



TIME Magazine Cover Of Breastfeeding Mom Sparks Intense Debate

DETROIT (WWJ) - An attractive 26-year-old mom dressed in a tank top is featured on the cover of TIME Magazine with her 3-year-old son standing on a ladder, sucking on her semi-exposed breast. It's a provocative photo and people are quick to offer their opinion of it.

The cover features a California mom with her son for a story about attachment parenting – which includes breastfeeding beyond the World Health Organization-recommended one year, co-sleeping and “baby wearing.”

The mother, Jamie Lynne Grumet, said her mother breastfed her until she was 6-years-old. She said she's hoping that people will become more accepting of the practice the more they see it.

“I grew up this way and never thought about raising my kids differently,” said Grumet.

The decision to have the son stand on a chair was a deliberate one by the photographer, Martin Schoeller.

“When you think of breast-feeding, you think of mothers holding their children, which was impossible with some of these older kids,” Schoeller told TIME. “I liked the idea of having kids standing up to underline the point that this was an uncommon situation.”

Dr. Howard Belkin, a psychiatrist affiliated with Beaumont Hospital, said it may be all about the mom.

“If you going to do something either to or for a kid for an extended period of time, make sure it’s for the child and not for the mother. If this is solely for the benefit for the mother, then it just may not be for the benefit of the child,” Belkin told WWJ Legal Analyst and Talk Radio 1270 Morning Show Host Charlie Langton.

Time Managing Editor Rick Stengel told CBS News the image was meant to get people thinking.

“We’re posing an interesting question about a subject that couldn’t be more important — how we raise our children. People have all kinds of mixed feelings about that,” said Stengel.

The TIME cover has sparked intense debate nationwide and Metro Detroiters are sounding off, too. The debate isn’t just about the cover image, but also whether its ok to breastfeed beyond infancy.

Several people called the WWJ Listener Comment Line at 248-455-7230, and their reactions were mixed. Here are just some of the comments we received:

- “I hope that stores cover up the magazine cover.”
- “I think that breastfeeding should be normalized in America. It’s normal everywhere else.”
- “I think now that I’m going to go out and actually get a subscription to TIME Magazine.”
- “When this child’s classmates see this, they’re going to go out there and harass the kid.”
- “Oh, heaven forbid that we display a mother breastfeeding her child.”
- “I believe it’s the way that God intended our bodies to be, but it’s a personal thing. It’s not a spectator sport.”
- “Gross. Just gross.”
- “What happens when that kid is older and one of his friends throws that magazine down in front of him? He’s going to be mortified.”

- “I have nothing against breastfeeding if the child is of proper age. She is just doing this for herself, not for the child.”
- “That child is going to have problems in the future. It should not be allowed.”
- “In this instance, the way this framed and done, I don’t think the breastfeeding is for the child here. The mother is using the child to make some political statement.”
- “It’s ok for mothers to nurse their babies. However, even with a little baby, you’re supposed to use discretion and cover up. And she has no business on no doggone magazine, that’s a disgrace. Nursing the child isn’t the disgrace, but you don’t go around bare-breasted feeding a child. That is just ridiculous.”

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