

**MEDIA RELEASE
AUGUST 2020**

Importance of breastfeeding support in the spotlight this August.

Breastfeeding support for mums has never been more important. That's the message of World Breastfeeding Week (1–7 August), a global event to raise awareness of the importance of breastfeeding.

Just ask Monica Spillman, mum to 13-week-old John.

'I never thought that I would ever give birth during a pandemic', says Ms Spillman.

'This is my second child so I guess I should have known what I was in for, but it's been so surreal. Lucky for me, the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) have been amazing in helping me juggle breastfeeding a newborn while wrangling a toddler and surviving lockdown during COVID-19.'

Monica reached out to her local ABA services after being sent home within 24 hours of having John.

'The midwives were amazing, but with everything going on in the world at the moment, I really wanted to go home and I think the hospital wanted us to be at home too', says Monica.

'It was probably day five when I called the National Breastfeeding Helpline to ask a few questions. The counsellor who I spoke to was so professional and helped me, giving me a lot more confidence about what I was doing. I guess not having my usual support network around made me second guess myself, but knowing that someone was there to help me with my baby while I was in lockdown helped put my mind at ease.'

Australian Breastfeeding Association Executive Officer Victoria Marshall-Cerins says Monica's story is not uncommon.

'ABA is so very happy to be playing our part in supporting families during the current COVID-19 situation', says Ms Marshall-Cerins.

'As part of this support we are proud to be taking part in World Breastfeeding Week. This is a global campaign to raise awareness and support breastfeeding. The theme for 2020 is, *Support breastfeeding for a healthier planet*. Human health and the health of the planet are deeply connected. The global dimensions of health have never been more apparent than they are right now.'

As Australia's leading authority on breastfeeding with more than 50 years' experience, ABA will use World Breastfeeding Week to educate the community on the imperative to protect, promote and support breastfeeding for the health of the planet and its people.

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