

# Breastfeeding Cafe

Connect, facilitate, nurture and empower

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Hello,

Hope everyone is already enjoying the crisp fall weather in the bay area. What a late summer it has been, with all the wildfires in Northern California, it made me think twice about if we are doing the right thing in keeping ourselves and our neighborhood safe. With a growing population and development and intrinsic fire proneness because of a bone-dry summer, California's wildfires have been occurring for centuries. But as hundreds and thousands of firefighters keep risking their lives and fighting the wildfires, maybe it's time to think about what we can change as a society and a community, which will reduce the possibility of this phenomenon of wildfires becoming house fires and destroying the neighborhood in communities, given the fact that wildfires have been a common phenomenon in these open spaces through centuries. Time to think, maybe?

## **Announcement:**

As we have discussed in our earlier newsletter, Breastfeeding Cafe is now an on-demand parent space where the immediate needs of parents will be addressed along with open-ended childcare. If you think we might be of help in addressing any of your requirements, don't hesitate to drop us an email, and we can take it forward from there. But just a small fact to keep in mind—we would only be addressing the request if you are a group of more than three parents. We believe in the power of being together as a community. More details coming up soon. Stay tuned. We always believe in the power of open-ended play, a lively conversation group among elders and a space suitable enough to support our needs where the needs of each and every customer can be addressed together to get the feel of a community. We feel giving parents the much needed "Me time" can help them a long way in their parenting journey.

If you think any cafe, bookstore, libraries, workspace, or anyone having a free space big enough to support a group's need would be interested in collaborating with us, drop us an email.

Here is a blurb to share with the [parent-students](#) of the bay area universities. We are trying to help them as they juggle studies and child care. Please spread the word.

## **Spotlight**

This week's spotlight is Christina Assirati, she is the Early Childhood Director, Honeybee Nursery Teacher at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula. Christina Assirati has many years of experience working in early childhood education in both private and Waldorf school settings.

She earned a BA in Education and BS in Health and Nutrition from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil; where she is originally from. In 2007, Christina received her Waldorf Teaching Certificate from the Arcturus Rudolf Steiner Teacher Training Program. In the spring 2016, Christina completed the RIE Foundation Course at the Resource for Infant Educators. She shared with us how do we support a child's play at home .

Breastfeeding Cafe team thanks teacher Christina for taking time out from her busy schedule to share this insightful article with our readers.

### **How to support your child's play at home.**

“One of the most common questions that parents ask me is how they can support their child's indoor play at home. I explain to them that it should be very simple, but it requires the parent's commitment to make a few changes in their daily routine. There are three essential elements that need to be in place in order for children to engage deeply in their play at home. Children need plenty of time, the right environment for play and limited interruptions from adults.

What do I mean by plenty of time to play? Nowadays, we live in a fast-paced lifestyle. Children have little time to play because of their busy schedules that consist of running errands, appointments, playdates and extracurricular activities. There is a need to slow down. Children need uninterrupted time to explore and play. Only when children are given enough time, they develop the ability to focus and lose themselves in their own imagination.

A good starting point is to analyze your busy schedule. We need to embrace the idea of slowing down and being courageous to say “no” to some activities, including play dates. Decide when, in your day, you can create a sacred moment dedicated just for your child to play indoors. Block at least a 30 minute time on your calendar every day for this “play period”. Be consistent with your new schedule. It takes about three weeks to form a new habit.

In order for your child to go deeply into play, all his basic needs should be met. He should not be tired, hungry or feeling sick. If possible, the “play period” should be scheduled after meal times. If your child is young, after breakfast is the ideal time as your child will be well rested and fed. Another good option is right after nap time.

How can you set up the right indoor environment for your child to play? The play space should bring a peaceful mood to the child. There should be no electronic sounds: turn off the tv, silence your phone, and take away toys that make sounds. Children need silence to deeply engage in play. Children are exposed to too much stimulation in their everyday life. Home should be a place where children find the peace and quiet they need.

Another aspect of the environment is the quality of your child's toys. If most of the toys are open ended they will ignite your child's imagination, and the quality of play will be richer. In order for a toy to be considered an open-ended toy, it needs to have the potential to mean something

different to your child, every time she plays with it. For instance, one day, a rock could be a cookie, the next day a cell phone, and the following day something else. Here are a few examples of open ended toys: wooden blocks, play cloths, silks, shells, sticks, rocks, simple dolls, and cardboard boxes.

It is essential to create a “child-friendly” environment where your child is safe and has a “yes” space to explore during play. Put away all objects of sentimental value, objects that are breakable, and small objects. You can also cover distracting objects (such as tv, video games, and computer) with beautiful cloths or old bed sheets.

What do I mean by the adult influence in a child’s play? It is essential that you observe your child more and intervene less. Every time you interrupt your child’s play you discourage his concentration. Observe for a good moment, sit close by for a while, you will be amazed how much you can learn about your child’s creative mind through observations.

Pay attention on how much you are talking to your child. Consider this period your child’s sacred play time. Avoid asking questions, saying good job all the time and interfering. With practice, you will realize that a simple nod, an eye contact and a warm smile is all your child needs to feel your presence.

During this “play period” it is wise not to use your phone or computer in front of your child, as it is too much of a distraction for her. The best activities for you are house chores like folding laundry, ironing or washing dishes. Hobbies such as sewing or knitting are also good options. When the children observe us doing repetitive actions they feel at peace with themselves. They know we are doing our work, while they are is busy playing.

If you agree with my suggestions, remember that it is very hard to put new ideas into practice. Be grateful for all that you already do for your child, and make only one change at a time. Go slow and be persistent. With time you will be surprised on how your child is so focused and engaged in his play, and you will be proud of yourself.”

We will comeback with few more updates soon, till then goodbye from all of us here.

Warm regards,  
Tanaya  
Founder, Breastfeeding Cafe