

To: The Secretary,

I wish to add some personal experiences and thoughts as a submission to the inquiry.

When babies are born, I am led to believe that they are one of the most helpless, underdeveloped mammals in the world. As human's, we have a responsibility to nurture our babies and consider the rights of these beautiful additions to our family and community. The rights of the mother (mother-centred decisions) are considered too often in today's society when talking about infant nutrition and deciding how to feed their baby. Communities need to start acknowledging the rights of the child to receive optimal infant nutrition through exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months and continued breastfeeding to 12 months and beyond.

Experiencing this with my son was one of the most empowering, fulfilling and bonding things I have ever done. Being able to fulfill my responsibilities to nourish this child and nurture their growth was a wonderful experience.

I also wanted to express my disappointment at the lack of action FSANZ has been taking to change the labelling of infant foods. There are still many companies like Heinz who have incorrectly labelled their foods as being suitable for 4 month-olds. This information compromises how long a baby is breastfed for, as introduction of solids then means that the baby is no longer exclusively breastfed.

In summary, I believe the Federal Government of Australia can do two things (among many others) to take a lead role to improve the health of the Australian population through support for breastfeeding:

1. Fund local health service providers and existing NGOs (like the Australian Breastfeeding Association) to continue encouraging communities to embrace the support of breastfeeding as everyone's responsibility.
2. Ensure FSANZ takes action to ensure labelling on infant foods is correct and appropriate.

Thankyou for the opportunity to submit to the breastfeeding inquiry.

Regards,

Elizabeth Nitschke
Mother of Liam, 3 years
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