

Attention: The Secretary of the Committee on breastfeeding

My name is Juliet Allen. I am a registered psychologist. In supporting my application I draw your attention to the recent newspaper article "Breastfed kids more popular" written by medical reporter, Grant McArthur.

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<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,21227965-24331,00.html>

'THE secret to popularity may be set in the way mums feed their babies.

A 70-year study in Britain has found those who were breastfed are more likely to climb the social ladder than those who were bottle-fed. The results have been backed by the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

Spokeswoman Karen Ingram said breast milk aided cognitive and motor development, which contributes to social skills.

"We know through research that the attachment to a mother through breastfeeding can help children attach to others, which makes them more secure and independent," she said.

More than 3000 babies from England and Scotland were monitored from birth in 1937-39. The findings were based on 1414 adults who are still being examined.

The study found those who were breastfed were 41 per cent more likely to move up the social ladder as adults than those who had been bottle-fed.

The prevalence of breastfeeding was not dependent on income, siblings, or social class at birth, allowing researchers to disregard other social factors that may have influenced results.

The authors suggest breastfeeding influences brain development, which then leads to better exam results and job prospects and greater income.'

The physical benefits of breastfeeding are substantial and well documented in other submissions and so I won't repeat them here but I thought that the psychological benefits should be noted as well.

The current percentage of Australian mothers who breastfeed are too low and it would be beneficial to look to other countries that are of similar socio-economic level to find inspiration.

Juliet Allen