don't listen to the "shoulds"


Abstract (Document Summary)

Hanauer shares five rules in child care, which is okay to break. Among others, a mother should breastfeed no matter what.

Full Text (1503 words)

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each time I watch Phoebe, my 10-year-old daughter, soar down the soccer field, I wonder: Is it possible it's been a decade since we first brought her home, that chubby-cheeked human doll in a hat? Ten years since I had my first panic attack about how to wash her sweet little head and diaper her tiny red butt?

When I think back to those early days of Phoebe's existence, along with the joy and the exhaustion, I remember feeling a whole lot of stress about whether I was doing things "right." From the What to Expect guide exhorting me to eat bran and broccoli when I could barely keep down ice chips, to the mothers in my baby group who'd already signed up their infants for music classes, I found myself swirling in advice and anxiety about what I "should" do. Ah, to have known then that most of those seemingly huge musts I tortured myself about would feel so minor in a few years. Allow me to elaborate:

1 You should have a natural childbirth.