

Black Moms Say No to Nursing



The financial benefits of breast-feeding took center stage in the latest issue of [The Urban Shopper](#), a Shopping Lifestyle and Values web magazine, targeted to Black and Latino females. The web magazine devoted all of its six content channels exclusively to the financial impact of raising a baby.

"Milk-Made Wars" the title of the article looks at the health and wealth benefits of breast versus bottle-feeding baby. The issue of breast-feeding is really a sensitive one in the African-American community especially given the rate of premature infants and low-birth weight babies born to Black mothers. Only about 58% of Black mothers ever breast-feed compared to 81% of Latino and 76% of white mothers. After a year, almost half of Latino and white moms are still at it while only 13% of Black moms continue to breast-feed. Compared to bottle-feeding, breast-feeding baby can save a family about \$1,500 in the first year.

Reasons for the persistently low rates of breastfeeding among Black women are not well understood. Black women return to work faster than white women and more often work at places not supportive of breastfeeding. Income too is indicator of willingness to breast feed, with higher income families more likely to breastfeed. Certainly marketers and even hospital in patient gift bags "promote" formula to new mothers to the exclusion of breastfeeding. No one can argue the convenience of ready-made products for the many daily feedings a baby demands. However convenience is soundly trumped by the health benefits of breast-feeding baby.

The American Pediatric Society has a goal of 90% of babies being breast feed for the first year of life. First Lady Michelle Obama has been campaigning for more breast-feeding around her initiatives on childhood obesity. Breast-fed babies result in slimmer children. Last week, the Internal Revenue Service finally agreed to allow 2010 taxes to reflect the costs of pumps and milk bags. Women with flexible spending accounts can use pre-tax dollars to pay for nursing supplies and those who itemize can add them in as health care costs.

ABOUT THE URBAN SHOPPER

The Urban Shopper publishes consumerist content targeted to Blacks and Latinos focused on shopping smart, finding value, and creating greater awareness of the urban consumer marketplace.

Exclusively online, The Urban Shopper covers the full shopping spectrum including Food & Household, Leisure Living, Technology and Learning, Green Living, Personal Finance, and Wellness & Beauty. It is a one-stop destination for shopping insights, resources, and buying tools relevant to the urban shopping experience.

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