

## **My infant feeding journey – women’s experiences of infant feeding in the UK**

The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative is an independent research methodology which is used to analyse the state of a country’s infant feeding policy framework. It asks questions about whether there is a national infant feeding strategy, and whether it has national coordination, for example. The evaluation has been carried out in more than 100 countries. The scores are ranked. The UK Report was written by a group of infant feeding specialists independent of government. It shows that the UK’s infant feeding policy is much worse than in many other countries.

We are researching women’s experiences of infant feeding in the UK. We want to find out about the impact that central government policy has on individual people’s lives.

We are seeking stories from women to help us find out more about women’s experiences of infant feeding. We would like to involve all women in this project, whatever method of feeding was chosen (eg bottle, breast, formula, supplementary nursing system, expressed breast milk, donor breast milk, wet nursing, cross nursing, milk sharing, exclusive pumping, combination/mixed feeding, tube feeding).

### **What will I need to do?**

We would like you to write about your infant feeding journey. It can be as long or short as you like, it is your story. You might want to consider things such as how and why you decided to feed your child in a particular way, what support you had, what support you would have liked, whether you had any problems and challenges, how you felt throughout the journey. Please include anything and everything that you feel is important.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and consent form, and send it along with your story by email to [r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk) . You may also print out and post your story and questionnaire and consent form to

Ruth Stirton,  
Sussex Law School,  
School of Law Politics and Sociology,  
Freeman Centre,  
University of Sussex  
Falmer BN1 9QE

### **How will be we use your story?**

We are planning to use the stories in a variety of ways. In the first instance we will collect them together and analyse them for recurring themes. We hope that they will help us to understand more about the impact of UK infant feeding policy on individual mothers and babies. We will use them to flesh out recommendations to policy-makers for changes to UK infant feeding policy. We may wish to use some of the stories for media work to increase awareness of infant feeding policy in the UK. We will contact you again before using your story in this way. We would like to keep the stories as a repository of experiences for use in further research. We may wish to contact you to talk about your experiences in future research.

### **Anonymity and confidentiality**

It is entirely up to you whether you want your name to be known or to remain anonymous. You can write your story without including any identifiable information, or you can ask us to remove any identifiable information when we use your story. It is entirely up to you what information you provide in your story. If you would like your story to be used for media and policy work then we may wish to contact you again but this can all be carried out without identifying you. All personal information and contact information will be stored separately in a password protected file on University of Sussex servers.

You may withdraw your data from this research. Please contact Ruth Stirton at [r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk) if you want to withdraw your story.

### **Who is doing this research?**

The principal researcher is Dr Ruth Stirton, Lecturer in Healthcare Law, Sussex Law School, University of Sussex – <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/profiles/362706> Contact me at [r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk)

She is working in conjunction with the WBTi UK team - <https://ukbreastfeeding.org/> This is the group of infant feeding specialists who have written the WBTi UK report. They are independent of government and want to improve the UK's infant feeding policy for all mothers and babies. This group is not anti-formula.

### **Who has reviewed this research?**

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Sussex.

### **Who do I contact if I have any questions or complaints?**

If you have any questions about this research, please contact Ruth Stirton, by email on [r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:r.stirton@sussex.ac.uk).

If you have any complaints about this research, please contact Ruth in the first instance, or the Chair of the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, University of Sussex, Dr Liz McDonnell: [e.j.mcdonnell@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:e.j.mcdonnell@sussex.ac.uk)