

but not sure - was subsidising ABA memberships for people in their council area. I think this was a fantastic initiative. I am not sure whether it continued and what the take up rate was.

Luvabub

May 24th, 2007, 01:21 PM

Breastfeeding. Something I was extremely well educated about. Something that I longed to do for my baby; who I had wanted for soooo long. I breastfed for 36 hours.

But after not sleeping a wink, that second night my daughter and I spent together, after being told by a midwife that I needed to 'just breastfeed her 45 minutes each side (again)' and then she'd stop screaming... I decided the breastfeeding world and I were not compatible. I might add that this midwife told me to buzz (after trying for an hour and a half with my baby's eyes and my eyes closed from fatigue) but there was no way in heaven and earth I would trust my precious bundle in that midwife's care.

Yes I wanted to breastfeed, and I had no nipple issues etc. But when mother and baby are overtired, what is wrong with one bottle to get them over the hurdle???

Real quick and real smart I decided bottle was best (at least I could feed my hungry baby) and wouldn't it be abuse not to? Women who force their babies to breastfeed (for the so called nutritional benefits) need to think about the long term effect of depriving their child of food and what effect this has on their personality. Also, I knew what formula to give my baby (because I'd also researched this) one with LCP's - which I might add - How many breastfeeding mother's include a good source of Omega 3's in their diet such as sardines etc? Because if they don't do this, perhaps their baby would be better on formula? Perhaps breast is not best if the mother is overtired, has no time to eat properly (remember that includes the sardines!!) and the baby is screaming to be fed.

My baby has never gone hungry, is not overweight and meets all the nutritional requirements she needs. She has been formula fed from 36 hours old. If breastfeeding works for you, have fun with it. But don't make new Mum's feel bad if they tried and it didn't work. More education is not the issue (don't you think it's in your face and suffocating enough??) but 'informed' midwife support and more lactation consultants are needed 24 X 7.

Luvabub

Luvabub

Phoenix

May 24th, 2007, 01:25 PM

It would be great if ABA could give everyone free memberships. they would probably love nothing more but unfortunately being not for profit they need to do something to raise funds to print all that info that everyone wants, to train more counsellors to help mothers, to train community educators ad all the other wonderful things that they do. If it had been on offer when I was first pregnant I would not have hesitated in doing a breastfeeding education class even if it did cost \$100 I paid that for a stupid antenatal talk that told me everythign that I could of read in the hospital info booklet. Paying the money for a class or membership that will help you to BF is going to save you heaps of money in the long run. I know they'd love to run ads but advertising campaigns cost millions of dollars. The recent budget allocated 8.7 million to b'feeding. Not sure how much ABA gets but even if they got the whole amount it wouldn't be enough to run a health campaign and offer free membership to the approx 250 000 births a year. The national helpline to set up will cost a couple of million dollars alone. Kim beazley pledged he would fund this when he was still leader of the opposition- wonder if they still will???

Kelly I think it would be great to have the committee view this thread.

And if anyone finds out about any more hearings and you can go along the do it. The more people that add their voice the better the results.

Emma1979

May 24th, 2007, 01:27 PM

i struggled with attachment and am using a nipple shield, so definitely would have benefitted from more support from a LC in hospital.

i have found that if u are going thru any issue with your baby, ie, at the moment mine wont sleep during the day, then its your milk that is in question... 'oh she is probably hungry', "that seems like a hunger cry not a sleep cry", "try some formula and see if she sleeps", "if i were you i would put her on the bottle, how do you know she is getting enough milk"...

when u are really desperate, you are willing to try almost anything, i have started using formula out of desperation to see if it makes a difference to her sleep, but am now coming to my senses and think i will continue with breast feeding.

Phoenix

May 24th, 2007, 01:33 PM

How many breastfeeding mother's include a good source of Omega 3's in their diet such as sardines etc? Because if they don't do this, perhaps their baby would be better on formula? Perhaps breast is not best if the mother is overtired, has no time to eat properly (remember that includes the sardines!!) and the baby is screaming to be fed.

Unfortunately this is a common misconception in our society. Mothers milk is always going to be better then formula regardless of how nutritionally inadequate her diet is. the body takes what it needs to make milk first. How else would third world mother be able to feed (most live on maize porridge or rice) and you don't have to eat sardines to get omega 3. Spanish mackerel as well as salmon has high concentrations. The mother with the perfect diet is going to have better overall health then one with an inadequate diet but her baby will not suffer. Formula does not contain the hundreds of other ingredients that make breastmilk good. Definately need better informed midwives. How on earth is a mother supposed to cope when she gets told a hundred conflicting things and treat a mother like hell when she is at her most vulnerable. there are a few programs where a midwife cares for you during pregnancy and then for the first 6 weeks post birth. they have great success with BF because the mothers are comfortable the midwives are knowledgeable and the support is there. Definately agree with you there luvabub

kellieem

May 24th, 2007, 02:07 PM

For me, the order I'd put these things in would be:

- Conflicting advice after birth
- Lack of education
- Lack of continuity of care
- Interventions at birth
- Family and friends ideals/ advice/ expectations
- Lack of affordability/ availability of care
- Accessibility of artificial milk
- Health professional influence
- Going back to work with lack of bf support
- Marketing of artificial milk

For me the main problem I had was that due to illness my milk didn't come in properly after my DD's birth. I tried to bf her after a few days (I was too ill in the first three days after she was born) and the midwives were no help. They all told me that my milk would come and to keep trying to feed her, until then supplement her with formula. She would scream and arch her back when I tried to attach her and I ended up with really badly damaged nipples. One midwife said to try to persevere which I did and DD ended up with a tummy full of bloody milk which she promptly projectile vomited all over me. I was horrified. After this another midwife said to stop bf until my nipples were a bit better, so I did and ended up with slight mastitis. I was a mess, which wasn't helping with my milk production.

It wasn't until about 5 days after my DD's birth that another midwife suggested and arranged a lactation consultant to see me, as well as a social worker. The LC said my DD was attaching and sucking really badly, even though the midwives were telling me she was doing well. And also that my holding technique was also quite bad.

The LC gave me a pump to use to try to increase my milk as well as some medication to help. She showed me how to hold DD properly and how to attach her and breast shields to use in the meantime to continue bf with horribly blistered and sore nipples. She saw me twice in hospital and then arranged for another LC to see me at home twice. I ended up with engorgement for a few days and DD was really difficult to get on the breast, ending in blistered and sore nipples again.

In the end though I have been unsuccessful in bf DD. My milk has decreased after a few weeks, and we also ended up with thrush. I also suspect I may have something wrong to do with my letdown (though I am no Dr!). My DD was distraught and so was I due to her being starving hungry. My local Dr. told me to give her a bottle after bf, which I did and this helped. She did not give me any info. to help increase my milk production or anyone to call for help. My family did not support me in bf, with my DH just as distraught as my DD and I and wanting us to be happy, and my mother telling me she had so much milk it squirted everywhere and she fed all the premi babies at the hospital when we were born- maybe I just wasn't made to bf like she was.

When DD settled after being bf and bottle fed, everyone pressured me to bottle feed her. She also began to reject me and only want a bottle (she's a lazy bones- too lazy to suck properly!). SO now here we are 5 weeks later, DD is almost fully bottle fed with only about 3-4 partial feeds a day being breast milk, supplemented with a bottle. At these times she has nearly a whole bottle so I think she only takes the breast for comfort more than for the milk.

I think that midwives need to be educated more or that Lactation Consultants should be at all hospitals for mothers to learn about bf straight away after birth. Going through all of this has really turned me off bf my DD. I know that even now I could probably increase my milk and get her solely on the breast, but with all of the trouble I went through, I am scared to do it and think it is easier (and will keep me more sane) to just continue with the bottle. There should also be more education (free!!) for pregnant women to prepare them for the trials of bf. I was never prepared for how hard it really is.

rayray

May 24th, 2007, 02:36 PM

Women who force their babies to breastfeed (for the so called nutritional benefits) need to think about the long term effect of depriving their child of food and what effect this has on their personality.

I assume you mean women who have no milk or are unable for some other reason to breastfeed, and won't give their babies formula, letting them go hungry? I don't know any mother who would deliberately starve their child (but who knows)

Otherwise, I'm not sure how you educated yourself on the benefits of breastfeeding, but I'd be looking at other sources next time. the nutritional benefits of breastfeeding are well proven.

I don't think anyone is trying to make formula feeding mums feel bad. I formula fed my son from 6 months.

I think the breast is best message is out there sure. But not everyone gets accurate information. I think the education should be aimed equally as much at the medical professionals who are supporting mums and expectant mums.

celinchand

May 24th, 2007, 02:40 PM

i think its more to do with lack of support and affordability of support, as breastfeeding a baby means every 2-3 hours you will have to leave everything and feed a baby. Also if you really want to breast feed then you will have to take some time off work, not many employers want to give a paid maternity leave and i think if you are breastfeeding then you should be granted atleast 6 months of paid maternity leave so you can support yourself well, and the care after having a baby in australia is shameful. Women are left on their own to cope up with the most stressful period of their lives, no wonder the rate of post natal depression are so high, and when are you depressed you body doesnt tend to do the natural things, even the milk produced is not sufficient. A mother needs privacy while feeding a baby and you literally have to look around to find a place to feed, even a stone or wooden fixed chair in a public toilets with a small curtian would be so helpful. But generally i think the mothers are just not cared for they have no support or very minimal support to be thinking the best for the child all the time is not possible, so much to do with a small baby, and hardly any rest, mothers are so tired all the time, life is very difficult at that itme and all the time there is so much to do, breastfeeding becomes a problem at that time with so much associated with it hope government takes some proper measures:pray:

AmyM

May 24th, 2007, 03:37 PM

If breasfeeding works for you, have fun with it. But don't make new Mum's feel bad if they tried and it didn't work. More education is not the issue (don't you think it's in your face and suffocating enough??) but 'informed' midwife support and more lactation consultants are needed 24 X 7.

I agree with you on the point of not making formular feeding mums feel bad, I had alot of this when I stopped feeding both of my children but it was mainly from the SIL from hell LOL, I also agree that Breast feeding can be an in your face thing, but having said that I do think that this and education are very different, I think that yes when I had my DS I was not given the oppurtunity to even say 'hmm maybe I will just formular feed' I just had no choice or it felt that way for me anyway, but I also had no education, no one to sit with me and show me how to attach him properly no information, nothing at all, I think the aim of the advertising needs to be to make public more accepting of BF and not so shamed about it, I dont think it needs to be there to make formular feeders feel terrible about their decissions, as I dont feel thats fair either, I know how hard it was for me to make the choice to stop BF and with the added pressure I was made to feel like i had committed a crime against my baby and that felt truly awful.

Cailin

May 24th, 2007, 04:05 PM

Breastfeeding. Something I was extremely well educated about. Something that I longed to do for my baby; who I had wanted for soooo long. I breastfed for 36 hours.

But after not sleeping a wink, that second night my daughter and I spent together, after being told by a midwife that I needed to 'just breastfeed her 45 minutes each side (again)' and then she'd stop screaming... I decided the breastfeeding world and I were not compatible. I might add that this midwife told me to buzz (after trying for an hour and a half with my baby's eyes and my eyes closed from fatigue) but there was no way in heaven and earth I would trust my precious bundle in that midwife's care.

Hmmm, I dunno about that. My milk didn't come in for 48 hours with my second child and he screamed blue murder the first night because as the midwife said he wanted steak and chips and all he was getting was bread and water... The whole reason babies cry when the milk hasn't come in is to help stimulate the hormones that bring the milk in. So it is ok to hear your baby cry, and it is ok for baby to cry. Some babies don't cry and my first didn't but my second did. I was offered formula in the middle of the night (before my milk came in) and I said no way. I knew he wasn't going to die if he didn't have formula because I knew I

had colostrum and I know my milk was going to be there eventually. So I really do stand by my claims that we need more education because the *steak & cheese crying is perfectly normal and its often misunderstood*, or thought to be starvation when in fact its all part of the grand plan...

hugs
Cailin

Liz

May 24th, 2007, 04:07 PM

But after not sleeping a wink, that second night my daughter and I spent together,

...Women who force their babies to breastfeed (for the so called nutritional benefits) need to think about the long term effect of depriving their child of food and what effect this has on their personality.

Baby's are born with fat stores to live off in those first few days whilst they drink colostrum, hence why they lose a bit of weight. It can take up to 4+ days for milk to come in. No one is starving their baby in the time it takes for milk to come in. It's knowing this kind of information that gets mums through rough patches. There's no need to panic about starving your baby in those first days, there is time to learn how to breastfeed.

And the nutritional benefits are far from so-called. This sadly is where formula companies mislead the public, making people believe it's as good as or better than breastmilk. I've seen posted on these boards "no-one can tell me that breastmilk has all the ingredients that are listed on the tin of formula". OMG - no it certainly doesn't. It has far more than what's on the tin, and far less of the bad stuff that's on the tin (ie sugar)

caro

May 24th, 2007, 04:10 PM

Oh brilliant Post Cailin You said EXACTLY what i was wanting to say but kept writing and deleting ;)

Also re the in your face comment - I dont think it is **in your face** enough otherwise people wouldnt have the views about BF that they do, the fact that the baby is starving after birth, The fact that if you arent eating fish you arent nutrioinally providing for your baby, the fact that you are abusing your baby because you arent feeding it directly after birth (despite baby having stores and despite baby getting colustrun) and the fact that there is no problem in giving **one bottle of formula** which clearly as you can see you only breast fed for 36 hours because of that - So yes there is a problem with giving just **one bottle** as it sets up the Breastfeeding relationship to head for a fall in MOST Cases.

BTW I didnt sleep for 4 nights straight...and i survived - its not like i had to operate heavy machinery or drive.. My adrenlin well and truly kicked in and took over plus i was resting all day and night on a bed

hannahfroodo

May 24th, 2007, 04:17 PM

I hear so many women saying they wanted their babies to sleep through the night so they switched to formula :(It's such a myth too as my fully breastfed baby slept 12 hours a niight from 2 months old. The problem is that there are a lot of well meaning family and friends out there spreading this myth further and further.

I too had a fully breast fed baby who slept 12 hours a night before 3 months of age. In my mother's group, I have heard discussions about trying baby out on a bottle of formula before bed in the hopes that this is what will get them sleeping through. It is a huge myth.

On the education topic - Yes, there is a lot of advertising out there for the 'Breast is Best' campaign. and I think that advertising is good and necessary BUT there is a lack of education on the how-to side. Not just 'this is how you do it' but 'this is what you do and where you turn if you have problems.'

I didn't even know LCs existed until my DD was a week old.

I love the idea of having a LC come to see you prior to discharge from hospital just as you can't discharge until the OB and peadeatrician have seen you, you should have to see the LC too.

I always thought everyone KNEW that BF is better for baby than FF - but I had a friend who told me (in my vulnerable state when DD was 1 week old and I was having BF problems) "these days, FF is just as good as BF. They put all the nutrients into formula that your baby needs."

If you want to/need to FF your baby, there is no problem with that. And your baby will still be happy and healthy. However, I think there is a problem with believing that FF is equivalent to BF in terms of what is good for your baby.

Let's face it - BF IS hard. And FF can be so much more convenient - you don't have to wait to find a quiet spot, you can whip the bottle out without stopping what you're doing and no one looks twice. If we DON'T consistently seek to educate people that BF is better for baby, where is the motivation to do it? Why wouldn't you just FF straight up?

As Liz said:



I've seen posted on these boards "no-one can tell me that breastmilk has all the ingredients that are listed on the tin of formula". OMG - no it certainly doesn't. It has far more than what's on the tin, and far less of the bad stuff that's on the tin (ie sugar)

100% agree. People forget that there are ingredients in breastmilk which science can't even isolate and identify - let alone replicate.

Liz

May 24th, 2007, 04:22 PM

I personally don't see FF as more convenient. I was too lazy to express milk, and sterilise bottles etc so DS was on the boob all the time. So there's no way I'd find FF easier, with bottles to wash etc. Much quicker to whip out a boob too rather than mix formula and heat it up, especially at night. Can't think of a faster way to get bub (and mum!) back to sleep than sticking em on the boob :)

Cailin

May 24th, 2007, 04:45 PM

Yeah I agree after having a baby that I FF and a baby that I BF I think BF'ing is way easier in the long run LOL! The amount of times we'd go out and I'd have forgotten my formula container or couldn't find somewhere to heat up her bottles, and sterilising was the pits for me. But everyone is different so what one person may hate another may love.

hugs
Cailin

Flea

May 24th, 2007, 05:09 PM

Yep me too.

I've formula fed one baby from two months old and I can't come at the argument that FF is easier. No way. When DS wakes up during the night he has a boob in his mouth before he can even open it enough to scream most of the time :lol:

If we were bottle feeding by the time his bottle was heated the whole house would be awake because he DON'T like to wait!

And that's not even mentioning washing, sterilising, and making up bottles every day. And then there's going out.....:wall: I love that I can throw a bib and a nappy in my handbag and that's all he needs. But alas we digress.....:lol:

Ryn

May 24th, 2007, 05:45 PM

Gosh yes - midwives telling you that your baby is starving, give her formula or I'll take her away and do it (and yes, I have a son, but despite the blue decor the evil midwife kept calling DS "she") before the milk comes in should be shot! That's why DS was on formula and BM for 3 weeks.

But for night formula feeds, I was told (when my family were trying to bully me into FF my baby pre-birth) that it's easy because you make the bottle, sleep with it next to your skin so when baby wakes up it's the right temperature. (Yes, I do know that's very dangerous, but that's what a family member did and thought it was great to do.)

Soph

May 24th, 2007, 06:02 PM

Ah I wish I had time to read all these posts...very interesting. I voted for health professionals eg MCHN - the number of times they have told me and other people to FF and especially to top up with FFs when weight gain is slow - I've lost count. It's crazy when you think that doing that usually means the beginning of the end for BF.....anyway I could go on forever here!

I too agree - I had #1 who wouldn't BF and I expressed for 8 weeks then FF and #2 who is still BF - wow BF is soooooooooooooooooooooo much easier in terms of daily work and in the middle of the night!

RachaelAustin

May 24th, 2007, 07:11 PM

:redface:ETA: - Wow RachaelAustin, I had no idea that midwives don't receive training on b/f! That amazes me! I would say that could be one of the best ways to improve the b/f rate in Aus. As the midwives are there for so much of the support during those first crucial days.

I know it's scary! But consider this too. For the little education midwives get...doctors get even less, if any. And frequently women turn to them for advice (doctors should know right:p) often get VERY dodgy, very inaccurate, not researched advice :cry:. But in fairness to doctors (SURGEONS) they are trained in high risk

birth, not normal everyday birth that accounts for approx 95% of the population.

The training is appalling for a start, then accessibility to trained professionals i.e LC's.

Blessings,
Rachael Austin
Midwife in Private Practice

amy&rafi

May 24th, 2007, 08:02 PM

rachael austin- it has been really great reading what you have to say! i completely agree with you on all accounts!

my mum (who has been a breastfeeding mother for 27 years) was told recently by a doctor that my baby sister (9 mths) should no longer be on the breast. that it was ridiculous that a 'child of that age' still be being breastfed. he told her that there 'was no nutritional value to it after 3 mths and any mother who continues to after that age is only doing it for their own gratification'... !!! talk about misinformation!!

not a big blow to my mum though cos she can't stand doctors at the best of times so thankfully she took that advice with a grain of salt... :D

it is surprising how little education is provided to midwives considering the most common reason for mothers hitting the 'nurse call' bell is for breastfeeding queries... hopefully the course outlines in universities will steadily change over the upcoming years.

mipsy

May 24th, 2007, 09:59 PM

Haven't posted for a while - I have been lucky and had a wonderful little girl, great mother's group, good family support etc etc, but have to put in my two cents worth in reply to this question.

I breastfed my little until she was 9mths, by which time we were both kind of over it all. She had no probs stopping at all, she pretty much gave it up herself.

However, in answer to the actual question, accessibility of artificial milk is up there as a big reason why b/feeding is stopped so early. Personally, being on a budget meant that breastfeeding was a perfect solution for me - I mean, really, I didnt have to pay for food for my Mousette until she started on solids at 6+ months!! Also, I knew it was the best thing for her and apart from a major amount of "ouch" factor during first week we never had any issues. Positive attitude + having to budget = successful breastfeeding!!

cheers all,
Anna

(my little one is a very happy, very healthy, brilliant sleeper, 2 1/2yr old now)

Ambah

May 24th, 2007, 10:41 PM

I voted for Lack of education as my first choice, however that vote would closely be followed by -

- Lack of continuity of care
- Lack of availability/affordability of support
- Accessibility of artificial milk

I can quite easily admit that I was able to breastfeed, but I did not perservere at it enough, and gave up much to quickly. I do not want to make excuses for myself, and say that breastfeeding was just not possible for me, because if I had tried harder and had more support and information then I certainly could have succeeded at it.

I come from a family where breastfeeding is not the norm. My mother formula fed all 5 of her daughters, which I later learnt was because one of her nipple is very inverted. Whether she could or could not have actually succeeded at breastfeeding is not my place to say. My older sister also did not succeed at breastfeeding past the first week with her first and second child. She did not attempt it with her third and fourth child, and put them onto formula straight away. She felt that is was not worth the stress, as she believed her babies were starving.

These were the only two family members close to me that could pass on their breasfeeding stories to me. And their stories certainly did 'normalise' formula in my mind.

Now onto my experience... Aidyn was put onto my breast within 15 mins after his birth. He seemed to be latching fine. He then slept most of that night, and during the next morning. During the next day I tried to attach him to me a few times, where he was drinking colostrum. In hindsight though I was not attaching him nearly enough, and the midwives did not encourage me to try to attach him more. I was unaware that the increased suckling would help my supply to arrive. Whenever I had guests visit me I never attempted to

BF in front of them, I was far too embarrassed, and it was just completely foreign for me to whip out my boob and struggle to attach him, with all of these people watching me. So I didn't do it, which again reduced the amount of time that I was attempting to BF him. For the next 24 hours he was screaming and crying, and my milk had not come in. A midwife told me that he was hungry and suggested he have a small amount of formula to tide him over. I refused at first, but a few hours later I agreed. After the formula he was asleep and peaceful instantly. The next time he went through a rough patch I requested formula again.... and then again. It was much easier and less stressful on me, and I was already stressed to the nines about everything else to do with motherhood.

When we left the hospital (on day 3) my milk still had not come in. I don't think it came in until day 5... and by this time Aidyn was very used to the bottle. I had major issues trying to attach him to me by then... he would just scream and become extremely distressed. I had a visiting midwife come out to see me, and when she saw him screaming and refusing to attach, she said there was nothing further she could do to help.

I went and got a breastpump and began pumping, so at least a few of his feeds per day were breastmilk. I found it extremely tiring pumping every four hours - although in hindsight I should have been doing it more frequently than that! I went through 3 breastpumps due to them breaking, and kept up the pumping for one month. During this time I would try to get him to attach to my breast, but he just would not take it... he was well and truly used to the bottle, and that was my downfall. I stopped using EBM when he was about 1 month old.

I think education would have made a huge difference.... education for me, and more education for the midwives in the hospital, and education for society in general!

I also think that the hospital that you give birth at should send out a visiting LC every day for the first week of bringing your baby home from hospital, and then be available for housecalls in the second week if needed.

Lack of support was also a huge one for me.... I had no one around me that was familiar enough with breastfeeding to help me. I think for my next baby there will be a huge difference, as I know a large network of women who successfully breastfeed, who I know would help support me with it.

I truly truly believe that an advertising campaign would work wonders. For example, take the National Tobacco campaign, that has been running for 10 years relentlessly. This campaign has been successful in its approach due to informing the public about the truths of the issue.

The National Tobacco Campaign was I believe one of the first Nationally coordinated health campaigns, involving all levels of government, and was on scale larger and more prominent than any other previous health campaign.

Well I believe its time for all governments of Australia to coordinate another one of these massive campaigns - on the benefits of breastfeeding, and the truth/facts about formula. If we can successfully encourage a larger proportion of mothers to breastfeed (and breastfeed for longer) the benefits for our society will be seen for decades to come, with reduced health issues in our population, saving millions (billions) of dollars. An advertising campaign of that scale I believe will be a huge key to helping educate the population. On every advertisement they should include the ABA hotline phone number. This of course means that the ABA would need significant funding to cope with the amount of calls...

One positive result of this I can think of (amongst many) is - imagine how much easier it will be to breastfeed in public, or in the workplace - without embarrassment, and without people commenting rudely, and without other barriers. Because every woman will have the confidence that the Australian government is supporting and encouraging their decision to breastfeed!

Wouldn't it be fantastic? :)

Anyway, that is just one idea that I dream of, but there are SO MANY other ideas here which I completely agree with.

I am so excited that these submissions will all be taken into account, and truly hope that some significant changes will come from this inquiry.

ETA - Kelly - your submission is BRILLIANT! WELL DONE!

IK

May 24th, 2007, 11:31 PM

I think that as well as subsidising one year's membership (or even the 6 month option), the government could put lactation consultants on medicare, just like they have with psychologists recently. That way, when a GP is presented with a new mother who is having problems, they can refer to an LC. When a maternal nurse has a mother with problems, she can send the mother to her GP for a referral to have a subsidised visit from an LC.

It gets me a bit worked up when I hear someone say "I'll call the ABA if I have problems", or, when they have been given a subscription, "I'll go to the group meetings if I have problems", as if the people who go to those meetings are all having problems. They're not, usually - they've moved beyond that and get together to provide much needed solidarity. That's why I love going to my Booby Club - to just get together with people who won't say "are you STILL feeding", or potentially feel uncomfortable. I would have gone to meetings before DS was born, but there was a mix up with the contact details I was given and my bulletin came the week Oscar was born. I didn't think I was going to have problems. In fact, it wasn't even MY problem when I had problems, it was DS's problem that was hurting my boobies! Even so, joining the local

group is good even if done when problems arise, but to think that the ABA is there only for problems is a big misconception. In an ideal world it would be. But in our world it is there to provide support to women who need the moral support to keep going in the face of disapproval, lack of family support etc.

Cailin

May 24th, 2007, 11:35 PM

Oh flea you've just reminded me! I used to hate night time feeds, she'd be screaming her guts out whilst the milk was heating up! Oh how quickly we forget! LOL! I remember when I had to pump and dump one night after drinks and we gave Seth EBM and he was having a major spack attack over waiting for it to heat up and I realised then and there how much easier BF'ing was!

hugs
Cailin

caro

May 24th, 2007, 11:53 PM

What I'm hearing a lot is accessiblity of artificial Milk So what would the solution be ?
How about Prescription only ...
Food for thought hey :)

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 12:20 AM

maybe becasue its the 21st centeruy and women have choices these days and use there own minds to make decision

i dont know that just my thoughts

IK

May 25th, 2007, 12:48 AM

Are you suggesting that breastmilk and breastfeeding are just not modern enough? That we should have moved on from these mere mammalian practices? That surely scientists are smart enough to improve on a highly sophisticated substance whose composition they still barely understand?

If women are making their own choices and using their own brains, and that stops someone from continuing (or even starting) a breastfeeding experience, then I would say that those brains aren't getting enough exercise. ABM is not the ideal substitute for BM, but it IS a substitute, lacking wet-nurses in our society. It's not cheaper, it's not more convenient. So, if you don't have to (for women who HAVE to preclude breastfeeding from their feeding practices), why else would you? Lack of education of people around you, the professionals you seek out and advise you towards formula for substandard reasons, of yourself.

That is not to say these women are stupid. I am not educated in molecular biology, it doesn't make me stupid, it just makes me uneducated about it.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 01:05 AM

Caro, it's on page 9 :)

Kelly, I read it and I think it's very effective. I'm also pleased that they would like a copy of this thread - it will be like listening to a conversation of women who are disappointed, confused, surprised, encouraging...all the things they need to hear to know how far-reaching are the implications of allowing breastfeeding to become a lost art.

MelanieR

May 25th, 2007, 08:47 AM

After reading more of these posts, I am changing my vote. Yes, lack of education and conflicting advice and lack of continuity of care and availability of artificial milk etc all play a huge part. But the fundamental problem is our culture. Most people in our circle of friends, playgroup etc will ff (at least by 6 months anyway). Most of the babies we see being fed on TV, elsewhere in the media and in real life are given a bottle. Most of us that do bf feel uncomfortable to do so in public so we hide away in feeding rooms or try to avoid feeding outside the home. And this just contributes to the problem. Also, the symbol for a feeding room is usually a bottle. And when you look at the baby section at any pharmacy or supermarket, what is the largest and most noticeable item - formula tins! Just try finding bulk packs of breast pads, reusable breast pads or breast milk bags. Believe me, I know how hard that is. A new pharmacy opened near me a couple of weeks ago and when I checked it out, it had all those items. I bought some and congratulated the pharmacist for stocking bfing friendly items. Another lady at the counter then said, "yes, thank you for saying something. I have so much trouble finding the breast pads I use". I felt so good to know that it's not just me that thinks shops are against me bfing. Others out there are having the same experiences as me, traipsing from one pharmacy to another until we find one thing we want at one and one thing at another. Pity I don't use formula - I could get a choice of 10 brands at any shop I walk into. Well, this new pharmacy is going to get a lot of my business.

I also make a conscious effort not to contribute to the problem. After initially feeling very uncomfortable about feeding around people, now I do it quite freely. If a feeding room isn't convenient when I'm out, I'll sit anywhere. One day I sat on the floor in the supermarket to feed Jack and a staff member brought me a chair. I also talk quite openly about extended feeding and how disappointed I was that Jack self-weaned before he was two. I ignore the "looks" I get and talk about how it's recommended by WHO etc. Maybe I can make just a small amount of difference. After all, it's not that long ago that my friend was feeding her daughter who was nearly 2 and I thought that it was weird. Amazing how some education has completely changed my mind on that!

Now, how to change the minds of the rest of the world?!?!

alpha

May 25th, 2007, 10:53 AM

Hi everyone,

Great posts! I think that if the enquiry can hear women's voices and their experiences it would be very eye opening to them. Of course research that is presented usually stems directly from voices - but at times the power is lost. As so many of you have pointed out in your posts - I have been thinking about the idea of an advertisement campaign on breastfeeding. Incorporating many of your ideals - the campaign should express not only acceptance of breastfeeding in public but also express the beauty and empowerment of the female body. I know that sounds a little strong - but it could be something as simple as the Dove campaign on accepting women's bodies as they are (of course we can still critique those campaigns - but I think the message is at base a good one). If society starts to get the reverse message of the female faulty body and also a message about our bodies not being purely sexual objects - I think it might help. Also, images of 'types' of women - I hate to put us into boxes - but often the earth mother is the image that is given for the woman who breastfeeds for an extended period of time. Images of women at work breastfeeding in business suits etc could dispell some of this myth.

I am originally from the United States - and I do have to say that it is actually worse at home - exposing a breast in public in the North Eastern parts of the States certainly caused a few heart attacks (including my own brother). Australia does have its problems, as so many have highlighted, but I do think it is a little more open. For instance I was breastfeeding in public recently and a woman approached me to thank me for doing so in public - to make it more acceptable. She highlighted that by women hiding away it causes part of the problem.

Anyway just an idea!

Bathsheba

May 25th, 2007, 11:02 AM

I personally don't see FF as more convenient. I was too lazy to express milk, and sterilise bottles etc so DS was on the boob all the time. So there's no way I'd find FF easier, with bottles to wash etc. Much quicker to whip out a boob too rather than mix formula and heat it up, especially at night. Can't think of a faster way to get bub (and mum!) back to sleep than sticking em on the boob :)

Exactly!!!

As for ideas in which to effectively educate the general public and new mums: TV commercials at prime time (maybe during the footy Grand Final LOL that would get the guys talking and if they had the hide to see it as a sexual activity hopefully they would be pulled into line by their mates... as my DH has had to do on occassion).

Also, the ABA needs to have big glossy (govt. funded perhaps) ads in popular womens' magazines like the Womans' Weekly, Cosmo, even maybe Dolly magazine... and they would have to be done in a way to appeal to womens' sense of aesthetics because unfortunately, whether we like it or not, sometimes we women place a greater importance on "image" and "branding" than practicality and common sense. If a super model or two could be used in these ads all the better. I loved the idea of having a working mum in business suit BFing in an ad too! Also, maybe they need to place big lit billboards like you see in shopping complexes (that usually advertise Revlon and Orotan etc) it's all about context... it needs to 'out there' and highly visible, not just placed in a little booklet that has been poorly photocopied and shoved in a information pack amongst all the other stuff you never have time to read. Also, brochures are often thought of as things you hand out discreetly for embarrassing health conditions... once again, I say: make it prominent, and make it appealing. Once again this is NOT meant to make mums who have to FF feel guilty... do advertisers avoid placing ads for shoes incase they make wheelchair users feel bad? (liked that analogy earlier in the thread) people, as adults, need to take responsibility for their own feelings i think and not place the responsibility onto to others for how they feel...too much of that these days, at the expense of the truth.

kyliealysha

May 25th, 2007, 11:19 AM

I've been thinking about this. I think that more education/support BEFORE the birth is needed. I have flat

nipples which my baby was unable to attach to right away and I was completely unaware of this until the first time I tried to feed her. In my pre natal class we were shown attachment with a fake cloth breast and told that the first feed would be the easiest and best :cry: imagine my dissapointment when I could not feed my baby at all.

Anyway had I known in advance that I had flat nipples I could have prepared myself for it, as I ended up having to give ebm for the first few weeks which involved a mad dash to the chemist to hire a breastpump, steriliser and bottles as I was completely unprepared for this to happen.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 11:58 AM

Me too, MelanieR :) I'm 'guilty' of just doing things and talking about things to normalise them! Some would say it makes me militant. I reckon I'm just making a touch of a difference. Last weekend I was at a fire call and it went for ages. And ages. Finally, I decided I needed to find a rock to sit on, in an unlit part of the property we were on, to just express onto the ground (in the absence of a receptacle to hold my milk safely). One of the other girls (actually, she may have been the only other girl there, now that I think on it), who is pretty cool with BFing and laughs good naturedly at stories of milk spraying everywhere, was still a bit grossed out that I had to express, and that I had to do it onto the ground. So, it would seem to me that whilst she's ok with feeding the child, the substance itself is still a bit taboo. Nevermind that it is lifegiving! But then, some people are grossed out by blood, so maybe it's related :dunno:

Anyway, I try not to 'hide', but if DS is being wriggly, I will find a 'quiet spot' just so that I don't let down all over the walkway...

And I'll talk about it. I do NOT get embarrassed when DS reaches down my top in public. In fact, I exclaim how cute it is, because I really do think it is.

However, what I wanted to say re: advertising in the public arena, was that there are already thousands of beautiful BFing photographs around, but it's unfortunate that only BFing families and visiting friends see them. I'm talking about both BFing photography and the ABA calendar. The most divine BFing photo I've ever seen is in this year's ABA calendar. I would give anything to have a similar shot of myself and DS! If you know someone with it, it's the December (and cover) photo.

BFing is SUCH a beautiful thing, and these pictures really convey that. I get really annoyed by the small ads of those BFing shawls. Yeah, I know there are women who are really shy about BFing, it annoys me that this society has them feeling that way. My mum wants to fit into this society so much that she accuses me of flouting 'convention' by feeding in public...she's from Latin America...where it's a natural thing!

MelanieR

May 25th, 2007, 12:04 PM

I hear you IK. I might possibly be called militant and times too LOL! You reminded me of an experience I had earlier this year. I always try to be discrete when feeding in public, as I don't want to make people more against it by showing too much IYKWIM. Earlier this year we went on a family holiday to Vanuatu and visited a local village. While there I needed to feed Thomas so I sat next to some local women on a bench and started to feed, being reasonably discrete as usual. Imagine my surprise when the women next to me lifted my top up more (I'm not sure whether it was to see better or to give Tom more room). But either way, I thought wow, how refreshing, that here was somewhere where people rejoiced in the bfing experience instead of cringing at it. If only it was like that everywhere.

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 12:13 PM

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If women are making their own choices and using their own brains, and that stops someone from continuing (or even starting) a breastfeeding experience, then I would say that those brains aren't getting enough exercise. ABM is not the ideal substitute for BM, but it IS a substitute, lacking wet-nurses in our society. It's not cheaper, it's not more convenient. So, if you don't have to (for women who HAVE to preclude breastfeeding from their feeding practices), why else would you? Lack of education of people around you, the professionals you seek out and advise you towards formula for substandard reasons, of yourself.

That is not to say these women are stupid. I am not educated in molecular biology, it doesn't make me stupid, it just makes me uneducated about it.

im asuming this was in responce to what i wrote if so then no im not saying all of that i ment exactly what i said and that is some people symply choose it because it what they want

rayray

May 25th, 2007, 12:19 PM

im asuming this was in responce to what i wrote if so then no im not saying all of that i ment exactly what i said and that is some people symply choose it because it what they want

Hi :)

I wasn't sure what question you were responding to when you put your original comment, as the question was

What do you think is the biggest barrier to breastfeeding in Australia?

and "some people simply choose it because it what they want" doesn't make sense in that context.

Do you mean some people choose formula feeding just because they want to - because yes that's true.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 12:21 PM

Mikenzees mum - the question being asked in this thread is WHY are they choosing it, though. We need to know so that we can find ways to encourage women to 'choose' breastfeeding instead, where physically possible (psychological reasons like previous sexual abuse I consider physiological because of the physiological response a chronic psychological reason will cause).

This thread is aiming to be more in depth and to really ask the 'why', and what can be done to avert the abandonment of BFing. As we have seen from a lot of the posts here, most women haven't just 'chosen' to give up, they have been failed somewhere along the line, so it is not a reflection of them not using their own brains. There really does seem to be a lack of education, lack of professional support, lack of community support, too much deception about ABM being 'just as good as breastmilk', etc.

Kelly's submission goes into these reasons really well - it is a good read, and will take you beyond a one-liner about women just needing to use their brains :)

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 12:22 PM

yes i was saying that some women choose formula simply because they want to

kerry

May 25th, 2007, 12:23 PM

Ever heard the saying... you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink... well it applies here. Regardless of education NOT ALL women want to Breast feed. Considering we live in a free society it should be their choice to do just that. Ok the WHO tells us BF is best you will find that most people are not debating that the simple fact is that for some women BF is not something they want to do, for some women it is not something they can do (and don't jump on saying they don't try hard enough, they have tried as hard as they can and reach the point they can't continue past, and then there are the women who try and try for months on end and week after week their baby loses weight so really they have no option.) and for some women it all comes to gether, maybe not easily maybe without any effort. The simple fact is it is not up to anyone to enforce their choices on others. What would you like, it it to become law that all women have to BF??

Bathsheba

May 25th, 2007, 12:25 PM

I wonder what the baby would want if it had a voice. I do support women who need to use formula because they have no other choice.

Discretion: I also am highly discrete when I BF in public... so far I haven't had any negative comments... but this will be the first time I have fed beyond a year... so I guess it's on the cards now :(I'm going out shopping now BTW... I'll feed discretely and see what happens... I choose not to use the rooms near the toilets either, especially after that physical attack here in Melbourne recently... I'll probably give a feed in the plaza or at the cafe.

ETA: Excellent submission Kelly :)

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 12:26 PM

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Kelly's submission goes into these reasons really well - it is a good read, and will take you beyond a one-liner about women just needing to use their brains :)

i realise that im not an idiot i am i was symply saying as i have said before "some people" symply have no reason just made a choice becuase they wanted to I am in no way dismissing what she has wrote or anything like that im just saying that sometimes there isnt a big thing as towhy some women choose what the choose

Cailin

May 25th, 2007, 12:34 PM

I think what you have said is valid Mikenzees mum. There are always going to be some people that choose it purely because they have that choice. I totally agree. It's something else to think about for sure. I think all the reasons put forth are valid on some level. And its great to see that we are working towards helping more mothers breastfeed should they choose to.

hugs
Cailin

rayray

May 25th, 2007, 12:36 PM

We need to know so that we can find ways to encourage women to 'choose' breastfeeding instead, where physically possible (psychological reasons like previous sexual abuse I consider physiological because of the physiological response a chronic psychological reason will cause).

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I think thats dead right. In fact I think IK, Mikenzees mum and Kerry are all right, but your just not talking about the same things.

Yes, some women choose to formula feed, and have access to all the information etc. Thats fantastic, it really is, that they had the opportunity to make that choice for themselves.

Its more the women who forumula feed becuase they didn't think they could breastfeed, were told they couldn't, we told formula was better than breastmilk etc that the discussion is aimed at.

If people don't want to breastfeed, they shouldn't be made or pressured to, but women are entitled to accurate information, if they want to be educated. They are also entitled to know that this information and education exists if they dont

Whatever choice they make is up to them, its arming them with relvant, accurate information, education, and support mechanisms so that someone who really does want to breastfeed, or who has not made up their mind, can be better equipped to do so.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 12:38 PM

OK, I think I see now (lightbulb!) - Mikenzees Mum, would you then vote for the availability of ABM?

Cailin

May 25th, 2007, 12:40 PM

Can I just do a happy dance! I love it when people can actually see other people POV. Even if it differs from their own. This is the way to constructive discussion. This is a more effective approach. I feel like I'm having a proud mummy moment ROFLMAO! And I don't mean that in any way to be patronising IK, I think you always put forward intelligent comments and are tolerant, its just great to see what I've been trying to instill into practice makes me very happy! *ok back to conversation* LOL!

hugs
Cailin

IK

May 25th, 2007, 12:48 PM

Yes, apologies, MM - I thought (after pondering your post for ages) that you were being facetious :doh: (If I thought you were 'stirring' I would have left it alone!). There wasn't much detail but I think I can see where you were coming from now :)

Cailin - humble pie doesnt taste too bad, I've discovered from time to time!

kerry

May 25th, 2007, 12:53 PM

OK cliché time again... You can't have your cake and eat it too... There is no point being dismayed at a society that doesn't accept public (even discreet) BF and yet not be willing to accept some women's choice to FF... it just seems a bit hypercritical.

Not saying that you aren't justified in being p.o'ed about people giving you funny looks or rude remarks, however it feels just as uncomfortable to FF mums to get the negative comments about their choices.

In all honesty I'm 100% if given the choice to BF or FF at birth my DD would have taken the later. She hated BF, and it wasn't through lack of technique on either part, she just didn't like the 'closeness' and once she had her first bottle (at 4 months and after only gaining 300g since birth) there was no way she would ever have gone back to BF.

kerry

May 25th, 2007, 12:58 PM

Ok I said lack of family support... (his not mine) because even while pg I would get.. you aren't going to BF are you, FF is better. I'm intelligent, I research, I was all for BF (just didn't work out) and I just ignored these comments. My X-sil is going to FF... because she doesn't like the idea of her baby sucking on her bbs and she doesn't like anyone touching them... that's her choice, I'm not going to argue with her and yes she has read up on stuff. However she concedes that it is easier to go along with her DH and his family than make a stand also.

While I was BF, even if at home when the X was there, I had to go into a room away from everyone else or there would be huge arguments.

So in my experience and therefore my opinion family support and influence is a big factor.

MelanieR

May 25th, 2007, 01:50 PM

That's awful Kerry. It must have been so hard for you. Obviously family support is another important factor. And of course it also comes back to education again (not for you, but for XDH's family), and also our culture where many see BFing as abnormal. Really, all the factors are inter-related.

hannahfroodo

May 25th, 2007, 02:15 PM

I agree that BF is easier in the long run - my DD is still BF and I can't imagine having to prepare FF in the middle of the night in the early days - but I do still think that FF can be more convenient. Not in terms of preparing the feed, certainly. But when you're out and about, it is much easier to sit down anywhere and just give a bottle instead of having to search around for an appropriate place to BF. And when you're talking to a tearful brand new mother who is having terrible problems establishing BF - FF is certainly easier than going through the pain and anxiety of BF.

Anyway, my point is just that BECAUSE establishing BF can be so very hard and FF can be an 'easy option' it is so important that the education is out there so people understand why it is important to stick at it and HOW to do it.

great submission Kelly. Do you know where I can read any of the other submissions?

Phoenix

May 25th, 2007, 02:26 PM

I wonder what the baby would want if it had a voice.

I think this is a very good point. I think there are a lot of women that make the decision on how to feed based on what they want not what is best for baby or what the baby wants.

Hannahfroodo you can view all the submissions here at the government website www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/breastfeeding/subs.htm

kerry

May 25th, 2007, 02:30 PM

No offence but I think the baby just wants a full tummy and is in pure survival mode and doesn't really care where it comes from.

dachlostar

May 25th, 2007, 02:34 PM

I think that to encourage breastfeeding for ALL of the community we need to provide more space to do so discreetly.

Yes, it should be ok if a baby wants to feed in a restaurant (even though boob isn't on their menu :P) but for women who place a higher premium on modesty there should also be more private spaces. Obviously

I'm a Muslim and many Muslim, Jewish, Christian and Hindu women prefer more privacy but also some women may have body issues (weight, stretch marks, scaring etc) and others just view breastfeeding as a private activity. Also some babies are total sticky beaks and find it hard to concentrate on having a good feed in a busy area.

For myself I will use a small cape if I'm fairly sure that there aren't likely to be many men around or a very large scarf (read waist length) if I think there will be men but many women aren't confident at public breastfeeding without exposure and thier needs should also be considered.

OT but I just remembered when Imran was really young and I was feeding him under my scarf at Darling Harbour. He went to sleep so I left him there - you should have seen the look on the face of the women who were sitting near me when it was time to leave and I pulled a baby out from under my cloths ROFL.

only1micp

May 25th, 2007, 02:46 PM

These are my top three

1. Lack of availablility/affordability of support
2. Lack of continuity of care
3. Lack of education

Not enough support for me...I spoke to LC in the hospy...who was so upset that I had called her up specifically to see me. I was dishcharged from hospy with bleeding nipples and they basically said that its all part of it...where everywhere I was reading that it shouldnt hurt.

Then I went to numerous BFing drop in clinics at the baby centre. Feeds were so painfull! I had cracked bleeding nipples for three weeks because no-one told me that bub had to have tounge down...it took 3 weeks for someone to tell me this!!! Life with a newborn is hard enough without having to dread each feed around the clock...the only way to get through the day is to tell yourself...only 2 more feeds until I got to bed then I can rest and BF when she wakes again.

Not being able to BF on demand because it hurt sooo much...hence the baby crying more!

Then I was still having issues with painfull feeds...I even had a LC come to my home which cost \$100 (which we couldnt afford) and check attachment...which she said was fine.

If I wasnt so determined to BF I would have just put bub on formula...but bub was my main concern...she was getting enough milk...I just had to deal with the pain. Which I did 10 months on I am still BFing.

I support the idea of bulk billing LCs...that would have been awesome and I am sure it would be a hit with all new mums that have done all they can with what is available to them.

I also support the idea of the government supporting the ABA both financially and with other resources.

Good Luck!

jala80

May 25th, 2007, 02:48 PM

I voted for conflicting advice, I was told I had a low milk supply and there was really nothing I could do, then I was told by another chn that I had enough milk, it was just late to come in but my baby had oral thrush which is why I was having problems.....bub didn't have oral thrush (I later found out from my GP) but just hearing it was enough so I pretty much gave up at that time (I experienced the pain of infected nipples with my first child and was quite upset that I'd have to go through this pain again :(). So, if we ever decide to have a 3rd child maybe I'll just listen to my body and my baby and ignore all the conflicting advice out there! I think some of it on my part was being too head strong to seek more advice or support. I'd just had enough of the bf problems! I found it hard coping with a toddler and newborn as well. I found I couldn't get into any kind of routine with breastfeeding my new baby so my toddler was stuck at home and left to do her own thing! I went to the bottle because I'd done it before, knew what I was doing and felt a huge sense of relief when I decided to fully ff. Maybe 3rd time lucky :lol:

BellyBelly

May 25th, 2007, 02:50 PM

Oh that would be fabulous, I really love that idea of bulk billing lactation consultants, especially IBCLC (international board certified lactation consultants) who are the gold standard.... the lactation consultants at hospital compared to pivate consultants are so different. I've sent Pinky to my clients on several occasions and small adjustments have meant that they happily continue breastfeeding, one telling me something along the lines of 'I can now see what you mean about breastfeeding being enjoyable.' She had mastitis twice after 'help' from hospital sources.

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 03:22 PM

Yes, apologies, MM - I thought (after pondering your post for ages) that you were being facetious :doh: (If I thought you were 'stirring' I would have left it alone!). There wasn't much detail but I think I can see where

you were coming from now :)

Cailin - humble pie doesn't taste too bad, I've discovered from time to time!

Sorry i wasn't trying to stirr and i don't know facetious means LOL, Im sorry that my post came across like i was sorry

not_again

May 25th, 2007, 03:27 PM

My list would be in order of importance:

- 1) Lack of education both before & after the birth of a baby, for parents and HCP
- 2) Marketing of artificial milk & Accessibility of artificial milk I think these two go hand in hand. I personally am tired of going into a large department store looking for storage bags to be told that they don't stock "that kind of thing" there but have 2 aisles dedicated to ABM.
- 3) Lack of availability/affordability of support I had no idea there was support for mums with breastfeeding issues (ABA help line local groups & the forum) till my 4th baby was 4 months old.

A friend of mine has just put her baby on the bottle at 7 weeks because her milk dried up, when I asked how she knew her milk had dried she said it was because she no longer felt the full engorged feeling & her bub had started to want to feed every 2-3 hours rather than the 4-5 hours he was going before. I think that would be one of the most common reasons for women to stop breastfeeding, I was never told that your supply will settle & you wouldn't feel the fullness as much & at about the same time your bub will go through a growth spurt, but that doesn't mean you have no milk.

tanby

May 25th, 2007, 04:00 PM

I just wanted to add that in my case i haven't found breastfeeding to be "easier" at all. In fact it's been really really challenging but i do it because i know it's better for my son. BF has actually caused me a lot of grief and i had i chosen to go for formula i could have fit in to the basket choice of "what makes mum happier/more comfortable is better for bub" however i chose to put myself through what is sometimes hell because i know nutritionally it is better for him.

Ways in which i've found bf hard have been that i don't feel comfortable with my breasts being touched/used and getting over this has been a huge hurdle but im getting there. Feeding in public causes me much grief, probably because of my own issues and the social stigma, and you can certainly bet it's there. So for the first 6 months i avoided leaving the house so i wouldn't be caught out and have to feed in public... the staying home all the time led to a social phobia which i'm now finally getting over. The frequent feeding for the first 6 months (hourly-2hourly) contributed to my postnatal anxiety, sleep dep. I'm not sure if lucas would have ever fed longer being a formula baby but i sure fantasised about it sometimes. The sheer dependance of being the only one ever able to feed lucas also causes me much anxiety, i know that if something happened to me there would be trouble as he will not take any other milk source, so it hugely stresses me out. Currently, for the past 10 days i have been feeding lucas with what equates to a hole the size of a lady bug on my nipple, every time i feed him i sob in agony and actually have to meditate to get through the pain. I visualise a healthy happy son running around and knowing that my milk is the key. It gets me through, just.

So i honestly don't think bf has been any easier, to be honest i imagine having started him out as a formula baby would have been easier given my factors. However i do this because i know it's best for him. I haven't really had the support around me except from my dh but i have huge will power myself and that's been enough. Ill also be extended bf him simply because i want to give him the best and because i can. You can do anything you genuinely want to do.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 04:29 PM

Oh, Tanby, :hugs: - I know how much work you have done to have the boy you have now :)

Mikenzee's mum - in hindsight, you weren't being facetious, so don't apologise for something that never happened!

Kerry - I fail to see the hypocrisy? I, like many on here, would like to see the minimisation of formula use where BFing could have taken place once one or a combination of the barriers that Kelly lists are removed. If you choose to see it as a criticism then that's out of my control.

Chloe - I completely understand the modesty/shyness aspect, and I definitely believe there needs to be catering for that in building design. For non-religious people, though, a lot of it is still stigma. My mum doesn't cite religion when she tells me I should be using a blanket (I kid you not, a blanket is what she says), she cites convention! She'd rather call me an anarchist than support me in something that is as natural as hair on your head. Being that I must lack that shyness gene, I like to just feed where we are both comfy. But like I said, women who use coverings don't bug me, it's being told that I'm an exhibitionist that bugs me, IYKWIM

tanby

May 25th, 2007, 04:41 PM

I think what i was trying to say was that even though there can be barriers contributing to reduced rates of breastfeeding, i think if people really want to they can overcome these. I know from the many times ive called the aba there's always been answer or solution to something and i know for others, they've been given ways in which they can continue bf. A good friend of mine had bleeding cracked nipples and she continued feeding, she had attachment issues. The entire skin on her nipples, several cms worth actually peeled off. But she kept feeding because she wanted to bf. So i think perhaps "making" breastfeeding something more women want to do is the key, because i think if the want is strong enough in many cases you can.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 04:51 PM

I think you're onto something, Tanya. I'm no counselling expert, but I would have thought that if a sexual abuse survivor could, through therapy, see that their body was more than just a crime scene, and that it could triumph over such trauma by nurturing a life (I mean, it's gone through a pregnancy, and that's got to be confronting to someone who hasn't worked through those issues yet), then BFing as the next step in healing isn't out of the question, is it? Dunno, my mum was abused and she BF us (continues to have these 'modesty' issues, but was able to see her boobs as more than just traitors) - not to say that everyone should be able to get over it, but it IS to say that encouraging BFing in a sexual abuse survivor shouldn't be taboo, it should be used as a tool for recovery and turning around that negative body imagery. Just a thought, and I hope I have not offended anyone in this situation, it is certainly not my intention.

tanby

May 25th, 2007, 05:05 PM

You're certainly right there, it is possible. I have overcome so many body issues through the experience of pregnancy and bf. However I wanted to so i didn't let any barriers prevent that.

Someone mentioned before about cosmo, featuring bf, i agree that the cultural attitude is a huge barrier, but it is possible to change through advertising and promotion. Smoking used to be fashionable, its not now. They are even talking about putting r ratings on movies with someone smoking in them. FF could be done in the same way... notice how a doll usually comes with a bottle... extreme thought but how bout a boob lol. ITs just the whole imagery around us doesnt support bf. I see bottles everywhere, in movies, with dolls, etc. I think to promote bf you want to see boobs everywhere, feeding boobs. Change the culture, make them not sexual objects but nutritional objects.

Sorry if i'm not explaining properly i have a terrible flu and cant convey what i want so say. Anyway back to bed for me ;)

Sherie

May 25th, 2007, 05:19 PM

I haven't commented deeper in this thread other than my first initial post. But the choices offered in the poll don't really suit me and my situation. I have had issues BF and had to use formula.

I just want to know that if all of these issues were addressed and something done to correct them, what happens to the women that do everything humanly possible to establish a BF relationship and it still doesn't work? How are we to deal with that? Does she get the "that's OK, you did your best" or does she sink into the 'surely you could have done more' basket? Unfortunately there will always be women who can't BF, despite their best intentions and there will still be some who chose to FF from the outset regardless of what help there is available.

caro

May 25th, 2007, 05:22 PM

the lactation consultants at hospital compared to private consultants are so different.

What do you mean ? Thats a bit of a generalisation isnt it ? The two LC 's I have seen at the hospital and when discharged, were fantastic and helped me retain my BF relationships in both baby's

Sherie

May 25th, 2007, 05:25 PM

I think what Kelly was getting at was that private LC do it for a living - they have paid to undertake courses to give them the training necessary to help women to get things going. I don't know how it is in WA, but I know that here in NSW it is like an optional extra for Midwives to become LC's - it isn't part of their mid studies as such, so therefore it is luck of the draw as to getting a good one through a public hospital, depending on how much extra training they did.

ETA - Older midwives didn't even get the training I think. One midwife I know who is in her 50's said that she paid to do extra courses to get her (then) nursing mothers certificate and that many of that era didn't because they weren't interested in going that step further kwim?

caro

May 25th, 2007, 05:32 PM

Ah Okay well it was at a private hospital too not a public one...
I think I mentioned it in another post before I think hospitals should have LC's 24x7 and all women access to them FREE of charge (bulk billed to medicare whatever) for the first 6 weeks at least

BellyBelly

May 25th, 2007, 05:39 PM

Lactation consultants at hospitals don't have a strict standard/level of training and have varying experience - some just designated the title. IBCLC (international board certified lactation consultants) undergo huge amounts of hours of experience, need to study complex medical books, sit an exam and it is very strenuous - it is the highest qualification. My client I mentioned above ended up with mastitis twice from hospital advice and I daresay would have considered stopping... but after one visit with Pinky, in her home without time limits, everything was fine.

I think women need this experienced care, if we promote LC's in general it may not be enough as like I say there is no standard at present in hospitals. Same as MCHN's they have no lactation training unless they decide to themselves - we are surrounded by carers who have no pre-requisite training in breastfeeding.

IK

May 25th, 2007, 05:39 PM

Sherie, I took part in this discussion under the assumption that aside from physical reasons for not being able to BF, what are the other barriers to BFing. Having read through some of the submissions, it would seem that we are talking about social barriers - education, advertising, poor support etc.

I don't think this thread is meant to deal with all the issues to do with BFing, no-one is aiming to fix anyone else. It's about what we perceive the barriers to be, once we've decided we're not talking about the women who just can NOT BF. Kelly really does spell this out in her submission, and the submission is the catalyst for the thread.

ETA: Sorry, it's taking ages between starting my posts and submitting them (I'm supposed to be writing an assignment!), so by the time I submit, there is usually a few posts between the one I'm responding to!

Yes, when I suggested Medicare funded LC's, I meant the ones with the international qualification, the one that matters to me. And I was deadly serious - how could an LC not be as important as a psychologist or medical practitioner? It's a specialty that affects public health!

Phoenix

May 25th, 2007, 05:56 PM

I just want to know that if all of these issues were addressed and something done to correct them, what happens to the women that do everything humanly possible to establish a BF relationship and it still doesn't work? How are we to deal with that? Does she get the "that's OK, you did your best" or does she sink into the 'surely you could have done more' basket? Unfortunately there will always be women who can't BF, despite their best intentions and there will still be some who chose to FF from the outset regardless of what help there is available.

Great point.

The current measure aren't working. If new measures are introduced then the rates will eventually increase so BF is the norm. With all mothers being supported and fully informed about BF then very few will have to FF. I think also the number of mothers who choose to FF may reduce if they were truly informed about the health disadvantages of FF. So in the end those mothers who truly can't BF may then have the option of giving their babies donor breastmilk (establishment of milk banks across Australia is one of the suggestions put fwd to the committee). So it may not happen overnight but hopefully by the time our children have kids BF will be the norm and those mothers who truly cannot BF will not be frowned upon because they will be so rare that other mothers will know that there must be some thing that has prevented it. Well thats what I feel will happen in an ideal world where the politicians do all the things necessary.

Bathsheba

May 25th, 2007, 06:18 PM

Tanby: *Big Hugs* for working through all those issues and pain... my toes curled as i read your post as I've also experienced a fair degree of excruciating pain as my little man (I call him "Munch") has bitten me fairly regularly over the past few months (he has 8 teeth now)... to the point he has drawn blood and left a gaping hole. I've had to rely on formula to tide me over too as it also was too painful to express. Now, more recently, my left boob has really slowed down production and DS doesn't like feeding from that side anymore... he just squirms until he physically gets himself to the other one. Anyhow, it now seems that i am actually complimentary FF/BF as he has as least one bottle a day because one side BFing is not enough for him. I made enquiries at the pharmacy today about lactation medication... but I might just see how it goes... if I can keep going on just one side then I think I might leave it at that.

Kerry: How terrible that you had to endure being "banished" to another room in your own home! That must have made you feel so undervalued... how could you be expected to relax and enjoy the bonding time with that tension hanging in the air? Do men like this realise that what their wives are giving their children is worth literally more than gold? *Grrrr*

Also I just wanted to agree also that BFing has helped me work through a lot of physical insecurities and past abuse as well. I've never been one who likes being constantly touched because of this and some days I feel so "chaffed" and hypersensitive that I just want to scream.... but that's only some days.... most days I love the whole bonding time with my baby which is also what I meant when I mentioned "what baby might want". Feeding is not just about 'food in a tummy'... it's about a transfer of emotions/connecting and physical bonding. But I agree that this can also be largely shared via bottle feeding so i really don't wish to offend anyone about that.

Once again this afternoon I was able to BF successfully at my local plaza... infact one little old lady smiled at me as she passed by so that was nice. The seat wasn't comfortable but it did the job. Oh and yes i know Chloe about "sticky beaks!" LOL I have a real little nosey Parker here... I just keep my hand hovering over and as I don't have much to hide in the breast department it isn't too hard to deal with, someone would have to be standing right over me to get an eyefull. LOL at you lifting your baby out from under the cloth to everyone's surprise!

2ndtimeround

May 25th, 2007, 06:40 PM

Kelly,

I stopped breast feeding for a number of reasons,

- 1) I wanted my sleep and didn't really understand anything about expressing and freezing breast milk
- 2) My breasts became so sore cracked and bled and it hurt
- 3) I went back to work fulltime after 6 weeks
- 4) I lived an unhealthy life at the time so I am glad I gave up breastfeeding. eg: Smoked, Drank, ate high fat foods. Now I am wiser and don't do any of that and I would definitely try to give BF a go for a while.

My children are now 17 and 14. The 17 year old is very close to me, intelligent, obese but well adjusted and totally together (other than weight) and is 5.11.

The 14 year old has an iq of 145, no weight problem, is almost 6 foot tall - reads at university level.

So I have to say, although BF is exceptional in some instances, it depends on the lifestyle of the mother. If the mother, drinks, smokes, eats crap and doesn't exercise and is totally unfit, it is probably better if she doesn't breast feed past a few weeks.

Cheers
Tracey

smylie

May 25th, 2007, 06:42 PM

Definately anything that can done to make breastfeeding the 'norm' would be awesome.

As long as women who "have" to FF are not made to feel guilty what is wrong with saying 'breast is best' etc also mothers who go back to work and simply dont have time to express shouldnt feel guilty either.

Too many people I think because of lack of education and lack of continuation of care THINK they HAVE to FF....

I liked Mckenzie's threads saying that it is 21st century so we should just be able to have choice.... i am actually surprised at myself for not realising this earlier.... I feel pressure to continue breastfeeding because i have no troubles doing so and i am now a stay at home mum so basically 'what else am i doing' my hubby likes me breastfeeding as it is 'best' for jemima with regards to her immune system etc

i say things to my friends who have been very quickly convinced they 'cant' breast feed like "who cares where it comes from as long as the baby is getting fed" but to be honest i dont believe that i just dont want them to feel bad

if my friends had had the right kind of support they may very well have had the confidence to keep 'trying' i feel they got too little too late

and yes everyone women has the right to just choose but the barriers that are apparent in society make it TOO EASY for mothers to choose FF over bfing

Mikenzees mum

May 25th, 2007, 08:25 PM

can i just say as a non breastfeeding mum(im a tube feeding mum), this is the first thread about this sort of thing that i havent found rude and offensive and i think that is great so well done all the posters belly

belly for that i think thats great,

rayray

May 25th, 2007, 09:29 PM

Lactation consultants at hospitals don't have a strict standard/level of training and have varying experience - some just designated the title.

I agree that on the whole that may be true, but did want to add that at least one midwife/LC (who was also my MCHN) and at least 3 other LC are IBCLC certified, so its great to know that some hospitals at least do have them.

smylie

May 25th, 2007, 09:52 PM

I have been thinking, I'm at that "crucial" 3 month mark with feeding Jemima now... I have heard a lot about my supply going up and down and stuff about now... the way she was feeding today was like she was sucking me dry.... but I have no idea to be honest....

so perhaps follow up appointments from Lactation Consultants 2 weekly when you first come home and then at 3 and 6 months would be good??

Sherie

May 25th, 2007, 10:27 PM

IK, I realise what you're saying, but I was trying to take it to the next step - what happens after we have a model BF culture? (Just more of a hypothetical really but it is something that may arise in the future) What happens to the Mums who give birth in the perfect world where ABM is just a story you think your Mum/grandmother made up (you mean babies actually survived on artificial milk?) and despite having the perfect environment to do it in with loads of external support from both health workers, family and social acceptance, in depth educational resources, and zero promotion of ABM - she still can't get it together even though she has no physical barrier stopping her? What happens to those mums?

I suppose it is asking for too much to expect that in 20-30 or even 40 yrs time that there wont be a need for ABM anymore as there will be milk banks on every second corner, meaning that the only options for infant feeding become BM or BM from a milk bank.

Maybe I think too much sometimes, but even though I know that this entire submission and enquiry is so very very important to setting up the 'ideal', there are still always going to be women with problems that need help isn't there?

Mum2boy

May 25th, 2007, 10:46 PM

I think this thread is saying SO much just going by the number of replies. Its just terrible that there are people out there with such horrible experiences.

I had an emergency caeser, and when they did the epidural, they did it wrong and had to do it again. They told me that I would have some mild headaches afterwards. MILD?????!!! Are you kidding me?? My headaches started full on (unfortunately) the same day my milk came in. Basically, every time I sat upright, I felt like my neck wouldn't be able to support my head and felt like it weighed a tonne, and the pain was excruciating. On top of that, Cooper wouldn't latch onto my left nipple and I was constantly having to look down, trying to get him to latch on, whilst I had this horrible pain. This went on for 2 weeks...And do you know what? I never once thought of putting him on formula.

I say each to their own and all, but I hear friends of mine say about their babies, 'oh, he didn't want my boobs' and 'I just didn't want to go through the hassle of it all' so their babies go on formula, and I just say nothing, because I still say each to their own, but I am happy to say, that through it all, I perservered and we got through it. I just feel really disappointed to hear mothers attitudes because there is an easier option - they take it.

I went to antenatal classes and they talk so much about how good b/milk is, but they DON'T tell you what to expect with breast feeding, and like so many people I know, about what to do if your milk starts to dry up! In my mothers group, there are 3 mums whose milk dried up, another got mastitis, and only I was left breastfeeding. What does that say!! The ones whose milk dried up, well, they were really disappointed, but didn't know what to do until it was too late.

I think there is a lot that needs to be done to better inform pregnant women. Motherhood alone is very confusing, there should be a lot more information given to pregnant women about what to expect.

Cailin

May 25th, 2007, 10:54 PM

I'm going to go out on a limb here and share with you all my experience in hopes that helps bridge the gap that I feel causes a lot of anger and guilt from both sides of the fence.

With my first child I read books I educated myself as best I could I joined a parenting forum and I surrounded myself with people whom I thought were educated and experienced. I was very lucky in that even though I had a c/s and often complications can arise with milk coming in and latching vs positions I was able to feed quite easily. My milk came in within 24 hours, we had no real latching problems (other than the usual latching issues that arise for new bubs & new mums). I was at a hospital that was pro breastfeeding I thought everything was going great. I got home and I had over active let down a baby with reflux (in a time where dr's didn't really offer solutions for reflux ie. medications AR formula etc). Because of the reflux and the over active let down we went through weeks of screaming. We went to our GP and they referred me to a paed. The paed saw the pain she was in checked a nappy and told me it was a form of gastro and that as a result my daughter was now suffering from lactose intolerance and needed to go on soy formula for a couple of weeks for her digestive system to settle down so that she could then go back on the breast. Being new parents and wanting what was best for our baby we did what our paed told us. Our MCHN had copies of all the paed's reports etc and it wasn't till we saw the MCHN we have now that she read it and shook her head and said he had it all wrong. We had a baby with reflux who had normal breastfeeding BM but we had been totally misdiagnosed. Anyway we fought to get her to take a bottle 24 hours of hell. She finally did and she still cried for the breast every time she went near me only wanting to take a bottle from my husband. She was on the bottle for 2 weeks. And at first I thought it was great no more screaming, somewhat happy baby (although still refluxy) and things seemed to be going well. So we tried to reintroduce the breast. She wouldn't take it, we had LC's I spent days at the hospital with feeding tubes and skin to skin contact, baths you name it we did it. It got to the point that the LC told us it was impacting on her psychologically, that you could tell that because if you held her anywhere near your chest or in a nursing position she would scream the house down. The LC told us we needed to make a decision that was best for us, and sometimes you have to know when you've had enough. And we had got to that point. So I expressed for a few months, we hired an electric pump and I took tablets to help with my supply. Then I got cracked nipples and realised that spending 8 hours a day attached to a machine was not a good quality of life for me or my daughter so we switched to formula. I was devastated. For years I was convinced we did the right thing (we didn't know the paed had given us wrong information) that I had tried everything possible, and if someone challenged me I would take that as a judgement. I would hate going to shopping centres and using baby rooms for all these women breastfeeding and here I was heating up a bottle of artificial milk because *I* couldn't breastfeed. And I'd get those looks or the questions "How come you aren't breastfeeding?" "Oh you bottle feed" as though I was some disappointment to the human race. Like I was abusing my child. Then I thought to myself you know what I did what I could the very best I could, maybe someone else could have done better I don't know but *I* did the best that *I* could and that was enough. I had convinced myself that if I couldn't breastfeed my next baby that would be ok, some mothers can't breastfeed and thats just the way life is. Then as time went on we started thinking about TTC #2, I joined a website called BelyBelly (you might know it) and I started to become educated all over again. Then I started to learn more, I met a new MCHN who told me a few home truths about the lack of support and care I received. About how I should have been told how to manage overactive letdown and reflux and that would have helped. These things I didn't know. But you know what? Instead of blaming myself I thought to myself... why don't people know this stuff? Why is it that 3 different medical professionals think 3 different things? How can this be right. Then I had my son. And we started feeding again, and I had over active letdown and he had reflux (no way near as bad as Paris luckily), but because of the things I had learnt I tried new things new ways and I noticed that things started working and I enjoyed it. I still had times where I would stress over his latch, or his weight gain, or the reflux etc But I persevered and I breastfed for just over 12 months until he self weaned. It wasn't always easy (even being a second child) but I knew what to expect. I knew about the steak & cheese cry, I knew that some babies needed a little bit extra help to latch, I knew that sometimes with overactive letdown you need to feed differently. And I realised that when I had my daughter I really wasn't that informed. I knew the basics but I didn't know the stuff that really mattered. It baffled me that there are books on what to expect when expecting... but where was the section or better yet the book that said "what to expect when breastfeeding".

I have heard so many stories over the years from friends and people who say they chose formula because they had no choice because they had to do what was best for their baby. And when someone brings up something to suggest that there might have been another way they get angry and defensive and feel persecuted. And I know I was exactly the same... exactly. But I think its moreso people want to share their knowledge they don't tell you so you can feel like an idiot who was uneducated. But the thing is we shouldn't have to tell each other, we should know. We should know before we conceive. And if a mother decides she doesn't like the steak & cheese cry, or she doesn't feel comfortable breastfeeding or she prefers the option of formula she shouldn't be ridiculed or mocked. And at the same time a woman who chooses to breastfeed her baby at a family function or a cafe shouldn't be scoffed at. The problem is our parents didn't have the information we have today. And we have the information but not everyone has access to it, or access to all of it. We should know all this stuff so that if you see someone who has a formula fed baby and they say "I chose to use formula because I was more comfortable with that option" or whatever your reason is it will be accepted and not challenged because everyone knows the benefits, the trials and tribulations and the techniques for breastfeeding and everyone has the support to breastfeed if they choose to. We live in an information hungry era and people are just as passionate to share the information as they are to get it. But sometimes that gap that small tiny gap leaves FF mothers feeling like monsters, and BF mothers feeling like hippies or nipple nazi's. When the reality is neither is the reality. So next time someone accuses

you of being a nipple nazi, or next time someone accuses you of being uneducated think about what they have been through. Think about their motive. Very rarely do people say and do things because they want you to feel bad. Usually its because they've had a bad experience or because they want to help. And just because you BF/FF doesn't mean you can't support or accept the other side. I prefer breastmilk for my children if they can get it, and I'm sure if it came down to it and we had some way of having breasmilk on tap everyone would choose that option for their child. But if someone chooses formula it doesn't mean they are ignorant or care less for the safety of their child. It just means they made the decision that was best for them. BUT and this is a big but, we need more education, we need this stuff to be taught in schools to be part of our every day life. So that when our children have their own children feeding guilt is a thing of the past. And inconsistent information is a thing of the past. Formula pushing chemists and medical professionals is a thing of the past. I do believe that this is the only way we will step forward. And I do think no matter how you feed your child we can do it united.

hugs
Cailin

dachlostar

May 25th, 2007, 10:57 PM

^ word!

mum2boy, I'm horrified that none of the midwives helped you to breastfeed lying down. After Imran's birth I fed him lying down for about the first 8 hours.

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

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Pages : 1 [2]

IK May 25th, 2007, 11:50 PM
Well said, Cailin :) Thanks so much for that, I hope it didn't take too much out of you to type all of that!

Ambah May 26th, 2007, 12:04 AM
I agree, that was SO well put Cai. Thankyou!! :)

BellyBelly May 26th, 2007, 06:46 AM
smylie, breastfeeding works on supply & demand, so when they have a growth spurt, they do do this for a short time, which increases your supply for their growth spurts. So you will probably find it will settle down soon. These babies are very clever :)
ETA: Fantastic post Cai! :clap:

rayray May 26th, 2007, 07:20 AM
gosh now I'm all teary!

Mum2boy May 26th, 2007, 09:38 AM
Sorry dachlostar, should've said that I had one day where the midwives helped with trying to get him to feed lying down, but he wouldn't latch on, and the only way I could properly see was by sitting up.

Bathsheba May 26th, 2007, 11:35 AM
QUOTE (Cailin) "We live in an information hungry era and people are just as passionate to share the information as they are to get it. But sometimes that gap that small tiny gap leaves FF mothers feeling like monsters, and BF mothers feeling like hippies or nipple nazi's. When the reality is neither is the reality. So next time someone accuses you of being a nipple nazi, or next time someone accuses you of being uneducated think about what they have been through. Think about their motive. Very rarely do people say and do things because they want you to feel bad. Usually its because they've had a bad experience or because they want to help. And just because you BF/FF doesn't mean you can't support or accept the other side".

Beautifully written Cailin *smile* Thankyou for sharing your story, it must have taken so much out of you emotionally but it expresses such a vital point perfectly. Well done!

christy May 26th, 2007, 12:13 PM
Cai you are an absolute legend! but I already knew that ;)

Luvabub May 26th, 2007, 12:51 PM
Wow! I'm really surprised that my post was attacked so passionately. That my decision to do what was best for my baby has been rejected by mothers who breastfed more easily than me. Of course I believe breast is best, all other things being equal. But given my particular set of circumstances, I felt I was making the right decision for my baby by bottlefeeding her. Thank you for the advice about steak and cheese, with the benefit of hindsight, if I can ever conceive a second time I hope I have the stamina that you have. However, I reject totally the fact that any other woman was qualified to make my decision. I knew what life I had to offer her as a breastfeeding mother or alternatively as a bottlefeeding mother. I decided I could manage our life together more effectively as a bottlefeeding mother. I am the first to admit, there's not much 'earth mother' about me and I was in way out of my depth. But I researched the best formulas from various academic sources (not just advertising as one respondent suggested!! Please, give me some intellectual credit, I may not have working boobs, but my brain's all there). And someone else suggested a

wetnurse be a more suitable alternative than formula? Please, keep your breasts away from my baby - who knows what would be passed on through a wetnurse's milk? Formula is a hygienic and measured source of (yes relative) nutritional value. But I'd much rather look at the contents of a formula tin (yes including the sugar) and know what (and how much) was in my babies system rather than trust another woman's diet. Please, I hope someone wasn't suggesting that a woman's diet from a third world country would be preferable to formula!! If so, perhaps you should pick up some formula tins because these days the only real difference is the immunity factor. But I totally and wholeheartedly support your choice and effort to breastfeed whether in public or private. Just please respect other women's right to choose and don't cut them down or question their mothering ability. At the end of the day it's not physically obvious whose been formula fed and whose been breastfed. It's a mother's choice, not the baby's because like other issues, the mother knows the best decision to make for her baby because she is the only person able to consider all other factors; eg single mother, return to work, preference about breasts being touched, family support, milk supply, shift work arrangements etc etc etc. And I do agree we need more lactation consultants in hospitals and when we return home from hospital because ultimately I would love the opportunity to breastfeed again, but no guarantees I'll stick with it when this forum very obviously highlights how judgemental successful breastfeeders can be.

BellyBelly

May 26th, 2007, 01:02 PM

Luvabub, I didn't see any attacking at all, only healthy discussion, some people were in agreeance with some points with you there. There is no right or wrong in here, only your experience which I will highlight by submitting this to parliament. Everyone has different levels of experience, knowledge and understanding, and this is where the blow-ups often occur, because we all did what was best for us and / or our baby at the time... so any insinuation that it was otherwise is going to touch a raw nerve. Thank-you for your input Luvabub and I look forward to this being heard in parliament. Perhaps you could also check out the other thread and consider submitting your own story via email to be added to the Inquiry.

caro

May 26th, 2007, 01:05 PM

Please, keep your breasts away from my baby - who knows what would be passed on through a wetnurse's milk? Please, I hope someone wasn't suggesting that a woman's diet from a third world country would be preferable to formula!! :rolleyes:

but no guarantees I'll stick with it when this forum very obviously highlights how judgemental successful breastfeeders can be.

Oh Please this is a wind up right ?

You made shocking comments about women abusing their baby for sticking to breastfeeding in the first few days after being born when the baby is crying (and clearly starving according to you! - which its not but anyway)

And how a woman who isnt getting enough Omega3 is abusing their baby by breastfeeding.

I doubt anyone here would suggest a 3rd world country wet nurse when they have enough problems feeding their own babies

And I cant believe you would make a decision on sticking or not sticking to breastfeeding *next time* based on this forum !\

No one judges formula feeding mummies on here, not even the most passionate breastfeeder (and I happen to be one of them) but women who have BTDT will try to impart knowledge and support TO Breastfeed which is unfortunately often taken as bullying or judging

Did you read Cailins post on page 13 ?

Very rarely do people say and do things because they want you to feel bad. Usually its because they've had a bad experience or because they want to help.

Never a truer word spoken...and it hurts when you try to impart that knowledge on people and get berated for it, accused of being judgemental , or trying to tell them how to raise their child, or nipple nazi or any other accusational hurt...

You made outrageous comments about Breastfeeding mummies abusing their babies - you can only then expect people to comment back'

dachlostar

May 26th, 2007, 04:05 PM

luvabub, I'm sorry that you felt attacked. Your opinion and experience are just as valid as anyone else's. I

think that you've just raised a really interesting subject - that we assume that we can know what is in the tin just by reading the label. It's funny that we implicitly trust the companies that make formula to be open and honest and we assume that formula must be hygienic because it comes in a sealed tin. This a quote from an article from The Ecologist called Suck on This

'If anybody were to ask 'which formula should I use?' or 'which is nearest to mother's milk?', the answer would be 'nobody knows' because there is *not one single objective source of that kind of information* provided by anybody,' says Mary Smale, a breastfeeding counsellor with the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) for 28 years. 'Only the manufacturers know what's in their stuff, and they aren't telling. They may advertise special 'healthy' ingredients like oligosaccharides, long-chain fatty acids or, a while ago, beta-carotene, but they never actually tell you what the basic product is made from or where the ingredients come from.'

The known constituents of breastmilk were and are used as a general reference for scientists devising infant formulas. But, to this day, there is no actual 'formula' for formula. In fact, the process of producing infant formulas has, since its earliest days, been one of trial and error.

Within reason, manufacturers can put anything they like into formula. In fact, the recipe for one product can vary from batch to batch, according to the price and availability of ingredients. While we assume that formula is heavily regulated, no transparency is required of manufacturers: they do not, for example, have to log the specific constituents of any batch or brand with any authority.

Most commercial formulas are based on cow's milk. But before a baby can drink cow's milk in the form of infant formula, it needs to be severely modified. The protein and mineral content must be reduced and the carbohydrate content increased, usually by adding sugar. Milk fat, which is not easily absorbed by the human body, particularly one with an immature digestive system, is removed and substituted with vegetable, animal or mineral fats.

Vitamins and trace elements are added, but not always in their most easily digestible form. (This means that the claims that formula is 'nutritionally complete' are true, but only in the crudest sense of having had added the full complement of vitamins and minerals to a nutritionally inferior product.)

Many formulas are also highly sweetened. While most infant formulas do not contain sugar in the form of sucrose, they can contain high levels of other types of sugar such as lactose (milk sugar), fructose (fruit sugar), glucose (also known as dextrose, a simple sugar found in plants) and maltodextrin (malt sugar). Because of a loophole in the law, these can still be advertised as 'sucrose free'. Formula may also contain unintentional contaminants introduced during the manufacturing process. Some may contain traces of genetically engineered soya and corn.

The bacteria *Salmonella* and aflatoxins – potent toxic, carcinogenic, mutagenic, immunosuppressive agents produced by species of the fungus *Aspergillus* – have regularly been detected in commercial formulas, as has *Enterobacter sakazakii*, a devastating foodborne pathogen that can cause sepsis (overwhelming bacterial infection in the bloodstream), meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain) and necrotising enterocolitis (severe infection and inflammation of the small intestine and colon) in newborn infants.

The packaging of infant formulas occasionally gives rise to contamination with broken glass and fragments of metal as well as industrial chemicals such as phthalates and bisphenol A (both carcinogens) and, most recently, the packaging constituent isopropyl thioxanthone (ITX; another suspected carcinogen). Infant formulas may also contain excessive levels of toxic or heavy metals, including aluminium, manganese, cadmium and lead.

Soya formulas are of particular concern due to the very high levels of plant-derived oestrogens (phytoestrogens) they contain. In fact, concentrations of phytoestrogens detected in the blood of infants receiving soya formula can be 13,000 to 22,000 times greater than the concentrations of natural oestrogens. Oestrogen in doses above those normally found in the body can cause cancer.

With all this in mind I would hope that after this enquiry is completed that one of its recommendations is that formula companies become far more accountable. Mums and bubs who use formula deserve products that are produced in strictly controlled and transparent environments.

BellyBelly

May 26th, 2007, 04:10 PM

That full article is on the BellyBelly website, I have renamed it:

Baby Formula - What Formula Manufacturers Don't Want You To Know
(<http://www.bellybelly.com.au/articles/baby/breastfeeding-or-bottlefeeding>).

Flowerchild

May 26th, 2007, 04:47 PM

I have been trying to read through all of the posts but I haven't yet completed that task...

Firstly Cai what a great post - it brought tears to my eyes because I really know how it feels... Since this is being submitted to parliament I will share my story. I have done so before on BB but here goes...

My first child was a planned home birth. After a long 22 hours I made the decision to transfer to hospital. My contractions were 2 minutes apart from the onset of labour so you can imagine my exhaustion... When we got to hospital I requested an epidural...

The first epidural was inserted too high and caused some respiratory problems in myself... This was removed and a second go was had... This resulted in a "dural tap" - basically a release of cerebro spinal fluid which causes an intense headache... The epidural didn't take but I was left with this incredible pain. In order to push my baby out I needed a nurse on either side of my head to push on my temples - it was the only way I could control the pain...

After my baby was born I requested pethidine for the pain... I couldn't move my head without intense agony... I couldn't lie on my side without intense pain. The hospital staff said it wasn't a dural tap - the pain would be much worse. I was discharged the next day... I vomited on the way home due to the pain... My midwife brought nipple shields in a way to attach my baby whilst I lay on my back. My DH had to help with this each feed. This went on for 7 days... One night my dH phoned a doctor who came to the house who agreed it was a dural tap. I was admitted to hospital that night... Still told it couldn't be a tap and perhaps I had had a mini stroke! What the!!!!

To cut a long story short a professor of anaesthetics saw my chart and did a blood patch and within hours I had no headache...

So, you can imagine what all of this did for my breastfeeding... It was HELL... But, like a previous poster I chose to battle on... It was really hard at times and finally I was able to feed like a trooper and my baby was chubby and thriving... We breastfed for almost 3 years... It was so very very difficult in those early days...

What made the difference for me? Well, I had been around the homebirthing movement for a long time so I had lots of support for breastfeeding. Lots of good advice... I had a really supportive partner... I am as stubborn as a mule and I was very educated about breastfeeding... I had continuity of care. I had my own midwife. I didn't have conflicting advice as many women do... I had one professional guiding me...

I lament that women don't feel supported. I lament that our health professionals at times don't acknowledge just how difficult those first 8 weeks can be... It's not easy. It's a challenge and breastfeeding needs a supportive community to make it work. I am a committed breastfeeder and I do know first hand just how damn hard it can be...

I too wonder what would happen if ABM just wasn't available... But we would need more support... We live in a society that is far from a village for many of us. One where women live in isolation and battle with their fears, their trials and this breeds guilt and a sense of worthlessness. I despair at that. We all love our babies and would lay down our lives for them... We need to show our love and support for women - whatever their choices. I make different ones to some of you but I deserve support just as you do...

There is no argument that breast milk is far superior to ABM - that's a moot point... I know so many women who would have continued to breastfeed if they had been supported. If they had been educated well prior to birth about how it may be tough... If they had continuity of care and no conflicting advice... This is our responsibility as women to seek out this information and the responsibility of the health system to aid in that information sourcing...

I found through my experience that I too was judged. I was judged for not using a bottle. So, I think that the judgement happens sadly on both sides. What I needed from those people was support for my decision. NOT to be told that it wasn't that important. It was important for me... In many ways I felt I had failed somewhat in labour I didn't want to fail at b/f as well... (that was my FEELING - not necessarily the reality)...

So, for me one of the main factors inhibiting successful breastfeeding from what I have witnessed is lack of continuity of care and birth intervention...

Ryn

May 26th, 2007, 04:54 PM

I really hate the fact that people who give up on BFing and wish they had continued think that people who do BF have it easy. Tanby, Cailin and Flowerchild's posts show that is not the case! For the first four weeks of Liebling's life I was kicking my feet in pain every time he started a feed, but knew I'd not be able to live

with myself if I gave up so quickly. In fact, I had a very pushy midwife in hospital so DS was topped up with formula, but we were able to eliminate that quickly (well, it did help that he hated the formula and vomitted it all up). One of my baby buddies was having to express every feed for a few weeks because of a problem - it takes a lot of perseverance to breastfeed and women who do BF shouldn't be told that we have it easy.

I would rather have formula than a stranger's breastmilk - and it would be expressed, not from the breast - but if I needed a friend's breastmilk I wouldn't hesitate to ask.

Another pet hate, which may seem odd, is the use of the word "boob" or "booby" to do with feeding - I dislike the word anyway, it has a sort of adolescent boy feel about it - but I do think that it sexualises breastfeeding. But "baby likes booby" just sends a shiver down me; if anyone commented on me "boobyfeeding" it would put me right off. I know I'm in a minority of one here, but even women who do breastfeed can be put off or made to feel they are getting some sort of sexual kick from feeding, which you just don't. The word "boob" has been used to me to put me off feeding or to explain why someone doesn't want to BF - "it's my boobs" or "how can you use your boobs like that?" Well, because they're my breasts and designed for breastfeeding, that's how!

BTW, has anyone else been told that if you BF your son he will turn out gay? I fail to see how thinking breasts are great makes a bloke gay LOL.

Anyway, I don't bag anyone for picking formula so long as they don't push formula on me or tell me I find it easy to BF - everyone is individual, but this thread was to find out why people quit on BFing so quickly.

aussienic

May 26th, 2007, 05:55 PM

I think the biggest problem is lack of education but really nearly all of the options are linked to breastfeeding problems.

I gave up breastfeeding my first son at 3 months due to personal reasons. I started supplementing with formula from 6 weeks as I thought he was hungry and I went against my child health nurses advice

My second son was born sick. due to being on medication for seizures he was also very drowsy. Therefore making feeding extremely difficult. It never crossed my mind to feed him formula. He did have supplement feeding in the first day or so but my milk came in and I pumped more then enough. . when we finally came home I tried to feed him from the breast again but he was simply to tired. So from here we expressed full time for 10 months..

My 3rd son was born and Breastfeeding was wel established by day 2. He was a champ. I admit I was a little bad and asked they didn't wake me in the night to feed him as I was so very tired but he only had formula 3 times over our 4 day stay. We have just weaned at 21 months.

caro

May 26th, 2007, 06:41 PM

Okay as this is being submitted to Parliament I too will share my stories in the hope that it does some good in changing the barriers to Breastfeeding

My first baby, I was 36; she was a vacuum birth due to being stuck. She came out and was placed on me for all of one second and whisked off to be checked by the pediatrician. She was in eye sight at all times. She was finally checked over and deemed healthy and perfect all but this big *jelly* patch on the back of her head - perfectly normal from the vacuum I was told and would settle and go away on is own. But it LOOKED awful

So we go up to the room and she is being checked on and suddenly I am told she has to go to Neonatal Intensive care because she isn't retaining heat I'm devastated how does this work why is my baby being taken away I thought she was fine But I want to BREASTFEED HER.

She goes to neo nates and I can sit with her as long as I like. I'm given a pump to express. and at this stage I don't think she is being fed although she might have been given some sugar syrup stuff?? It's all a blur as to what happened over those couple of days

2 days later she was fine to come back to me. And so the BF journey was to begin. But she couldn't latch I was devastated, what was I doing wrong, I didn't get it, it was supposed to be natural, everyone told you that. The midwives came in and offered dummies, bottles of formula and some tried to help latch her by grabbing my boobs, and by pushing on the back of her head and pushing her head around onto my boob All the while I just sat there and had tears streaming down my face because they were touching her SORE head. Please be careful I'd say? They would say sorry what do you mean - I'd say her head it's still badly bruised and jelly like..

The night midwives were the worst when you needed the best!

Finally some days later a wonderful Lactation Consultant comes up from the LC Clinic and gives me confidence and respect. She doesn't touch my boobs, she asks if it would be alright to position me and baby, she's already aware that bubs has a jelly head and asks if she may touch my baby to help her latch on.

We went through a awful lot, we had to feed lying down most of the time, we had to use nipple shields and

we had to go to day clinics to get through the tough spots but I was determined to breast feed no matter what and despite everyone telling me "you cant run your life around a baby" when I would state that I was establishing breastfeeding routine - well bubs was and so I couldn't go there or couldn't do that or this etc.

And then came the sad day when my Father in law died suddenly and my menstrual cycle returned and my baby weaned herself BUT I believe if I had been armed with better knowledge, more confidence and the ability to push through my grief I could have kept her breastfeeding and pushed through that bad patch.

Now on to my 2cnd baby who is now 8 weeks and 6 days old. Completely different birth and was on my chest for a lengthy time and straight to the breast. Straight onto latching (well he didn't have a thumping headache either!) All was going great and then engorgement happened on day 3-5 - luckily again at the same hospital (night midwives had NOT improved!) I had another fantastic Lactation consultant come up from the clinic and get me through that bad patch. Although again I had health professionals suggesting that I allow them to take him to the nursery overnight and give him some formula so I could get some sleep - no thank you - and I went 4 nights without sleep. I was in a hospital I was in bed most of the time I was resting. It wasn't going to kill me. But them giving him a bottle of formula would have.

Feeding was going really well, but baby was losing weight, he was taking too LONG too feed using up too much energy apparently. So at 3 weeks when he had dropped down to 2530grammes the Paedetriction said I needed to do top ups of EBM and if I wasn't able to express enough then he would have to have some top ups of formula, and he is a pro bf pediatrician.

Then there was the 3 week zone and the 6week zone where for some reason it seems that there is a dip in feeding and a common trend that milk seems to start to diminish (it doesn't but it really seems that way) I was convinced I didn't have enough milk, that he was starving etc..I already had a \$120 Pump but it wasn't powerful enough to pump the QTY I needed - so I had to hire a electric double pump and buy the kit, Then I was terrified that he was getting nipple confusion so I spent another \$80 on a supplemental nursing feeder - Where I had to fill the feeder with ebm - hang it around my neck and try and get the tube in at the same time as the nipple! - IT worked when I could get it in but it was time consuming and frustrating for us - but I was terrified of him refusing the nipple from having bottles after a feed.

So we breastfed and I topped him up with EBM either by the Supplemental feeder or in the middle of the night when I was just too tired a bottle on the odd occasion

It was so hard and so frustrating but I was determined he would put on weight and I was determined he was going to be breastfed

I had wonderful support from some ABA Counselors by one who is a BB member and the other lady who was the one that hired the pump to me

Just for those encouraging words of everything is going fine, you're doing fine, you're not losing your milk supply, just really supportive words to get a sleep deprived, frustrated mum through those tough times...

Fortunately he started to put on weight with the top ups of ebm, but then came a new problem positing and wet hiccups then agonizing pain, he'd developed reflux.

So now feeding my baby was so beautiful and brought happy tears of joy BUT straight after screaming agony - it was so hurtful to me to watch. So now we are on medicines to control this and trying different things to alleviate and control the problem..

Fortunately we haven't had to use formula because for reflux Breast milk is much better for them

I'm determined to breast feed for a minimum of 1 year if not longer..

I truly hope that the government will put in the \$\$ needed to increase funding for Accredited Lactation Consultants to be available at hospitals 24x7 and to all women for AT LEAST 6 weeks following the birth..

I also hope that with education that it's really thought about how to help get the message out there in such a way that people will feel supported

That its not just pamphlets thrown into Bounty bags saying Breast is Best

I'm thrilled to see this Parliamentary enquiry into breastfeeding and the perceived barriers to breastfeeding - I hope this will be a step forward into the future for a very positive one for breastfeeding

Eugenia

May 26th, 2007, 08:45 PM

WOW, when I posted my reply many pages ago I didn't realise this topic would become so popular. I haven't read all responses, only the last few pages, but I feel I need to say a little bit more.

I was also one of the people who fought to get breastfeeding happening. For 5 weeks I struggled with breast refusal, poor attachment, cracked nipples, low supply, pumping every 3 hours day and night, lack of support from everyone except DH, and a very bad LC who didn't know what she was talking about. But in the end I persevered and DD is still being breastfed. So I take offence at anyone who suggests that I breastfeed because it was easy for me and that they had it so much harder. I don't judge women who formula feed and I'd appreciate the same consideration back.

Jack

May 26th, 2007, 11:43 PM

I voted for Lack of Education but this lack of education starts before we even have our bubs. I (luckily) had a natural, drug free birth but I was never advised of the risks of having an epidural (if I chose to have one), induction (which was booked for the following day after I had DD as I had mild pre eclampsia) or other intervention during labour and how that may affect my ability to breastfeed, which was not portrayed as that important to begin with.

After I had DD, we struggled for 6 weeks before the problems with attachment were sorted due to a great Lactation Day Stay in our closest large town which was 45 minutes away. My MCHN was (and still is) great and has always been very supportive and well informed and a member of ABA herself. However, many mothers in my little country town don't breastfeed at all due to the lack of education and support in rural areas. I had massive oversupply issues and DD was getting way too much foremilk, was gassy and cried constantly for weeks. MCHN saw me every week to help me through it and the ABA was fantastic for support and information in this area.

Thanks to the ABA, my MCHN and Day Stay DD is 18 months and still BFing.

Our ABA group is slowly dwindling as mums just aren't breastfeeding here. Many mums don't understand how their body works and makes milk and most of the time it seems to be a competition as to whose baby gained the most weight or sleeps though at 6 weeks of age and my slow gaining poor sleeping BF bub just didn't compare. The amount of times I heard, "just put her on the bottle and get a good nights sleep" or "Just top her up with 40mls formula and she'll sleep through" was astounding. My friends gave me bottles, packets of formula to try, and advice re bottle feeding but had no idea about breastfeeding. I was made to feed DD in separate rooms at family functions as to not embarrass the men (and women) and still hear, "Are you still breastfeeding that child?"

If our govt wants more mothers to breastfeed they need to start increasing their funding to support the ABA, education for mums, MCHN's and GP's and offer more trained LC's, especially in rural areas. New mums should also be offered a lengthier stay in hospital after having bubs to ensure that feeding is established and offer education about breastfeeding whilst in hospital.

The more information out there and education women, MCHN and other health professionals receive the more breastfeeding rates will increase, correct information will be shared between friends, more support will be offered from all areas of our lives, including work and family.

BellyBelly

May 27th, 2007, 07:08 AM

With the focus of all the replies being mostly education, obviously more training needs to be going on, all round - midwives, MCHN's, paed's etc... or at least referrals to LC's - but in order to prevent the conflicting advice scenario which is a huge complaint as well from many new mothers, there needs to be training provided by one body, who can voice the same message to all - they can teach in uni's, wherever... and I think this needs to be the ABA. They have training already established, they have procedures and protocols and can deliver one message. I think the ABA should be sufficiently funded so that they can fund educators to teach in all scenarios and as someone else mentioned, outreach programs as well as schools too. But it would be great to see one voice teach a generation and beyond.

I just keep getting more and more ideas reading your posts, this has greatly helped my presentation, thank-you so much for stirring up my thoughts, the opportunities are endless. I don't see a hopeless situation for breastfeeding, I am excited as there are so many things we can do. We could be the shining example on the world of how it can be.

Liana

May 27th, 2007, 08:05 AM

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...

I completely agree. A good lactation consultant is hard to come by....and most midwives have no breastfeeding knowledge what-so-ever. There is also far too much an attitude of "everyone can breastfeed" among people who are supposed to be professionals, and so people with true physical inability to breastfeed or to breastfeed exclusively are simply being shunned instead of getting the support they need, whether it be to continue trying on the breastfeeding journey or to let it go if need be. "Just drink more water" simply ain't gonna do it!

MelanieR

May 27th, 2007, 12:30 PM

Kelly, I think that's a great idea about the ABA training health professionals. It's important that if something like this was to be introduced, that it is for all health professionals, those already practicing, not just new graduates. Otherwise it would be a long time before we would see a difference.

I do really hope that all these ideas and sharing of experiences make a difference. As some of the posters

have pointed out, some women will always choose formula. Also, some women will bf easily with no problems. But the vast majority of new mums will either struggle against the odds to bf, or give up when they really did want to succeed with bfing. There is so much that could be done to change this situation, with huge benefits.

Liz

May 27th, 2007, 12:33 PM

Yeah I think even if GPs etc don't try and fix the problem themselves, but just refer to LC's it would be a start. Same with MCHN's. Might as well ask the next door neighbour for advice as go to the GP or nurse these days.

Edensmumma

May 27th, 2007, 02:06 PM

for the last few days, i've had a million things running around my head that i want to add to this thread... i just never have the brain power to sit down and get it all out... i'm gonna give it a bloody good bash now tho...

i have found breast feeding to be the hardest thing i have ever encountered... but, i would never ever have given up no matter what, i still find it hard now, and Eden will be 21 weeks old tomorrow. But when its all finished and we get to a year or maybe 2 i will look back and go-"my gawd, we did it", and it will be one of the greatest acheivements of my life.

You know how people have lists of things they want to do and see in their life? Well, on my list when i die will be, successfully breast fed my babies...

And having got this far with Eden there are so many things i have yet to do with breast feeding,- feed her in the bath(we dont have a bath), feed her during my next pregnancy & labour (if she hasnt weaned herself by then), perhaps tandem feed... so many things...

In saying all of this i dont want to come across like a complete nonsense hippy i just want it to be known that i am a better person for doing this. I never knew how lovely life could be.

More women should be able to and be encouraged to breast feed, it should be so bloody 2nd nature to walk past a woman at a cafe feeding her child at the breast and for her to not be gawked at or sniggered, or even to be made to feel like a world champion caz someone goes-"oh your breast feeding, good on you for giving it a go."

I'm really annoying myself here caz i know im jumping all over the place with my thoughts, its just i feel so passionate about this and i cant seem to word it all properly...

Breast feeding and tolerance of and education of and understanding of and believing in SHOULD just be here and available to everyone. It is currently been treated as a fad or choice to consider for women having babies. Just as much importance needs to be placed on it as does every aspect of birthing ur baby.

Argh, im just going around in circles, i think i'll come back and post again when i can present my thoughts in a logical way....im upsetting myself here because this is so important to me, in fact its making me cry writing it all out.

I am supportive of everyone doing whatever they feel is best for them and their babies, just why is it that there is a whole half aisle of formula at supermarkets?? And so many woman feeling so helpless and beating themsleves up as failures when not having support for breast feeding???

Flowerchild

May 27th, 2007, 04:21 PM

I loved your post Edensmumma - I know just what you mean... You said so much even though you feel you were "jumping around"... Well done on persevering if that's what is important to you... :hug:

Luvabub

May 27th, 2007, 06:20 PM

Yes, Cailin's proud Mummy moment is something we all need to aspire to; seeing each other's point of view. I have not made a decision about future breastfeeding based on this forum, I simply highlighted how judgemental breastfeeding women can be and this does make other women feel inadequate if it doesn't work out. The feelings of inadequacy are central to this debate and should not be ignored. Yes, Flowerchild, I agree that judgement does happen sadly on both sides. Your persistence with breastfeeding is admirable given the circumstances you found yourself in. So breastfeeders need to 'impart knowledge and support breastfeeding' in a very sensitive and cautious way. This presents a difficulty because breastfeeding education also needs to be explicit and available. Very interesting article on 'formula's' (in general); it has definitely given me a lot to think about. I didn't realise how unaccountable formula companies were. It also raised the question for me about how accountable breastfeeding mothers are for their diet and milk supply to the baby.

If my comments were 'outrageous' or hurtful to others, I apologise. I could have used more tact in expressing my concerns regarding Omega 3's and that period after birth before milk supply is sufficient.

Let's not clog the forum with right and wrong posts. I do apologise for any offence, just wanted to add my story.

Flowerchild

May 28th, 2007, 07:15 AM

Luvabub - it is so very true breastfeeding mothers do need to be accountable for what they put into their bodies... An extension of pregnancy really. It's a really positive thing though. It always makes you stop and think before you put something in your body...

Bathsheba

May 28th, 2007, 08:13 AM

Really enjoyed reading your post Edensmumma :)

Regarding diet, I've been taking a multivitamin specific for BFing women as well as InLiven which, between the 2 products, I think covers just about every trace element needed for both maternal and child health. So if you don't like sardines ;) then I'm sure there are other more palatable means of providing your baby with a list of "ingredients" just as impressive as that on the side of a tin....and more, including antibodies to the latest cold bug that is going around! Also, correct me if I'm wrong but if the milk-making body is running low of a few vitamins etc it will direct them into the milk first? (Before allowing them to be absorbed by the mother's body).

Thanks Chloe for posting that article on artificial BM. Very concerning. I'm definately getting a prescription to relactate (my left side) now... I would have thought ABM would have been more regulated, like a medicine maybe... what are vegetable fats doing in there? A newborn's digestive system wouldn't be geared up to digest that... so I guess it would go straight through their body? From my understanding of (school LOL) biology if you don't have the enzyme present in your body to link up with and help digest each substance in the food then that element of food will just be eliminated? Anyhow...I'll do the reading, don't need a biology lesson here :) It also got me thinking that I guess at the end of the day, ABM is a money making exercise, and if they can get away with substituting a cheap ingredient for a more expensive "optimal" ingredient they would :(

Once again, would just like say that I'm glad this isn't a pro/against formula debate anymore... I have been using ABM as a complimentary singular bottle ... and it doesn't appear to have done my baby any harm... so I'm not suddenly going to be critical of those who choose to stick with it... it's just not my personal choice IF I can re lactate my left side.

janey4

May 28th, 2007, 08:17 AM

I am going into my 4th week of breastfeeding and still struggling. I have seen breastfeeding consultants, doctors, am taking Motilim and fengreek to aid milk supply. I have bought a pump and express to aid milk supply and am still supplementing with formula so I am not against formula as without it my little one would be malnourished. I am trying so hard to breastfeed (have spent over \$1000 on professional advice, medication, pump etc) as I feel the pressure from the public/bfc/and myself (cause its better for baby) to breastfeed but after getting so depressed a week ago and worried I was getting post natal depression (was crying all day at drop of hat) I have decided to take a different view. Breast is best and every day I manage to feed is one more day she gets the benefit but I can't get that upset, tired and depressed that I am no good to her or myself (do women who start bottle feeding maybe get to this point and can't go on??). When I look back the only thing that may have helped me would be not getting conflicting advice and differing techniques of attachments by nurses in hospital and being able to seek advice from BFC from day one (the hospital I attended does not allow you to pay an independent BFC to see you in hospital while you are a patient (you have to have whatever nurse is on).

On saying all of that I still believe breast is best and I will persevere for as long as my sense of humour allows me to.(my motto is "every breastfeed counts").sorry this is so longwinded (am very passionate on this topic at present)

Edensmumma

May 28th, 2007, 10:31 AM

Janey- every breast feed counts is a beautiful way of looking at it.

IK

May 28th, 2007, 11:39 AM

Janey, :hug: it took me nearly 5 weeks to stop making a visible wince whenever I realised DS was hungry. I had the associated vasospasm (psychological response becoming physiological and PAINFUL) until about week 9 or 10 before I realised it had gone all together. If you can make it past this, there is every reason to believe that you will come to a point where you will say to yourself 'THIS is what it's all about!'. What got me through, as Tanby says, was drilling into myself that the benefit was way beyond myself and that it was about the ultimate wellbeing of my child - coupled with a decision to have faith in what other nursing mothers (friends, who had their initial problems, too) around me were saying, and that was "it WILL come together and you won't look back". When mummies around you give you negative stories, ignore them, but when they are giving you something positive, I've learned to grab at those snippets because they get you through, and they are based on truth :) But I hear you, for me, at 4 weeks things were still horrendous (he had his tongue tie snipped at 4 weeks, but it doesn't magically fix it instantly...he needed to relearn how to

suck with his new tongue!), and it was all I could do to remain positive through eyes spilling out tears and apologising profusely to DS. In hindsight, hopefully, you will see that 4 weeks, 6 weeks, even 12 weeks is a blip on the timescale and you WILL get through this :) ETA: sorry, meant to say that I also received conflicting advice, about attachment, and an LC in the MCHN system got me through. I just cannot understand why a policy would be upheld when it is adversely affecting the health of you and your child. Our 'system' has so far to go.

Flowerchild

May 28th, 2007, 11:42 AM

Janey - you are doing a wonderful wonderful job... Such dedication and steadfastness. Well done. Blessed Thistle is another wonderful herb for increasing supply. An old midwife once told me also to soak a handful of almonds overnight and then drink the water and eat the nuts in the morning. This is said to increase supply and produce creamy milk. I have tried both and do think it helped me...

BellyBelly

May 28th, 2007, 12:15 PM

Some great news to those in Melbourne:

I wanted to also mention that you may wish to let your Melbourne based members know that we will be having Community Statements at 2.00pm at the hearing next Thursday. This is where anyone can give a three minute statement to the Committee that will be regarded as evidence. They only have to give their first name and can say whatever they want.

Flowerchild

May 28th, 2007, 12:17 PM

Oh I wish I could be there....

Phoenix

May 28th, 2007, 02:23 PM

If anyone in Melbourne can go then do it. I went to the one in Cairns. It was brilliant and I got to say my 2 cents worth. If you have written a submission make sure you mention that when you talk. The more mums they here the better.

Bathsheba

May 28th, 2007, 02:32 PM

Kelly... could you post the location/times here please... although I might not be able to go because of the boys (no one to care for them).

Phoenix

May 28th, 2007, 04:32 PM

Bathsheba you can take your kids. The only down side I had was I was in and out of the room and missed some of the speakers.

Study Mummy

May 29th, 2007, 08:59 AM

Janey - hang in there! I remember four weeks (ouch ouch ouch plus no weight gain for bub) and it does get better. It hurt for three months (tho nothing like those early weeks) and now it's only painful if the teeth get in the way when my boy is distracted :) What got me through was lots of Tim Tams, raspberry leaf tea, counting to 10 (or 20 or 30 if needed) outloud, and the mantra "this too shall pass" ... and the knowledge that it was good for my baby, not to mention a helluva lot easier when we went out or travelled. Good luck!

Helen.p

May 29th, 2007, 09:24 PM

I havent had enough time to read through all of the posts, so I am sorry if I am repeating anything discussed.

I had great support with my first baby, however only managed to successfully breastfeed for 4 1/2 to 5 mths. I found it really hard as there was nowhere really for me to breastfeed when I was out and about. I am a particularly shy person and in Tasmania there are not many places with good parent rooms where you can breastfeed in privacy. I have since had another baby who is still breastfed. However this is more to my sheer determination rather than support from the general community. I have gone and sat in the car park in my car numerous times to feed him and had my husband hold a blanket to help with my privacy at times that I havent been able to get to somewhere private.

So basically I think it needs to be put out there that breastfeeding is a normal thing, as I think a lot of people still see it as an alternative thing to do not a normal one. Just the other day I was speaking to a mum at DD's kinder who didnt know that cloth nappies were around these days and when I spoke about

breastfeeding I got a plain nup I wasnt going there. Not that this lady has anything against it, I just think there needs to be more education in the general society. As far as education for mothers, I'm not sure if they offer it in the public system as I went private, but a pre birth breastfeeding class should be encouraged with part of pre-natal care. I attended a free class before I had DD and it was a great experience to hold baby dolls and learn how I should hold them, ask all the questions and know what to expect. I actually went into it thinking that I would get blisters, cracked nipples etc. Luckily I didnt get any of these, but I knew that breastfeeding was something that both me and my baby would have to learn together not just something that would happen perfectly the first time.

Love

innernorth

June 4th, 2007, 09:49 AM

My beautiful girl was born full term and slightly jaundiced in a private hospital. We were moved out of hospital and into a hotel suite within 26 hours of her birth. The midwives would come in and out and all offer different advice on feeding and attachment, and none of them stayed to watch an entire feed from start to finish.

When I left the hotel I was not sure about feeding and did not think that my milk had come in. I was informed that it had and not to worry about it. I was also concerned that my baby was nrealy always asleep and would not stay awake for feeding - again I was advised not to worry.

7 days after she was born my milk actually came in. This was 3 days after I had returned home. Despite my fears about my sleeping baby who didn't feed properly everyone said she was fine, including the local maternal child nurse.

10 days after she was born my baby was admitted to the Royal Children's Hospital in the neo-natal ward for what they described as "silent starving". She had not been feeding all that time and my milk had disappeared. She was treated for jaundice and then given feeding tubes. I dealt with a lactation consultant to try and get my milk back, and luckily it worked. After 4 really hard days in hospital, my baby and I returned home and this time she actually was feeding.

If one person had actually sat with me for an entire feed, they would have seen that my girl was not feeding, very drowsy and attachment per se was not the problem. I have never felt more upset in my entire life and a complete failure.

My girl is now 8 months old and thriving - more by my good judgment in a fog of sleeplessness that something was wrong.

I also felt a complete lack of support for feeding from my parents and their friends. As we were all bottle fed, they find breastfeeding too primal and public. My father still leaves the room and my mother is embarrassed.

Baby is now great and we are now feeding once at night after her dinner and bath, when I am home from work.

ScarletRubies

June 4th, 2007, 12:18 PM

I didn't take the time to read the whole thread, so I do apologise for saying something someone else most likely has said. However, I did join the forums just to post on this topic as breastfeeding is a matter near to my heart - literally!

I voted education, but that is not exactly what I intended. I think the single greatest barrier to women choosing to breastfeed, or breastfeeding for longer than 6 weeks, which I believe is the major drop off point, is EXAMPLE. In our communities and our families, we do not see women breastfeeding older babies very often, and feedback from other (non-nursing) mothers is often very negative.

In order for women to value "extended" (ridiculous term!) breastfeeding, as a community we need to support and encourage breastfeeding, so it does relate back to education. The community does not seem to recognise that breastfeeding remains valuable well after the introduction of solids foods. This will be most appropriate from midwives, family health nurses, other mothers and the ABA etc. GPs, other doctors esp. paed, and other para-medical professionals also need to get on board.

If we believe breastfeeding is essential to the health of the entire community - and I do - then we need to make a concerted effort to change the values we espouse. The campaign to reduce/defeat SIDS is a wonderful example of how a very public and emotive campaign can successfully change the way families behave across the nation. Imagine if we increased breastfeeding to the same statistical level as SIDS has decreased!

I could talk a week about the benefits of human milk for human infants, but most people here will already be very aware of those benefits. I am very happy for you to use any thing I have said in your submission/presentation if it is of value. For what it's worth, I breastfed/feed two children - one to age 3, the other almost 18 months and having 3 regular feeds a day.

IK

June 4th, 2007, 01:29 PM

Scarlet Rubies, thanks for joining to post that - I really enjoyed reading your input, and completely agree

with you!

Example is something that is related to education, but is another aspect again.

When people ask me how many feeds DS still has, they seem surprised that he has more than the 'token' feeds they expect him to have. He has at least 4 feeds, not just for comfort.

You just can't 'win' though, in terms of current public favour - babies are only feeding beyond 12 months (for some people it's 9 months, for some 6, for others it's 3!) are only feeding for comfort, yet comfort feeding is something that we 'shouldn't' do in our advanced society, either! As I am wont to say from time to time, "bite me" ;)

ETA: BTW, as an aside to the idea of subsidising ABA memberships for new mummies, please remember that Health Care Card Holders DO receive a discount, so it's only \$35, and you still get a book :) So, in a way, it IS subsidised for those who are genuinely on low incomes or have limited income support.

Steph

June 4th, 2007, 06:31 PM

Hi All, as a community educator for the Australian Breastfeeding Association I can truly say this issue is very close to my heart. In my experience (and sorry that at this time I can't quote any supportive data/studies), Mum's who are determined to feed BEFORE bub is born generally have more success when met with any of the issues mentioned in this questionaire. I felt very lucky that the advice I was given before the birth of my first baby was very candid - it is natural, but it is a LEARNED skill that requires practice - and one of my closest friends said - IT IS PROBABLY GOING TO HURT! We have asthma and allergies and irritable bowel in my family and I was determined to do my best to try to avoid this for my children and did much research and found support BEFORE my first baby was born. My determination to do the best got me through mastitis, cracked nipples, engorgement, thrush, reduced supply and lack of let down sometimes. I would also like to point out for everyone one supportive person I met there were twenty who were ready to put me down or question my judgement. As a CE for ABA I do my best to tell pregnant women to find the facts for themselves before birth and find at least one person who has successfully breastfed to remind them it can be difficult, but also has rewards (like Motherhood really). I think if we, as a society, give mothers the opportunity to de-sexualise the breast and do what THEY feel comfortable with we will create a more supportive environment - and how could that be bad?

Liz

June 4th, 2007, 06:37 PM

Steph - the midwife at our antenatal class was convinced I'd succeed just because I wanted to so much, and she knew I'd booked in for an ABA class etc. Definitely what I learned there, and here on BB, helped me succeed. Admittedly I didn't have huge hurdles to overcome, but to have words of encouragement like that makes a huge difference...coz I agree.. there are far more people out there saying discouraging things re breastfeeding than there are encouraging.

Steph

June 4th, 2007, 06:40 PM

Hi ScarletRubies, loved your post - I breastfed my first for 2 years and my second weaned himself at 18 months - almost broke my heart!!! But we have allergies, asthma and irritable bowel in our family. It surprises me that many people don't know the human gut lining takes 2 years to grow and mature and breastmilk is the best defence against damage to this lining which contributes to allergies and illnesses. At nearly 6 and nearly 3 neither of my boys has asthma, although my eldest has mild eczma and the youngest is mildly allergic to peanuts, but I would hate to imagine how much worse it could be if I had not known all the benefits of breastfeeding. Did you know mammals are designed to drink their mothers milk until the milk teeth fall out? I took great delight in telling my amazing facts to anyone who felt the right to criticise me feeding my children when they were "too old". Fancy feeding my babies human milk!! What kind of a mother am I?? Currently looking forward to the birth of my 3rd and that special bond of breastfeeding - lets hope this one lets me lead the weaning!!

IK

June 4th, 2007, 07:50 PM

Fantastic, Steph! I enjoyed your post, too :)

Flowerchild

June 4th, 2007, 07:54 PM

Steph, I enjoyed reading your post - it is just so true... To find support before birth... I had planned a homebirth with my first child so I had my own midwife, thus one on one support. I too suffered with many trials in learning to breastfeed my first baby... I still cringe at those early weeks. I also had an incredibly supportive husband.

My husband has asthma and three of four of his sisters children have asthma and eczema. I was determined as I had educated myself well on the protective benefits of b/feeding to reduce allergies... I copped so much flack from DH family and "well meaning" people. It was incredibly difficult. But I battled on... None of my children have asthma or any allergies thus far.

Interestingly my SIL finally asked about B/feeding and allergies (after openly poo pooing me!) and chose to fully b/f her fourth for the first 6 months (the others had only been b/f for a few weeks)... He is the only one of her 4 kids without asthma and eczema.

Thanks again for your post and good luck with your next birth... :hug:

pernillep

June 5th, 2007, 05:06 AM

Wow, there are a lot of influences I think, but I have voted for lack of continuity of care.

I have breastfed both my children. My first till he was 3,5y and my 2nd 2,5y. But with my first it only happened because I have grown up with purely positive talk about breastfeeding. My Mum loved breastfeeding and always talked SO positively about it. My first ended up in nursery for wheezy breathing just after birth and although most of their words were positive of breastfeeding, the conditions were really bad. They basically just treated me as naive for thinking I would successfully BF. They kept him in nursery for breastfeeding problems and I had a crap LC whom I hadn't invited. I just wanted them to leave me alone, so I could get on with my breastfeeding relationship with my son. I didn't doubt my feeding ability for one moment and that got me through. I had to have someone watching me every time I tried to feed, because they thought I was cheating with how much he was feeding. Anyway, to cut a long story short, as soon as I came home he fed beautifully.

So I think that support is sorely missing and that would come naturally if you had continuity of care. But obviously the cares attitude is also vital.

Cheers Pernille

Steph

June 5th, 2007, 01:50 PM

Hi Kelly and MelanieR, this is a fantastic idea as ABA does have the ability and infrastructure to do this - as a Community Educator for ABA, my primary focus is "educating" anyone about the benefits. However it is not so easy in reality - the health professionals are sometimes the most difficult to deal with; eg: the hospital where I had my two (and will be having my 3rd) is VERY pro-breastfeeding, but won't allow ABA to visit new Mum's and leave them with info about what a supportive organisation we are. When I tirelessly refused to take no for an answer and went to the very highest person in the hospital I found out the reason is simply that the health professionals involved felt threatened by ABA "encroaching" on their territory as they are supposed to be the "professionals". I have no medical training, but I am a Mum, I have successfully breastfed 2 babies, I have supported and helped Mum's who have wanted to breastfeed, why can't I and my ABA peers work with health professionals to ensure breastfeeding continues past when Mum's leave hospital? It is not about who is in the right, or who has the best medical knowledge, it is about creating a supportive environment, so Mum's can feel nurtured and valued and have somewhere/someone to turn to in the tough times - parenting can be tough, whether it's breastfeeding, sleeping, discipline, care choices - all of these things would be easier if a Mum felt she had support to choose what is right for her, especially when that choice is the tough road!!

By the way - ABA CE's are ALWAYS available for any event!! We are often looking for opportunities, so if you know a group, or a school, or pregnant Mum's, or health professionals, or anyone who wants to know more - PLEASE contact your local ABA group (listed in white pages) and ask for a Community Educator. ABA needs the help of the community to stay a strong organisation, we are all volunteers and we welcome any help!!!

Steph

June 5th, 2007, 03:50 PM

I love the suggestion of all mothers being given a free 12 month subscription to ABA!
I have had to go to the FMAU a couple of times already (and have to go again tomorrow!)
FMAU=Fetal Monitoring Assessment Unit. Over 4 hours they take your blood pressure average, take some blood and get out on the baby monitor for their heartbeat/movements just to make sure everything is AOK

Anyhow, the ABA is offering a breastfeeding class over a weekend for 1st time mums (well, I guess any mum really) to learn about breastfeeding, what to expect etc.. all for \$95!

Of course that includes a year's membership.

That's all fine and well, anything to promote and help out with mums breastfeeding is only a great thing.. but to be 'suckered in' to paying for something that comes free and naturally.. I don't know.. kinda runs me the wrong way.

I think ABA should give (or offer) a year's membership to all mums (no matter what number child) for free, then only if you decide to stay for longer than that year do you pay a membership fee (I'm sure they need financial help too to keep things going)

We, as Australians can get most medical things (and especially when having a baby) for free on Medicare.. so

why not also have membership to ABA on Medicare too if a mother chooses too?

Sounds great to me!

Hi Clearbrite, just wanted to re-iterate what IK mentioned - ABA is a not for profit organisation that receives no subsidies (that I am currently aware of). All Breastfeeding counsellors and Community Educators are volunteers, we give up our own weekends for training, nights for meeting planning, time off from paid work to make hospital visits (luckily I have a very understanding boss!), but our organisation desperately needs these funds. When planning a seminar - be it breastfeeding education, or mother's returning to work, we do carefully plan costs of hall hire, tea and coffee and nibbles and the literature handed out as well as hoping to be able to contribute a small amount back to the organisation for advertising etc. It is a difficult balance to strike - but the more people who support ABA, donate, join membership and come to our seminars, the more we are able to moderate pricing! So please talk to your local group if pricing is an issue, but promote as many people as possible to join the organisation or even better - promote government subsidies for ABA!!!

hopeful_mum_01

June 6th, 2007, 08:50 AM

For me it was Lack of education. I was very determined to breastfeed, but also very scared. I had a vaginal birth and asked to be able to breastfeed straight away. DD was popped on my boob and she went for it. Unfortunately she was not attached properly and caused blisters within 2 minutes. Aside from that I had various suggestions on attachment during my 2.5 day stay at The Royal Womens in Melbourne. Then I went home.....

My daughter was feeding every 30-45 minutes for 15 minutes at a time. She was having explosive poo's and always crying. My nipples were bleeding and I started to express as it was less painful for night feeds. I rang the breastfeeding advice line in my blue book and asked for help. They suggested I come in to the clinic and get help. I was booked in for Wednesday... 6 days away. I hung up and cried for an hour, attempted 2 more feeds and then called my husband in tears and told him through sobs to get some formula and bottles as I could not do this one more time. My daughter had 2 formula feeds and actually stayed asleep for more than 20 minutes. I then called the maternal help line and they talked me around to trying again... I did, for 2 days. I also cried for 2 days. My sister came over and found me in the bathroom, nearly asleep on the floor... yup, I has mastitis. She popped me in the shower and helped me relieve some pressure. I rang the maternal help line and explained what was happening and they advised to express regularly and keep trying, if my temp went higher than 40 (it was 39) then go to the doctors.

That night I changed to formula for good. At 8 am I was called by the breastfeeding clinic to advise a spot was open and I could go in earlier. I hung up without saying a word.

Since then I have found out so much more, such as DD was only getting foremilk, hence the explosive poos and excessive feeding and crying. That I could have only fed on one side for a few days to let my worst nipple heal... oh the list goes on.

My daughter was a happy child and has had no major health problems, however to this day 2 years on I still wish I had better information and more available help when I was going through this.

Lorrie

June 6th, 2007, 09:13 AM

Without a doubt it is the lack of continuity and education. Also the main one that is missing, I feel, is the fact that no one ever gets to SEE a woman attach a baby and breastfeed anymore. Society expects us to cover up and you don't get to see a baby breastfeed generally, until it is your own. We are having our babies later so that means that our daughters don't get to see their mothers feed either. Our culture prevents us from learning from our peers.

I also feel that a lot of carers believe that because you have breastfed one baby you will automatically know what to do with subsequent babies....not so....I am proof of that, with damaged nipples the second time around due to poor attachment. It is a learning process all over again with each new baby especially if there is a big age gap. Carers need to give every new baby and new mum or experienced mum follow up care with attachment and positioning

Cheers
Loretta Frino

lucky_mummy

June 6th, 2007, 09:39 AM

Absolutely the lack of education. With more education there would be less birth intervention. We aren't even warned to watch out for the 6 week mark where baby can be a bit fussy, that is the time when most of the people I know give up because they think they have not enough milk, or baby is too hungry, or something silly like that. Why aren't we warned of this time, and told how to get through it?

Linda.

Cricket

June 6th, 2007, 09:51 AM

I also can't speak for Australian women, in particular, but I have a feeling that things are similar here. I think that the influence/opinions of family and friends is very important to a new mother's decision. This is often where she learns a lot of her own parenting - from her mum. (Not that she can't make her own decisions, of course.) And these are the people she likely be turning to for support and encouragement and advice. She will be visiting with them, and having to nurse her baby with them there, which I would find quite uncomfortable, if I knew they thought I was silly for doing it. On the other hand, knowing that my mother nursed all of us, and always told us that it was best for babies, as well as being cheapest, and always ready, meant that I never really considered formula for my newborns. I knew I would have encouragement and support for my decision to nurse my babies.

I personally don't find the availability of formula so much of a deterrent to nursing. Cigarettes, alcohol, and junk food are also available to me, and advertised all over, but it doesn't mean I'll use them, or give them to my kids! I also think that it is important to have good quality formula available to women who find themselves unable to nurse, for one reason or another. (I ran out after 4 months with DD1, after having double pneumonia, and DD2 refused to nurse anymore at 8 months - too young for cow milk.)

Education is also very important, I think. Prospective mothers certainly need to know the benefits of nursing, as well as the potential problems. I've heard mothers who said that their midwife/doctor told them that if something hurts, you're doing it wrong. To me that's misleading. It's going to hurt for a few days. When your milk comes in, it hurts. That's normal. Latching on might be a challenge to get right. (and give resources for support and information) Of course, this is going to be a challenge to present in the right way, so that mothers are not scared off. I've heard it said that for a new mother to know what breast feeding is like, she should try it for six weeks. That will be about how long it takes to work out some of the problems, and to develop a routine of nursing. New mothers should maybe hear advice like that, and be encouraged to hang in there through those first few rough weeks. And if after six weeks, they still are frustrated, uncomfortable, and in pain, I personally think they should feel no guilt about switching to a good quality formula. They gave it a good shot, and gave their baby some of the most important benefits of nursing. Struggling for longer than that with nursing, I think, can become counter-productive.

One final thing that I find a deterrent to nursing is the idea of having boobs flapping around in public. :rolleyes: Boobs are private, and the lack of availability of clean, comfortable, private nursing rooms definitely makes nursing difficult. Especially for a new, first-time mum, trying to learn how to nurse, or for a mum with a highly distractable infant, feeding a baby in public is challenging! When I had DD1, if I was out with her for an afternoon, I would take her to the car, and drive to a remote location, so I could nurse in privacy! With DD2, I relaxed a little, but still, nice, private rooms are few and far between, and they would make things a lot easier!

Anyways, I hope you can make sense of my long rambling, and I hope it is of some use to you! Thanks!

Amanda_Jane78

June 6th, 2007, 09:58 AM

I found that the education here (Canberra) is quite good... I do have quite a good support network though and am very lucky in that regard!

I think what will be hard for me this time, is the need to go back to work... I am hoping to be able to express, but if the need to go back to work wasn't so important and places of employment set up some way bf'ing mothers could take time out during the day to express or run home to feed bubs, it would be a great help.

I will be discussing this issue in my workplace prior to me going on Mat leave.

Bathsheba

June 6th, 2007, 10:05 AM

"I also think that it is important to have good quality formula available to women who find themselves unable to nurse, for one reason or another." (Cricket)

Very good point Cricket. I'm complimenting my BFing with formula ATM and after reading Chloe's posted article "Suck on This" (I think it was called) I'm feeling very dubious about what's actually in the stuff as well.

If women were able to donate breast milk just as they donate blood (both life giving fluids if you think about it) and if the donated expressed breast milk (EBM) could be heat treated and powdered wouldn't that be fantastic?! However there has been a thread about "would you use donated breast milk?" (words to that effect) and I was surprised by the number of women who had a psychological barrier to using human milk as opposed to cows.

Angela80

June 6th, 2007, 10:14 AM

I am the first to admit I was against breastfeeding thinking it was vulgar and unnatural - until I become a mother myself almost 3 weeks ago. I believe there is a stigma about breastfeeding in Australia where it is seen as pornographic and explicit in public by many (and I once again I admit I was once one of those people).

For many people (mostly men I believe) a naked breast is purely seen as a sexual object and not one of nourishment and survival.

Apart from that, I personally felt alot of pressure from midwives in the hospital to 'only' breastfeed - however my daughter breastfeeds every 1-2 hours at night, giving me very little sleep to the point that it was affecting my health and milk supply. I now only bottle feed at night and it has been my cure to fatigue and makes my bonding experience with Rachel even more special as I am more alert to be with her. Last night I was blessed with over 6 hours uninterrupted sleep and Rachel was happy and alert during her bath time and even managed a little smile as we locked gazes.

I feel that bottle feeding allows my husband to bond with his daughter and gives me a break to revive my body and spirit.

However I do feel that every woman has a right to choose what is best for not only her child but also herself. Breast or bottle - we are keeping our children alive and preparing them to face the world. I just wish that the general public can respect a woman's decision. Let's face it - we all eat in public. Why can't our children?

Let's hope our small voices can create a ROAR in parliament!!

xx

Phoenix

June 6th, 2007, 10:25 AM

Hearing the Committee for the inquiry speak they are very keen to recommend the establishment of milk banks Australia wide. It does make me wonder about how many women are opposed to giving their babies donor breastmilk but have no problems feeding their babies something from a cow. Perhaps because it is a fairly new thing to get used to and in time people may get used to the idea. The WHO lists FF as 4th way to feed a baby after your own milk or expressed milk or donor milk.

We aren't even warned to watch out for the 6 week mark where baby can be a bit fussy, that is the time when most of the people I know give up because they think they have not enough milk, or baby is too hungry, or something silly like that. Why aren't we warned of this time, and told how to get through it? It is sad that you weren't told about this. As a CE/trainee counsellor for ABA I give antenatal talks at my local hospital. This is one of the points I really try to bring home as it is really common especially at the 3mth mark for women to stop BF because they think they have no more milk.

I just read a very interesting submission that was put up on the website yesterday. It is from a lady in Victoria who strongly believes that BF rates would increase in Australia if women were encouraged to bed share. It was a very interesting read and a lot of what she said made perfect sense.

Bundymumof2

June 6th, 2007, 10:26 AM

Hi All

I dont have the time to go into great detail and jump on my pro-breastfeeding band wagon. However I just wanted to tell you what I think is the biggest issue with breastfeeding (Wel to me anyway) I have a bub who is 16 and breastfed. I am studying a nursing degree and really need to go back to work for financial reasons. I live in a town with no friends or family so need to put my kids in childcare, yet im told that I cant send Expressed Breast Milk to child care, what the????

My other problem is that lets say I found a daycare that would allow me to send breatmilk there, what am i supposed to do? My work wont allow me to keep going off and express milk? Wouldnt it be great if they did??/

beckles

June 6th, 2007, 10:29 AM

wow i think that all of this things can contribute to a failed breastfeeding relationship. i believe that some women just don't think it is a priority to breastfeed. i believe that some women are embarrassed to breastfeed as they are not comfortable with their breasts and it is not seen as the norm. toys are sold with bottles for babies normalising bottle feeding. i had to buy a breastfeeding mother and baby from overseas! i believe that artificial milk should be prescription only - not just available at the corner shop. this would ensure that a (Correctly and suffeciently educated) health professional discussed all the cons of artificially feeding a baby and to ensure that the mother's issues have been thouroughly discussed and education to rectafy the problem. i think that confidence needs to be given back to women that they do have enough milk and can breastfeed their baby. it is distressing how many mothers stop breastfeeding because they were 'starving their baby' - if baby's have free access to the breast 24/7 this is very uncommon. health professionals need to be made accountable to breastfeeding failure rates - this would encourage them to learn more about breastfeeding and how it can be successful.

beckles

Miss Betty

June 6th, 2007, 10:34 AM

Goodness - to pick just one? I think they all have their place in becoming barriers to breastfeeding. I chose lack of education in the poll, but to add to that, lack of community role models - we don't grow up watching women breastfeed their babies. Girls aren't raised with knowledge on how to and how not to. Boys aren't raised with the idea that bf is the norm, so can find it more difficult to relinquish temporary sole 'custody' and support their women in bf.

Next up IMO would probably be the availability of artificial milk. As we have all mentioned, bf is a learned process. When we don't have all those wonderful years of experience surrounding us as we're learning, difficulties are more likely to occur. And when you're in incredible physical and emotional pain, feeding your hungry babe is your priority. Again, with lack of trusted experience around us, to help us through the feeding difficulties - artificial milk becomes the fastest option to feed a hungry babe.

Conflicting advice from professionals and relatives comes in at a hot third. Our society is relearning the art of bf because it has been lost to us for so long - so in the last 50 to 100 years, many theories, techniques and 'experts' have surfaced in that time. Not everyone is up to date (health professionals included) on what has been discounted and what the latest schools of thought are.

Interventions at birth certainly play their part. Narcotics in the bloodstream of both Mother and Babe have effects; physical and emotional trauma if they occur can impede. Going back to work - for sure! A girl in my mother's group felt obligated to her workplace to return when her babe was 4 months old, so she introduced artificial milk 'just for the 2 days she'd be away'. A week in, her babe was exclusively artificially fed, because, in her opinion, it was easier.

A personal rant, if I may. TV personalities have a big impact I'm sure. Channel 9's daytime "The Catch-up" presenter Libby Gore, unashamedly referred to breastfeeding women as "Nipple Nazi's", while in the same sentence remarked how women should be supporting each other in our choices. :angry: Not surprising, their chat forum had crashed by the time I got on there to voice my thoughts!

I don't know where the solution lies. But perhaps, because feeding our children with human milk is so vital to the myriad of proven societal and health factors - we need to place utmost importance on the correct information given to all women having children (if not before). Perhaps a body of government funded lactation consultants with the most continuous, up to date information from around the world be the only recommended professionals to give advice on breastfeeding.

shell_i_d

June 6th, 2007, 10:46 AM

I was in a private hosp & the midwives were all very lovely, but I found the advice different/conflicting from each midwife. Also, they'd usually just come in & put her on, but I'd still be none the wiser on how to do it myself properly, my daughter would clamp down with her gums & it was very painful, I had to go to a clinic after I got out of hospital to get more advice, however still didn't feel I got adequate advice, then bought a 'nipple shield' & persisted (despite cracked/sore/bleeding/grazed nipples) & eventually got there but it was extremely hard I felt.

jgal

June 6th, 2007, 10:49 AM

I wished I could have picked a few answers.

Initially I think EDUCATION is a big one. When my milk first came in it was the most painful thing ever and something I was totally unprepared for. Noone told me about that in the lead-up to birth and the only pain I knew about was that I would experience in labour. I can see why it would scare a lot of women into stopping BF without giving it a proper shot. Luckily I didn't have huge problems with attachment, but for those women who experience extreme pain with engorgement AND attachment issues, I can understand that they would just want to stop, especially not knowing how long the pain would last for and when (or IF) it would ever settle down. Once someone has had bad experiences BF (generally from not knowing what to expect) it makes it harder to want to do it again with subsequent babies.

Once you're over those initial issues, then ADVICE OF FRIENDS/FAMILY would be the big issue. I remember starting a fitness class with mums and bubs when my son was 6w old (and alot of teh woment tehre had abbies teh same age). A couple of them were talking about giving formula to make babies sleep through, so quite a few dropped off breastfeeding and switched to formula because they were sick of broken sleep. Many found that their babies still woke up anyway (they were still so young!) but once they had stopped breastfeeding, there was no going back. I also agree with PP coments that everyone telling a breastfeeding Mum to stop and FF instead to eliminate the issues with tiredness/soreness is quite influencial. It would be much better if friends and family SUPPORTED the BF mum by perhaps offering to help out around the house while she fed or rested (BF does take longer to do than FF), or instead of telling them to stop, offered solutions of things she could try to help elliviate some of the problems. The problem is that so many people have FF and it's hard to find someone close to you that you trust and can be open with who has successfully BF.

Finally when you get past all of those issues and are still BF, you go back to work, and there is nowhere to BF baby (or bub isn't allowed on your worksite for a feed), and the only place you can express milk is the toilet! Makes it hard to keep up the supply when you don't have access to a comfortable and private expressing area.

jgal

June 6th, 2007, 11:02 AM

I just read one of the other comments above (re: men relinquishing "sole custody" to let Mum feed)and have to add:

There were times that I regretted my choice to breastfeed because it meant I was trapped. My husband works afternoon shift and wanted to spend the morning with his son every day as he couldn't see him at night. Fair enough. But that meant I wasn't able to leave the house. Where the baby was, I had to be. I sometimes felt like I was just a milk bar and nothing else. My relationship suffered because I was angry about not being able to get out. If I did go out to say mother's group, I felt relaxed and happy while I was there, and got home smiling, only to be grumbled at because I'd taken his son away from him. While breastfeeding, I couldn't stand to be away from my baby, as I was worried he'd need my milk as soon as I was gone. I think next time it should be easier as DH now knows that while breastfeeding, I need the baby with me. And for my sanity and our relationship, I also need time out occasionally (which means I TAKE the baby!) Perhaps Men need a bit of education when their wives are pregnant on how to SUPPORT a BF mum. We both went to the BF class run by the hospital, and I don't recall any mention of this. Husbands need to know what to expect too.

lermshell

June 6th, 2007, 11:12 AM

I have successfully breastfed my four children up to the ages of about 17mths. The biggest problem I had was the availability of artificial milk. Whenever they were fussy I was always told 'give him a bottle' most of my friends gave up very early as 'bottles were so much easier', In hospital it was suggested to give them top up bottles till my milk came in...I was sent home with bags full of artificial feeding sachets and advertising. The breastfeeding stuff was a single photocopy (hardly able to read it). Also the work problem is a farce! I had to express in a toilet and use my meal time too!

BellyBelly

June 6th, 2007, 12:34 PM

We actually had a poll some time ago when the WA milk bank opened and it was 50/50 as to who would be happy to use it and those who did not feel comfortable. I think the main issue was how the milk was sourced, worrying about what was in the milk they didn't know about... but I do know they have treatment and screening processes for that. It's change, will take a while for people to warm to I think, without it being out there and explained about safety. Quite a few who said no mentioned they would if it was from a friend.

Bathsheba

June 6th, 2007, 01:03 PM

How true Michelle! The only literature about breast feeding in my first information pack (with my first child) was a crookedly photocopied brochure that was so grainy from repeated cost-saving printing that it could hardly be read. How does that compare to the glossy warm fuzzy feel good brochures from the formula companies? The reason why the information is presently differently (I think) is because there is obviously no money to be made if women choose to breast feed. When women are at their most vulnerable and emotional they are easy targets for this kind of marketing. We are so isolated as mums these days that I suspect most of us are watching TV and reading magazines more frequently than talking amongst ourselves. So what has happened is that methods of raising our children such as feeding, napping, playing with etc that are in line with the advertisers desired outcomes are now considered the "norm" whilst non-money making methods (BFing, cloth nappies, home made games such as digging in the garden etc as opposed to expensive educational toys) are all being turned away from as we are seduced by the marketing companies. And a lot comes back to marketing masquerading as "information"! How many times are you told by your friends and family that "You're a GOOD mother"? not daily?... but this is exactly what the advertisers say and imply in their ads (if we purchase their product that is).... no wonder we lap it up! Because nothing introduces as much self doubt into the average woman's mind as motherhood!

Anyhow... here's me stepping off the soap-box LOL BTW I do use formula, disposable nappies, and buy expensive toys LOL but in a limited way... but people shouldn't be made to feel like they are giving their children anything less than the best from advertisers for refraining from purchasing their products more regularly.

LG

June 6th, 2007, 01:23 PM

i never considered not breastfeeding. I really believe having a true belief in myself and my body helped me to start and continue feeding (i think same applies to birth). I only found i started to doubt myself at the

antenatal classes of all places where they talked about all the problems etc etc. I'm not advocating that this information isn't given to expectant mums, I'm just sharing my experience.

When I was pregnant I think my aim was to feed exclusively for 6 months and then wean. As I did more research into the benefits of continued breastfeeding and the very real risks of formula (which aren't well publicised) I decided to continue on to the 12 month mark. In this time I found ABA which was a HUGE support to me and my breastfeeding relationship with my son. I was able to do away with the "guilt" of feeding to sleep, comfort feeding etc etc! Suddenly I realised that all these things were normal and natural. The way we were designed! I have since started (nearing completion) training to become an ABA counsellor. I have a huge passion for getting the correct information out there to women. At least if they have all the information women can make an INFORMED choice about the way to feed their children. I think far too often people believe they haven't got 'enough' having been told this by ill-informed health professionals or well-meaning relatives. And let's face it, any new mum is extremely vulnerable especially if they are told their baby is "not thriving".

Which brings me to another point, doctors, and other health professionals (including some midwives and CYH nurses) just haven't got the current relevant information on breastfeeding. Often their initial training doesn't cover much breastfeeding information, and often their skills are not up-dated regularly.

Breastfeeding can be very difficult for some women, and in these cases they need support. Not just from professionals but also from family and friends who understand the importance of breastfeeding - not just nutritionally, but also emotionally and for the bonding process. I have often heard that partners seeing their wives in distress or pain through breastfeeding want to offer a "solution" eg ABM - and they are being helpful and supportive in their own way, but a man can't fully understand the desire to feed their off-spring, and what it does to a mother who feels 'failure' over weaning from the breast.

By the way, I went on to feed my son for 23 months, and weaned recently due to pregnancy and because I was finding it 'too much'.

Apologies if most of all this has already been said - I haven't had time to read all the responses.

Good luck tomorrow Kelly! What you are doing is so so so so so important!! The government DO need to recognise the benefits of mothers caring for their children in the best possible ways in order to create a generation of productive and emotionally well-balanced people. Not to mention the benefits for the health system (healthier children and adults).

flower

June 6th, 2007, 01:35 PM

In my case, I was on medication that could have been harmful to baby if passed through breastmilk, so I could not breast feed. I am sure I am not alone in this.

I know another lady who was sexually abused as a child and found breastfeeding v traumatic as a result and could not do it. I was reading that about one in three girls will be victims of child sexual assault. The difficult thing is that if something like that has happened and as a result you can't breastfeed, it's not something you want to tell people openly, so this poor woman found herself being judged for not breastfeeding and not being open as to why.

Hope this helps

MichelleW

June 6th, 2007, 01:45 PM

Hi,

I put lack of education as my first choice but as some other mums said they are all connected. I had a wonderful 'textbook' breastfeeding experience (until she was 11mths) with my daughter and fed her until 21mths although from 11mths I started experiencing problems with my 'let down' reflex because of the stress of moving to a very hot rural town with no family/friends support. Unfortunately this tainted the whole breastfeeding experience. Through this experience I at least had some understanding of the role that stress and lack of support has when you are trying to establish breastfeeding in the early days and for me, maintenance in the later stages. There was no ABA in the town I lived in and I just struggled on in a state of anxiety until I stopped breastfeeding 10mths later.

Education before you have the baby would be a good start to tell you about all your options eg how to breastfeed, attachment, problems you can have, services available, how to pick a good LC and also counselling services because it is an emotional investment for ourselves as well as a physical one. And when you think about it, if you don't know what you are doing you get stressed and negative comments freak you out then supportive counselling is something lots of mums would probably benefit from.

I don't understand why women are discharged before breastfeeding is established, often without followup. Follow up should be mandatory for I think at least the first 6 weeks.

Women need to know that it is good to keep breast feeding as long as possible. I breastfed the longest out of my group of friends and most started weaning at 6mths.

I also think for those women who can't continue to breastfeed for whatever reason need to be told that's okay and that they did their best and understand completely the reasons why they stopped. I wonder if

some women are fully informed, lots of my friends said 'my milk supply was low' because they could 'feel' the milk wasn't there. Often their milk supply was fine but it was just changes in their breasts as the engorgement finally settled down. Once again, lack of education.

Education and help should really be ongoing for all stages of breastfeeding.

Thats my say anyway,

Mich

lekala75

June 6th, 2007, 02:10 PM

I think that there is a real need for more information and support on breast feeding. In hospital you get so many different bits of information, it is so confusing. I breast feed my first daughter quite successfully, until she was 14 months old, (she is now 3) I am now feeding her sister, who is 6 months. Although I had no real problems I didn't have any real support, most of my friends who had babies bottle fed and were a little anti breast feeding, I think mainly because they didn't have success. It can be really difficult in those first few weeks and I think not having support is why so many women give up, its also a very lonely job in the wee hours of the morning. If it wasn't for my stubbornness I'm sure I would have given up also. It is a beautiful experience for both you and your baby and a wonderful way to bond with her. I suffered post natal depression with my first daughter, I truly believe this special time with my Zoe was what got me through to the other side. I have nothing against those who chose to bottle feed it was just what I decided to do. <http://bf.lilypie.com/OcRTp10/.png> (<http://lilypie.com>)

carls

June 6th, 2007, 02:35 PM

I found that the midwives just didn't have the time to have one-on-one time with me to ensure that I was BF properly. The last night I was in hospital I was looking for a midwife to help me and they were all in delivery and they had a staff member from a different ward looking after the desk!!!

I believe to overcome any BF issues early on you need the education and support and in my experience I was definately lacking the support. Even when I got home I was told to ring the community nurse regarding a visit. They rang me back when my son was 4 months old to book in the visit! By this time I had given up with the BF and a screaming son and taken up the bottle. I didn't need them 4 months down the track, I needed them straight away.

SweetPea

June 6th, 2007, 02:59 PM

I voted lack of education, but think alot of the other options are important as well. I think it would have been useful to have more specific education about bf in the prenatal classes. I actually did do a bf class before my baby arrived but all they talked about was how to attach the baby, they didn't even brush upon any of the problems you may encounter and how to recognise them, such as mastitis (which I ended up with! not fun at all!), nipple thrush, cracked nipples, attachment problems and what to do if you encounter problems, the list could go on!

I also think it would be great that as part of your postnatal care that you have a visit to a LC once a week, luckily the hospital I went to has an outpatient program for patients to visit the LC once they leave the hospital, but it would be great if this was enforced more!

I've also found that the advice I've been getting is conflicting, everyone seems to have a different idea!

NattieB

June 6th, 2007, 05:15 PM

Family and community attitudes is a huge one for me

Still BFing my 12.5 month old and talk about ppl's attitudes towards me (like Im doing something WRONG?!?!?!?) and my family (who think she should be weaned now so she can spend large amounts of time with them without the tie to me).

I generally dont tell ppl that i am still BFing unless they are close friends. The comments from ppl really annoy me alot....

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