



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Mothers' Milk, the 'Magic Pudding', and Maternity Protection Money



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▪WABA UNICEF Symposium on Breastfeeding and Work, Stockholm, 25-29 September 2005



The Magic Pudding ...

which, no matter how often it is eaten, always re-forms in order to be eaten again.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23625/23625-h/23625-h.htm>

Key messages

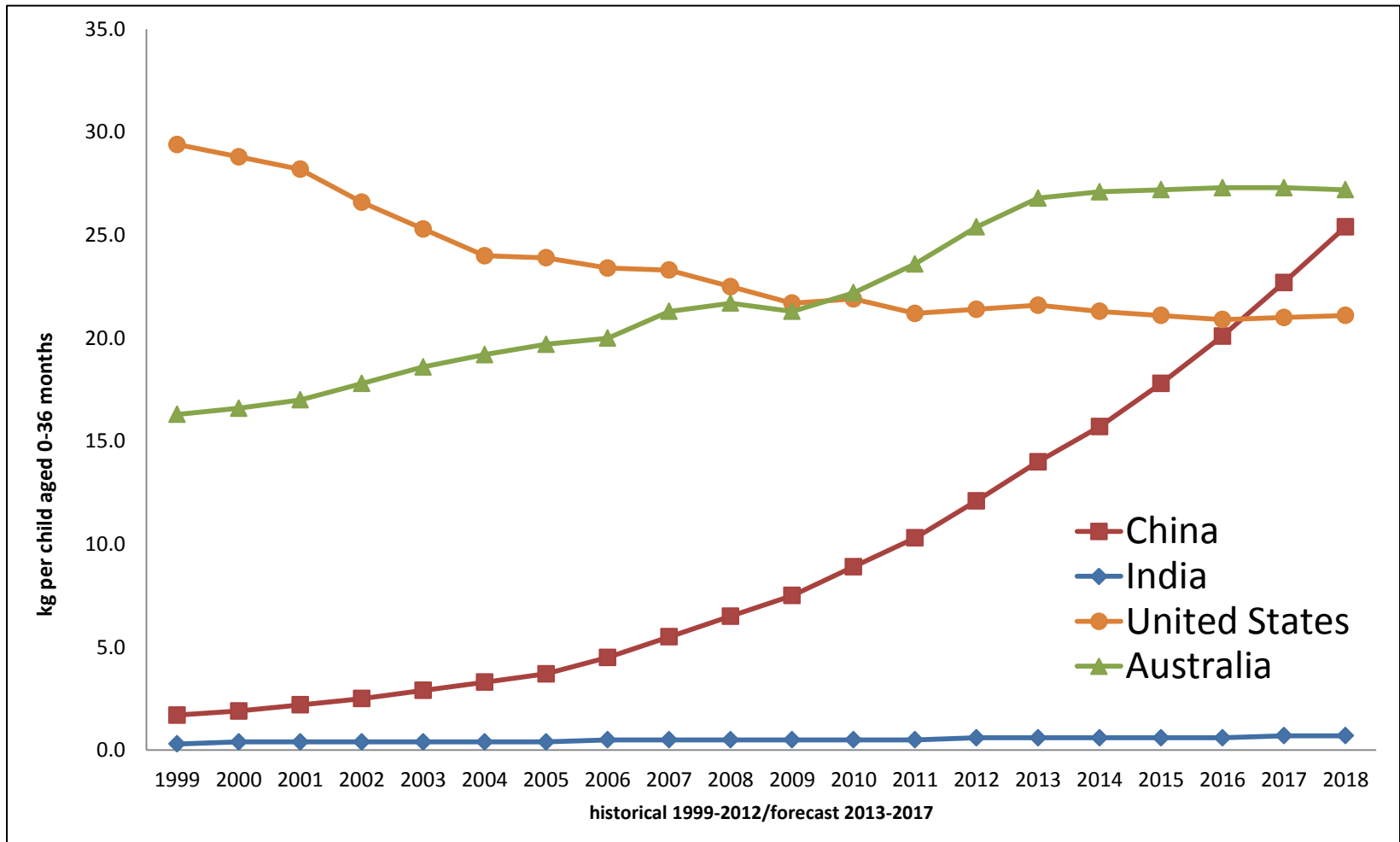
Messages

- Mothers milk is an important food commodity, but the resource is being eroded by lack of protection from market competition
- There is a need to protect and resource the mothers so they can properly nourish the babies as well as share fairly in human development and economic progress
- Maternity leave, breastfeeding breaks, workplace support, accessible childcare
- We need focussed strategies and goals to urgently shift the effective burden of funding Maternity Protection away from women and children

Themes

- Maternal depletion and the Magic Pudding of Care
- The 'Pudding Thieves'; Lack of Time, Support and Proximity
- Replenishing the Magic Pudding - financing maternity protection

Disturbing trends



Smith, J. P., J. Galtry and L. Salmon, 2014 Confronting the formula feeding epidemic in a new era of trade and investment liberalisation. *Journal of Australian Political Economy*(73): 132-171.

1 Australian Dollar equal 6 Swedish Krone

Each dollar spent on formula adds a dollar or more to health system costs of treating acute illness

- **Australian hospital system costs of premature weaning were estimated at \$60-120 million pa for just 4 conditions (gastrointestinal illness, respiratory illness, eczema & NEC)**
- **US study showing avoidable child health treatment costs including later life chronic illness of \$10.5 billion p.a. from poor US breastfeeding rates**

Smith, J.P., Thompson, J.F., and Ellwood, D.A. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 2002

Bartick, M. and A. Reinhold (2010). "The burden of suboptimal breastfeeding in the United States: a pediatric cost analysis." *Pediatrics* 125(5): e1048.

Pokhrel S, Quigley MA, Fox-Rushby J, McCormick F, Williams A, Trueman P, et al. Potential economic impacts from improving breastfeeding rates in the UK. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*. 2014 December 4, 2014.

... later chronic disease

- **US study calculates the maternal health, morbidity and mortality costs of suboptimal breastfeeding to be more than \$17 billion**
- **UK study estimates health care system saving from increasing breastfeeding of £40 million per year including reductions in the costs of maternal breast cancer**
- **In Australia, around 8-24% of current chronic disease cases are from high formula feeding in previous generations**

**Can countries afford this avoidable burden on their health system?
How will they afford to provide universal health care?**

Bartick, M. C., Stuebe, A. et al, (2013). Cost analysis of maternal disease associated with suboptimal breastfeeding. *Obstet Gynecol*, 122(1), 111-119.

Renfrew, M. J., Pokhrel, S., et al., (2012). Preventing disease and saving resources: UNICEF UK.

Smith JP, Harvey PJ. Chronic disease and infant nutrition? *Public Health Nutrition* 2011;14(02):279-289.

'Lost' production of human milk for infants, 0-24 months, p.a.

Country	Lost value of human milk (US\$ million) ^{d)}	Lost value as (% of potential) ^{e)}
Australia	4,016	53
United States	63,113	58
Norway	598	40

Smith, J. P., 2013 "Lost Milk?" Counting the Economic Value of Breast Milk in Gross Domestic Product
Journal of Human Lactation **29(4): 537 - 546.**

Folbre, N., 2002, The Revolt of the Magic Pudding; How to reshape a labour market that simply doesn't care.
Australian Financial Review(5 April): 4-5.

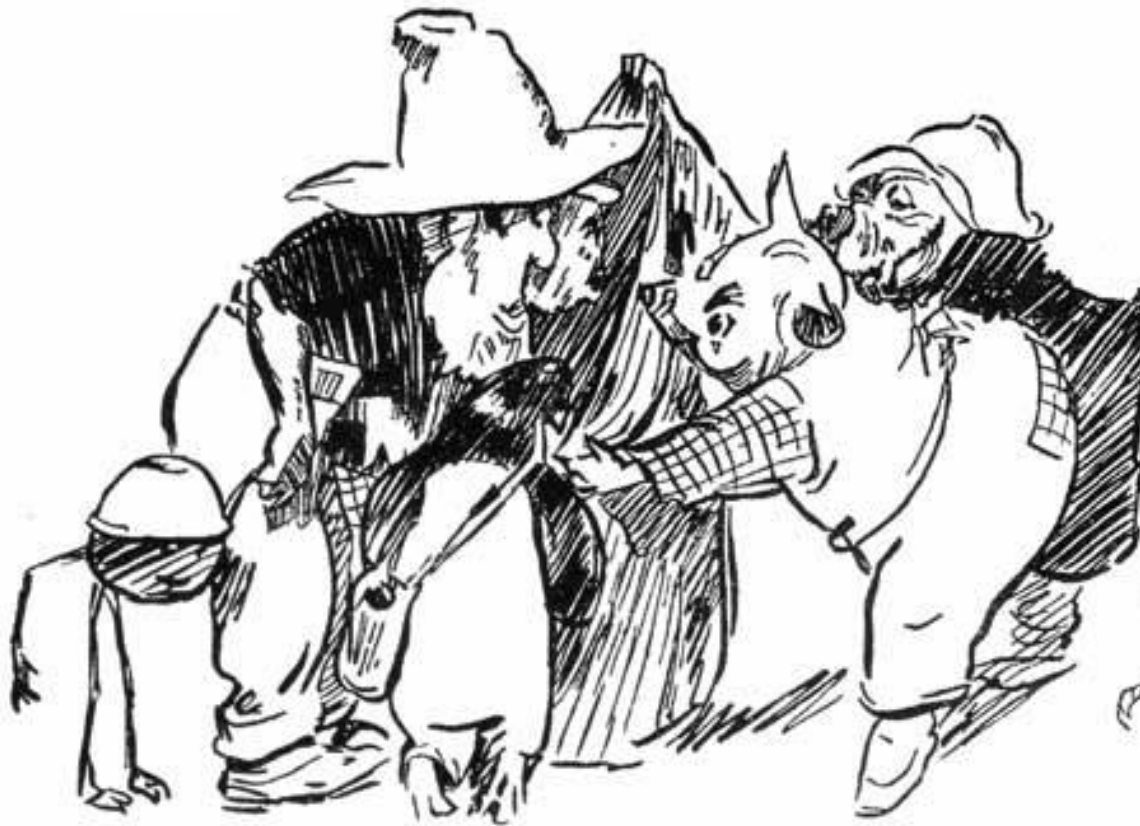
Misleading GDP measurement biases policymaking against women

- Two Nobel Prize winners in economics, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen agree that human milk should be counted in GDP as excluding it biases policymaking

“There is a serious omission in the valuation of home-produced goods – the value of breast milk. This is clearly within the System of National Accounts production boundary, is quantitatively non-trivial and also has important implications for public policy and child and maternal health.”

- This is part of a worldwide pattern of undervaluing women’s economic contribution.
- Lack of accounting for women’s unpaid work including in breastfeeding results in economic injustice, and lack of resources for women and children.

Stiglitz, J.E., Sen, A., and Fitoussi, J.-P. (2009) The measurement of economic performance and social progress revisited; Reflections and overview, Centre de recherche en économie de Sciences Po (OFCE).



Pudding thief 1 – Insufficient time ...

... for mother and child to establish and maintain breastfeeding (maternity leave, breastfeeding breaks, rest time)

The real 'Gender Gap' is in pay not work

Policy moves to increase mothers workforce participation

Tony Abbott Leads G20 Charge To Close Gender Gap - Yahoo!7

The Prime Minister is taking an ambitious plan to the Brisbane summit that hopes to close the international gender gap by 25 per cent by 2025.

marie claire
November 3, 2014, 9:20 am



Brisbane's G20 Opening Ceremony. Photo: Getty Images.

As Brisbane – and the world – gears up for the G20 summit, which will take place over the weekend of November 15 and 16 in the Queensland capital, it has been revealed that one of the summit's biggest targets will be closing the world's gender gap.

The campaign is being led by Australia – and Prime Minister Tony Abbott – and aims to reduce the worldwide gender gap by 25 percent by 2025, injecting billions of dollars of growth into the world's economy, *The Australian* reports. Currently, Australia's gender gap is the highest it has ever been, sitting at 18.2 per cent, meaning that women earn just 81.8 cents for every dollar their male colleagues make.

Home

G20 LEADERS AGREE TO REDUCE GENDER EMPLOYMENT GAP

16 November 2014

Prime Minister

G20 leaders have committed to reducing the gap in participation rates between men and women by 25 per cent by 2025.



THE AUSTRALIAN

G20 to target the gender gap

DAVID CROWE AND DAVID UREN THE AUSTRALIAN NOVEMBER 03, 2014 12:00AM

WORLD leaders are negotiating a major pledge to be unveiled within weeks to break down barriers facing millions of women as Tony Abbott puts the social and economic reform on the agenda at the G20 summit in Brisbane.

Australia is building support among G20 nations to close the gender gap in workforce participation in the hope of lifting women out of temporary or unpaid work and into secure jobs.

Breastfeeding takes time

- ❖ Exclusive breastfeeding is time intensive for mothers
- ❖ This may lead to premature weaning for women who
 - ❖ are time-stressed,
 - ❖ get little assistance with care of the infant or other children from family, or
 - ❖ cannot afford paid help including suitable childcare.



Mothers fund maternity protection!

- **Only in three mothers can access maternity leave**
- **Mothers invest in breastfeeding by devoting their time and skill to it.**
- **Breastfeeding is work, and takes time. Time is money.**

<i>mean weekly hours</i>	EBF	Not EBF
Milk feeding*	18.2	11.6
Solids feeding**	0.1	2.5
Preparing feeds*	0.4	1.4
Total	18.7	15.4

Smith, J. P., & Forrester, R. (2013). Who pays for the health benefits of exclusive breastfeeding? An analysis of maternal time costs *Journal of Human Lactation*, 29(4), 547 - 555.

Early return to work = less optimal breastfeeding

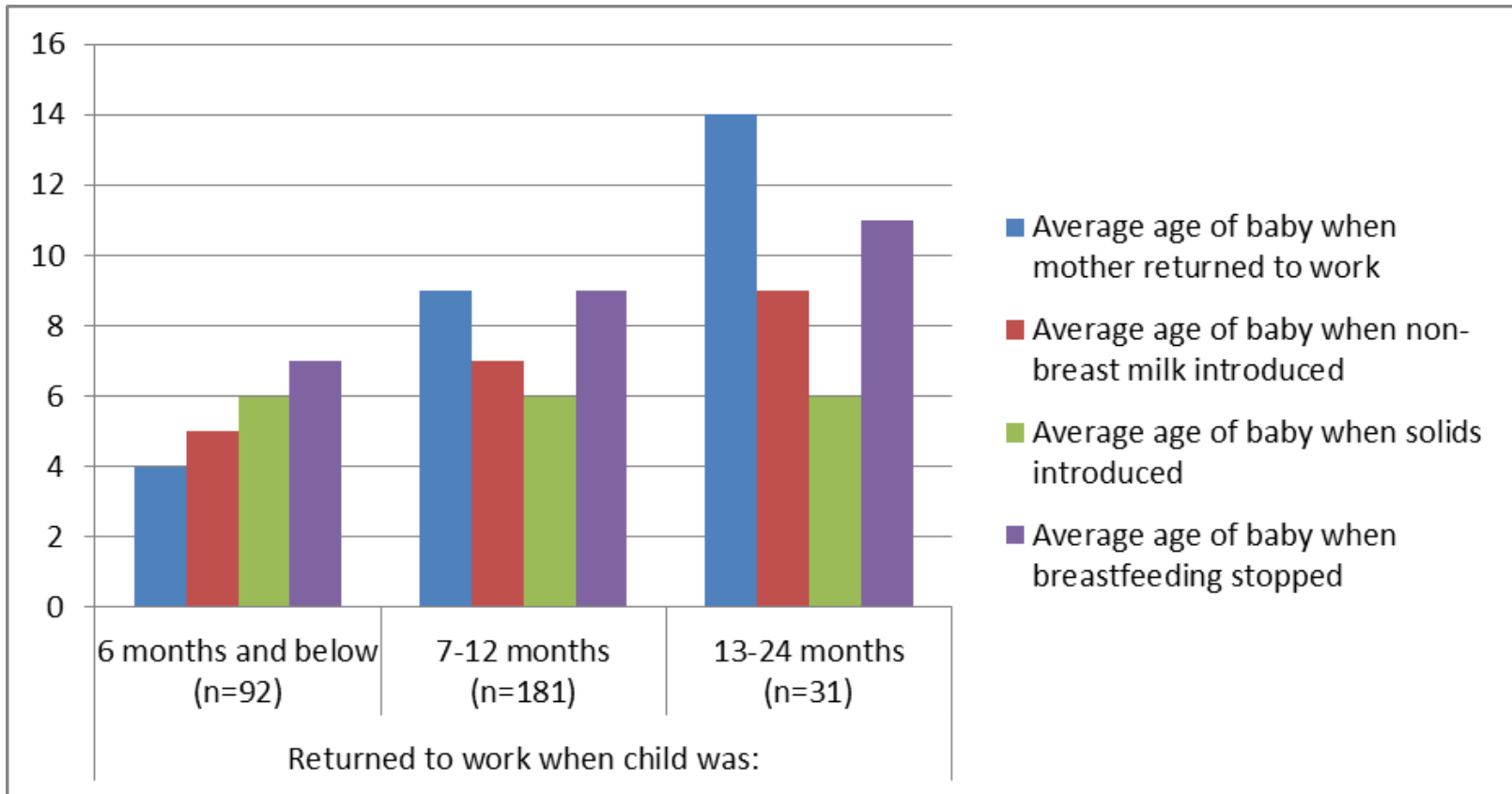
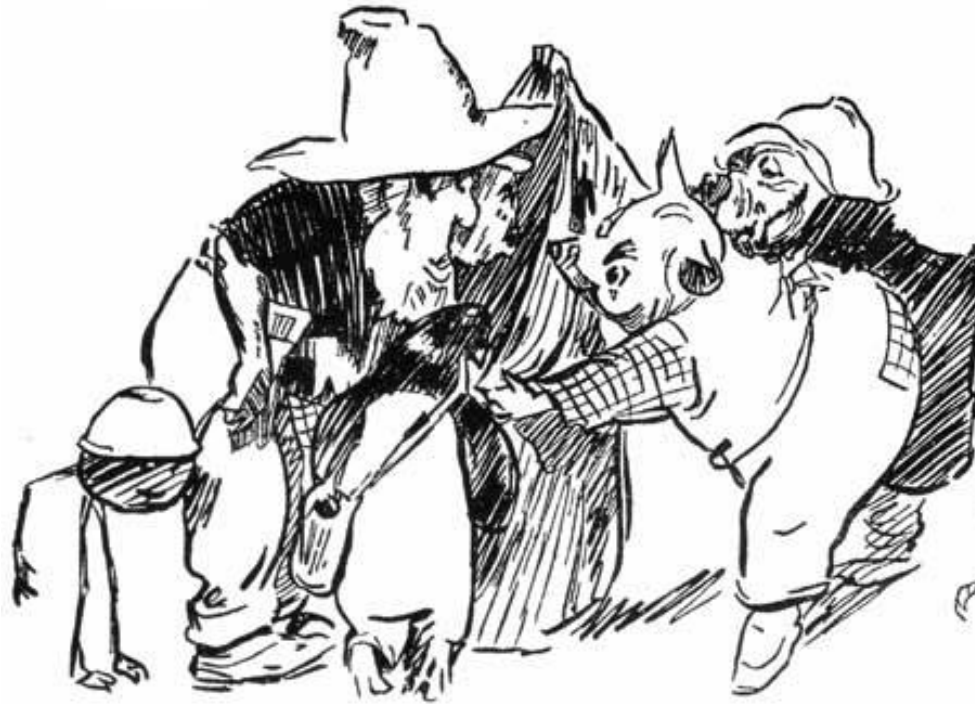


Figure 1 Infant feeding milestones by age of baby when mother returned to work



Pudding thief 2 – Lack of support from employers, family, community ...

... after return to work, mothers need security of a breastfeeding friendly workplace (employer, co-workers)

Workplace factors linked with exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months?

Current work arrangements (full time/part time)

Can adjust hours to accommodate need to breastfeed or express milk^a

Written policy of supporting mothers who express breastmilk/breastfeed @ work?^c

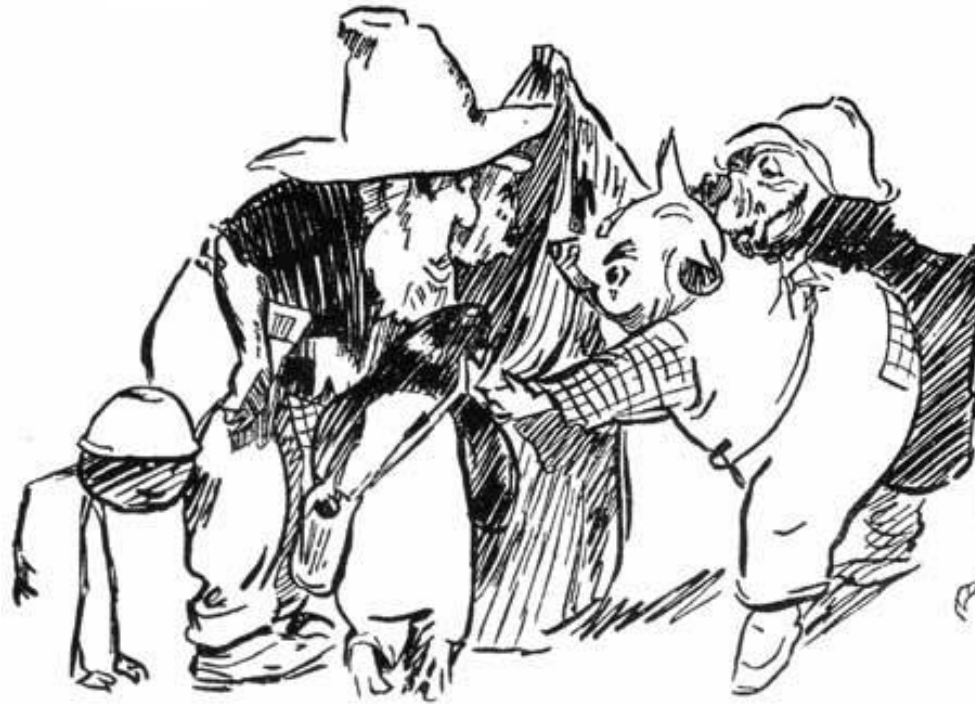
Have a say over hours worked^a

Have a say over start and finish times^a

Able to take long enough or frequent enough lactation breaks^b

- Risks losing job if expresses breast milk or breastfeeds at work^a
- Would have returned to work sooner if workplace supportive of breastfeeding^a
- Managers/colleagues think poorly of workers who express breastmilk/breastfeed @ work^a

Smith JP, McIntyre PE, Craig APL, Javanparast DS, Mortensen K. **Workplace support, breastfeeding, and health.** *Family Matters* 2013;93(December):58-73.



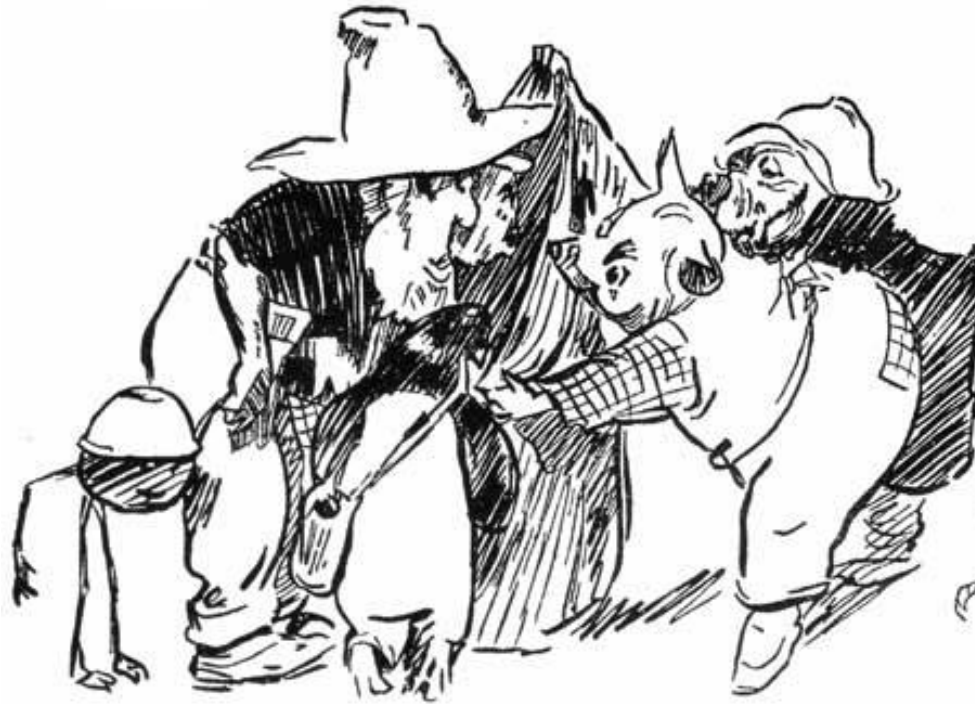
Pudding thief 3 – Separation and lack of proximity ...

... alternate caregivers may not be nearby, to enable breastfeeding to continue while the mother is at work

- **Breastfeeding is 10 per cent higher among working mothers of infants aged 4-12 months who use only parental care rather than other forms of childcare.**
 - Higher breastfeeding among self employed women may reflect using parental childcare
 - Poor knowledge and skills among childcare providers
 - Quality improvement needed

Baxter J. Breastfeeding, employment and leave; an analysis of mothers in *Growing Up in Australia. Family Matters*. 2008;80:17-26.

Smith, J. P., S. Javanparast, E. McIntyre, et al., 2013, Discrimination against breastfeeding mothers in childcare. *Australian Journal of Labour Economics* **16(1): 65**.



The Corporate Pudding Thieves ...

... companies target working mothers vulnerabilities

“Trends in Baby Food New Product Development”

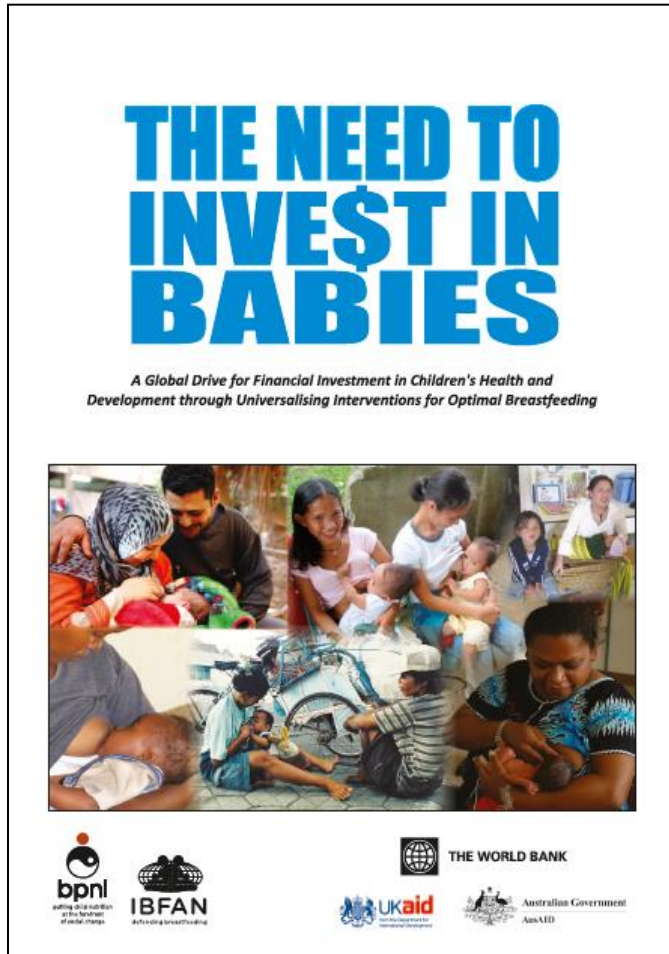
“With an increasing number of mothers returning to work after giving birth, products that help babies sleep better could have a wide appeal.”

Source: Euromonitor International



Translating as “Sleep Well Milk”, Milupa claims this helps babies sleep

Global funding needed for action...



Action Area	USD in billions)
Maternity Entitlement	12.6
BFHI Implementation	2.0
Community support/HW training	1.6
International Code Implementation	0.5
Media Promotion	0.7

Maternity protection resources the mother to protect the baby, and replenishes the Magic Pudding of Care



Financing maternity protection

- Conceptual framework for options
 1. Status quo, mothers, babies and families mostly pay via foregone earnings and compromised wages; long term costs to government and society
 - Variations: loan scheme, savings accounts etc
 2. Employers pay: depresses wages for women unless equal bargaining, discrimination
 3. Pooled financing: reduces discrimination, incidence of costs and benefits more widely shared, burden on industry
 4. General revenue financing
 - Variations: social security levy or proportional levy on personal income; valued added taxation, specific taxes on relevant products
 5. Combination of the above

- **Breastfeeding is economically valuable and cost saving**
- **Markets set incentives which erode breastfeeding**
- **Mothers are effectively paying for maternity protection,**
- **It is time to share the burden: 2019 priority goals**
 - ✓ **GOAL 1 on paid maternity leave - No mother and baby below the relevant national poverty line during the first 6 months, assisted by global fund and international agencies**
 - ✓ **GOAL 2 on workplace support - Breastfeeding breaks legislated in all countries as a minimum employment standard, assisted by tax breaks for employers and earmarked levy**