Today’s piece was prepared by David Marriott, MS-4, based on a New York Times story, [Breast-Feeding Has No Impact on I.Q. by Age 16](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/well/family/breast-feeding-has-no-impact-on-iq-by-age-16.html)

The article cites findings from a paper studying the relationship between breastfeeding and IQ. The article focuses almost exclusively on the largest conclusion from the paper which is that the neurocognitive differences between exclusively breastfed vs. “usual care” infants diminish by the time children reach 16 years old. The article is very persuasive in that it uses bold language and avoids complex or lengthy discussion, maintaining reader interest. It is from a reputable periodical and includes a quote from the study’s primary author adding validity and clarity to the report.

The biggest issue with the article is its brevity, helping readers avoid getting lost or confused but omitting important details and nuances of the paper, such as definitions of how long children were exclusively breastfed (≥ 3 months), the magnitude of differences that were statistically significant, or the fact that this is a follow-up study of children who had been measured at age 6.5 years. The strong language becomes problematic as there is a contradiction in the piece where at one point the author says “no-discernable differences” though later concedes that there are in fact differences between the two groups’ verbal IQ scores. Some of the discussion in the original paper, such as exactly how breastfeeding might enhance verbal IQ, would provide helpful recommendations for both breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding mothers.

A big concern is that readers will read the (inaccurate) title and the detail-sparse article and walk away thinking that the pendulum is swinging away from breastfeeding. While the neurocognitive benefits of breastfeeding may reduce substantially by adolescence, the multitude of other benefits should not be forgotten.

**RESOURCE ON BREASTFEEDING:**[WomensHealth.Gov - Breastfeeding](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.womenshealth.gov_Breastfeeding_&d=DwMF-g&c=aBkXpkKi7gN5fe5MqrMaN-VmRugaRb1IDRfSv2xVRy0&r=oP9RZ_hRRKW_Un11N-mm61QOfZnOirJ5OCPxH9cojE4FKc2kQg3hWFs1dnM2lTmQ&m=UJshw8WNnmo43FbQESRMG8W-uGdhyNJevkqZwtl1cqs&s=jEpEs5ojXAz69mQR-Jd0wvJTHBXkp7QdIXTHAH0kpfw&e=)  *A website intended for use by mothers and mothers-to-be that is easy to navigate and is visually appealing. It is created by The Office on Women's Health under the DHHS. It has an FAQ, practical breastfeeding tips, breastmilk pumping/storing information and contact numbers for a breastfeeding helpline and the WIC program. All resources and phone numbers have Spanish availability.*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!