

Subject: breastfeeding submission

My son was born 22/12/03. I was basically down to one feed a day by 5 mths.

I experienced attachment problems on one nipple that led to a pussy type infection forming. Luckily I didn't develop mastitis. During this time I was very frustrated at the lack of help I was able to access. We were living in Qld at the time. My local Child Health clinic was shut down during this period as it was the xmas/ new year break. Babies are still born during this time and mothers still need supporting. Services should still have been available for me to access. In the end I had to pay for a private lactation consultant to come to my house on a number of occasions. Thank god for her and thank god I have private health insurance. Once the child health clinic reopened after their holiday break I was then able to attend a breastfeeding session but by then I felt the damage had already been done on my desire to continue breastfeeding.

In hospital, you are made to feel that breastfeeding is the only option you have and that it is the most natural thing to do. Whether this line is pushed only by the private hospitals I am not sure as this is my only experience, or if public hospitals have the same emphasis I would be interested to know. I felt uncomfortable about the whole thing, rarely feed in public and the experience didn't feel natural to me.

My next baby is due in 4 weeks and while I am going to give breastfeeding another go I am already feeling anxious about the whole thing and wonder at the level of support I am going to receive as people may expect me to already know what I am doing as I've "been there, done that".

It's bloody tiring and demanding on the body as well.