

Asimilador Cultural

Read through the following situation and decide which of the four responses would be the most appropriate. Check your response at the end of the section to see if you were right. If you were great, if not try again.

Incident:

You in a good sized town in Mexico and you are visiting with a family that you just meet in the neighborhood through a mutual friend. In the family there is a relatively young baby and during a conversation with the family the mother leans down picks up the child and starts to breast-feed. What do you do?

Possible Responses:

1. Obviously this is a cue for you to leave so you get up and leave the house.
2. You continue chatting, because although this seems strange to you everyone else is acting quite normal.
3. You comment that no one in *your country* would ever think of doing that around mixed company.
4. You kindly ask that the mother not do that in front of you because you find it offensive.

Retorts:

Option 1. You chose poorly. Breast-feeding in public is normal in most Spanish countries (and many other countries also). If you were to get up and leave the family might be offended.

Option 2. You have chosen wisely. It is natural for a mother in Mexico to breast-feed in front of company without thinking twice about it.

Option 3. Wrong! You have just built a barrier between you and the family that will be hard to tear down by implying that *your country* is better than theirs.

Option 4. Try again. Even though you ask with all the tack in the world that she not do that, the odds are the family will still be offended. The family probably does not realize that that is a cultural faux pas where you are from. To them it is perfectly normal.