


Submission no. 211

AUTHORISED: 4/4/07 

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to tell you of my experiences on a personal level of breastfeeding. I have two children the first was breastfed til just over twelve months and I am currently still breastfeeding my three and a half year old.

Breastfeeding has been a wonderful experience but not always easy and the only way I have made it through is with the help and support of other people, especially my husband and the Australian Breastfeeding Association of which I am now a Counsellor.

One of the things that to me has proved that breastfeeding is very important and makes a large difference in health is the day my daughter brought home from Day Care a Gastro bug, it lasted a total of four hours and was not much to it at all and did not get passed on to anyone else in our family even through very close contact. I since found out that the bug was passed through the centre to many children who also had it the same night as she did, only all the children and families who did come down with it ended up with severe cases some lasting days. I fully believe that Breastfeeding made an amazing difference in this being a small case rather than the same as all the Artificially fed children.

In general health my children are rarely unwell, they both suffer from asthma which is very prominent in our family but the only time it has an affect on them is when they catch a cold, even then it is mild and easily controlled compared to other family members who were artificially fed who, from a young age were and still are on preventers and periods in hospital.

I find it hard to know of the many babies who I see missing out on their Mums milk simply due to ignorance, misinformation from medical professionals or by just not realising there is help out there, I myself have been told things which are not true from Doctors who I would trust and if I did not have the knowledge from being with the Association I know that I may have given in to them and missed out on so much, I have even occasionally found myself wondering if my little girl needs what is termed as "Toddlers Milk" due to the advertising which seems to be everywhere like TV and through most magazines even though I know that Breastmilk is superior to these inferior products that are probably only needed by those who Artificially feed and then these wouldn't be needed if people knew more about breastfeeding to give their children the start to life which is needed, and more to the point natural and not a decision but a right they were and are born to have.

The advertising of formula needs to be replaced or added to, with details of where to get help with breastfeeding e.g. Breastfeeding Counsellors, Lactation Consultants and a list of why Breastfeeding is so important in a child's life not just as a baby with the benefits reaching right through to adulthood and beyond. Samples of Formula are still given to Mums with young babies and so easily accessed whilst shopping where a Mum with problems will see as the solution when in fact it causes more problems than had in the first place but these ones continue throughout the years and are not always easily seen to start with, these need to become only accessible after having sought help and then only after seeing a Dr or Pharmacist who should have the Breastfeeding Information on hand and the way they can contact them for help. More support needs to be given to all those who help with Breastfeeding, via advertising, training medical professionals and telling people the benefits of Breastmilk and Breastfeeding.

Kind Regards
Charise D'Ath

16/03/2007