

## The World Celebrates World Breastfeeding Week 2004

Tell us how you celebrated WBW 2004 and at the same time inspire others to stimulate similar activities in their respective countries.

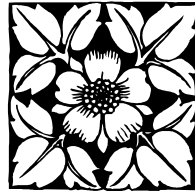
Best of all is you send in your stories together with our WBW 2004 Feedback Form\* and you will be entitled to receive Free Gifts worth US\$60. All you have to do is to send us your stories by 30th November 2004 and you will receive an exclusive WBW 2005 Banner and 10 WABA-UNICEF Golden Bow Pins.

*\*The Feedback forms are available with the WBW 2004 Action Folders or you can download them from [www.waba.org.my](http://www.waba.org.my)*

**More WBW 2004 stories in our next issue!**

## Enclosures with this Issue

- WABA Publications Catalogue and Order Form
- Why ensure exclusive Breastfeeding for all babies?
- Prevention of Infant HIV - What we need to know about breastfeeding and HIV
- Mainstreaming Gender in Breastfeeding Programmes What's breastfeeding got to do with gender issues?
- US Declaration on World Breastfeeding Week



## UNICEF: Breastfeeding can save over 1 million lives yearly

On the eve of World Breastfeeding Week 2004, UNICEF issued a press statement saying that by expanding the number of women who exclusively breastfeed during their child's first six months, at least 1.3 million infant lives could be saved this year. UNICEF also called for greater global commitment to protect, promote breastfeeding.

Every year, more than 10 million children die mainly from preventable causes including diarrhoea, pneumonia, measles and malaria. If every baby were exclusively breastfed from birth to six months, an estimated 3,500 children's lives could be saved each day, UNICEF said.

*The World Health Organisation (WHO) commissioned a systematic review of more than 3000 published scientific literature. The findings confirm that exclusive breastfeeding meets all the nutritional needs of a baby for the first six months of life.*

"Simply put, if a child dies a preventable death, it's because mothers and infants are not getting the basic support they need", said UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy. "Breastfeeding - the most natural act of mother and newborn - has not been supported for what it is: the key to good health and development for millions of children".

Source : UNICEF, [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_22646.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_22646.html)



## Hot from the Press



*The United States government makes a formal declaration on World Breastfeeding Week. A copy of the proclamation by the Secretary of Agriculture is included with this issue of Wabalink.*



*Indian Minister of State for Human Resource Development, launches two important publications, National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding and The Law to Protect, Promote and Support Breastfeeding on 6 August 2004.*

## Image of Nipple during Breastfeeding Axed from UK TV

Prudish British censors have censored a glimpse of an exposed nipple in an advertisement promoting the joys of voting in the European Elections.



The opening shot of a baby deciding on which nipple to feed from was deemed too be "too overtly sexual" by the Cinema Advertising Association for the British version.

Made by the European parliament's own audio-visual department, the advert of universal images was intended to be screened in all 25 countries delivering the message at the end: "You've been voting since you were born: Don't stop now - European parliament elections, 10th of June".

Julia Drown, the Labour member of the British parliament who campaigned in favour of breastfeeding after she was banned in a UK House of Commons committee room, said: "This is a strange decision. If the British are offended by bosoms, why do we have millions thrust in our faces everyday by the tabloids".

It is noted that for the rest of Europe, the image was received as fantastic. Italy, Germany and France showed the advert on daytime TV without the editing. There was quite a lot of chuckling within Europe about the English being a prudish nation.

Source : *The Guardian, London, May 23, 2004*

## Cappuccino for Mummy but no breastfeeding for baby - Starbucks



A mother who was breastfeeding her 15-month old daughter in a Starbucks in Maryland was told by the Starbucks employee to cover up in a blanket or breastfeed in the bathroom.

The mother protested and eventually got the regional Vice-President of Starbucks to recognise a Maryland law that allows mothers to breastfeed their children in public.

More than a two dozen mothers staged a breastfeeding "nurse-in" at a Starbucks store to get the world's largest coffee shop chain to adopt a policy allowing breastfeeding in all its 5,882 stores in the US, and not only in Maryland.

Source: *Reuters/NST Aug 12, 2004*

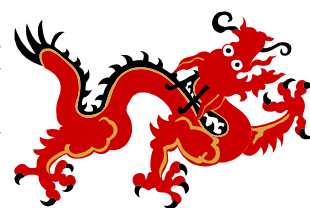
## Nutricia Breaks Its Promises Again in China

Nutricia has once again been caught by the International Code Documentation Centre (ICDC) in China, distributing a popular CD with children's songs as an incentive to buy the "Kissing my Baby 1" infant formula.

Back in February 2004, ICDC learnt that Nutricia had at least 50,000 CDs (possibly 100,000) in stock for a new promotional campaign in China. ICDC immediately issued an alert, pointing out that the campaign was against Chinese law as well as against the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Both the Code and Chinese rules prohibit gifts to mothers as it undermines breastfeeding. Following the alert, hundreds of emails from all over the world were sent to NUMICO, Nutricia's parent company, protesting against the campaign.

Nutricia responded by saying that they "were not going to use the CD for selling our first phase infant formula".

Their first phase infant formula is called "Kissing My Baby1", the CD cover advertises "Kissing My Baby", the choir in the CD is called "Kissing My Baby" and the cover claims that Nutricia is a company that has been making babies smarter for a



hundred years. It is also noted that the "Kissing My Baby Phase 1, 2 and 3" packaging all look alike.

By June 2004, a mother in China had been given the CD in a supermarket when she bought a tin of "Kissing My Baby 1", the infant formula marketed for babies between 0 - 6 months. Another mother in Beijing whose baby was just 3-months old had heard about the nice songs Nutricia was giving away. She called the company's hotline and in 1 week, she had received the CD.

Says Annelies Allain, coordinator of ICDC, "using popular Dutch children's songs to increase sales in China may make good business sense, but the company has disgraced Holland. Nutricia knows its promotion competes with breastfeeding - it has broken the Chinese law, it has broken the Code, it has broken its promises. Shame on Nutricia".

Source : *IBFAN-ICDC*

## Exclusive Breastfeeding in China undermined by aggressive marketing

UNICEF said that the recent milk powder infant deaths in China appear to confirm trends of decreasing breastfeeding patterns in China. While there is extensive scientific evidence that breastmilk is best for infants, exclusive breastfeeding rates in China during the first four months of life have been declining from around 76% in 1998 to 64 percent at the present time.

The reason for this decline it said are commercial companies' aggressive marketing of powdered milk, the lack of baby-friendly workplaces, a widespread failure to effectively monitor and enforce the International Code of Marketing.

Source: *www.chinaview.en 2004-04-24*

## Breastfeeding and Obesity

Babies who are not breastfed are 25% more likely to become overweight and obese. Programs that target lifestyle changes must also include funding and provisions for the original anti-obesity diet - human milk.

Combating obesity starts at the onset of life. It requires policies and funding that promote and support breastfeeding and the dissemination of information to the public that breastmilk serves as the software for programming the body to resist obesity.

Financing anti-obesity campaigns by the US Centers for Disease Control in all states is important. Too bad the National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign sponsored by the Office on Women's Health, an agency within the US Department of Health and Human Services, has been halted by infant formula manufacturers who do not wish the public to know that breastmilk is the first step in reducing the obesity epidemic.

Source : Marsha Walker RN -as appeared in the Boston Globe



## Health Benefits of Breastfeeding

The prestigious medical journal Lancet has recently published the results of a new study that demonstrates that infants who are fed human milk have 14% lower cholesterol as adults than their formula fed counterparts.

It has been estimated that even a 10% reduction in cholesterol would cut cardiovascular disease by a quarter.

Breastfeeding's immunological, nutritional and health benefits for babies has long been documented. Until recently, the life extending benefits of breastfeeding for adults has not been well understood.

This study reaffirms the opinion that breastfeeding has benefits that extend well beyond infancy. Previous research has shown a relationship between breastfeeding and weight control in later life. Human milk feeding has also been shown to reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes.

Source: LLLI News, May 19, 2004



## Breastfeeding May Protect Children's Hearts

In a recent study published by the Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association, researchers tracked the effects of breastfeeding on 4,763 children in the UK who were born in 1991 and 1992 and then examined when they were about 7 1/2 years old.

Researchers found that children who were breastfed for any length of time had slightly lower blood pressure than those who were exclusively bottle-fed using infant formula. The study showed that breastfed children had blood pressure readings that averaged 0.8 mm Hg lower for systolic pressure and 0.6mm Hg lower for diastolic pressure.

Even this small reduction may have important population-health implications. A 1% reduction in population systolic blood pressure levels is associated with about 1.5% reduction in all-cause mortality, equivalent to a lessening in premature death of about 8,000 to 20,000 deaths per year in the United States and the UK respectively.

The study also showed that the blood pressure lowering effects increased with the duration that the infant was breastfed. On average, every three months of breastfeeding was associated with a 0.02 mm Hg reduction in systolic blood pressure.

Researchers say differences in the nutrient content of breastmilk and formula may at least partially explain the blood-pressure lowering effects found. Children who are breastfed tend to consume less sodium, which is associated with raising blood pressure.

In addition they say formula feeding is more likely to lead to overfeeding and overweight babies - two factors that are also known to raise blood pressure.

Source: Martin, R. Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association, March 1, 2004; vol 109



## Celebrations Around the Globe



### In Malaysia

The WBW 2004 celebration was spearheaded by the Malaysian Breastfeeding Association together with the Ministry of Health Malaysia. The seminar was organised with mixed plenary presentations with 20 topics and panel discussions. An open dialogue was held together with the WHO and UNICEF representatives focusing on Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. The seminar was well attended and participants came from as far as Philippines, Brunei, Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam.

### In Bulgaria

On 1 August 2004, the WBW 2004 celebration was launched with much fanfare. The press conference was well covered by the Press and was attended by the Vice Mayor, Sophia Municipality, IBFANers, WABA groups, Mothers Milk Bank, "Mother to Mother Support Groups" and volunteers. WBW is celebrated with traditional activities in towns throughout Bulgaria.





## News from the Secretariat, Penang, Malaysia

*Secretariat News, Project  
Development and Outreach*

**May** • Julianna Lim Abdullah joins WABA as Coordinator, Communications Programme • Mailout of WABALink • WABA Assessment and Overview Staff Meeting • Mailout of Action Folder • Reprint of MPC Kit • Satnam Kaur and Julianna Lim makes contact with My Moms Best, a new and active Malaysian breastfeeding and parenting online mother support group •

**June** • Nurina Eusoffe joins WABA as Information Assistant • Nair Carrusco attended the Millenium Development Goals in Chile • Planning Meeting for WABA staff • Final 3-year report fo DGIS • Production and design of the the Mainstreaming Gender in Breastfeeding Programmes brochure • Julianna Lim and Satnam Kaur participate in a Workshop on Counselling Related to HIV/AIDS •

**July** • Koh Kah Ling joins WABA as Project Officer • Lakshmi Menon returns to WABA for 1 month • Sarah Amin and Lakshmi Menon attend the Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing Platform for Action in Bangkok • Julianna Lim and Sarah Amin participate in the Advanced VIPP Facilitator Training, Penang • Design and production of the WABA-UNICEF Golden Bow Pin/Bookmark • Development and printing of the Golden Bow poster • Production and design of the Prevention of Infant HIV brochure • Liew Mun Tip and Anwar Fazal attend the 25th AIDS Conference in Bangkok • Liew Mun Tip starts a year in University of North Carolina, USA, under the prestigious Hubert Humphrey Fellowship award. • Printing & distribution of Action Folder (Spanish & French version) •

**August** • Sarah Amin, Satnam Kaur, Julianna Lim, Koh Kah Ling and Harjeet Kaur attend the National World Breastfeeding Week Launch and Seminar in Kuala Lumpur • Sarah Amin gave a talk on WBW 2004 at Adventist Hospital in Penang • Julianna Lim gave a talk on WBW 2004 at the Perak state level WBW launching ceremony • Pauline Emmanuel, Koh Kah Ling and Nurina Eusoffe attend the Training Course on CDS/ISIS for Windows • Satnam Kaur, Julianna Lim and Koh Kah Ling participate in the National Symposium on Maternity Protection in Kuala Lumpur •

## Calendar of Events 2004

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|---------------|--|
| Aug 1-7       | ■ WABA World Breastfeeding Week 2004<br><i>Exclusive Breastfeeding. The Gold Standard. Safe, Sound, Sustainable</i>            |
| Aug 28        | ■ National Symposium on Maternity Protection, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia   |
| Sept 6-9      | ■ UNESCAP Beijing Platform for Action, Bangkok, Thailand   |
| Sept 16-17    | ■ 4th International Clinics Practice Development Conference, Terrigal, New South Wales Australia                               |
| Sept 19-21    | ■ Australian Lactation Consultant Association International Conference, Australia  |
| Sept 20 -28   | ■ ICDC - Annual Training Course - Implementing the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, Penang, Malaysia |
| Oct 7-11      | ■ IBFAN/IbCoCo, Costa Rica   |
| Oct 12        | ■ IBFAN's 25th Anniversary   |
| Oct 13-14     | ■ WABA's 3rd Global Partners' Meeting, Costa Rica  |
| Oct 16-17     | ■ WABA Steering Committee Meeting, Costa Rica  |
| Oct 20-24     | ■ Midwifery Today Conference, Germany  |
| Oct           | ■ World Breastfeeding Week continues in parts of Brazil, Canada & Europe   |
| Nov 8-9       | ■ ILCA Conference, Denver, USA   |
| Nov 25        | ■ ASEAN Pediatric Federation Conference, Pattaya, Thailand   |
| Nov 29- Dec 1 | ■ WABA Gender Training / International Workshop, Penang, Malaysia  |
| Dec 2-3       | ■ WABA Gender Working Group Meeting, Penang Malaysia   |

### Visitors to the Secretariat

**Visitors :** **May** • Martin Sime, Executive Director, Scottish Council of Volunteer Organisations (SCVO), Council Member CIVICUS • **June** • Hilary Fisher, Amnesty International, London • Lillian Chan, My Moms Best, Penang, **July** • Dr. Balkees Abdul Majeed, Pediatrician, SRIGIM Medical Center, Penang, • Christine Neoh & Aishah Othman, Penang Adventist Hospital • Radha Holla Bhar, Author, The Boycott Book, India • **August** • Rosnah Idrus & Patricia Thiruchelvam, Penang Libraries Network •

**C183  
Maternity Protection  
Convention, 2000  
has been ratified by  
10 countries**

Country	Ratification Date
Albania	24.07.2004
Austria	30.04.2004
Belarus	10.02.2004
Bulgaria	06.12.2001
Cuba	01.06.2004
Hungary	04.11.2003
Italy	07.02.2001
Lithuania	23.09.2003
Romania	23.10.2002
Slovakia	12.12.2000



Source: 2004 International Labour Organisation ILO

<http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratific.pl?C183>



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Wabalink is produced and edited by the Secretariat of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA). WABA is a global network of individuals and organisations concerned with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding based on the Innocenti Declaration, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the WHO/ UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. Its core partners are International Baby Action Food Network (IBFAN), La Leche League International (LLL), International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), Wellstart International, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM) and LINKAGES. WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF and an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).



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# Why ensure exclusive breastfeeding for all babies?

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By Dr. Arun Gupta

In February 2003, researchers from several institutions met in Italy to define the strategy to save approximately 6 million out of the 10.9 million children under the age five who die annually. The expert group concluded that at least one proven and practical intervention is available for preventing or treating each main cause of death. If all these interventions are made universally available (meaning, a 90 percent coverage), about 63 percent child deaths could be prevented.

This, in effect, means that the interventions needed to achieve the UN mandated Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing child mortality by two-thirds by 2015 are available, but are not being delivered to the mothers and children who need them.

Breastfeeding — defined as exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for 6-12 months — was identified as the single most effective intervention that could prevent 13-15 per cent of all child deaths. This coupled with adequate complementary feeding could prevent 19 per cent of all child deaths.

Currently, only 35 per cent babies the world over are exclusively breastfed during the first four months. Malnutrition is highest in South Asia, where only about 45 per cent of 0-3 months babies are exclusively breastfed. In India, only about 20 per cent babies at six months are exclusively breastfed.

It is critical to understand that inappropriate feeding practices are intimately related to malnutrition, which fuels child deaths. Take the case of India, where 26 million children are born every year and about 60 million below the age five years are undernourished. In India, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is 65 and

Under-five Mortality Rate (U-5MR) is 95 per thousand born. Some 2.42 million children under the age five die each year; about 1.6 million children die during their first year itself. Most these deaths — caused by diarrhoea, pneumonia and neonatal infections — are preventable.



## Promoting breastfeeding vs. checking HIV transmission

The major source of HIV infection in young children is mother-to-child transmission. The virus may be transmitted during pregnancy, labour and delivery, or through breastfeeding. Recent evidence suggests that 5–20 percent of infants born to HIV-positive women get infected through breastfeeding.

Among women recently infected with HIV, the risk of transmission through breastfeeding is two times higher than for women infected before or during pregnancy, because of the high viral load shortly after initial infection. Other factors that significantly increase transmission rates include “mixed feeding” of infants (meaning, both breastfeeding and artificial feeding) and preventable breast conditions like sore nipples and mastitis.

In 2003, nine UN Agencies endorsed the HIV and Infant Feeding: Framework for Priority Action to guide nations about key actions pertaining to infant and young child feeding with regards to special circumstances like HIV. Its aim is to create and sustain an environment that encourages optimal feeding practices for all infants while scaling up interventions to reduce HIV transmission. The Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding — developed jointly by UNICEF and the WHO, and approved by the World Health Assembly in May 2002 — provides a strong basis for policy and action on the issue of





appropriate feeding practices for infants and young children. In balancing the need for reducing the risk of HIV transmission to infants with the necessity of minimising the risk of other causes of morbidity and mortality, the UN guidelines state: "when replacement feeding is acceptable, feasible, affordable, sustainable and safe, avoidance of all breastfeeding by HIV-infected mothers is recommended. Otherwise, exclusive breastfeeding is recommended during the first months of life."

To help them make the best choice, the HIV-positive mothers based on local assessments, and guidance in selecting the option most suitable for their situation. They should also have access to follow-up care and support, including family planning and nutritional support.

### **Why recommend exclusive breastfeeding for all babies?**

More than 99 per cent mothers in South Asia are HIV-negative. Of the remaining 1 per cent, only a minority gets tested for HIV. The unnecessary use of breast milk substitutes by mothers who are unaware of their HIV status or are HIV-negative needs to be avoided. Further, the risk of HIV transmission increases in case of "mixed feeding".

In formulating a global strategy, UN's HIV And Infant Feeding: Framework for Priority Action proposes certain key actions for consideration by governments. It puts the following as the first priority action: "Develop or revise (as the case may be) a comprehensive national policy on infant and young child feeding, which includes HIV and infant feeding."

As such, all mothers should be encouraged and supported to breastfeed exclusively for six months. As a best practice, breastfeeding should continue alongside complementary feeding till 24 months. The importance of appropriate feeding practice is obvious as more than 90 per cent of the brain develops during this critical period.

Exclusive breastfeeding is best maintained when mother and baby have a skin to skin contact and breastfeeding starts within one hour of the baby's birth; when a baby is properly attached to the breast (this prevents sore nipples and mastitis); and when baby practices demand feeding and suckles without any interference or pacifiers (this ensures effective and adequate milk supply). The support and counselling by skilled personnel can go a long way in ensuring this. Since these inputs require the skill development of grassroots workers, and are time intensive, they often remain ignored.



It would be a critical mistake if we fail to attend to such direct and cost saving actions to improve infant wellbeing and health. Benefits of such direct interventions during the first two years of life are proven, affordable and sustainable.

According to the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding, "Inappropriate feeding practices and their consequences are major obstacle to sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction. Governments will be unsuccessful in the efforts to accelerate economic development in any significant long-term sense until optimal child growth and development, especially through appropriate feeding practices, is ensured."

The strategy calls on the member states to act urgently. It urges all national policymakers, public health authorities, professional bodies, UN agencies, technical programme managers and NGOs to promote breastfeeding for the survival, growth and development of their children and societies.

*Sources: Ministry of Health, Government of India  
UNICEF's The State of the World's Children reports*

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<http://southasia.oneworld.net/article/view/91300/1/>





UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

WIC NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING WEEK  
AUGUST 1 – 7, 2004

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By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

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A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS** breastfeeding provides optimal infant nutrition, providing a range of benefits for the infant's growth, immunity and development, and promotes mother, infant and family bonding;

**WHEREAS** the United States Department of Agriculture and cooperating State health departments and Indian Tribal Organizations promote and support breastfeeding through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as well as through other nutrition assistance programs;

**WHEREAS** "Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work" is the USDA National Breastfeeding Promotion Campaign and emphasizes that family, friends, the health care system and community are all important to a breastfeeding mother's success;

**WHEREAS** the number of women served by WIC who choose to breastfeed their infants continues to steadily increase due to the dedicated efforts of WIC staff in collaboration with community partners;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, to recognize all breastfeeding mothers and to thank them for their efforts, I, Ann M. Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim the week of August 1 – 7, 2004, as "WIC National Breastfeeding Week" and call upon WIC State and local agencies, and the numerous community partners that have worked in collaboration with the WIC Program, to celebrate with appropriate ceremonies and activities that acknowledge efforts of breastfeeding mothers, fathers and families, health and medical professionals, peer counselors and others that provide loving support, encouragement, and assistance, so that mothers continue to succeed with breastfeeding their children.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of July in the year two thousand and four, and the two hundred and twenty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

ANN M. VENEMAN  
SECRETARY