

to help me. He saw the small baby strapped to my front, and said with a knowing smile, 'Son, eh?'

'No, daughter.'

My reply made him stare in disbelief and he walked away mumbling to himself.

Another time we became the centre of attention at a building supply store. A male employee with a West Indian accent, seeing the sling, asked if I had broken my arm.

'I have my baby daughter in the sling,' was my reply.

'Hey man, come look dis,' he called to his friends.

I was soon surrounded by five black men who were eagerly touching the baby, asking questions and who seemed generally delighted to see such a healthy child with her father. I couldn't have been more pleased and proud.

At about six months Penny became too active to be confined to the cot or chair I had made to fit on Fiona's desk and began to spend more and more time with me. I still took her to Fi for the family lunch, but I now had contact with her twenty-

four hours a day.

What has been the cost to me, as the primary child caring parent? It did not cost me my freedom, because I was still able to work on various projects. I wasn't home-bound and frustrated, as some stay-at-home women are described. If anything, the care of our child has made me more patient and considerate. I had my 'alone time' when Penny did. She always had a good napping schedule, which allowed me two to four hours per day of unhindered work time.

I did about seventy percent of all cleaning, laundry and cooking, mostly when Penny was awake. I had the satisfaction of knowing Penny, her habits and foibles better than any other person. When she learned new things, I knew about them first. When Fiona had the flu and was home for about ten days (Penny was twenty months old), she was surprised to learn many things about our daily habits that she had not known or appreciated before.

Penny was about eighteen months old before she had any serious illness and I was

surprised at how much it affected me. The first time I held her limp and fevered body (she had a virus and high temperature) I cried. Tears rolled off my cheeks onto her. Was this a weakness, sissy behaviour? I think not. I felt a deep concern and sympathy for someone I loved and lived with closely, who was helpless and unable to care for herself.

Penny is now over two years old, and is in nursery school for half-days. Our infant son is two months old. We are carrying on with his nurturing just as we did with Penny.

Fiona is back at work after a maternity leave, taking Peter with her for most of the day. He will gradually spend more and more time with Penny and I as his feeding schedule allows.

In closing, I would like to mention a matter of discrimination in public washrooms, especially those on the children's floor in major department stores. Something should be done about the fact that women's washrooms have diaper changing tables but the men's washrooms do not!

Letter to Mr. Eaton

Dear Mr. Eaton,

Recently a friend of mine and I were shopping at Eaton's Centre with our babies and were very disappointed to find that there were no nursing facilities available where we could feed our children.

We were informed that the 3rd floor washroom had a changing counter and a chair but there was no chair in there when we checked. When we inquired further into the matter with saleswomen in the infantwear department we were treated rather abruptly. After no cooperation and wandering around the store with crying babies we finally found a fitting room. Not a great solution but passable.

It certainly would seem that the colossal new Eaton Centre with Canada geese by Michael Snow could afford to spend a little more money on practical items like a proper nursing station (with chairs that cannot be mysteriously removed) especially when you consider the role of the female consumer in supporting your institution.

And by the way, since Eaton's prides itself in being up on the latest fashions have you heard that breastfeeding is 'in'?

Thank you for your attention and I will look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely

Dr. Judith S. Posner

This letter was sent to Frederick Eaton, President, and a copy mailed to CWS/CF.