

Infant Feeding S.U.P.P.O.R.T



Scenario

Lisa is a third time mother. Exclusively breastfeeding is important to her. Her three day old baby has a shallow latch no matter how she positions her. She is getting very frustrated. Her mature milk does not seem to be in yet. She cannot understand why she is having so much difficulty being an experienced mother.

Her partner Ben is charged with caring for the older two children, ages five and two. They have been home just 36 hours and both parents are exhausted. Lisa is pumping after feeds, trying hard to latch. Ben suggests just giving formula until they can regain a little control in the home.

How can you support this family?
(Application and Understanding question)

S.U.P.P.O.R.T

As postpartum professionals it is important that we provide evidenced based information while also supporting and respecting our clients' choices regarding infant feeding. When we follow S.U.P.P.O.R.T. we are able to do just that. S.U.P.P.O.R.T. regarding infant feeding looks like this:

- **S**cope:
Assisting with normal latch initiation but not diagnosing latch issues or weight concerns.
Providing resources but not making direct recommendations regarding supplementing.
- **U**nderstanding:
Being understanding and empathetic regarding the feeding choices a family makes. Every situation is unique, though we may feel a different choice would be better it is not our place to pass judgment.
- **P**rofessional:
While we may feel passionate about breastfeeding, or other parenting decisions, we must not allow those feelings to interfere with the support we provide our clients.
- **P**raise:
Encouragement and confidence building can be an important part of building a successful breastfeeding relationship. If our client chooses not to, or is unable to breastfeed it is important that our support build their confidence in their ability to parent in a way that is best for their family.

- **Others:**
Educating a mom's support system about how they can help her is a way to support a breastfeeding relationship. Caring for siblings and assisting with household organization can also be extremely helpful.
- **Refer:**
As postpartum doulas we are equipped to assist with normal breastfeeding initiation, provide education and support moms as they establish healthy breastfeeding relationships. When persistent painful latch, infant weight gain/loss or other issues arise, it is important we direct families to an IBCLC or their healthcare provider.
- **Trust**
Trusts that a mother is capable of making the right feeding choices for herself, her baby, and her family.

Some childbirth and postpartum professionals feel it is very important to abide by the WHO (World Health Organization) code for infant feeding. Some professionals choose to limit their business partners and interactions based on following this code. That is ultimately a personal decision. Whether you choose to be code compliant and partner only with code compliant businesses and individuals or not, knowing the code, can assist in understanding the power of marketing and its influence on feeding choices here in the US. Here is the code:

The Code (World Health Organization Publication WHO/MCH/NUT/90.1) says:

- No advertising of breast milk substitutes to the public
- No free samples to mothers
- No promotion of products in healthcare facilities
- No company nurses to advise mothers
- No gifts or personal samples to health workers
- No words or pictures idealizing artificial feeding
- Information to health workers should be scientific and factual
- All information on artificial feeding, including the labels, should explain the benefits of breastfeeding and the cost and hazards associated with artificial feeding
- Unsuitable products, such as condensed milk, should not be promoted for babies
- All products should be of a high quality and take into account the climactic and storage conditions of the country where they are used

Application and Understanding

1. How would you support Lisa and Ben in the above scenario, using each letter of the acronym SUPPORT?