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**From:** charlotte chambers [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 21 March 2021 7:17 PM  
**To:** Exemptions  
**Subject:** AA1000534 Infant Nutrition Council Submission  
**Attachments:** VFFM .pdf

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this email first as a mother, that breastfed 2 babies exclusively for 6 months with the support of my mother who was a midwife and also lactation enthusiast. Secondly as one of 3 female founders of Australia's mumamoo, we are 100% Australian owned and manufactured with a message of support for all women. I am a passionate about the wonders and benefits of breastfeeding and I know that it is the VERY best for babies. **Breastmilk is amazing, and so are women!!!** However, without the support I had from my mother my journey could have been very different.

We have spent the last 3 years speaking with hundreds women, having conversations and hearing their stories. These women are our colleagues, ours sisters, our friends, our family. We are in the trenches with them and we know first-hand how they are feeling, because we have walked in their shoes. I am also the publisher of a child and family magazine and I have heard the same stories over and over. Women are suffering. We are these women, we hear their pain, we feel their pain.

Australia seems to have a problem on it's hands. And restricting the marketing of toddler milk is not the answer.

**PROBLEM:**

- Increase and protect breastfeeding in Australia.

**SOLUTION:**

- Increase postpartum support and care at home or in the health sector, to allow women the opportunity establish successful breastfeeding.
- Increase paid maternity leave to allow working mothers to continue to breastfeed.
- Increase postpartum hospital stays for women- to allow time for hands on breastfeeding support and/or for a mother's milk to help establish successful breastfeeding.

Yes these are very obvious solutions ....BUT it involves funding and support. We believe it's time that the infant formula industry and the ABA work together to lobby for more post-partum support for mothers, this will have real benefits for the mother and baby and in turn I believe, help to increase breastfeeding rates.

While we understand and appreciate that the ABA, midwives and the health care professionals do an incredible job in support and education, their recourses are also limited and poorly funded. We believe this needs to change.

I include below three points supporting my submission to REJECT The proposal to increase restrictions on toddler milk:

### **1.We are all harming the women that we are trying to protect.**

It should NEVER be assumed that a women is so mindless that they will see a toddler milk ad and think 'Hey I might stop breastfeeding". This is ridiculous and insulting.

This is 2021, women have a right to be informed and want to be armed with ALL the information. There should be no place for censorship on a product predominantly used by women. Women have a right to information about their bodies and how they chose to feed their children. Australia has incredibly HIGH breastfeeding initiation rates ( \* \* 96%) and this shows that women WANT to breastfeed. The elephant in the room is NOT the toddler milk ads... this is a VERY long bow to draw.

Mothers are turning to infant formula because of a range of complex and common reasons, all detailed in the **Australian Infant Feeding Guidelines**, **NOT because they have seen a toddler drinking from a Sippy cup**. Formula feeding mothers are the silent majority and are all too often reporting of a lack of support, education and the shame, and guilt they are made to feel when wanting and needing to turn to formula.

We see their eyes drop to the floor when they confess that they are using formula. This is heart breaking and is part of our WHY in starting mumamoo. We believe that women should be equally informed of their options, and then be given the EQUAL support on how they feed their baby. We should be there for their plan A or their plan B. We truly believe that women deserve to be supported no matter how they feed their baby. This is why we are all here isn't it?

We have spoken to hundreds of women over the last 3 years and the most common story is the lack of information, shame and stigma that they felt about using infant formula. Is this what we want for our new mothers? Just because a woman is unable or chooses not to breastfeed, the support tap shouldn't turn off.

1 in 5 women new or expectant mothers suffer post-natal depression \* This is why mumamoo gives a portion of our online profits back to PANDA. We want women to be given all the information so that if their plan A doesn't work, they can make informed and educated decisions about their plan B without feeling unprepared. Expectation VS Harsh Reality.

When we speak of "the village"... what does that look in 2021? 8 – 15 antenatal visits, then out of hospital sometimes within 4 – 24 hours, with 1 -2 home visits. I don't know if it's just me but this looks very unevenly weighted. If breastfeeding is the goal, and this can only be achieved once baby has arrived, why don't the antenatal visits NOT equal the postnatal visits?

We are NOT here to lobby that the Infant formula industry be able to market and advertise infant formula (0-1 years). We comply with current restrictions and absolutely agree that breastfeeding needs to be protected, encouraged and valued. However we do know that by FURTHER limiting the amount of information that women receive about

this ONLY alternative to breastmilk, will have an increased effect on the shame and stigma that is associated with this life saving product.

I have attached a document with just a handful of comments from posts on a forum about feeding (names and dates obscured for privacy) so you can get an idea of what the women of Australia are saying about how they feel about using formula. Women are turning to other mothers and forums for their information on formula feeding and their support. This is the tip of the iceberg.

Decreasing the marketing of toddler milk WILL NOT FIX the problem to increase breastfeeding rates. This is a waste of time and money which could be much better spent on a positive solution.

## **2. Selective Censorship**

If toddler milk marketing restrictions are passed how is it that you will be able to see marketing for junk food (aimed at children in the same age range). There are a multitude of products aimed at children with less restrictions than toddler milk, not to mention alcohol and gambling all of which put immense pressure on our health care system. Will there be a review on how these products are marketed and the damaging health effects they have on our population, health care and welfare systems? Why is it proposed that information be censored in one category only, a category predominantly used by women? Women have a right to information in the same way as the general population. FACT - Restricting toddler milk means less information on products used by mothers from 0 - 3 years. This is surely out of scope of the ACCC and completely contradictory.

## **3. Anti-Consumer Competition**

Further restricting toddler milk marketing will ensure that the door will be firmly closed to ANY OTHER business wanting to enter the industry, just like ours. A business that is 100% Australian that is female founded with transparency and ethical practices at our core.

How can you possibly launch a product with NO MEANS of marketing or advertising. I was under the impression that one of the key goals of the ACCC is to ensure fair and competitive business in the market. Below is what noted from your website.

"The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is an independent Commonwealth statutory authority whose role is to enforce the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 and a range of additional legislation, promoting competition, fair trading and regulating national infrastructure for the benefit of all Australians."

The majority of what is currently available on supermarket shelves are foreign owned and imported. Putting a black-out on the marketing of this industry, will close the door forever on any new Australian competitors entering the industry and establishing a market presence. Australia has one of the most enviable dairy industries in the world that supports local Australian jobs and farmers. Surely our goal as Australians is to move towards, not away from products that are 100% Australian made and owned.

Inadvertently these restrictions will have major and irreversible effects on the Australian dairy industry and Australian businesses, just like mumamoo.

Australian families want Australian options.

Yours truthfully and passionately.  
Charlotte Chambers

- \* - <https://www.panda.org.au/>
- \*\* - <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/infant-feeding-guidelines-information-health-workers>

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mumamoo  
Developed by science backed by mums  




I had the same situation with my now 4 yr old daughter. I grieved the fact that breastfeeding didn't work for a very long time, until my second daughter was born 10 months ago actually. I had counseling for ppd and ppa, which helped a bit by putting it into perspective, and just providing me with a space to talk through it however many times necessary. But in the end what really helped was the fact that my second baby breastfed with no issues and I realised that it was never my fault to begin with. Each baby is different, for some it will work, and for others it won't. Be gentle on yourself. Cry and talk about it when you need to, and understand that your hormones are going crazy at this time, and it will get better. Having a fed, content baby and a sane , happy mother is far more important than ruining your mental health for the same of breastfeeding.

Like · Reply · 35w

I had a similar experience to others here. I had a bub that couldn't feed well & hardly gained any weight. I felt like I was failing her if I didn't give her breast milk so I fought & pumped & feeding was a stressful experience. I gave her formula at 4m & she kicked goals! She was happier, healthier & I absolutely regret not starting earlier! You've done an amazing job to get this far with a fussy bub. Most ppl can't imagine how hard it is even tho they think they can! You will likely find any guilt will disappear when u turn feeding from a stress to a bonding time & she will likely gain weight. Plus u can always try to mix feed if u still want.

Like · Reply · 35w · Edited

# V F F M VOICES OF THE FORMULA FEEDING MOTHERS

There is such a push to breastfeed and I know it is best and I had every intention of exclusively breastfeeding. I had a horrible birth 4 days later still no milk and 11% weight loss. The hospital sent us home with formula and that was the best thing ever and although my milk did come in eventually I had huge anxiety about breastfeeding and hated it. I managed to mix feed for 8 weeks but was so upset I'd 'failed' at feeding till a nurse came out to our house to visit and said that a bottle fed baby is just as good and healthy as breast because it's fed. Anyway, I wish before hand I never felt shamed for bottle feeding. Next baby I'd like to try breast feeding again but I'd like to see a lactations consultant day 2 not week 2 because maybe I wouldn't have ended up being so anxious about feeding my bubba! I just want to give this lady a big hug. So sad.

Like · Reply · 4y

I was in hospital for a week with Logan, he had low blood sugars from my gd, it took till day 3 for them to test jaundice levels, he was 3 points off blood transfusion! He was not feeding and i was terrified! The staff belittled me bc he would not latch and i was constantly in tears but they were giving him formula in a bottle not a syringe like i had told them to! I ended up giving up and giving him formula (which i was also shamed for) but he got better when i stopped and went against what they were telling me and did what i felt was the right thing to do.

They didn't even believe i was in labour, why would i take their silly advice seriously when they weren't looking at whats best for us but what pushes their agenda. X

Like · Reply · 4y

September 17, 2016 · 🌐

Looking for some emotional support please. My baby girl is only 5 days old and already I'm hating breastfeeding so much and for so many reasons I'm thinking of calling it quits. I know the pain will pass and that it takes longer to build and establish your supply than 5 days, but there are other reasons too. I suppose I'm looking to hear from other mums who chose to give up breastfeeding at an early stage for their own reasons, and how they dealt with the guilty feelings.

31 Comments

If you absolutely hate breastfeeding, there is no shame in calling it quits. I breastfed my middle son for 7 months and hated every minute, I honestly believe that it was a major factor in my PND and if I had my time again, I would have put him on the bottle. I had no issues with my other 2 and fed them both for for 18 months. You need to do what's best for you. Don't feel guilty, a happy mum is the most important thing.

Like · Reply · 4v

My mum was horrified when I talked about early release. She can't understand how mums, and new mums especially, can be allowed to head home before milk has come in, feeding is established and the mother has recovered from the trauma of the birth. For her back in the 70s it was a mandatory weeks stay with high level of hands on support. I totally get that hospital is not for everyone (my BF is petrified of them due to a childhood car accident) but providing no support is not working either. I think rather than mum's being encourage to leave ASAP it should be a mentality of leave when you ready. Give each mum a week and then gently push them out the door if they are still not leaving. I know from personal experience I was chomping at the bit by day 5 but before then I was not ready to face the reality of home-life, especially with the later babies. Something has got to be done but unfortunately public health and community support are not sexy or dramatic topics and therefore are not a priority with our current governments 😞

Like · Reply · 4y



Lack of current education in certain hospitals. That many of my friends that have become new mums wouldn't even know what a lactation consultant was let alone knowing things like nipple stimulation, ties, gas or dehydration. 2 days after giving birth isn't a lot of time to learn your babies cues. Giving birth is traumatic enough without complications. Feeling overwhelmed with the 2 day cram study session you get from a midwife tell you her/his point of view, first poo, how many wee's, lets show you how to bath the baby, change a nappy etc. new mums need a chance to understand the important stuff and they just aren't given the time in my opinion. I've referred a lot of my friends to this group purely because it's breast and formula support. There is no you should do one or then other in this group it's just a nice place to ask questions and have mums supporting mums. Let's build each other up not down. Some of the dedicated breastfeeding groups are so nasty. Yes there are women full of knowledge but you have to do what's right for you and your baby. I EBF and I'm not asking for a medal, I'm just feeding my baby the way it works for us. So much stigma and it really annoys me xx

Like · Reply · 4y · Edited



Definitely feel the same. I don't know how many times I was told "there is no such thing as low supply" even though I had multiple lactation consultants and my doctor advise me that I had insufficient glandular tissue in my breasts and I do have diagnosed low supply. When you're already beating yourself up for it not working the last thing you need is for others to jump on you telling you you're wrong and the only reason it isn't working is because you aren't trying hard enough. This page was my safe place with my first bub and as soon as my supply refused to increase from colostrum again with my second I rejoined straight away

Like · Reply · 38w



Absolutely 🙌❤️🥰❤️

I feel the same! Breast feeding mums can be so nasty, the things I've read on Facebook, absolutely terrible, we're meant to support eachother, it's already tough enough xx

Like · Reply · 38w



I hate to admit before my son I was one of the "breast is best" kind of person, but my journey was horrible breast feeding, my mental health and babies health was not worth the struggle, fed is fed at the end of the day 😊

I'm sorry to hear you've had a shitty day!  
Glad you find support in this group

Like · Reply · 38w



I agree ❤️❤️ I find FF mums so much more empathetic and realistic compared to those "breast is best" mums. But also I used to judge people who formula fed when I was pregnant and wow was I in for a shock when I couldn't breastfeed. It has actually taught me to be more kind and to never judge about anyone's choices anymore. So it's been a blessing!

Like · Reply · 38w · Edited



VFFM  
VOICES OF THE FORMULA FEEDING MOTHERS

The breastfeeding pages were the worse!!  
Made me feel so horrible and I felt always  
looking for something wrong with their  
babies to explain poor weight gain etc. prefer  
the supportive women of this group 🙌🙌🙌

Like · Reply · 38w



I agree! These women are  
my kind of women!

Like · Reply · 38w



Write a reply...



This page is amazing!! No judgement at all

Like · Reply · 38w



I shared an article to this page earlier today  
that really resonated with me, i especially  
loved the last few lines...it disgusts me that  
some women are so immature & arrogant  
that they can't support other mums in their  
baby raising journey even if it differs from  
their own...

Like · Reply · 38w

Yes I was shamed and made to feel like crap by my MIL. She said u didn't try hard enough and u didn't try for long enough. She actually started shaming me before my boy was born, telling me that 'not breastfeeding is wrong'. I tried to breastfeed and it was my intention to do so, but it just wasn't working and I was struggling physically and mentally. So I chose to formula feed for my sake and my bubbas. Some people are just so narrow minded. I really do not like my MIL, I tried for years to like her but this tipped me over the edge. I'm civil to her but can't stand being around her. She still to this day tells me that for the next kid I need to breastfeed. By the way my son is perfectly healthy and happy.

The thing is us mums always feel like we have failed! **YOU HAVE NOT FAILED!** You have saved your child from starvation!!!! Fed is best, how can breast be best the breast doesn't always work. My boobs are slack and so I mix feed I felt bad for so long but my 4.5 month old is happy and healthy because he is FED!

You are doing great and your child has a happy full belly, do not feel like you have failed you have won!!

I got shamed the other day by friends cause they were talking about food and breastfeeding. Even though one of them mix feeds like we did my opinion still didn't matter cause I didn't breastfeed. Just pisses me off. I did both sorry it wasn't exclusively breast but I didn't produce enough so had to give formula too. God I hate people they are so judgemental

Like · Reply · 3y

it's a shame as a parent you get judged for just about anything! I wish people were kinder and more passionate towards mothers who do their best! Thanks for posting ❤️

Like · Reply · 6w

❤️ 1

July 12, 2020 · 🐾

When did all you mums start your bubbas on solids? Everything i read is related to breast fed babies as they develop differently 😞 (just another ounce of shame for formula feeding 😭)

👍 2

76 Comments

I tried breastfeeding my little one however it wasn't until one night he was screaming & crying all night long (literally got 2 hours sleep) that I realised I couldn't produce enough. I tried seeking help and all I got was 'just keep him on the boob' or 'he won't make himself starve'. That absolutely made me so angry, I didn't want to put my bubs in stress or hunger any longer so I chose to chuck him on formula. He has been one happy baby since! I'm sorry you haven't got the support you needed but this group is amazing! Plus with formula it's not feed on demand which may be a bit less stressful for yourself with twins as you can time their feeds now & prepare better x

Like · Reply · 1y



July 16, 2020 · 🌐

How do I get over the guilt of going to formula. Baby isn't putting enough weight on, is extremely fussy at the breast. I've been trying for 5 weeks now. I've seen 2 ibclc a few times each.

I can't pump and give her bottles as it takes my time away from my bub and I hate it.

But the guilt of not giving her breast milk is tearing me up.



1

23 Comments

# VFFM VOICES OF THE FORMULA FEEDING MOTHERS

Like · Reply · 35w · Edited

The best piece of advice i heard was - 'a fed baby is best' it doesnt matter how it comes. You just need to be happy with your decision and bubs will follow suit.

Like · Reply · 35w



For me it was my mental health and bubs physical health had to come first. Once he was on formula full time we were both so much more relaxed and happy

Like · Reply · 35w



Honestly, it sounds like you've tried everything. Be proud that you gave it your absolute best, and take comfort in the fact that you're doing what's best for your baby.

Remember too that it's ok to feel disappointed when something hasn't worked out the way you wanted it to. Give yourself that moment to feel sad if you need to. Be kind to yourself. Sometimes sitting with your sadness for a while makes it easier to then move forward. Xx

Like · Reply · 35w

This is lovely advice. And I have, Ive tried EVERYTHING! Multiple times. We got to 11 weeks

Like · Reply · 35w



February 5 · 🌐

As a mum who had to formula feed from the get go (boobs made no milk. NIL) and have a perfectly healthy baby girl (97 percentile in weight, HELP) I am so saddened to read about the shame and guilt my fellow mums feel when turning to formula to FEED OUR KIDS. How did we as a society get to the point where we made to feel less like a woman and mother because we use formula, a perfectly acceptable alternative. I understand the benefits of bfing, but the way it is being spun these days, formula might as well be poison, we are poisoning our babies if we turn to formula. Imagine the negative effect on our confidence, our self-worth when we get judged like that. THAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

Mums, please know you are doing the right thing in formula feeding, whether by choice or by need. There is no shame or guilt in giving formula. My wonderful paediatrician said to me, "I see kids all day long in my job. I cannot tell who was a formula baby or breastfed." They will grow up equally strong, happy and healthy ❤️

👍❤️🧐 90

15 Comments

V F F M  
VOICES OF THE FORMULA FEEDING MOTHERS

It's a horrible world when we're judged for feeding our children. I had a very low supply and ended up formula feeding after six long weeks of expressing what I could. There's a replacement for breastmilk but there isn't one for a mummas mental healthz

Like · Reply · 6w



Amen it's a shame as a parent you get judged for just about anything! I wish people were kinder and more passionate towards mothers who do their best! Thanks for posting ❤️

Like · Reply · 6w



Due to me being so sick after my bub was born my milk never came through. Bub was put on formula after 3 days as she lost too much weight. i tried to still breast feed before i gave her formula. after a month of doing this i stopped as for my mental health was too much and bub was happy and growing. but i still felt the pressure from people that kept saying i had to see lactation consultants etc.

it didn't make my bond with bub any different. i have a very strong connection with her and she's a mamas girl.

End of the day it's no one else business and so what's best bub and you.

Like · Reply · 6w



Cannot love this enough! ❤️

Like · Reply · 6w



I had the same situation with my now 4 yr old daughter. I grieved the fact that breastfeeding didn't work for a very long time, until my second daughter was born 10 months ago actually. I had counseling for ppd and ppa, which helped a bit by putting it into perspective, and just providing me with a space to talk through it however many times necessary. But in the end what really helped was the fact that my second baby breastfed with no issues and I realised that it was never my fault to begin with. Each baby is different, for some it will work, and for others it won't. Be gentle on yourself. Cry and talk about it when you need to, and understand that your hormones are going crazy at this time, and it will get better. Having a fed, content baby and a sane , happy mother is far more important than ruining your mental health for the sake of breastfeeding.

Like · Reply · 35w

I was absolutely gutted when I couldn't breastfeed my prem son, but at feeding time it was me crying, him screaming. I also had a 20 month old so decided formula was best for everyone and at it honestly changed everyone's mood. I wasn't as stressed, my son didn't scream as much and my daughter could help! Fed is best babe xx

Like · Reply · 35w

Like · Reply · 35w

I know the guilt you feel as due to my mental health when my son was 2 weeks old I had to give up breastfeeding. Whilst it was hard we were both so much happier for it. My son was full and content. The guilt does get easier. I still have moments of grief now, 19 months later but my son is so healthy and happy and how he was fed has made no difference 🥰🥰 be kind to yourself. This doesn't make you a failure. It makes you an amazing mum putting bubs needs first ❤️❤️❤️

Like · Reply · 35w