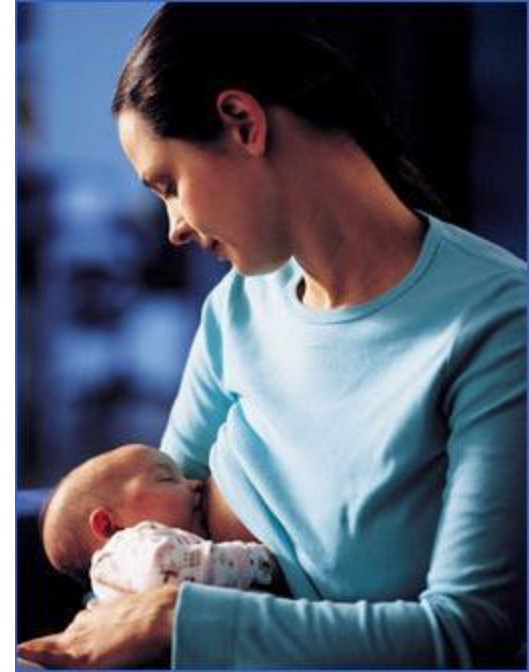


Overcoming gender bias in the support of the breastfeeding working woman



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GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH



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BREASTFEEDING INSTITUTE
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Outline

- Why should families risk economic repercussions in order to breastfeed?
- What support is needed for paid leave and workplace accommodation?
- What challenges remain for breastfeeding rates to increase within and beyond the workplace?

What is “Breastfeeding” ?

- **Breastfeeding**

May be “any” breastfeeding, only partial

- **Exclusive breastfeeding**

Nothing else for six months

- **Breast milk feeding**

May be exclusive, but may not be from mother or involve contact with her

- **Many** variations in feeding behaviors, and with infant’s age



All Babies INTEND to Breastfeed...



Optimally from birth exclusively for 6 months and continued for up to 2 years and beyond without another competing pregnancy....

Tean Hall Mills, Staffordshire potteries C18th – breastfeeding hole in door



Swarovski factory in Bangkok – mothers' room





Why should families risk economic repercussions in order to breastfeed?

- Women tend to earn less than men, due to gender bias
- Women's income may be necessary to meet basic needs or lifestyle expectations.
- Why would such a couple choose to invest in breastfeeding?



Why should families risk economic repercussions in order to breastfeed?

- Lifetime savings due to reduced health risk for mother and child
- Lower health costs can outweigh the income lost for a year or so per child.
- Improved development, scholastic achievement, earnings as adult
- BUT without paid leave, this becomes an almost impossible decision for a young family



Outline

- Why should families risk economic repercussions in order to breastfeed?
- **What support is needed for paid leave and workplace accommodation?**
- What challenges remain for breastfeeding rates to increase within and beyond the workplace?

What support is needed for breastfeeding success?

1. Rights of baby and mother to breastfeed must be guaranteed and respected.
2. Skilled practical help and facilities must be available
3. Circles of support must go beyond family.
4. Ultimately, the circles of support require government involvement.



Areas where rights must be guaranteed and social and skilled breastfeeding support implemented

Government, Legislation, Policy

Community Services and Workplace

Social Community

Family/individual



Extended family, social and religious groups.

Hospitals, Businesses, Police, Education,
trade unions

Rights, protection, laws, regulation



Outline

- Why should families risk economic repercussions in order to breastfeed?
- What support is needed for paid leave and workplace accommodation?
- **What challenges remain for breastfeeding rates to increase within and beyond the workplace?**

Challenges: Full commitment to address the “*four pillars*” and the base of support

1. Government commitment
2. Health System
 - Education of health professionals
 - Quality assurance for practices
3. Control of formula marketing
 - Media
 - Health personnel
4. Workplace
 - Paid leave, breaks, facilities
 - Co-located child care



**+ COMMUNITY
SUPPORT
WITH
DEMAND
CREATION**



What challenges remain?

There is real confusion and often conflict between the issues of:

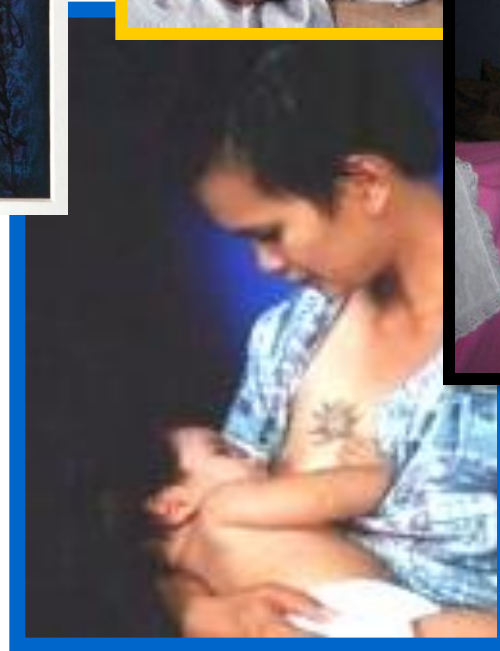
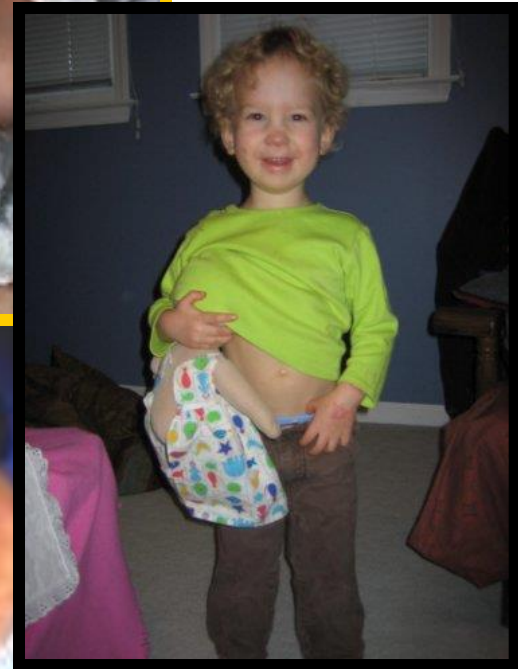
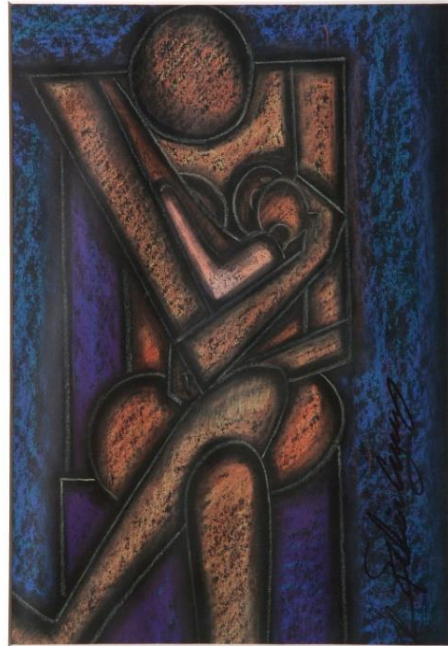
- Gender acceptance and equity, vs acceptance of overt sexuality/sexual prejudice,
- Public acceptance vs shaming or disregard
- Preventive health vs need for treatment
- Protection against false and misleading advertising vs free marketing
- Those who prioritize optimal health for all family members vs those who resist changes needed to support breastfeeding women in the workplace

We must fight against the inertia and prejudice that work against best outcomes.



Breastfeeding for health: A global human right

- The responsibility for enabling women to breastfeed lies at national level as a human right
- ***Failure to breastfeed is not a woman's "failure" but a national failure with life-threatening consequences.***



Thank you