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Book Review

Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple: A Guide for Helping Mothers

By Nancy Mohrbacher
Hale Publishing, 2010

Reviewed by Brylin Highton and Barbara Sturmfels

This new research-based tome from Nancy Mohrbacher is a 'must have' for anyone involved or interested in breastfeeding counselling. Because her writing is informative and uncomplicated, and text size and white space are generous, its 866+ pages are very readable and the information contained therein will be accessible to a wide audience.

'BAMS' contains groundbreaking international research on breastfeeding and infant behaviours as well as all the classic breastfeeding information covered so well in Mohrbacher's earlier publication *The Breastfeeding Answer Book* (LLL International, 2003). Mohrbacher has included all the significant recent findings that have been published and/or presented at international seminars and conferences over the past few years such as babies' inborn feeding behaviours, biological nurturing, the benefits of skin-to-skin contact and baby-led weaning. She draws on the expertise of well-known researchers and presenters of breastfeeding information as well as thousands of referenced articles.

Unlike most breastfeeding reference books, the mother-baby relationship and the natural physiological condition of the mother-baby dyad comes first. New ideas about positioning and attachment are handled next.

The main points are highlighted in a side column for easy reference and complementary information elsewhere in the book is referenced by page number. There are useful listings of relevant website addresses and books at the end of each chapter as well as references for research papers. The content is easily accessed by both an expanded chapter index and an alphabetical index.

Besides information on the normal course of breastfeeding, challenges at the breast and health issues that may arise relating to mother and baby, there are excellent sections on breastfeeding and employment, introduction of solids, the preterm

baby, depression and mental health, and an appendix on techniques to aid breastfeeding. Other subjects covered include: reverse pressure softening, 'laid back breastfeeding', gigantomastia, hypoplasia, night feedings and where the baby sleeps, and the World Health Organisation growth charts.

Medication information for breastfeeding mothers is tucked away under 'Breastfeeding with Health Issues' and could perhaps have had more prominence as medication issues are a common issue arising in breastfeeding counselling. In a later section, various drugs used for psychiatric illnesses are covered.

This is a wonderful book that every La Leche League Leader and health professional dealing with mothers and babies would benefit from having access to.

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