

Supportive Comments for Nursing Moms

Written by [Laurel Haring](#) Monday, July 07 2008 14:49

Since my article "Snappy Comebacks to Rude Breastfeeding Remarks" was so popular, I'm going to take a look at the opposite situation. That is, what can we say to or do for nursing moms that will make them feel better about their choice and help ease their way? Once you've nursed a child or been exposed to other women who do, it seems like you spot nursing moms everywhere. Some of them look quite comfortable, while others seem tense or nervous trying to cope with the newness of nursing their baby somewhere other than at home.

Since I'm a big advocate of making the world a nicer place and passing the goodness I experienced during my nursing days forward, I've been thinking about what I can do or say to help nursing moms or to at least show them that they're not alone.

Here's a list of things you can do to make a nursing mom feel more comfortable. (Note that this is for all nursing moms, but especially those who you may not know that well ... or at all.)

- **Smile at her.** As my karate instructor says, "A smile is the shortest distance between two people." And it's true. You don't have to speak the same language with words when you can speak the same language with a warm smile. The next time you see a mom who's nursing, give her a smile to let her know that one person, at least, is sending good vibes her way.
- **Talk with her.** It's not uncommon that people will avoid a mom who's nursing her baby. This is fine if what she wants is a little space and alone time. On the other hand, it could be that she'd love to talk with someone while she's feeding her baby and might welcome the company. The key here is to make eye contact and ask if she'd like some company. She does? Great! Please be sure to make eye contact with her at least one in a while instead of looking everywhere but in her direction. I'm hoping that her breast is covered; however, if it isn't, you have a few options. You could talk to her while facing in a different direction. You could ask her to cover up just a bit, since you're a little uncomfortable. Or you can always just smile and keep on moving; you certainly don't have to talk with anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable. Please be gentle, though: it may be that she is new to nursing is hasn't yet mastered the art of draping a cloth, blanket, or her shirt in a way that no skin is exposed.
- **Offer to get her something.** Who hasn't sat down to do something, only to remember that you meant to get a drink of water, a snack, that magazine you've been meaning to read, or any of a hundred other things? If you're not comfortable talking with a woman who's nursing but still wouldn't mind offering your support

in some other way, this is your chance. And you'll only need to make eye contact twice: once when you ask what you can get for her and again when you deliver the goods.

- **Make a supportive gesture.** This one is along the same lines as a sunny smile. You can give the woman a thumb's up or make the OK symbol or even just nod your head and smile. (However, please do not wink, especially if you're a man. You'll be sending a message that's almost guaranteed to make the nursing mom uncomfortable.)

Putting any of these suggestions into action – gently, and with consideration for the mom's feelings – can go a long way to making a nursing mother feel confident, comfortable, and thankful.

Do you have any ideas for helping nursing moms feel this way? I'd love to hear them. Please share your thoughts by leaving a comment or sending me an e-mail. I can't wait to hear from you!

Laurel Haring is a writer and editor. She and her family live in Wilmington, Delaware. Laurel makes a point of smiling at every mom she sees who is feeding her baby, whether by nursing or by bottle-feeding. Mothers of babies, like all of us, really need an "atta girl" every now and then.

<http://www.typeamom.net/supportive-comments-for-nursing-moms.html>