

Tiffany Barnes

Cut 1"

Cut 2"

## Going Back to School

I went back to school just one week after having my baby.

I cried on the way to school. It was so hard to leave her, but breastfeeding made it easier to be away from her. I looked forward to my special bond with her when I got home.

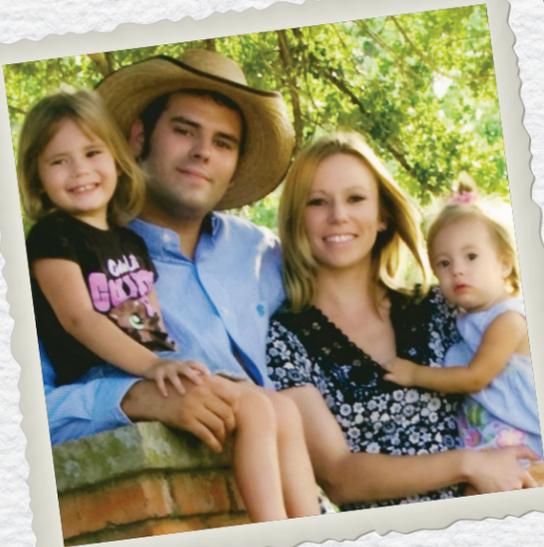
Breastfeeding while going to school was scary at first. But I just did it, and soon it was easy and natural. Breast pumps were a life saver. It was a lot of work but totally worth it.

No one can understand the breastfeeding bond between a mother and baby until they experience it. My breastfeeding time was so special! I will treasure it for the rest of my life.

Going to school is no reason not to breastfeed. I highly recommend it to any mother, especially those going back to school. Breastfeeding changed my life for the better, and I will never forget it. Those who choose to formula feed because it seems easier are missing out on one of life's greatest joys.

Tiffany Barnes

“ My first baby was formula fed,  
but I chose to breastfeed  
my second baby ”



I have two girls: Faith and Gracee. I tried to breastfeed Faith but gave up after three weeks. I did not have the support I needed to keep breastfeeding. I felt so guilty, because she spit up often. The formula didn't agree with her, and we had many problems feeding her.

I was lucky with my second daughter, Gracee. I had the support I needed to breastfeed, and I was able to provide her with my milk for a year.

I felt such satisfaction knowing that I could provide everything she needed. But even more important was how it made me feel. I felt happy when I breastfed. I felt fulfilled. It lifted my usual after-pregnancy depression in a powerful way.

There is a huge difference between formula and breastfeeding. There is a different bonding that happens when you hold your baby to your breast. No one else can offer your baby what you can, and that is very rewarding.

Stephanie Dresser

“ I was a teenage mom... but breastfeeding worked for me. ”

Becoming a mom is always overwhelming. But becoming a teen mom is even more challenging. I wondered if I could really breastfeed and go back to school. Would I really be able to feed my baby so he would do well?

The first time I breastfed my son it was such a different experience. By the third or fourth time it felt natural - even easy. I hated to hear my son cry, and I was happy that he did not have to be upset while I made bottles.

Breastfeeding and going back to school was easier than I thought. I would go to my car or the teacher's lounge for privacy when I pumped. The best part was when I returned home at the end of the school day and I could hold my baby. It was just him and me. I hope the bonding we both felt will be a forever feeling.

Breastfeeding made me feel good about myself. My son is very close to me now and that closeness started with breastfeeding.

I urge other moms returning to school to try breastfeeding. Jamie (my WIC breastfeeding educator) and my sister were both available to help if I had any questions or needed encouragement.

Kelly Marshall





**Mother of  
four children**

I am the mother of four children. I breastfed all of my babies for at least a year. Like most young families, we pinch pennies. Knowing that I have an endless supply of perfect milk takes away many worries. WIC is great to give formula, but the amount provided does not always stretch for the entire month. Breastfeeding, I feel confident that my baby will have everything she needs without any restrictions — what a great stress reducer.

Everyone knows that breast milk is best for baby, but it also is best for moms. My life is hectic. I appreciate being able to sit down and nurse. This automatically relieves my stress and allows me to focus on my newest family member.

The most challenging part of breastfeeding is letting go. I love the special bond that forms between me and my baby. I love the way our eyes connect, and I talk to my baby. I feel that our early conversations bond us in a unique and powerful way.

**Jamie Battiest**

## part time student full time mom :)

I have known I wanted to breastfeed since I was a teenager. I had heard the good stuff about it and knew in my heart that I wanted to do it when I had a baby. Eight months ago I had my daughter, Grace.

Breastfeeding did not feel natural at first. Grace refused breast milk, and I felt like a failure. It took about a week for it to "click" for us both. That week seemed like forever. It is tempting to give up when you feel new mom jitters and are all emotional, but I am so happy I kept trying.

I am in college full-time and plan to continue breastfeeding for a year. I feel proud that Grace has no ear infections or colds. I like making time for her at the beginning and end of each day. It is our time together where she can feel I will always take care of her. I like how relaxed we both are as we connect in a unique way.

Some friends and family say that I do not really need to breastfeed a full year. Some say the nutritional benefits have worn off by now. I don't believe that. I know that my milk is making a difference. Besides, I still want the strong bond that only breastfeeding gives. I know a lot more now about life than I did eight months ago. I know that breastfeeding takes effort, but it is so worth it. I promised myself I would "go the distance", and I want to feel like I accomplished my goal when I breastfeed Grace for the last time at one year. I am proud of who I have become.

Carissa Lutrell



Cut 2"

Cut 1"

Cut 2"



## “I Overcame the Barriers of Abuse”

I had my first baby at a young age. Breastfeeding was something I thought every mom should do, so I tried it. My first experience was not good. I felt a rush of emotions connected to being molested in the past. I did not have any support to continue, and I quit after one try.

I tried breastfeeding with my next two children. I slowly started to realize that breastfeeding was between me and my baby—not the molester. I did not want that person to control my life anymore. The more he controlled my breastfeeding decision, the more he continued to control my life. It was MY body and it was beautiful. Breastfeeding was my choice and I wanted to show myself that I could do it.

I breastfed my last child. I decided this was something I wanted to achieve as a mother, and it worked. This time, I found the support I needed by talking with Jamie at the WIC clinic. She was so practical! She even brought her own baby in for me to see how to latch. I was not able to breastfeed as long as I planned, but I treasure the experience. I am proud of myself for trying.

Brandy Lemons

Cut 7"

“One of the most amazing experiences of my life!”

I didn't know what to expect the first time I breastfed my baby. I felt awkward. I was unsure I could really do it. It was hard for me to believe my breastmilk could really keep a baby alive.

Now, four babies later, I count breastfeeding as one of the most amazing experiences of my life! I have never felt closer to another person than when breastfeeding.

I breastfed my first baby for 10 months and my last child for 18 months. With each child, my breastfeeding time grew longer. It was hard to give up. I knew I would never be so close to that child again.

Friends tell me that they feel as close to their baby using a bottle as I do breastfeeding. That may be true. But I treasure the memories of each breastfeeding experience and know that I will never forget the feeling - the bonding - that happened between me and my baby.

Every mom wants to feel successful. I feel very successful knowing that my breast milk gave my child a step ahead in life.

Amber Sawyer



Cut 2"

Cut 1"

## my family didn't believe in breastfeeding

My mother and other family members are very much against breastfeeding.

My husband and I don't feel that way. It makes me sad that I do not have my family's support to breastfeed my children.

It takes a lot of courage to stand up against family members when it concerns a baby. But I know that breastfeeding is best, and I am willing to do right by my child despite their comments. I walk away when they say negative comments and always breastfeed in a separate room when they are around.

Breastfeeding is amazing. It makes me feel happy. I love the calmness that comes to me and my baby when we sit together. Only I can provide the perfect food for my baby and that makes me feel special. I have successfully breastfed all three of my children and would not trade that experience for anything.

I would encourage every mother to breastfeed, even if family members don't support her decision. There is nothing like it. I would not allow the comments of others to rob me of one of life's greatest experiences.

Amanda Adams



Cut 2"

Cut 7"

Cut 2"

Cut 1"

Cut 2"

“ Breastfeeding  
connected our hearts ”

The first time I tried to breastfeed my newborn son, he turned his head from my breast. I felt crushed. I have lived a life of abuse and have been through so much. I wanted so badly for my son to accept and love me. I didn't know until much later that that a medical condition caused him to turn away from my breast, but his initial reaction did not stop me from breastfeeding. I started to pump and I pumped for six months, feeding him breast milk in a bottle. It was worth it to me to know that my son accepted my gift of breast milk.

Breastfeeding my daughter was completely different. She latched on immediately and I felt complete. I held her close, so she could hear the beating of my heart. Now my children are ages one and two, and I can still quiet them in seconds by laying their head on my chest. Breastfeeding connected their hearts with mine.

One thing I have learned about breastfeeding is that it should not hurt. If it hurts, something needs to change. You just have to figure out what to do differently. Knowing that helped me keep going.

To me, breastfeeding represents acceptance. I will treasure those memories for the rest of my life.

Alana McElmurry



Cut 7"