

WORKING MOTHER

Tia Mowry Nails Breast vs. Formula Debate: ‘Whatever You Can Feed Your Child, That’s What’s Important’

We need every new mom to take note.

By QUINN FISH DECEMBER 23, 2020

Our favorite working mom twin (OK, on par with her sister Tamera), Tia Mowry-Hardrict shed some light on the decades-old formula debate—and we’re here for it. In a *Working Mother* exclusive, the actress got real about mom-shaming, what’s *really* important to her as a working mom, and how she stays sane in the COVID era.

The *Sister, Sister* star is mom to 9-year-old Cree and 2-1/2-year-old Cairo with actor husband Cory Hardrict. She’s spoken with us before about her struggles with mastitis, especially with Cree, and in our most recent conversation, she opened up about how those struggles were especially hard in part because of her own negative feelings about formula-feeding.

“I was one of those moms that when, after three months of breastfeeding my son, I wanted to go longer, and I couldn’t,” Tia said. “I was crying giving my son formula, because there’s this stigma on formula.”

With time, she’s realized there’s no reason to feel bad about feeding your baby—however it happens. When model mommy Chrissy Teigen took to Twitter with her “normalize formula” rallying cry, Tia was *totally* rooting her on.

“I loved that she did that. I loved the way that she specifically said ‘formula,’” she said. “Whatever you can feed your child, that’s what’s important. And not only feeding your child, but giving them love, giving them attention. I believe in spoiling your baby, so whatever is accessible to your child, that’s what’s important. Not whether or not it’s breast milk or formula. If you can breastfeed, that’s amazing, kudos to you, but let’s not shame either/or!”

Amen, sister! Though Tia successfully breastfed Cairo for a year—and laughs that now her “boobs are hanging low to the ground”—she is quick to note that every mom and every baby is different.

“It’s hard raising a family, it’s hard raising a child, taking care of a newborn, all of it’s extremely hard —so let’s be a little kinder to one another when it comes to stuff like that,” Tia said. “Just focus on what works for you and what works for your family. Everybody’s on a different journey. Everybody parents differently. Everybody has different traditions when it comes to raising their family and their children. Who am I to say what works for your family?”

Take that, mom-shamers. When it comes to what works for *her* family, Tia emphasized the importance of self-care. “Now more than ever, this is the time where my family really, really needs me. And I need to be the best that I can possibly be, meaning with my health, my wellness, my energy, being present, and taking care of yourself, it helps with all of that.”

She tries to exercise and meditate daily, specifically with binaural beats, soothing two-toned sounds that have been proven to have positive effects on mood, anxiety, memory, creativity and attention. Though Cree can only take a few minutes of meditation before he “bounces off the walls,” Tia and Cory are able to practice together. (Another pandemic hack? She spoke to us on behalf of Whirlpool’s first-ever Swash liquid laundry detergent, which she describes as “perfect for every working mom.”)

No matter how you plan to stay afloat the rest of the pandemic, let Tia’s wise words serve as the reminder we all need to hear: “We’re all in this thing together. More than anything, as moms, we need each other. That’s why community is so important to me when it comes to motherhood. It’s because, yes, this is hard—we just need each other’s encouragement.”

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