



**Australian
Breastfeeding
Association**

National Head Office
1818-1822 Malvern Rd
East Malvern VIC 3145

PO Box 4000
Glen Iris VIC 3146

Telephone: 03 9885 0855
Facsimile: 03 9885 0866

info@breastfeeding.asn.au
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

ABN 64 005 081 523

Breastfeeding Helpline

1800 mum 2 mum
(1800 686 268)

Lactation Resource Centre
www.lrc.asn.au

Retail Subsidiary
www.mothersdirect.com.au

Report Affirms Supportive Breastfeeding Helpline

The Australian Breastfeeding Association today welcomed the findings of the final report by The Allen Consulting Group, on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing, on the effectiveness of the National Breastfeeding Helpline.

'The key findings show the Breastfeeding Helpline is meeting its objective in providing an accessible service, offering quality advice and support for breastfeeding mothers. Our volunteer counsellors provide over 600 hours per week of breastfeeding support across Australia and we estimate this volunteer contribution at a value of \$1.5 million annually,' said Mrs Rachel Fuller, President, Australian Breastfeeding Association.

'In preparing the report The Allen Consulting Group surveyed callers to the Breastfeeding Helpline in March 2012, who reported a high degree of satisfaction in the service provided by counsellors on the Helpline. Callers also found the information they received was supportive and relevant with the counsellor being professional and approachable. Pleasingly, all callers surveyed said they would recommend the service to a friend or relative.

'The report finds the Breastfeeding Helpline is a cost-effective investment by the Federal Government. It acknowledges our concerns with the increasing costs associated with the growing number of calls to the Breastfeeding Helpline from mobile telephones. Calls from mobiles to the Breastfeeding Helpline have risen from 17% in 2009 to over 50% and rising in 2012. This increase places additional costs on the service, as calls from a landline telephone are less expensive to receive.

'The report makes several recommendations to increase access and availability of the services we provide to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers, along with other target groups such as young mums.

'The Association sought an increase in Federal funding to develop specific programs to support these priority population groups who are not currently accessing our service. However, these additional programs were not funded in the last budget and our funding levels for the Breastfeeding Helpline for the next three years remain unchanged since the implementation of the service.

'We acknowledge the report's key finding about the security of our 'volunteer workforce' to operate the Breastfeeding Helpline. Like any volunteer organisation, we too face a challenge to recruit new members to train. Our volunteer counsellors value the training they receive and find it useful in their daily life. The Association offers volunteers a nationally accredited Certificate IV in Breastfeeding Education (Counselling).

'The conclusions of the report showcase the depth and commitment of our volunteers. The professionalism of the hundreds of dedicated, trained volunteer breastfeeding counsellors who devote their time through our Breastfeeding Helpline to assisting mothers breastfeed their babies is a remarkable and highly valued community service,' concluded Mrs Fuller.

ENDS.

Media Enquiries: Nicole Bridges 0413 726 513

About the Australian Breastfeeding Association

The Australian Breastfeeding Association is Australia's leading authority on breastfeeding. We seek to educate society and support mothers, using up-to-date research findings and the practical experiences of many women. We work to influence society to acknowledge breastfeeding as normal and important to parenting and the physical and mental health of babies, children and mothers. The Association is governed by a Code of Ethics, by which our counsellors, community educators and any other members are bound.

About the National Breastfeeding Helpline

The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) runs the National Breastfeeding Helpline 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268). The Breastfeeding Helpline is available 7 days a week. It is staffed by trained, volunteer counsellors who answer calls on a roster system in their own homes.

More than 400 breastfeeding counsellors volunteer on the Breastfeeding Helpline each month, answering as many as 6,000 calls.

The National Breastfeeding Helpline is supported by funding from the Australian Government.

www.breastfeeding.asn.au



**Australian
Breastfeeding
Association**

National Head Office

1818-1822 Malvern Rd
East Malvern VIC 3145

PO Box 4000
Glen Iris VIC 3146

Telephone: 03 9885 0855

Facsimile: 03 9885 0866

info@breastfeeding.asn.au

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

ABN 64 005 081 523

Breastfeeding Helpline

1800 mum 2 mum
(1800 686 268)

Lactation Resource Centre

www.lrc.asn.au

Retail Subsidiary

www.mothersdirect.com.au