

The Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force

Promoting Maternal and Infant Health through Breastfeeding

January 23, 1998

Dear Christian Leader:

The Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force is a collaborative group of agencies and individuals working together to promote maternal and infant health through breastfeeding and strives to increase the effectiveness of breastfeeding support and information dispersed 'in Santa Clara County. On behalf of the Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force, we would like to thank you for promoting breastfeeding to the families you serve.

In the past months, our task force has become aware of an increasing number of babies in Santa Clara County being seen within the medical and lactation community for failure to gain adequate weight. In the process of investigating this phenomenon, it was found that there are a number of parents in our community using information based on a program entitled, "Growing Kids God's Way", by Growing Families International. The book often used for this program is entitled Babywise, by G. Ezzo and F.L. Bucknam and promotes a technique called "parent-directed feeding" (PDF).

As a task force, we have researched this feeding method, as outlined in the book Babywise, and find these infant feeding practices contradict current scientific facts and contain medically incorrect statements. We strongly feel that if "parent-directed feeding" is followed as specifically outlined, it is likely to contribute to serious health problems for the infant – most likely dehydration and poor weight gain, leading to malnutrition, learning difficulties and other developmental problems. As a task force concerned about those in our community, this greatly alarms us.

Below is an excerpt from a letter recently written by a mother who had practiced "parent directed feeding" and whose infant consequently became ill. She asked that we share an excerpt of her letter that she wrote to the lactation consultant who helped her. Please note that this is one woman's viewpoint and that as a task force we are concerned about the feeding method being promoted by Mr. Ezzo.

"... I wanted to thank you... You were a God-send! Thank you for the information you have provided about the Ezzo method of parenting. It has really been a confirmation to me that this method truly isn't "God's Way" and I am deeply saddened by the babies who fall victims to his feeding methods. Ezzo seems to portray God as someone who is non-nurturing and rather indifferent to our children's needs. I know this is not true, as I have felt His comfort and presence in my own life. Doesn't God want us to provide the same comfort and nurturance to our own children, especially when feeding them?"

P.O. Box 53776, San Jose, CA 95153-0776

For your further review and information, we are enclosing the same information that the above mother found very helpful, "Preparation for Behavioral Pediatrics? A Biblical and Practical Critique of Preparation for Parenting: A Biblical Perspective", by Rebecca Prewett. In addition, enclosed is the recent statement by Grace Community Church, with whom Mr. Ezzo and Growing Families International were originally affiliated.

We thank you for your attention in this very important matter. If you should have further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact our task force at (408) 297-3814.

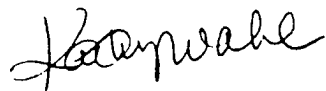
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Karen Foster in cursive script.

Karen Foster, R.D., C.L.E.
Task Group Chair, Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force

Handwritten signature of Beverly Morgan in cursive script.

Beverly Morgan, IBCLC
Chair, Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force

Handwritten signature of Kathy Wahl in cursive script.

Kathy Wahl, M.A., R.D., C.L.E.
Coordinator, Santa Clara Valley Breastfeeding Task Force

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