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ANNOUNCEMENT

Supporting breastfeeding and expressing mothers-working hand in hand with health professionals[☆]

Express Yourself Mums is a central resource for breastfeeding mums *and you*, the healthcare professionals who support them. I set up the Express Yourself Mums website to help mums and healthcare professionals overcome barriers to successful breastfeeding. We provide:

- articles and advice written by leading healthcare professionals – including articles on exclusive expressing and an article by Liz Jones on “How to get your premature baby on to your breast”;
- the best breastfeeding and expressing products directly to mums – including Ameda and Medela breastpumps, expressing bras, EBM storage bottles and bags, breastfeeding pillow, nursing bras, and breastpads;
- superb teaching resources as well as breastfeeding, expressing and Kangaroo care products to hospitals.

Our ultimate aim is to help increase breastfeeding rates in the UK. We are proud to announce that on November 30th 2005 Express Yourself Mums won a grant from UnLtd, a charity which supports social enterprise. We are thrilled to have received such important external recognition and support for our work.

In September, I met many of you at the Neonatal Nurses Association Annual Conference and received such lovely feedback on the talk I gave: Exclusive Expressing – a mother’s perspective. Express Yourself Mums aims to help all mums who want to breastfeed, but the mums whom you support, on

your SCBUs, are particularly vulnerable and in need of help. This is why we’ve designed this special A2 poster, (see overleaf), to give out to all neonatal units that want them.

The idea behind the poster is to encourage mums of premature babies to start expressing often and early, to enjoy lots of kangaroo care and to let them know that breastfeeding is a real possibility. It is also a way of highlighting Express Yourself Mums as a resource that is available to them. There is one simple take home message for mums to take from the poster – their breastmilk, is a difference that they can make. We launched this poster, and another designed for antenatal and postnatal clinics and wards at the UNICEF Baby Friendly Conference and we’ve been overwhelmed by the positive response.

I took all the photographs for the poster at University College London Hospital a few weeks ago and it was such an incredible learning experience all round. One of the mums on the poster, Geraldine, at the top, had been expressing for a couple of weeks. For the photo-shoot, I gave her one of our Easy Expression expressing bras so that she could double-pump hands-free, allowing her to relax and also touch and chat to her baby while she expressed. Normally she was making 4 oz at that time of day, but instead she made almost 10 oz. She was amazed, but I wasn’t that surprised, as I’ve lots of anecdotal evidence in letters and emails from mums of an increase in yield. I believe that the reason her yield increased so much was several fold:

- (i) She was double-pumping, which has been demonstrated to increase yield (Jones et al., 2001).

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- (ii) She was relaxed and hands-free instead of hunched up and holding the collecting sets in place.
- (iii) She wasn't checking to see how much milk she had made.
- (iv) She was with her baby, focusing on her baby, not even thinking about expressing.

It would be fascinating to know what her oxytocin levels were when expressing using the expressing bra, compared to when she used to express without it.

I'm a scientist by background so I'd be keen for someone to do a robust randomised clinical trial looking at milk yield, fat content etc. of mums

expressing with and without the expressing bras. If you, or anyone from your unit, would be interested in doing this as a study, please do let me know if there is anything I could do to help.

Evidence aside, Geraldine was overjoyed, as well as relieved and a lot more confident. When I popped back to UCH a couple of weeks later I found Geraldine was fully breastfeeding and had donated the expressing bra to the unit for the next mother to enjoy.

The Easy Expression Halterneck bra is just one of the products that Express Yourself Mums sell to hospitals. There are a few other key products that are of particular interest to neonatal units, they include:

All babies can benefit from breastmilk - especially premature and sick babies



Express Yourself Mums 

"Discovering that I could express milk immediately for my baby was immensely rewarding, reassuring and empowering"

Yes, you can!

Doublepumping has been shown to increase the yield and fat content of breastmilk. The Easy Expression™ expressing bras make double-pumping hands-free and easy.

we are here to help
visit www.expressyourselfmums.co.uk

- Read articles on exclusive expressing, kangaroo care and much more
- Buy expressing bras, baby carriers, breast-pumps, nursing bras and breastfeeding pillows
- A donation goes to charity with every purchase

call us on **0870 389 5576**



Many premature babies go on to enjoy a fulfilling breastfeeding relationship with their mums.







Many thanks to the mums, babies and staff on the Special Care Baby Unit of University College London Hospital where we took these photos.

Express Yourself Mums was set up by a mother who expressed long-term for her two boys. We promote expressing, kangaroo-care and, where possible, breastfeeding on neonatal units.

"It is beautiful seeing him grow, knowing that it is all from my milk"

"The first time I had him skin to skin, my heart was racing, so special, so close"

Your milk - a difference you can make

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