

childbearing

The newsletter of the Lower Mainland Childbearing Society

The Lower Mainland Childbearing Society

is 30 this year, and we're celebrating with the launch of our newsletter. In this and subsequent issues we will bring you news relevant to parents and parents-to-be; updates on our classes; tips for pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and parenting; as well as birth announcements and stories provided by you, our clients and readers.

Next issue we will bring you a history of **Childbearing** written by the one woman who's been here through it all, **Diane Donaldson**. In the meantime, here's a little more information about us:

As a group, our goals are:

- ⌘ To maintain classes of excellent quality by staying abreast of new techniques and improved methods of teaching, and by periodically reviewing the design and content of our program.
- ⌘ To maintain consistency of instruction while allowing individual teachers autonomy and individuality.
- ⌘ To continue ongoing recruitment of new staff: teachers and other group workers.
- ⌘ To provide support for our new and old members currently active within the organization.
- ⌘ To continue providing stimulating in-service education through group meetings, yearly workshops and conference attendance.
- ⌘ To encourage members to read and update their skills and knowledge.
- ⌘ To increase the self-confidence of our clients in a variety of ways to help them cope better with stress in childbirth and the adjustment to early parenthood.

And our newest commitment:

- ⌘ To provide high-quality, experienced labour support for our clients through our doula network.

For information on the courses we offer, please see the last page of this newsletter.

In This Issue:

- ⌘ **Lower Mainland Childbearing hits 30!**
- ⌘ **Doula Services now available**
- ⌘ **Focus on Breastfeeding:**
~ A Breastfeeding Success Story
~ Question of the Quarter
- ⌘ **Course Calendar**

Next Issue:

- ⌘ Birth stories, our history, prenatal nutrition and more!!

NEW!!!

Doula Services are now available through Lower Mainland Childbearing. We have hand-picked each of the doulas on our referral list for their qualifications, experience, skills, compassion, and, most importantly, rave reviews from our prenatal class participants.

Our doulas provide:

- ⌘ Two prenatal visits
- ⌘ Continuous care at home and hospital during labour
- ⌘ Breastfeeding help immediately after the birth
- ⌘ Two postpartum visits

If you would like to learn more about our doula services contact:

(604) 878 1031
registrar@childbearing.org
www.childbearing.org

Lower Mainland Childbearing is: Diane Donaldson, *President, Treasurer*; Aleksandra Henderson, *Doula Coordinator, Teacher at Large*; Jennifer Landels, *Registrar, Newsletter Editor*; Nicole Seeds, *Secretary*; Susan Woodhouse, *Packages*.

Instructors: Beth Beeching, Aleksandra Henderson, Jennifer Landels

A Breastfeeding Success Story

by Emma Pocock

It was always my intention to breastfeed my baby as it seemed the most natural thing to do and I knew it would provide my baby with everything she needed. I was expecting to have some minor problems as I had read that many women had difficulty breastfeeding initially, especially with their first child. What I was not expecting was to go through one of the most physically and emotionally demanding few weeks of my life.

Unless you have gone through the trials of breastfeeding when there are difficulties, you do not realize the enormous amount of time, energy and determination it takes to succeed. It was difficult watching other mothers pop their babies onto their breast with nary a second thought. The close monitoring of my baby's weight and health by midwives, nurses and doctors made me feel that my competence as a mother was in doubt. Being told that the first six weeks are always difficult did not help as I was living one feed to the next and with little sleep and few breaks, six weeks seemed like light years away. Pumping was not easy and just reinforced to me the overwhelming feeling of failure.

My breastfeeding saga began in the recovery room after a forceps delivery and a 2L blood loss. Sasha latched on but did not suckle very

much and the following 48 hours were a similar scenario. I was told that I was doing everything correctly, but it was up to Sasha to make an effort.

Sasha was to be fed every two to three hours with one four hour gap at night, but she had developed jaundice whilst in the hospital and was very sleepy which made it even more of a challenge. We had to strip her down to her diaper and use cold cloths just to get her awake enough to latch, let alone suckle. It was heart-breaking, but necessary in order for her to thrive and for me to get the stimulation for my breast milk to come in. After spending around 30 minutes getting her awake, attempting to breastfeed and then having to pump whilst she was supplemented with expressed milk and formula by my husband, there was very little time to do anything

between feeds.

The turning point came after two long emotionally charged weeks when we got help from Dr Stringer, at the Vancouver Breastfeeding Centre. We were told that Sasha's latch would get better as she grew bigger but that her milk transfer was quite poor. She encouraged the use of nipple shields, reduced the amount of time we should attempt to breastfeed, gave me cream for my painful nipples and I was started on Domperidone to increase my milk supply. I felt more positive and less of a failure and determined to see it through.

By the fourth week I had achieved my goal, Sasha was off the nipple shields, I no longer had to pump and my baby was exclusively breastfeeding! OK so I still needed a plethora of pillows adjusted "just so" and the latch was not perfect all of the time and she



A happy healthy Sasha at four months

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still took 45 minutes to an hour to feed BUT we had done it!

Then, at week 5, I developed a blocked duct that progressed to mastitis and I started to think maybe I should not be breast-feeding this child! But with time this cleared up and with help from my prenatal class instructor in fine-tuning the positioning and latch, we were up and running again and did not look back!

Sasha doubled her birth weight by four months and I feel so amazed and pleased that I have been able to give her all the nourishment she needed to do this. The special smiles she gives me, the sweet sounds she makes and the closeness I feel when she is breastfeeding far outweigh the difficulty of those first six weeks.

It was not easy, but I would do it all again in a heartbeat in

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order to be able to breastfeed my baby.✉

Emma Pocock

Sasha continues to grow in leaps and bounds, and has now moved with her mum and dad, Emma and Andrew, to their home in Australia. We wish them the best of luck down under! JL

Question of the Quarter

Q: My preterm (34 week) baby is now three months old, and I have been prescribed antibiotics for myself. My doctor says I should stop breastfeeding her for ten days, and pump and dump the breast milk. I can't stand the thought of throwing away breast milk, and I'm worried that my daughter, who has only just started nursing well, will forget how. What would you suggest?

A: I can't stand the thought of you throwing out breast milk either – it's much too precious a commodity! There are very few medications, which pose a serious problem in breast milk. Many drug molecules are too large to pass into the milk, and of those that do, most are so dilute as to be negligible. There are so many antibiotics available that are considered compatible with breastfeeding that I find it highly unlikely your doctor needs to give you one that is not. Ask her to look in the lilac pages of the PDF (Physician's Desk Reference): chances are there have been few, or no, reported adverse effects on nurslings; and if there have, she can usually prescribe a different antibiotic. Ironically, some antibiotics, which are given to newborns in relatively large doses, are contraindicated for nursing mothers. The reason is this: drug-trials aren't usually performed with lactating women, so to cover their legal backsides, drug manufacturers put cautions on their medications.

The bottom line, though, is the benefits your daughter receives from breastfeeding far outweigh the risk of her receiving some antibiotics through the breast milk. The hazards of formula, on the other hand, are well documented, and if you stop for ten days you face the very real prospect that you might not be able to re-establish your nursing relationship. Given how hard you worked to get this far with breastfeeding, it would be tragic to jeopardize that now.✉ JL

For more information on drugs and breastfeeding see:

Hale, Thomas, *Medication and Mother's Milk*.

Newman, Jack & Teresa Pitman, *Dr Jack Newman's Guide to Breastfeeding*.

If you have a question for our instructors, or would like to see your birth story in print, please send your story or question to:
registrar@childbearing.org or
Jennifer Landels, Editor, **childbearing**
8540 Elsmore Road, Richmond BC V7C 2A1
phone queries: 604 878 1031

Win \$25 off your prenatal class series!

Mention this notice when you register for an evening series or weekend workshop **before March 1st 2004** and you will be automatically entered in a draw to win a \$25 discount off the full price of the classes (reg. \$175).

Prenatal Class Schedule (updated January 2004)

Weekly Series

Content: Normal labour & birth; relaxation, positions & coping skills for labour; medical pain relief, interventions & procedures; postpartum; breastfeeding; early parenthood; newborn care. Includes handbook, audiocassette

10 sessions:
 7 Evening classes (2hrs ea)
 2 Healthy Pregnancy sessions
 1 Postpartum Reunion

Cost: \$175.
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm
Location: Bayview School, 2251 Collingwood (in Kitsilano, at 7th).*
 *Summer series held at BC Women's Health Centre room D306

Winter: Th 29 Jan – 11 Mar
Spring: T 30 Mar – 11 May
Late Spring: W 5 May – 16 Jun
Summer: T/Th 20 Jul – 10 Aug

Weekend Workshops

Content: Same as for weekly series; slightly condensed format: breastfeeding not covered, but cost includes Friday night breastfeeding class. Handbook & audiocassette included.

6 sessions:
 2 Weekend days (5hrs ea)
 1 Breastfeeding Night
 2 Healthy Pregnancy sessions
 1 Postpartum Reunion

Cost: \$175.
Time: 9:00am-2:00pm
 OR 3:00pm – 8:00pm
Location: Victoria & 16th (instructor's home).

January: 17 & 18 Jan
Mar: 6 & 7 Mar
Apr: 24 & 25 Apr
May: 22 & 23 May
June: 26 & 27 Jun
July: 17 & 18 Jul
Aug: 21 & 22 Aug

Private Classes

Cost: \$15 + \$30/hour
 Minimum 2 ½ hours.

Does not include materials (optional: \$20 extra)

Low income rates available.

Doula Services

We will provide you with several doulas whom you can interview and select between. Service includes:

2 prenatal home visits
Continuous labour support
Immediate postpartum support
 2 postpartum visits

Cost: prices are set by individual doulas but vary from \$250 to \$650.

To register, or for more information, call
(604) 878-1031
 or visit our website:
www.childbearing.org

Healthy Pregnancy Class

Content: *Mums only class.* Covers nutrition, exercise, and lifestyle choices for pregnancy; screening & diagnostic tests; foetal development; pregnancy discomforts & remedies.

2 sessions

Cost: \$50.*
 *Included free of charge with weekly series or weekend workshops.

Time: 7:00pm-9:00pm
Location: Bayview School in Kitsilano, 2251 Collingwood (at 7th).*
 *August Healthy Pregnancy held at BC Women's Health Centre room D306

February: W 4 & 11 Feb
Apr: Th 8 & 15 Apr
Jun: Th 3 & 10 Jun
Aug: Th/T 12 & 17 Aug

Breastfeeding Nights

Content: *Mums only class.* Partners welcome if space permits. Covers breastfeeding basics; troubleshooting; breastpumps & returning to work; special needs; colic & sleep issues.

1 session:
 Friday Night

Cost: \$25.*
 *Included free of charge with weekend workshop

Time: 7-9pm
Location: Victoria & 16th (instructor's home).

January: 16 Jan
Mar: 5 Mar
Apr: 23 Apr
May: 21 May
June: 25 Jun
July: 16 Jul
Aug: F 20 Aug

Our Instructors, all health professionals and parents, add their extensive training and reading on subjects related to pregnancy, birth and parenting to their personal experience. All instructors hold Childbirth Education Certificates from VCC / Douglas College, and are members of ICEA, the International Childbirth Education Association. All have a love and passion for the childbearing year.