

The Jackson Clinic
Professional Association

February 20, 1998

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Dear Sir:

In your February issue, Michael Maudlin requested a response to your efforts and choices in presenting debatable issues. Randy Frame's article "Growing Criticism" concerning G.F.I. and the Ezzos was a very weak choice ~~and~~ a calculated attack rather than an effort to fairly present the issues being raised by those who disagree with G.F.I. material. This is your second of two articles, and both have been extremely biased with no effort to fairly present G.F.I.'s position. The biased approach can be refuted point by point, but I will confirm my remarks to the medical evaluation of parent directed breastfeeding and the comments of those in the medical and psychological fields who disagree with this approach.

There are no medical studies that prove the superiority of demand breastfeeding over parent directed breastfeeding. The medical profession has only come to the conclusion that breastfeeding is superior in the last twenty years. We know medically that it is best to breastfeed and to continue to breastfeed for six or more months. Highly motivated mothers will attempt to be successful at breastfeeding as long as possible, often ignoring warning signs because they want to succeed. In my years of practice as an OB/GYN, I have seen hundreds of low birth weight and mildly dehydrated babies whose mothers attempted to demand feed without success. I do not remember hearing these mother criticized unless they refused to supplement when needed.

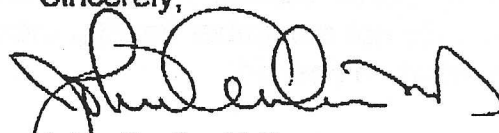
The remarks about the increased number of babies seen in the emergency room is biased because there is no control group for comparison. The most likely reason they were recognized is that they use a different approach than demand feeding. I assure you that if you will compare an equal number of demand breastfed infants with parent directed feeding, you will find the latter group to be as successful or more so than demand feeding. There are small studies now in progress addressing this issue.

The remarks by psychologists, lactation consultants, etc., are obviously their opinion only. There are equally trained specialists who would disagree and support G.F.I. There are many areas in medicine and the social sciences that are controversial and lead to opposing opinions by equally trained individuals. National organizations

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such as ACOG support issues such as abortion and all its members do not agree that this is a correct conclusion. The AAP has considered a resolution to define spanking as child abuse. If this indeed occurred, should we all say that they are right, and the opposing position is wrong? Psychology and Sociology have presented so many concepts foreign to Scripture, it is difficult to be concerned when they feel we are threatening the development of our children with absolutely no evidence to support their view. The major issue raised against G.F.I. is the course Preparation For Parenting and the book Baby Wise, which present parent directed breastfeeding instead of demand breastfeeding. There are a number of groups who obviously feel very strongly that demand feeding is the only way. Studies will ultimately reveal the success rate of each approach as infant weights are recorded and duration of breastfeeding is evaluated. The other issues are minor and never can be scientifically resolved. The conduct and development of the children will tell the story. I am a Board Certified and Recertified OB/GYN who practiced Obstetrics for twenty-five years. I have six adult children, and one teenager, all walking with the Lord (five of whom are Wheaton College graduates). I am also a member of the Medial Advisory Board of G. F.I.

Sincerely,



John Curlin, M.D.

JC/ds