, 12:08 PM

I had my heart set on breast feeding my baby, and when she was born, I was so happy she attached properly and stayed that way for 2 hours... but little did I know she wasn't getting anything... This continued for two days, with her screaming in hunger and then frustration... Nurses told me she wasn't attaching properly, but she would and suck for a minute and scream and push me away as there was nothing coming out (we still didn't know this). One nurse TIED MY BABY'S HANDS BEHIND HER BACK so she couldn't push away and then held her there while I cried... All Jasi did was scream.... Another kinder nurse suggested I go on the pump and feed it to her with a bottle... After 1 hour on the pump, there wasn't even enough milk to make my nipple wet. She fetched a bottle as soon as she realised Jasmine had not had 1 drop to drink/eat in 3 days. She was dehydrated and they were contemplating putting her on a drip. The next nurse that came on duty got angry and demanded to know why I wasn't breast feeding my baby when I asked for a bottle. I explained to her and she gave me the dirtiest look as if I was feeding my baby poison or something. I had this nurse for the last day of my hospital stay, and when I asked for some info on bottle feeding (remember, I had wanted to breast feed, so I had no bottles, no formula, no IDEA), she gave me a Milton leaflet on storing expressed breatmilk.... I cried and cried and cried.... At no point did she offer to help or refer me to anyone... After the trauma of this, I resigned myself to the task of bottle feeding... The C&YHS nurse came round and told me "Some cows make milk and others make hamburgers, we can't all be Jerseys...." and I felt a little better. She also said for me to go to a school at 3:30 and to see if I could pick the breast fed children.... That nurse saved me from further guilt and depression and I can't thank her enough...

I'm not proud, but I am at ease with the fact that I'M NOT A JERSEY!!!

**daddy**

June 6th, 2007, 12:22 PM

I voted Advice of Maternal Health Nurse / Paed / Midwife, because they told us he wasn't putting on enough weight. We now know after now having three children and talking to other MHN, Doctors and friends that it wasn't really nesassary for us to put my DS on the bottle so soon. My DW always regrets putting him on the bottle so soon, once he went on the bottle he didn't like being BF anymore.

**Rowie**

June 6th, 2007, 01:16 PM

I stopped breastfeeding because my little man just wasn't putting on enough weight. I was obviously not producing enough milk and not having a Mum to advise me my Maternal Health Nurse became the next best thing and she was amazing. Without saying put him on the bottle in so many words she said we might start him on solids a bit early, I then asked the question should I start topping him up with formula and she agreed that would be the place to start.

After the fact I asked her why she just didn't say top him up on formula she told me that they are not allowed to..... I wish she had, I was so at a loss as to what to do....

Regards

**MichelleW**

June 6th, 2007, 01:56 PM

Hi,

I had major psychological issues related to anxiety and probably depression (not post natal) that affected my let down reflex. I moved to a rural town with no support from family/friends and no aba assoc in town etc. I loved breastfeeding my daughter and she loved it too. she is 3 now and still talks about how she misses it. (stopped bf at 20mths)

**richelle\_84\_2004**

June 6th, 2007, 02:41 PM

I said lack of support, but really it was lack of widwife support. My DD lost 16% of birthweight by day 9 due to my lack of milk, the home nurse that came to see her that day went into a panic mode telling me my baby was sick and I had to rush into hospital and get all these tests done. She made me feel belittled and worthless as a mother because she thought I was neglecting my child and letting her starve. My DD was sleeping 8hrs at night and feeding 4hrly so I had no idea she wasn't getting enough milk. So for a week following that I combination fed, topping up after each feed with formula and sure enough she gained 200g in a week. The next day she was screaming and wanting to be on the boob constantly, I tried to express after a feed to find not a drop came out. Gave her a bottle and she slept soundly. Because of the stress I had been putting on myself to make sure my DD didn't suddenly lose weight again so I wouldn't have the midwife react like that again, my milk dried up. Consequently I ended up with a severe case of baby blues bordering PND.

**Mary**

June 6th, 2007, 03:01 PM

I had never considered bottle feeding as an option, however I had a terrible time b/f my eldest child Connor - basically he was totally disinterested! Connor however never cried or appeared to be hungry - I was the one who would always wake him up for a b/f. When I did try to feed him he would suck for upto 20 secs and then fall asleep - so in order to try and get enough milk into him a b/f would take about 1.5 - 2hrs, during which time I would strip him off, tickle his feet, splash water on him (anything to wake him up). We also tried small 10 - 15 min feeds every hour - but this did not work either. At the end of the day he just wouldn't suck properly, which resulted in poor let down etc...

I tried to improve my let down and volume by expressing between feeds, relaxing, hot towels etc...

By 6 weeks he was at the bottom of the chart for weight and the paediatrician said I should supplement him after every b/f with a bottle as this would be easier for him to take - however I had previously rung Nursing Mothers in a state of panic and they said I should not let him experience the bottle at all (and that if I made the effort it would all be OK)!!

Totally devastated by all of this I discussed the situation with my OBGYN (who gave me some medication to help with my let down), clinic nurse and everyone else I knew for any advice they might have - I WOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO SUCCESSFULLY BREASTFEED!!!

At 8 weeks old (with no weight gain in over 2 weeks) on a disgustingly hot summers day where he wouldn't drink anything at all (and I was fearful that he may dehydrate) I rang Nursing Mothers again. I was told again that it was my effort that would make the difference and that I obviously had not been trying hard enough to make it work. The woman also said that if I tried to give him a bottle of expressed milk that day, I might as well give up breastfeeding now - because he would not take the breast again!! I got off the phone devastated because I had done nothing but try to feed my baby for the last 8 weeks. All of my efforts were undermined by this woman's heavy handed laying of guilt, a feeling that I have subsequently discovered a number of women have had after using this helpline!

After getting off the phone and crying unconsolably for an hour my husband came home went to the freezer and pulled out some of the stored b/milk - which he fed to Connor. As he said, it is all well and good to want the best for your child's future (Better immunity, speech etc...) but he has to grow and be healthy NOW as well. I still thank him to this day for stepping in - because he did not make this about my failure to b/f - rather what was best for our son.

I continued to try to b/f for the next 3 weeks, and supplement him with a bottle or expressed milk after each feed (at least I now knew his minimum daily intake). After this he would not take the breast at all (yes the Breast Feeding Nazi's from Nursing Mothers were right!) - so I continued to express as much as I could for 4 more weeks (I spent about 7 hrs/day doing this), but the weight gain remained well below expectations (between 0 and 30g/week).

I started supplementing him with formula and after 4 months of hell, he began to gain weight.

The amount of guilt that I put on myself for my lack of success in b/f and that layed on me others almost deterrred me from even trying it a 2nd time when my daughter was born. Luckily with the support of family I did give it another go with a bit more success this time round (largely because my 2nd was "a little piggie").

I am concerned about the pressure brought to bear on women to b/f and the guilt they are made to feel if they don't . I honestly believe that not every child can be successfully breastfed - and I think that the women should not be misled into thinking otherwise. It is true that in years past there was no formula, however there were Wet Nurses, and high rates of child mortality from failure to thrive (these are never

mentioned when we get told "women have done it for centuries").

I THINK THE FOCUS SHOULD BE PUT ON "WHAT IS BEST FOR BUB", and though b/f may often (not always) set the ground work for a healthier, more articulate etc.. child, IT SHOULD NOT BE PUSHED TO THE "DETERIMENT OF THE CHILD AND/OR MOTHERS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL BEING".

P.S. Connor is now a happy healthy 5 year old who has only had to take antibiotics twice in his life (despite the fact he has attended Day Care from 6mths of age). His speech is very advanced and he is in the top 6 of his class in reading etc (although he is the 2nd youngest in the class).

Sorry for the rant but as you can tell this is a sore point and after having discussed it with a lot of women - I find that they are often to embarassed to voice similar opinions.

Regards and good luck with your presentation.

**Bathsheba**

June 6th, 2007, 03:38 PM

Love all the honest replies. Especially Shannon's: "One other thing which I am a bit embarrassed to admit as to why I weaned her was the 'trend' factor of bottlefeeding. We live in a very consumer driven society, and the bottle feeders got this whole section of the baby aisle in the supermarket with tins of formula, bottles & teats galore, bottle carriers, with the 'cute' factor going for them. It was almost 'trendy' to bottle feed over breastfeed. Well, to me it was".

Which I have to agree was a factor with my first baby back in 1994. I also didn't really know anyone who had fed for as long as I had (9 months) so I felt I was a real trail-blazer! LOL

I had to vote "lack of support" for that reason.

**Roudysmum**

June 6th, 2007, 03:45 PM

purely lack of professional support

**sushee**

June 6th, 2007, 03:59 PM

I actually called the ABA on more than one occasion during the time that I BFed Charlie, and I have to say that my experience with them was excellent, on all occasions. None of the counsellors I spoke to pressured me to keep BFing when I was thinking of weaning, and all gave me down-to-earth, honest, real advice when I was at my most confused. I'm so sorry to hear of other's bad experiences with them, but I thought they were fab, myself.

**Phoenix**

June 6th, 2007, 05:02 PM

Being a trainee counsellor with ABA it scares me that others have not received the information and support they needed to continue breastfeeding. Before starting training I too rang counsellors to help me and found their support invaluable and thats one of the reasons I decided to train.

I do have to say but it upsets me greatly when ABA or nursing mothers are referred to as Nazis. I have never seen a BF mother lock a FF mother in a concentration camp and gas them for not BF. So please can we put a stop to this name. It really is upsetting.

**pebbles2820**

June 6th, 2007, 05:09 PM

I stopped B'feeding DD after 6weeks as I developed an allergic reaction to her saliva and I am already on high dosage anti-hystamines so there wasn't anything the doctors could do for me.

**Gabysmum**

June 6th, 2007, 07:14 PM

I voted mother led altho really it was a combination of that and baby self weaning. DD was weaned by the time she was 7 months old. She was a voracious feeder and truthfully I was tired and couldn't keep up with it all - also within our family networks no-one really breastfed past 6 months old, so that perhaps influenced me too as I didn't know any friends with children.

**alpha**

June 6th, 2007, 08:06 PM

I breastfed my eldest until she weaned herself at 13 months. I cried so much when she stopped! However, I weaned my middle child at 18 months as he was very intent on continuing as long as possible but my breasts were becoming extremely sore! At that point I felt he was gaining his nutritional needs through solids and our bond was extremely strong. I am now currently feeding my 8 month old - whom I am sure will not want to stop for a very long time!! It can be exhausting but I wouldn't trade it for the world!

Take care  
Alpha

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Conflicting advice after birth		61	17.23%
Interventions at birth		9	2.54%
Lack of continuity of care		42	11.86%
Accessibility of artificial milk		20	5.65%
Marketing of artificial milk		5	1.41%
Lack of education		99	27.97%
Health professional influence e.g. MCHN, Paed		17	4.80%
Family &/ friends ideals/advice/expectation		45	12.71%
Going back to work with lack of bf support		24	6.78%
Lack of availablility/affordability of support		32	9.04%

Voters: 354. You have already voted on this poll



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Yesterday, 02:35 PM

#321

**carls**  
Member

Join Date: Apr 2006  
Posts: 8



I found that the midwives just didn't have the time to have one-on-one time with me to ensure

BellyBelly Forums ~ Pregnancy, Birth & Baby > Baby > Breastfeeding, Bottlefeeding and Solids > What do you think is the biggest barrier to breastfeeding In Australia?

PDA

## **View Full Version : What do you think is the biggest barrier to breastfeeding In Australia?**

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**BellyBelly**

May 22nd, 2007, 11:07 PM

As you may know, I am presenting in the Parliamentary Inquiry Into Breastfeeding in the coming weeks. I would like to hear your thoughts and for you to vote in this poll as to the things which you think are barriers to breastfeeding in Australia. While I know there are many things contributing to this, I would like to know what your #1 thought is as to the most pressing reason why our breastfeeding rates are lower than other countries.

Please feel free to list all the options above which you think are of big concern for you, or perhaps in order... all help and comments appreciated!

Here is the list to help:

Conflicting advice after birth  
Interventions at birth  
Lack of continuity of care  
Accessibility of artificial milk  
Marketing of artificial milk  
Lack of education  
Health professional influence e.g. MCHN, Paed  
Family &/ friends ideals/advice/expectation  
Going back to work with lack of bf support  
Lack of availability/affordability of support

EDITED TO ADD: I will be submitting this discussion to parliament as a submission as per their encouragement, so please let me know if you do not want your comments included and I can edit them for the submission. Thank-you!

You might also like to consider making your own submission, lots of organisations have put in their research etc so now they want to hear from mums. Its as simple as sending an email with your personal story and they will keep accepting submissions from mothers until everyone has had their say (despite the expiry date for submissions being in February - they didn't realise how big this would be!). You can read all the details here: <http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/haa/breastfeeding/>

**Cailin**

May 22nd, 2007, 11:18 PM

Lack of education not only for mothers to be, but also for professionals (midwives, obs, GP's, MCHN's (ESPECIALLY), Paed's). There are currently too many trains of thought...

The ABA should have government funding to help support them in supporting us.

Laction Consultants should have to have certain qualifications and possibly even tested by a main body. As I've had some great ones but also cr@p ones.

I think Teenagers should be taught about the benefits of breastfeeding in sexual education to eradicate the taboo of breastfeeding.

There should be breastfeeding facilities on site in the workplace (fridges/pumps etc) and workplaces that support and encourage new mothers to breastfeed.

Totally get rid of "its natural" I think this slogan is so misleading and its half the reason people stop breastfeeding because they think their body has failed them, when in reality establishing breastfeeding in some cases is harder work than for others but that hard work is worth the effort and nutrients your baby receives.

There's more in my head...

ETA: Oops there's a poll now (I'll just go do the poll)... LOL!

\*hugs\*

Cailin



**caro**

May 22nd, 2007, 11:37 PM

So many to choose from but i chose lack of support But I also think Lack of Continuity of care and lack of education as well. Plus pushing of formula is another

Totally get rid of "its natural" I think this slogan is so misleading and its half the reason people stop breastfeeding because they think their body has failed them, when in reality establishing breastfeeding in some cases is harder work than for others but that hard work is worth the effort and nutrients your baby receives.

Totally agree with this as well.

YES breastfeeding is NATURAL but NO it doesnt come naturally to 99percent of women. Breastfeeding is HARD WORK. People are not told this they think it will just all happen But between the Huge engorgment from milk coming in , to the spraying of milk everywhere all over bubs face when it comes in and at other times for some women, to the difficulties with getting bubs to attach, to Mastitis to cracked nipples , to the raging hormones and any other problem that the boob might have that any woman May get one of these or many of these , is it any wonder that its hard work and not natural..

LC's should be in all hospitals available 24x7 and an absolute must just like having your obs done !! when your milk comes in , this is USUALLY The hardest and most difficult time so yes a LC there for every woman.

Then follow ups weekly for the 1st 6 weeks

Definitely More LC's proactively involved with helping women BF and keep BF

And yes the Govt needs to fund this to kick start it off

**mummycate**

May 23rd, 2007, 12:11 AM

I breastfed for 3 weeks. battled bad cracks for most of that time. i went home the day of my birth, and had a midwife (same lady throughout pregnancy) visit me at home. she was helpful but after just 2 weeks, handed me over to the early childhood health centre. so i had no help with breastfeeding. when the cracks got unbelievably painful and i was full to bursting, i just gave dd formula. never bothered to call midwife. she then loaned me an electric pump but i got only a small amount of milk. it turns out i wasn't having let downs. cracks were healing and back onto boobs (i felt it was too soon, but she had all the experience). no more care, no more pump and cracks came back within 3 days. got myself a pump (hired) and got 40ml of milk total in 3 days. so i just gave up. later on at mother's group, one mum had a feeding line and was on milk production meds. wish i had more support and could have done that. my family were all supportive of me giving dd formula. she plumped up and put on a heck of weight within a few weeks. there is a definite lack of support for those who are struggling, and there are advertisements for formula but only for toddlers i have seen. i had no idea which one was right for her, i just got whatever the chemist had. ps sorry for long post, my first

**tanby**

May 23rd, 2007, 01:07 AM

Definitely the accessibility of artificial milk!!! it wouldn't matter how uneducated people were if artificial milk wasn't accessible then bf would be the first port of call for feeding options.

**Ryn**

May 23rd, 2007, 01:11 AM

Although I can't comment for Australia, the best advice I had was the day before I gave birth, and that was "expect to have problems". I had never thought that I'd have a problem, and when I did that advice kept me from feeling even worse (although a midwife did try to make me feel as bad as possible about it).

I would say, for me, a midwife pushing formula milk very, very hard on day 2 would have stopped me breastfeeding if I weren't so bloody minded about it (and knew I'd have the backup of the girls here once I got out of that... well, NHS hospital says it all really - oh and the constant reminders from my family that I'd previously said I'd wanted to BF for at least a year just to make me feel extra crap). Telling me to FF until I could see a LC (which would be on day six if I were lucky) was not helpful at all, especially when all she did was say that DS was doing well now so no need for her to be around after all.

And pictures of babies who decide to come off the nipple early so are sprayed with milk over their face and hair would help, I think it looks so cute, shame I never took a pic of Liebling like that! Oh well, I bet he'll be like that soon enough as he's just having a growth spurt now. But it just shows you that breastfeeding can be fun too.

**IK**

May 23rd, 2007, 01:35 AM

Definitely lack of education all round, IMO and in my experiences/conversations with other women. For instance, many women do not realise that stress about BFing difficulties (including pain, cracked nipples etc) can and will affect letdown. I was lucky that I was subscribed to the ABA by a relative. I received my free book and read it before DS was born. The book told me about stress affecting letdown. The book helped me diagnose vasospasm that I had instead of hindered letdown (oversupply meant I had major letdown!) - that was my manifestation of the stress of attachment problems caused by undiagnosed tongue-tie. The book was my first education, then I went to meetings and have been reading Essence religiously for their research updates etc and began educating myself.

Lack of education lets down far too many women in this country. I am not saying that women who give up are ignorant. I'm saying that many are being failed by our 'health system', that could do with a goodly bit of breastfeeding education because that would then alleviate the burden on the health system in so many, indirect ways.

I have said it before and will say it again, instead of trying to scare the bejesus out of me when I was pregnant, those women with their birth story badges (the worse the birth, the better the story) should have told me about breastfeeding. One of them had the nerve to tel me, after finding out that I was having attachment problems, "yeah, it looks easy, but it's not, is it?"...you tell me NOW? When you could have prepared me for this two months ago???

Anyway, I digress. I totally support the idea of breastfeeding education for our school children - boys and girls. Muslim women must be taught about it, as it is enshrined in the Quran - anyone care to educate me? The Quran and that fat man, Buddha, have got some great teachings to live by! Again, I digress... it's late and I should be in bed, or writing an assignment...

**Edensmumma**

May 23rd, 2007, 06:40 AM

Accessability of artificial milk is definately right up there... i have had a friend say to me... "im sorry to say Gill(when i was having a blubber about no sleep) FF fed babies are just so much easier, you have chosen the tough road for yourself"?!?!... that statement made me angry. Eden is a bad sleeper and everyone, wants to put it down to her being bb fed. I also think its lack of support, families often dont "get it", and my mum and hubby's mum didnt booby feed....

Lack of education- but this too is the womans responsibility and it is out there!!! i was a little library worm while i was pregnant, i read everything about birth and then when i thought i was ready there i moved onto breast feeding... you have to learn about breast feeding, esp(going back to above) if its not around you, i mean lots of us had never seen anyone breast feed before having our bubs... You need to go in search of information... I also think how amazing would it be to be taught these things at school- i mean crikey you get taught to feed yourself in Home Economics, why not be taught how to feed your children too?

**christy**

May 23rd, 2007, 08:32 AM

oh there are just soo many to choose from ;) IMO though I've had too many "health" professionals telling me to FF. MCHN's telling me over the phone that I don't have enough milk and should FF (even without seeing our feeding relationship...)

**Berry**

May 23rd, 2007, 08:36 AM

Hi Kelly,

Interesting thread and quite a topical issue to me personally.

I have always been very pro-breastfeeding and always intended to be a breastfeeding mama, and so (having easily breastfed my first baby for 14 months) it was hard having a hospitalised 27-weeker and having all sorts of obstacles which led me to abandon breastfeeding attempts when she was 4.5months old. I am now a consumer rep. on a hospital Committee (mainly comprised of neonatal medical staff) which is forming extensive guidelines for establishing feeding of hospitalised babies. I have been advocating to my best ability for the hospital to encourage every possible avenue, within funding constraints, to support breastfeeding of prem babies.

So for me the first barrier to breastfeeding has been baby's early hospitalisation which caused unavoidable maternal separation (would have LOVED to room in with my baby at the hospital for the 3 month stay but unfortunately that just doesn't happen with NICU/Sepcial Care), and baby's immature development causing physical difficulty latching on and sustaining the energy to feed.

From your list, I would say Conflicting advice after birth has been a significant barrier following both my birth experiences - particularly nurses differing in their beliefs / patience / assessment of mum's breastfeeding success and baby's sucking ability. Can't generalise as I have had some absolutely amazing nurses assist me with breastfeeding. However, after my firstborn arrived and I felt I was doing a great job with him latching on and feeding well from the start, my mum overheard a particular nurse say to another nurse that I "still hadn't learnt to breastfeed my baby". The same nurse insisted that I return to the hospital after discharge to have my baby weighed, as she felt he couldn't be getting enough milk. He had put on

well more than expected and as his mum I always knew he was a content, great breastfeeder. That is one example of an experience where a first-time mum could have been put off by the unfortunate attitude of a nurse. All the other nurses were great with my firstborn though.

With my second baby (prem), when she finally began graduating from tube-feeding to suck-feeding, me and some of the wonderful nurses were delighted and rated the initial attempts as successful and despite what this 27-week-born-baby was up against, she sustained some pretty good sucking (and was then topped up with EBM each time). I desperately wanted to hear that me and my baby were doing a good job and that there could be hope for successful ongoing breastfeeding. I felt really deflated that one nurse had to say "your baby is a poor sucker", and pointed out that other babies in the room were doing a lot better. That broke my heart and I wish all prem mums could be told that they are doing an amazing job just getting anywhere with breastfeeding.

**Flea**

May 23rd, 2007, 09:21 AM

Gosh can we only pick one? :lol:

I would say lack of support after leaving hospital (the last option?). I was lucky enough to have a champion feeder this last time and not need any help with him. But I had alot of problems with Emily and I found it very hard to get help. I am a well educated, capable woman as many mothers are, yet I found it pretty much impossible to access the help I needed in my community to help me breastfeed successfully. The ABA were no help to me at all despite contacting them repeatedly. What I needed was a lactation consultant who could come to my house and work with us face to face - but at the time I didn't know such a thing existed, let alone how to access it. I think that's really appalling.

Further compounding my problems (in fact probably one of the root causes) was the fact that Emily was born 4 weeks early, so was jaundiced and sleepy. I was booted out of hospital on day 3 before my milk had come in so I was left to work it all out for myself at home - with a premature, sleepy baby who couldn't stay awake to feed properly for nearly two weeks. So many mums have similar stories of having to go home before they've got milk so no one is around when they actually start feeding "for real".

Running a close second is the return to work issue. I had to go back to work when DD was four months old so when I decided to wean her at two months with all the problems we were having it was an "easier" decision because I knew I would have to do so in another few weeks anyway. Like many mums the practicalities of trying to express and store milk at work were seriously prohibitive.

Interestingly, I have a full year of maternity leave this time and DS is still breastfeeding and I expect he will be until after I go back to work, and probably longer since by the time he's one, expressing won't be such a drama as he won't need as much milk as a three month old.

**Fee**

May 23rd, 2007, 09:38 AM

I think definitely lack of education and then followed by the accessibility and marketing of ABM.

**rayray**

May 23rd, 2007, 09:41 AM

I voted for Health Professional influence, but I think its really a combination of things, probably these 4 would be the main ones in my experience.

Lack of education  
Health professional influence e.g. MCHN, Paed

Lack of education, both on the part of the mum and contributing to the health professionals "advice".

I know of one OB who frequently tells mums to stop breastfeeding at their 6 month check if he decides their weight gain is not up to scratch, when often its fine for a b/f baby.

A lot of mums have no idea. Most in my mothers group did not know that the charts (until recently) in the baby books were based on white, middle class American FF babies.

I have also met a lot who are scared of the ABA. I mean it, the term "breastfeeding nazi" was used, and they thought that they'd be frowned on for having problems.

I was very, very lucky that all of the midwives when my son was born were supportive of me breastfeeding, and that he was a big baby.

My milk did not come in until day 5, and until then we were hand expressing and catching it in syringes to feed DS. He didn't attach properly, breastfeeding DS was extremely painful for me and frustratig for him.

The oncall paed wrote him up for comp feeds.

The midwife and the LC discussed it with me, and we decided that he didn't need them just yet, he was

getting enough, albeit barely.

I stayed in an extra day at the Breastfeeding day stay (not enough of these available IMO. I have been 2 two different hospitals for them, it was great) and had another 5 or so visits after we went home.

I was lucky to have a supportive MCHN, who could recommend a pro-b/f paed. for me to see.

Unfortunately not everyone else is as lucky as I was.  
I think all mums and babies deserve to have this care and these opportunities.  
It shouldn't come down to the luck of the draw.

**Eugenia**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:09 AM

I can't pick just one! I think they're all very important. Anyway, here is my list in order of what I think affected me the most.

- Health professional influence e.g. MCHN, Paed
- Family &/ friends ideals/advice/expectation
- Lack of continuity of care
- Conflicting advice after birth
- Lack of availability/affordability of support
- Lack of education
- Interventions at birth
- Accessibility of artificial milk
- Marketing of artificial milk

I probably should have put lack of education higher as I really didn't bother to educate myself about breastfeeding as much as I did about pregnancy and birth, I just assumed it would be easy because it's the natural thing to do. I also wasn't the only one amongst my friends who thought that. I know others who stopped breastfeeding because they had an unsettled 5 day old baby and just assumed they didn't have enough milk and that was the reason for the crying. One friend even told me that I too would give up bf just like she did once I had to be up at 3 am with a crying baby.

Which brings me to family/friends/society expectations. I found that in our society ff is seen as the norm by just about everyone and as soon as you have any trouble the advice is, "switch to formula". People think you're crazy to choose to persevere with bf despite having massive problems. Even a so-called LC told me that. There should be some sort of standard to make people have real qualifications to work as LCs, and not have just anyone do it.

Enough of my ranting. Good luck, Kelly. I hope you can make them see some sense!

**Sherie**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:16 AM

I can't choose one to vote for in the poll as every single one of them influences what a mother chooses to do. Several may apply to one woman's journey, and for others it may only be one thing on that list. Sadly, the list is just too long to start with and it shouldn't be kwim? I really do think that everything needs to be addressed as all of them relate to one another - i.e. lack of education can be compounded by conflicting advice and then the availability of formula when the advice doesn't work.

**dee73**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:21 AM

I had supply issues with my milk, as did my mum. I would have tried to increase the supply but felt I was being bullied by the nurses at CYH who told me Dylan was feeding well but was just "difficult" when actually they had weighted him incorrectly and he was losing weight! By the time this was discovered by a Paed, it was too late to build my supply back up so he was weaned at 8 weeks. I felt awful that this happened and was then very cross when the same nurse scoffed that "of course a paed won't support breastfeeding" when it had been HER mistake in the first place that caused my son to be starving!

Next time I will listen to my own instincts instead.

**mum2cheekygirl06**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:23 AM

For me personally it was conflicting advice after birth. I was told one thing then another. I basically self taught myself and read books. I was lucky though that my DD new how to do it and i had no problems. I only got mastitis once which i had no idea about either no one told me anything, it was like they thought i had already had about 4 babies and it was not my first!

I also found that not one of the midwives were trained the same way and i found that the older midwives obviously did not go to regular updates in training to be in line with the now times, it was always back in

the old days etc etc. The new young midwives were trained well though and were helpful no negative advice was given from any of the younger girls at all it was the older girls who gave negatives and did not support you.

HTH :)

Jen

**chocolatecatty**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:37 AM

I voted lack of education, specifically about artificial milk. For one, formula should be know as just that..artificial milk. Does it say that on the tin?

I HATE going to the supermarket/chemist and seeing tins and tins on this stuff in the baby section. It totally normalises artificial milk. It makes mothers-to-be think there's two options for feeding thier unborn babies, an either/or, a simple choice. Like they're both good choices and you must pick one!

I had one young mum tell my mums group she tried bfeeding for a day or so with her 'fantastic milk supply' but then switched to, get this, 'normal milk' as it was too hard. I would have ripped her head off but I hardly knew her and so held my tongue.

The fact that formula is in our faces, and breastfeeding women and ads aren't, leads a lot of young mums to think that it's absolutely fine to use, IMO.

And a close second would be all the different opinions of midwives. I think even if they were trained up in the same way, they'd still pull you aside and give you thier own differing opinions. It was never pointed out to me that I had flat nipples (yeah, I didn't know either!) and I was sent home before my milk came in.....lucky for me I scored a very pro-bfeeding visiting health nurse who sorted me out with shields and advice.

**Suzyanneau**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:37 AM

I spent months reading about pregnancy and birth. I didn't realise that breastfeeding could be so complicated. I had such a lot of milk and a baby that was too sleepy to suck. I battled constant bouts of mastitis, cracked nipples and leaked badly all the time. I'm pleased I perservered because I ended up enjoying breast feeding very much. I do think there needs to be more education on breast feeding.

Suz

**cathybutterfly**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:38 AM

I voted for conflicting advice, but these are my 3 biggest reasons I struggled (however did stick with it):

Conflicting advice after birth  
Lack of education  
Lack of continuity of care

I found each midwife/nurse on duty in hospital had different advice, none of which actually helped anyway.

It wasn't until my daughter was 5 days old and I was home, and my birthing centre midwife came to visit that I finally got some advice which actually helped.

However, I'd also like to comment on the ABA. I found 2 piece of their advice in literature etc totally inaccurate, not just for me but for several people I know:

1. that letdown "tingles". For me it really really hurt, and for several months.
2. that if you introduce some formula your breastmilk will suffer. I have successfully breastfed and formula fed my daughter from 2 weeks old until 12months old, and will continue with this.

Cathy :)

**annef6722**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:39 AM

hi

1. conflicting advice after birth/lack of continuity of care  
the nurses all had their own methods of breastfeeding - makes it too confusing. most of them seemed to query my ability to feed, and seemed surprised i'd been able to feed my first son. even though i fed him for

10months, and am now sucessfully feeding my second.  
only one of about ten nurses made me feel competent about feeding my baby.  
so more consistency needed among nurses, and more reassuring advice.

2. women feeling "funny" about breastfeeding - as if their breasts were designed for sexual purposes only. I don't understand this, but it is common among my friends.

thanks  
anne

### Roryrory

May 23rd, 2007, 10:40 AM

I think it was the education I sought out before BF that made it so easy for me. I really feel for women who have problems and I know that biologically there was something in Flynn and me that just worked, but I have read so much about correct attachment, foremilk/hindmilk, posture feeding, different holds, how to prevent/fix mastitis, how often/whether to use cream, etc that I had LCs in hospital asking me if this was really the first time I had BF.

### Mads

May 23rd, 2007, 10:45 AM

Hmm... tricky.

Going from my own experience I could only really put forward conflicting advice. Sounds like I was one of the lucky ones. I went through a public hospital, got great advice (mostly) both before birth, and after. Great follow up support, too. I never considered formula, and it was never pushed on to me either. So I never had any problems or found there to be any barriers - I just want to stress this was in my own experience, though.

### charli\_girl

May 23rd, 2007, 10:45 AM

I voted for lack of education - but there are so many factors that contribute. I think overall, we are generally under-educated about breastfeeding as a society, and I do think the normalisation of ABM undermines BF.

I also think that there is a bit of stigma attached to BF (no pun intended). From my experience, women who perservere with BF after 3-6 months are almost labelled as 'hippy tree-huggers', regardless of the world health organisation endorsing BF for a minimum of 2 years. Interestingly, the average age for weaning is 4 years... why do Australian authorities recommend for only 6 months?

Personally, I love BF my little boy and plan to for as long as it works for both of us.

Anyway, I'll get off my high horse now :)

### nelly

May 23rd, 2007, 10:46 AM

I too think that they all contribute in some way.

I am one in a group of eight friends who had babies last year of whom only myself and one other are still breastfeeding. My son is 6m3wk and hers is just 6mths.

I remember when I was in hospital how every midwife would have a different form of advice, a different way to attach and everytime all bar one very kind woman came in and I was feeding (or trying to) when they left I felt totally useless and that everything I was doing was wrong.

When I got home a friend who is an ABA member lent me a video and book she borrowed from their library and invited me to some meetings. I also utilised the ABA email counselling and after about 4 weeks I finally felt that I know what I was doing. I didn't help that I had a reflux baby - but that's another story.

My best friend's sister was diagnosed with PND and anxiety, a lot of which my friend thought was attributed to how her sister felt "consumed" by breastfeeding and she consequently gave it up after maybe 4 wks. After that everytime I saw her or my friend it was to comments like "oh you are still breastfeeding, goodness when are you going to get him on a bottle to make it easier".... etc ....

My sister in law was ejected from a regional public hospital after a caesar on her 3rd day and her milk hadn't even come in. She is now having feeding problems and is about to quit. This is aggravated even more by a narrow minded mother who bottle fed her babies and disliked BF telling her to wean now and it will be easier later.

Another friend who gave away feeding because of ongoing attachment problems, "milk problems" and the

fact that she didn't enjoy it. She was also diagnosed with PND and attributed a lot of it to breastfeeding and being "consumed". Once again more pressure about how could I still be breastfeeding...

I love feeding my son and find it extremely easy now but at the time the pressure was amazing...

My son was a big nine and a half pound baby and loves his booby feeds. When he was going through his 4wk growth spurt he was feeding every 2 hours and I was constantly inundated with comments like " my god are you feeding him again" and " maybe you don't have enough milk" and "your milk might not be very good quality" - they followed me everytime we sat down to our feed.

It was enough to make me quit BF.

I think there is a lot of support out there but it isn't made easily accessible from the start if you don't know where to look or have someone around you who can help direct you. There are health providers / friends profligating the beliefs that is your baby is feeding 2 hourly you don't have enough milk etc. There are also too many conflicting areas of advice when you are in hospital, and women being sent home before they can even feed their baby and with little or no support once they get home.

I also remember being in hospital and constantly bombarded with BF is best message. Now I know it is and I did then as well, but when you are trying to get started and it doesn't come easy and you are too scared to ask for help you struggle with the message. I remember feeling like I had failed as a woman and mother because I couldn't just do it easily straight away and all the literature told me it was natural, it was best and you had to do it.

I think the blame lies in so many areas - midwives / nurses not having their training updated, women being sent home too early and with little or no support, poorly educated friends and family who know no better and think they know best, women too scared to ask for help for fear of looking like a failure, over zealous BF advocates and literature etc.

Sorry to go on but I feel quite passionate as I was one of the women who really wanted to BF, but was stuck in the middle of BF nazis and those telling me it was too hard and to get on the bottle. I am glad I stuck to it now as it is just the most precious thing and will hopefully still be BF when Jake is 12mths and beyond.

**ren**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:48 AM

I really think it's got a lot to do with breastfeeding being such an 'unknown' in our society. I have so many friends that say they had never even seen a mother breastfeed before they tried it themselves. Or only ever someone who was already past the 'hard stage' and so many people don't realise it takes effort and perseverance.

So I'd go with lack of education and also accessibility to formula (you wouldn't be so quick to use it if you lived on a remote island!).

**\*Jessica\***

May 23rd, 2007, 10:49 AM

Honestly????!! It is soooo hard, no-one told me that?! And in what I believe is a 'give up too soon' generation, why wouldn't you stop the pain and give the baby a bottle, esp when formula is so easy to come by? I was lucky enough to hang in there, and realise the pain and difficulties does go away and it is a great thing.

**dachlostar**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:49 AM

Can I say all of the above lol.

If i had to pick one I would say cultural influences/expectations & advice from family & friends. This is just from my own experience but the people I know who didn't breastfeed or only brestfed for a short time were mainly from families with a culture of not breastfeeding. A couple of examples - a friend who was using artificial milk by the time she left hospital with her first born had been told that none of the women in her family could breastfeed. With her second after encouragement from midwives and me she breastfed successfully until the third trimester of her third pregnancy.

SIL was told the same story by MIL - that she wouldn't be able to breastfeed because MIL couldn't. She started breastfeeding successfully but after a few months when her baby was going through a growth spurt and was waking up alot in the night MIL told SIL that she couldn't make enough milk and that she should give formula and do CC. Sadly SIL followed MIL's advice and that was the end of her BF relationship with her daughter.

In contrast I always believed that I could and would breastfeed because that's my family culture. I had my share of difficulties especially with Imran and his wonky tongue but we got there in the end. With Imran formula was nearly my undoing - MIL left a can in my house and at about 10 days with scabs on my nipples, a sore c-section scar and almost no sleep it was incredibly tempting. Luckily my DH talked me out of it.

FWIW I think that breastfeeding needs to be promoted realistically. In my ante-natal classes they showed us holds but they never told us that it could be difficult and excruciatingly painful. If women were more prepared for the difficulties of the early days they might be more inclined see it as normal and to continue instead of assuming that they couldn't do it.

**Amym**

May 23rd, 2007, 10:56 AM

I chose Lack of education,

for me I was a new and young mum and the hospital was way to understaffed to cope with any of my needs to have a midwife or a breastfeeding counsellor available to teach me and show me and help me through the rough times. I felt so alone through my breastfeeding trials, and yes those services were available but you had to book in and wait for them to be available for your needs, breastfeeding was alot harder than I thought it would be, I dont remember ever really talking about it prior to birth, just that I was going to give it a go.

I turned to formular because I couldnt bare it any longer, and with my Daughter I got mastitis very badly on both sides, this was because she was not attaching properly, but no one had the time or the staff requirements to back up having someone spend some time and make sure I was doing this properly.

**PlonkeeMumma**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:03 AM

For me, definitely lack of support. i had all sorts of problems with DS#1 and stayed in hospital for a week and although the midwives tried to help i didn't find them very supportive at all. One even said to me 'welcome to the real world' when i was crying when feeding due to horrendous c/s scar pain. The hospital i was at had a lactation specialist (i found out afterwards) but no one asked her to come and see me. I gave up after 2 weeks. I was lucky with DS#2 that i didn't have any probs and he was a great feeder so still b/f him now.

**Princess Confused**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:06 AM

Lack of education and Conflicting advice after birth. Not that it really matters to me atm cause Laila had to go on thickened formula for her reflux anyway but I do hope i dont have the same problem for future kids.

**Jodie259**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:08 AM

I found that I had plenty of support and offers to help... but with sleep deprivation and huge stress - before and after the birth of my child - I just never produced enough milk. I had plenty of help in hospital. I had 4 MCHN come to my home. I spent an entire day at a lactation centre. The help is there... but so is the pressure!!!

I found the pressure to HAVE to breastfeed even more stressful...

After my child was losing large amounts of weight consistently (for weeks) - I was more stressed.

Although formula was reluctantly suggested before I left hospital (because my son was suffering so much)... I wish that there had been more support right from the start to top up with formula and continue with breastfeeding. But it seemed everyone was anti-formula until it became a desperate situation.

I saw another mother absolutely beside herself because her daughter was constantly crying from difficulties with breastfeeding. I somehow managed to keep myself together in comparison. But I am not surprised by the prevalence of PND when the pressure to breastfeed is so high. I understand it's a great thing... and I don't knock it at all. I am going to give it a 100% go with my 2nd child. And I did everything I possibly could with my 1st. Even the lactation centre that I visited said I should stick with formula.

I think the pressure to breastfeed from everyone is the biggest deterrent. You are nearly made to feel like a 'bad mother' if you don't b/f... which only adds to more pressure.

EDIT: I did not vote as I felt none of the options were relevant to me. I felt the PRESSURE to have to breastfeed caused stress and anxiety which added to the milk supply problems

**staraus1**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:10 AM

Breastfeeding should be encouraged but not at the expense of the relationship of mother and child. 12 years ago I had my first, I tried to breastfeed for 3.5 weeks, distressed baby, distressed mother. I saw Lactations consultants in my home and there home, early childhood nurses. My technique was right I had enough milk blah blah blah. With severe depression I went to my GP 1.5 hrs drive away and was told to put her on formula and me on anti depressants. Two years later my milk finally dried up naturally.



Foward 8 years and I had my second child, wanted to try again, I was aware of PND had a great support network. Finally my problem was revealed, I had fibrous nipples. My children will never feel comfortable. Tried nipples shields but in the end opted for expressing and feeding from a bottle the expressed milk. I could hand express and fill a bottle in 5 minutes. So here we are no. 3 is due in Sept. I am more aware and more relaxed about it now. I have my pump and my bottle ready. I will not be made to feel like a failure. I applaud women that 'can do it', but please dont inflict your opinions so harshly on mothers just trying to do there best as well. We all love our children but some have abilities that others lack. We are all dont foregt only human.

Helen

**Debi77**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:11 AM

From reading what you have all said, I think a continuity of support and education throughout the process is very important. Changing people who are the first point of access for information would make it very difficult if they are all giving conflicting information. Ideally breast feeding is clearly the best option, however, sometimes there are obstacles which cannot be avoided which hinder the process. Ultimately the most important thing is the health and welfare and the child and mother, and whilst breatfeeding should be promoted and vigourously encouraged, if it is not the most viable option, a mother should not be made to feel bad for taking the formula option, especially when it may be in the best interests of the child.

That said, I was extremely fortunate, I breast fedd my first child to six months, when I returned to full time work. I worked part time for 4 months before that, and because I work for my inlaws, I was able to bring my son to work with me and breastfeed him there. I never had a problem with breast feeding, we both took to it straight away, with no medical complications or otherwise. From the sound of others experiences, it would appear that I was in the minority, and I certainly hope that my next experience is as good as the first. (I dont want sore boobies for Christmas LOL)

**Airlie**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:12 AM

Hi I get quiet angry over the pressure of breastfeeding and how it affects the women that really can't breast feed no matter what occurs. I agree that Breast Feeding is the first option any new mother should try, but in many cases some women find it impossible to breast feed and a lot of these times it is detremental to the baby's health for the mother to continue trying. I am pregnant with baby no 3. I am unable to breastfeed no matter what. Medication I take normally affects the thickness of my skin so that my babies get more blood than milk and have me feeling very tense until my milk dries up because of emotions. I always feed as long as possible usually only a couple of days after birth to try to give my babies the best start they can have, but after that it is no good for the baby or me. Not only that within a couple of weeks of having a baby I get very sick and need to go back on medication which I can not breastfeed while doing so. If I don't take the medication I can not take care of my baby as I am unable to move or hold it and am in constant pain. On one occasion I was made to feel that it was all my fault by one midwife who said all women can breastfeed and that I was causing the problems, at the same time thankfully the other midwives sat me down and told me not to continue as it was no good for me or the baby. This all occured with my first baby, with my second I tried again and with 12 hours they sat me down again and advised that I not continue. Not only did I have a bad experience with a midwife with my second baby which made me feel crap about myself for days, but I was then also excluding from the mothers group because I was a non breastfeeding mother. I do agree that breastfeeding in majority of circumstances is the best thing for mother and baby, but this is not always the case and the mothers that truly are unable to breastfeed should not be made to feel inadequate about themselves or their parenting skills, this is a large contribution to mothers depression. Even while bottle feeding I still did all the feeding so that I had the contact with my baby, I did not let anyone else do this feeding and still kept that contact between the baby and me. I am now expecting my third child and once again very nervous about the breastfeeding issue, once again I will try and continue as long as I can but as I am on these tablets all the time now believe my chances are even worse than before. I get nervous even thinking about having to stay in the hospital and dealing with other mothers and midwives when I may not be able to breastfeed. The hospital I am now closest too has a policy on breastfeeding and does not give mothers any support at all if they do not breastfeed. So does that now mean I will be out on my own once again and have no support network. I think breastfeeding mothers should feel privelged that they are able to enjoy this experience and not descrimate against the mothers that are unable to have this experience but support them.

**azima**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:15 AM

I voted lack of education. I think a lot of mums thing FF is as good as BF. That it's an equal choice IYKWIM. Also most FF mums I've met don't understand supply/demand so believe they had to 'top-up'. And that at 3mths it starts to feel different; doesn't mean you don't have enough.

**neeny**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:18 AM

I couldn't vote here because my reason was medication - unless you classify that as medical intervention? But I take that as being "advised not to" by medical professionals where as after colustrom I had to stop.

Just remember, as Caro said, not everyone can breastfeed and there was a story on "What's good for you" about it a while ago and the main reason for not breastfeeding was health/medications. Just because some of us FF doesn't mean we gave up too early or just wanted to. All my SILs BF and they now understand why I couldn't - they never gave me a hard time about it and that was a relief!

Besides I have friends who BF and FF - one in particular used Formula overnight to help her baby sleep longer and she said it worked for her.

Saying that - I read articles about breast milk banks and think it would be good to have breast milk accessible to every mother who can't BF. I think that would be rather expensive though!

Congrats Kelly on your Parillimentary submission and hope all goes well.

**Sammi-j**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:19 AM

I voted for Family &/ friends ideals/advice/expectation.

For me I only had two friends who were successful at breast feeding. As it was something I really wanted to do they motivated me to keep going when my mum, MIL, cousins & neighbours all told me to put the baby on the bottle because that is what they did. Breastfeeding was too much hassle for them and they were trying to spare me I guess. It's something that everyone had an opinion on and they were quite outspoken about it.

Even now I get comments from a few family members that they can't believe I put up with breastfeeding for so long!

**AmyGirl**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:24 AM

I put lack of education. Had I known that it was normal to experience a lull in supply at around 2-3 months, I would've tried harder than 2 weeks to get my supply back up. I did go to clinics and doctor but no body really said that it was normal to experience a temporary drop in your supply. I expressed myself to know end but got too worked up about having to put her on formula, I'm sure it made it worse. I think I would've been far more relaxed and accepting of it, had I known it would eventually come back up (as I understand now, usually it does).

**smithy**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:26 AM

well i have four children and i think we need more support before we leave the hospitals we are not given enough advice although some of us just are unable to bf and i think its a choice that really has to be made by both partners

**Liz**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:26 AM

I chose conflicting advice after birth, but I'd love to say all of the above too! I was fortunate that I had done reading and research, and attended an ABA breastfeeding class, so was able to sift through the variety of advice given in hospital.. and yes.. there was a variety!!

I was able to eliminate any fears of lack of supply etc, coz I knew what to expect from my boobs. I knew about engorgment, I knew about letdown, I expected the upcoming fussy periods where he'd feed and feed and feed, I knew my boobs would lose their full feeling after a few weeks, and didn't worry about it coz it just meant they now knew what they were doing! So education is a BIG one because mums I know that have stopped breastfeeding have usually had the same reasons, thinking they have no milk, or that the baby doesn't want it because they're being fussy etc etc. Managing sore & cracked nipples is possible, but there's no real help out there.

So, second I would choose lack of education, then I would choose health professionals. Just yesterday I was told by a GP that DS is only feeding for comfort now, not for nutrition. What a load of rubbish!

I agree with the culture thing too. I know some mums formula feed, and yes that's their choice, but what upsets me is when I hear "you know, it's ok to switch to formula - it's just as good". Whilst this can be supportive of those that choose to FF, it totally undermines breastfeeding, and provides NO support for those that want to breastfeed.

THE best piece of advice I received was from the ABA breastfeeding class, and that was "only take breastfeeding advice from someone who has successfully breastfed". So I was able to basically ignore any comments on formula being ok, and only listen to those that had got through any problems. Sadly, no-one in real life around me had successfully breastfed (except SIL) longer than a few months, so majority of advice was from the lovely BB girls :) I think even the ABA counsellors have to have successfully fed for at least 9 months to qualify as counsellors. Maybe next time in hospital with this bub if I have problems I

should outright ask the LC & midwives how long they fed their babies for. It would probably be a real eye opener!

**pip2jays**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:27 AM

I find the lack of consistency in care and the lack of information on discharge are the biggest hurdles. All 4 of my kids were special care babies. It is easy to forget that in this situation your baby is the patient and your wishes as the mother can sometimes be trivialised or given a cursory regard as the patients welfare is in the hands of the Paed. Finding a Paed with a BF lean is very difficult. I was lucky in that my Dr was, for 3 of my kids, but I had a different one for one and his lack of support was frustrating. The nursing staff in special care at the hospital I attended were very pro BF of the preemie bubs and offered me all the support and assistance I needed. They were a fountain of knowledge and were quick to assure me that I was doing the right thing and consulted me before doing anything to my baby, and allowed me to be involved in the medical care side as well as the mothering side. I was luck enough to stay in 3 weeks with my twins.

In contrast the midwives on the wards, had a vast difference in the advice and attitude towards BF. Most were not committed to establishing the BF relationship as much as the special care staff and actually told me that I had nothing to do so I could make my own bed (twins in special care and I was pumping all their feeds 24/7)

On leaving hospital I feel there is not enough information given to mothers to let them know what's in store. Of all the new mothers I know only a few are still BF and most cite lack of milk and I couldn't produce enough as the reason to give up. If they had known that it takes 6-8 weeks to establish BF, that the milk has to be produced by the bond between mother and baby and its not just there for the picking then many would be prepared to stick it out, as it is the unknown and the desire to have a happy baby that drives some mothers to FF. The basics of how the breasts work and how much feeding you need to do are not realistically communicated to departing mums.

The last issue I have is the early childhood nurses. Most I have encountered seem to be "retired" from the active hospital system and working the 9-5 is the last step to retirement. They are quick to advocate solids if a baby seems to be feeding too often and they are quick to tell mothers that the baby is not thriving (even though they are on the curve and travelling forward) and that they need to supplement. Teething is another panacea for all that ails the newborn.. the list goes on. These centres are the only contact some new mothers have and they arm themselves with the knowledge given to them by these professionals and as new mothers find it hard to question the advice. The answer could be that better more stringent requirements need to be met in order to work in these environments.

**dachlostar**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:28 AM

Anyway, I digress. I totally support the idea of breastfeeding education for our school children - boys and girls. Muslim women must be taught about it, as it is enshrined in the Quran - anyone care to educate me? The Quran and that fat man, Buddha, have got some great teachings to live by! Again, I digress... it's late and I should be in bed, or writing an assignment...

yep, In Islam it is regarded as child's right to be breastfed for 2 years (by its mother or failing that a wet-nurse). Of course it's also recognised that this isn't possible for some women so there are allowances made.

Judaism has similar perspective. Yael started a thread about it here (<http://www.bellybelly.com.au/forums/showthread.php?t=26376>)

I think that with this in mind that to promote breastfeeding the government needs to look at culturally sensitive campaigns that target specific communities ie campaign that suits the Muslim community would make reference to the Quranic verses as well as the modern research and another campaign that targets the Jewish community would refer to the Talmud as well as modern research and so on...

Alos it would be great if the government could fund the ABA to do some sort of outreach work - visiting schools, mosques, churches, sports clubs etc.

We can't really expect that a one-size-fits-all approach is going to influence everyone.

Also I don't understand why the government can't mount a massive tv campaign - they have the funds to promote all sorts of other stuff (like thier super changes) so why not a health campaign for breastfeeding? It should be shoved into people's faces during Neighbours; it would make a nice change from gangrenous toes lol.

**julesr**

May 23rd, 2007, 11:29 AM

I vote lack of education - but I would qualify that as actual lack of education in society, not just mothers to be.



My sister thinks breastfeeding is yucky and revolting and seems quite disgusted at the thought that she actually breastfed as a baby. My brother is not so bad but complains that he doesn't like seeing women