

MEDIA RELEASE
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Mums need better supports: how to nourish a new mum this Mother's Day

The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) has captured the new motherhood experiences of nearly 500 mums from across Australia, to starkly reveal the supports that are valued by them, and the specific practical and emotional reliefs they need from the different people in their life.

The average level of support received a rating of just 6/10, revealing the need to provide more and better care to mums. Partners and other mothers (whether their own or mum friends) were identified as those who best *knew* what kind of support new mums needed.

For Australian parents, who have already shouldered so much after unrelenting natural disasters and the pandemic, ABA has developed two new rapid guides *Helping your family/friend relish motherhood* and *Be a rock of support – The How to Guide*. These sharable guides are designed to inspire a broader range of people to be part of the nourishing village of support all mums need this Mother's Day.

The research was undertaken in March and April 2022, revealing that partners (and other support people) *are* tuning into the practical and emotional needs of mums, with the top three most valued supports being:

- Providing meals/cooking – 73%
- Taking leave from work in the early weeks/months – 70%
- Regularly telling me what a great job I was doing/thanking me for doing so much – 56%

The 487 respondents said they would have loved to receive more help with:

- House cleaning – 62%
- Providing meals/cooking – 55%
- Stress reduction (via managing visitors, friends and family, and enabling some timeout) – 52%

'Getting the right support people in place (pre-birth) is so important. Just like breastfeeding education, searching for help with a newborn is extremely stressful. My role as a "failing mother" turned around to "joyous yet exhausted" with the nurturing support I received from ABA,' explains Wendy from Queensland.

For friends and family members who want to help but don't know exactly how to, the research uncovered these top five activities as the best way to show your support:

- Slaying the laundry monster/house cleaning – 64%
- Regularly checking in without expecting a reply/sending funny messages – 59%
- Coordinating (and delivering) meals from friends – 59%
- Asking what practical task they could do to ease the workload – 58%
- Asking me how I FELT, and really listening – 56%

'The last 2 ½ years have been unbearably tough on Australia's mums. This survey highlights that primarily it is emotional connection and practical household assistance that mums crave from their support networks,' explains Naomi Hull, Senior Manager, Breastfeeding Information & Research.

'The most precious gift is simply our time – and not the endless chocolates, pamper vouchers or the adorable baby clothes that our social media feeds often peddle to us,' Ms Hull adds.

For mums keen to broaden their support networks, connect online or attend one of dozens of local group events being held during National Mothering Week (2–8 May 2022), found via ABA's national [Calendar of Events](#). For expectant mums, prepare with ABA's world-leading breastfeeding education [classes](#) – available online and in-person – and experience wraparound support post-birth via an ABA membership.

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A number of survey participants are available to provide quotes/ interviews on new motherhood support.