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Is it okay for a complete stranger to tell you, as a new mum, how to feed your new-born? A small study today suggests that new mums feel judged and scrutinised when it comes to parenting - judged by strangers and family under undue pressure. members, and it puts them We can speak now to Anna Whitehouse who is 6 months pregnant and has a three-year-old daughter Maye. Ven Wong is here with her one-year old Kyler. seven-month-old Reggie is here. And Skye Blake with Rosamund Dean is Mum to Ezra and three-week-old Eden. Eden's with us. rush. Thanks for getting here.

Congratulations, this must be Eden. Yes. There she is. So, Rosamund, is it true that recently you felt you had to lie about breast-feeding to a total stranger? Yes! That did happen actually at the swimming pool at the weekend. Eden and I were in the viewing gallery watching my husband and toddler Sam splashing around in the pool and a woman came over and said what a lovely baby. Breast-fed? And this time around, my second child, I stopped breast-feeding earlier so she's formula fed now. Ridiculously, I said yes. I felt I didn't want to be judged by this stranger. Wow. Do you mind me asking how old the stranger was out of interest? She was in her 20s I would say or early 30s max. She didn't seem... So did you do that, you said because you didn't want to be judged but also was it easier because you didn't necessarily want to get into

the conversation about the decision you had the conversation about the decision you had taken? been a whole conversation. Of course and you would have had to justify your decisions. She knows nothing about you or Eden. Who else can relate to that? So he's breast fed, but I get asked when I'm putting him on formula. Really? Because it works for us, I don't have a plan any time soon. Why do you think you get asked that? Is it because you're young or look young or what? I think it's me being young definitely comes into it. But I think people think that breast, you breastfeed for a certain amount of time and then you just switch to formula, but if it works for me, I don't see why I need to, I mean he's perfectly happy and healthy and putting on weight. And what do you think of complete

strangers asking you about how you feed your child? I get complete strangers asking me as well. People on the bus. Just people I see at other play groups. I mean everyone is different. Extraordinary. Anna, why does everyone have an opinion? I don't know because there is so much more information out there. When my mum went through it all, there wasn't the internet and this abundance of how to parent, you just got on with it. I was in a pub garden with May when she was really young in the sun, just drinking. Had half apple juice and half soda, but in a pint glass and the judgement around me, it was actually from a younger generation like, "Should she either be here? Should she be drinking it that" I was like I love my kid. I'm just drinking apple

juice. There is also a kids play area at this pub. The pub understands you have children and that it's not suddenly a place of shame. I feel more judged at the moment on what I'm eating because I'm six months pregnant from everybody from somebody in a restaurant. Are you sure you want medium steak? Is that the waiter or the waitress? Without meaning it. They might be checking because they don't want to be held liable if something goes wrong? People feel they care about it, but also there is an implication that we're not. Do you have something to say about this What do you want to say? My mummy eats all of my food! Does she? Alyour fish fingers? We all do it! Hello. What about your experience? I mean I really agree with the

sentiment that social media as kind of made. It amplifies everything. Why does it? For me, I mean, I guess, it's information is more out there and more like easily accessible and for me it was more about the stories that I read, you know, on Facebook or online of incidents where people had, you know, issues breast-feeding in public. For me, I did breastfeed for six months and for me the biggest issue was worrying that people are looking at me and judging me for the way I'm breast-feeding or people walking out, people being judgemental about it because I had read so many stories. Did you actually experience it or were you worried about experiencing it? The thing is, I was so worried about it to the point where I didn't want to do it in public. Right. For me, I actually just hardly even left the house for six months because I was so worried of what other people

would think that I just fed him at home. You see those comments on Facebook. Comments all the time. I think you just think that's a representation of maybe what outsiders are thinking. It might be, but it doesn't help your mindset. My mum didn't have that. She didn't have that kernel planted in her mind that somebody might think it's terrible I'm feeding my newborn formula aged three weeks. I think it's really funny because parents and that generation will say to you, you guys have it so easy, we didn't have any of the stuff you've got now. I think it is more complicated now with social media ampifying everything and they didn't have that. It's crazy whether you're breast-feeding or bottle-feeding your baby you can feel worried about doing it in public because of the way you will be judged. What about being judged or scrutinised or put under pressure by your own parents

or siblings, relatives and close friends? Does that happen? I don't know about you guys, but I didn't experience that. My family were very, very supportive and very reassuring. My mother and mother-in-law said, you know, I didn't breastfeed for very long and my friend said, you know in a couple of years when you've got a toddler running around you're going to think I can't believe I spent any time worrying about giving me baby a bottle. So my family are very supportive. I found it more midwives. It's awful really, healthcare professionals weren't reassuring in that way. They were very, very, you know, they were very convinced about breast-feeding and that being the best thing. And that put pressure on you? Yes, absolutely. When my son who is now two-and-a-half, when he was three weeks old, I was really struggling with breast-feeding and I cracked nipples and had by expressing milk into a bottle and I thought it is fine because it's still breast milk

and the midwife said you shouldn't do that because your son wouldn't get antibodies he needs unless it comes from the breast. I researched that and there is no evidence for that, what a thing to say to an emotional, vulnerable new mum who is desperate to do the best thing for her baby. Who saw a mum fill up a baby's bottle with Dr Pepper recently? I was on a bus in Lleyton. It drew quite a interesting feeling of myself as a mother because I thought how easy is to for me to just judge that straightaway? But I have had days where I've fed her mainly chocolate because I've had a very difficult day and she won't eat anything else. I've had days where I have been throwing up so much because of HGV, morning sickness and the only thing I can eat for my bump

is, you know, three Mars bars. You don't know that circumstance and while that's not great and obviously not to advocate, I just felt actually, I can't judge that. Yes. It's not, for me, to judge. I don't know the circumstances that have led to that and I'm going to make that mother feel worse and ultimately, you need to be in an OK frame of mind as a mother, whatever is going on around you, that's more important, I think. Thank you so much for coming in with your delicious children. Thank you, I really appreciate it and good luck. All the very best, thank I really appreciate it and good luck. All the very best, thank you. Coming up