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**From:** [Faded]  
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**To:** [Faded]  
**Subject:** [Faded]

**Subject:** Submission for Breastfeeding Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to put forward my opinions and experiences on breastfeeding:

d. initiatives to encourage breastfeeding;

I think the main problem with breastfeeding is people thinking it is going to be easy because it is 'natural'. Sure it comes easily to some people, but for a lot of people, it's quite a shock how hard it actually is. More help needs to be given to new mothers when they are learning how to breastfeed if the number of people breastfeeding is going to increase. Those first few days after a baby is born is very important.

One of the main problems I found, and have found other people had, is that there is so much conflicting advice, especially once you have the baby.

In hospital I had midwives telling me different things all the time. It was incredibly frustrating and nothing they did was any help at all. I actually had two different midwives who roughly grabbed my daughters head in one hand, my breast in the other and pushed them together. This is obviously not helpful at all. It is not an isolated case as I have heard other people have had the same thing happen to them.

Luckily, I came across a lovely midwife who took the time to sit with me, look at what I was doing, and correct me straight away. I was having so much trouble because my daughter wasn't latching on properly. After that I had no problems with latching on at all.

I think there needs to be some sort of 'set' teaching way, so that new mothers aren't given contradictory information. I know midwives are usually stressed and understaffed, but there is no excuse for being rude and rough. The only way new mothers can learn to breastfeed successfully is if they are taught in a clear, patient and non-stressful way.

Most people want to breastfeed, but usually aren't given enough support and end up quitting too early.

Maybe a brochure you could get from your doctor before birth, or in hospital after the birth, with main points, tips etc that everyone can get and midwives can refer to, so that everyone is receiving/giving the same information.

Of course every baby and mother is different, but if you have something to refer to and get your information from, it may prove helpful to some people.

I think there is enough information about why breastfeeding is good for mother and baby, nearly every parents magazine has articles on it, but the breastfeeding rates aren't higher, because people give up too easily. I am a member of an online forum and have read countless people saying 'I tried so hard to breastfeed, but it just didn't work out, so I switched to formula after 3 days'.

People need to be told that 3 days is not long enough to try breastfeeding, it takes time and patience over an extended period to get it right. I was not overly confident with breastfeeding until my daughter was about a month old. That didn't mean I wasn't doing it right all that time, it just took me that long to have confidence in myself that I was doing it correctly.

Part of my confidence came from visiting the child health nurses at my local health clinic, but again, a lot of conflicting advice was given. Luckily by that stage I knew just to stick with one person who I liked and listen to what they were saying.

Once breastfeeding is established correctly, it is such a rewarding, easy and lovely way to feed your baby, and all new mothers should be given all the help they need in a gentle, patient way, so they too can successfully feed their baby in this way.

Carmen Simpson

Mother of one and another on the way

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