

Mother Support Task Force (MS TF)

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action

Volume 4 Number 3- Quarterly newsletter - Published in [English](#), Spanish, French and Portuguese
July/August/September 2006

<http://www.waba.org.my/gims/index.html>

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Breastfeeding: The First Connection to Health, Well-Being and Community

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MOTHER SUPPORT TASK FORCE COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

1. Making Connections: Rebecca Magalhães, Coordinator

As you may guess, Pushpa, Pili and I spend hours emailing back and forth while each issue of the newsletter is being put together. A few days ago, one of us commented in an email message how we were each in a different country (USA, Malaysia, where Pushpa is working with WABA and visiting family, and Paraguay) but “connected” through the internet. It got me to thinking about how the internet makes it simple for some of us to be connected - to talk; to share experiences and information; to laugh at jokes.....no matter where we are. But, connecting is more than just emailing from different spots in the world. Connecting also takes place from being part of a family, sharing a language, enjoying the same kinds of food, and believing in a cause! We all believe in breastfeeding and this belief connects us even though we don’t speak the same language or eat the same foods. Of course, my thinking led me to the realization that the FIRST and most significant connection is when a baby *connects* to his/her mother through breastfeeding. The importance of this first connection helps us to persevere in our promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding. What I hope, too, is that you feel connected as a reader to the editors, the authors of the articles and to your fellow subscribers as you go through each newsletter issue. Maybe some day we can all be together, face-to-face, but for the time-being, this newsletter can be our “connection.” Happy World Breastfeeding Week!

Rebecca Magalhães

Coordinator

WABA Mother Support Task Force

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2. MSTF Update: Mother Support in Toronto : Rebecca Magalhães, Coordinator

As members of LLLI, a WABA Core Partner and a mother support organization, Rebecca Magalhães (USA), Yanet Olivares (Dominican Republic) and Irma de Maza (Guatemala) attended and gave presentations at the Conference “Gender, Child Survival and HIV/AIDS: From Evidence to Policy”, organized by WABA and York University, Toronto Canada, May 7-9. Rebecca co-presented with Liew Mun Tip, WABA on the Report on Breastfeeding and HIV and AIDS Symposium. Yanet presented the results of a UNICEF funded study that La Leche League/Dominican Republic carried out with HIV+ women who are instructed in that country to not breastfeed. Irma (Mimi)’s presentation was on “The implications of HIV for infant feeding policy: The Case of Guatemala” which outlined the challenges that Guatemala is facing. The conference was interesting, in that it focused on women and mothers in relation to gender and infant feeding. Although national ministries of health or HIV and AIDS committees or councils in each country may need to formulate policies and practices for their population, the needs of a woman/mother should be considered, in addition to how policies and practices affect her as she carries out her role as a woman

and a mother. For further information on this Conference and the Statement, please go to this link <http://www.waba.org.my/hiv/conference2006.htm>

If you are interested in being a country contact for GIMS and the MS TF, please email Rebecca RMagalhaes@livi.org, Prashant psgangel@hotmail.com or Nair cepren@amauta.rcp.net.pe

MOTHER SUPPORT FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES

3. Hello from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Salem Hamilton, Costa Rica

My name is Salem and I represent natural birth advocates from my community.

I am one of the four people who were arrested by Pinnacle Health System in August, 2005. We were arrested for challenging the newborn practices of the Harrisburg Hospital.

The first practice we challenged was the routine separation of mother and baby shortly after birth. Although new mothers have the right to keep their babies with them at Harrisburg Hospital, patients are not informed of this right. Therefore, few people knew of its existence and babies were routinely spent the next several hours in the newborn nursery. Some mothers, knowing of their right, who requested "no separation", were given a paper that stated among other things that unless they had another adult in the room at all times, they were not allowed to take a shower. The content of the "handout" often seemed intimidating to the mothers and influenced them to choose against keeping their babies with them.

In addition to this separation practice, breastfeeding advocates familiar with the WHO Code felt it was time to challenge the unethical practice of routine distribution of free discharge packs from the formula companies.

We decided to conduct a public rally in a picnic area near the hospital entrance. The same day we delivered a letter to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Pinnacle Health that outlined these unethical practices. We also composed and filed formal complaints to JAYCO (the organization that accredits all hospitals in the U.S.) and the State Department of Health, and attached the following documents (or pertinent sections of the documents):

- International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes
- Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative
- AAP 2005 revised version of Breastfeeding recommendations
- CDC statement and recommendations
- Lamaze International's 4 page "No separation care practices" handout

We contacted television news teams, as well as the local newspapers. After personally speaking with people from these agencies, we emailed press releases to them. In the press release, we stated our objective and also mentioned that we were prepared to engage in acts of "civil disobedience" if necessary. We knew we would not be welcomed on the hospital's property, but we also felt that this action was necessary in order for hospital management to hear what we had to say.

On the day of the rally, we hand delivered the letter along with the packet of information. We handed out flyers to the public, press kits to the press (duplicate of everything given to the administration), displayed our large sign that read "PINNACLES POLICIES HURT BABIES", as well as several other hand made signs.

Shortly after we arrived, we were told by hospital security that we must leave the property immediately. We told them that we had no plans of leaving. The Harrisburg police were summoned and within minutes, the front parking area of the hospital was filled with police cars. Some of us were handcuffed and arrested, while others, taking care of children, returned to their cars or went across the street off of hospital property. Just one hour following our arrest, we were given a citation and released. Television news ran scenes of the arrests, and radio and newspapers also covered this incident. One TV station

hosted an independent internet poll with the question "have you had problems with Harrisburg Hospital's newborn policies?" The poll showed that nearly 80% replied yes!

The following week, we began planning our next event, which we were planning to hold, with a permit from the City of Harrisburg, in the riverfront park located across the street from the hospital. A few days after the announcement of this rally, we contacted the Vice President of quality control at the hospital and requested a meeting with the administration. Within 24 hours, we received a response that they were interested in a meeting.

Within days, we met with senior administration as well as nurse managers from the maternity floors. The practices of this hospital, we argued, were not adhering to the recommendations of reputable expert agencies. The practices were not the healthiest for moms and babies and were clearly undermining successful breastfeeding. We also encouraged them to be known as a model hospital, leading health care facilities with their newborn practices. This was their opportunity to show the community that providing the very best for their patients and babies was a priority.

We asked that they work with us in an ongoing task force regarding these issues. They agreed. We held our next rally and the TV cameras shot signs that now read "Babies cried and Pinnacle listened". The task force began meeting monthly with the hospital administration.

As of January 2006, every labor and delivery patient is asked during the computerized admission process if they would like to keep their babies with them following the birth. The hospital has included a revised document that goes to every patient before admission. Floor Staff, Obstetricians and Pediatricians that work in the hospital were sent letters explaining the modification of practice along with a copy of the revision. The successful collaboration of this task force continues as we are now discussing the measures needed to become a Baby Friendly Hospital. The hospital administration is listening and cannot argue with the evidence presented to them. We even have lunch together during our meetings!

I share this story with you as an encouragement - that it doesn't take much more than creativity and courage to implement changes. Peaceful birth should not be a luxury for women and babies - it should be the standard.

Salem Hamilton, Director of BIRTH WITHOUT BOUNDARIES, Limon, Costa Rica. She is also a doula, birth activist and founder of BIRTH WITHOUT BOUNDARIES, an organization that works to assist in structuring a global birth network to ensure peaceful birth in our world. Salem is a mother of 6 children and a grandmother to 1.

Email: siafu2012@yahoo.com

4. The Center for Infant and Young Child Feeding: Dr. Miriam Lobbok, USA

The Center for Infant and Young Child Feeding, directed by Miriam Lobbok, MD, MPH, FACPM, IBCLC, FABM, was founded on 1 January 2006 in the oldest public university in the United States, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in the Maternal and Child Health Department under the leadership of Dr. Bert Peterson. Thanks to a generous donor from North Carolina, the first interdisciplinary center of this sort in a School of Public Health now exists to foster comprehensive action in support of the mother/child dyad as the focus for attention.

In addition to studying the risks of not breastfeeding and best practices in support of breastfeeding, the Center will also focus on complementary feeding. The quality and quantity of the complementary foods -- the additional foods given to the breastfed infant from 7-24 months and beyond while breastfeeding continues -- also contribute to future health, growth, and development.

The mother's health and well-being are essential for breastfeeding success, including adequate birth spacing for best maternal and child outcomes. Optimal infant feeding also depends on the active support

of the father, the family and society. Social, workplace, and healthcare support are all necessary, and the policies and programs needed to secure support in all these areas are the focus of the Center's work.

What is the Mission of the Center? To create an enabling environment, at the community, state, national and global levels, in which every mother is supported to achieve optimal infant and young child feeding and care, and every child achieves its full potential through the best start on life.

What do we do? Through research, service evaluation, policy development and training, we support the mother/child dyad to succeed in optimal infant feeding.

Why do we do it? Because we care about the future, and children are our future. And breastfeeding is a single intervention that results in improved neurological, physiological, and immunological development, reducing the risks of illness and mortality for every child.

What are our policies? The Center and its Associates respects and supports the International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions, The Golden Bow Initiative, The Physician's Pledge, the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative, other aspects of the 1990 and 1995 Innocenti Declarations, the US DHHS and NC DHHS, as well as the EU, Blueprints for Action on Breastfeeding, and the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding.

Who are we? Please visit our website to be introduced to the members of the multidisciplinary team who have lent their names and energy to the activities of the Center:

<http://www.sph.unc.edu/mhch/ciycfc/>

Miriam H Labbok, MD, MPH FACPM, IBCLC, FABM, Professor of the Practice of Public Health
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(Associated blog - <http://enabling-breastfeeding.blogspot.com>)

5. Breastfeeding into Toddlerhood or Beyond: the Experience of Mothers and Children: Dr. Karleen Gribble, Australia

Despite recommendations and research of the normalcy and benefits of breastfeeding into a child's second year and beyond, less than 1% of Australian children are breastfeeding on their second birthday. Dr. Karleen D. Gribble in her paper "Breastfeeding into toddlerhood or beyond: the experience of mothers and children" presents the results of the first Australian study on breastfeeding through toddlerhood or beyond. One hundred and seven (107) women breastfeeding 114 children from two to 6.5 years of age participated in this study on why, when and how the children breastfed; why and whose choice it was to continue breastfeeding and exploration of the viewpoint of the children as they talk about breastfeeding and play breastfeeding games.

While breastfeeding for years is unusual in the general Australian population such sustained breastfeeding is common in many historic, geographic or cultural contexts. Thus, a number of avenues of anthropological research support the normality of breastfeeding into toddlerhood; studies of the bone chemistry of ancient populations has found that they breastfed for several (2-6) years, ethnographic research of traditional cultures reports an average weaning age of between two and five years and examination of the primate pattern suggests that the natural age of weaning is somewhere between 2.5 and 7 years. It is noteworthy that in some remote areas of Australia the majority of aboriginal children are still breastfeeding at two years of age and that even within modern industrialized societies, micro-cultures exist within which breastfeeding is practiced for years. This study provides insight into the experiences of women and children in the general Australian population who have breastfed for more than two years. Much can be learned from these women about how and why they and their children persisted with breastfeeding. This study may help promote breastfeeding continuance as a valuable practice and may result in more women continuing breastfeeding through and beyond infancy.

For further information or the full text of the paper presented at the 2005 Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) International Conference, please contact Dr. Karleen Gribble, School of Nursing, University of Western Sydney, NSW, Australia
E-mail: karleeng@uws.edu.au

6. Supporting Breastfeeding through Videos - Mother of 7 Birth and Breastfeeding Video Series

Stephanie Scholz Neurohr, who has seven children with her husband Hunt, a Dallas, Texas, USA plastic surgeon, has produced the "*Mother of 7 Birth and Breastfeeding Video Series*." Mrs. Neurohr, who has a film degree from Southern Methodist University, Texas, USA, used her 14 years of nursing her own children, to make one of the videos in this series. Work on that video was started when she was pregnant with her 7th child who was born with a rare medical condition that kept the child from being able to breastfeed or even swallow after birth. Mrs. Neurohr continued working on the video, while she cared for her child through surgeries and struggles. The little girl (Autumn) received breast milk through feeding tubes for four months until she was strong enough to nurse. Mrs. Neurohr credits breastfeeding for helping her daughter overcome her severe medical problems.

This video, titled *Autumn's Story*, is one of the four videos in the series that emphasizes the benefits of breastfeeding for mother and child.

In a newspaper article, Mrs. Neurohr states "Breast milk made a difference in Autumn's survival and in mine." The videos include breastfeeding mothers from around the world (Africa, Central America, Europe, etc.) as well as Mrs. Neurohr herself nursing Autumn.

She also states in the article "Breast-feeding is a beautiful way to bond with and nourish and nurture your child. Virtually any woman, even those with special circumstances, can do it, but it takes education, practice and patience to master the art."

To follow up her breast-feeding videos, Mrs. Neurohr is currently working on a series of videos on birth, emphasizing natural methods.

The Mother of 7 Birth and Breastfeeding Video Series also includes *Breastfeeding Basics* (20 minutes), *Breastfeeding Intensive* (45 minutes) and *Breastfeeding Comprehensive* (130 minutes). Released this year, they can be purchased at the Web site, www.motherof7.com.

Compiled and written by the MS TF E-Newsletter staff

MOTHER SUPPORT - BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS RELATE THEIR EXPERIENCES

7. Birth of Kohai: Paula Meyer, Tahiti

At last, this was *the* day when my baby was going to be born, 10 days after my due date. It was midday and I was starting to experience mild contractions, but I was not sure whether labor had actually begun, or not. On that morning, my midwife had taken me for a two-hour hike in the mountain, and it was a very steep hike!

At about 2 pm, my contractions were gradually growing stronger, as I was sitting crossed-legged on my bed. I relaxed during each contraction, which is what I had done mentally before, thanks to tai chi. The light was gently filtering through the closed wooden shutters. It felt good. It was not too hot and the contractions were gradually getting stronger. I stood up and started walking in my bedroom. Then, my son came to see me and we chatted between two contractions. After a while, I asked him to leave the room, as I needed to be on my own. I walked again and bent forward to cope with each new contraction. Eventually I decided to lean on my elbows at the window, as it made me feel better. I enjoyed stretching forward, too.

The light was much less intense - it must have been about 4 pm. Beautiful orange shadows were dancing on the wall facing the window. My midwife told me she would be on the terrace with my husband,

preparing the inflatable pool and her materials. I was still standing at the window when she came to get me to sit in the pool. I stepped in, the water was not warm enough to my liking, so I kept the hot water hose beside me. I was kneeling, slightly bent forward and moaning during each contraction. My husband said that the neighbors might think we were loudly making love. This made me laugh, but the intensity of the contractions caught up with me. They were coming faster and stronger. My midwife suggested I should breathe more gently and exhale regularly and over a longer period of time. I thought it was not easy. At any rate I was under the impression I was just barely surviving, that I was not controlling anything, that my body was in charge. When I moved, when I breathed or when I cried out, I was not deciding anything. I think my midwife was talking to me, but I couldn't hear her. I was in my own world, my "bubble", the contractions were coming rapidly one after the other. I dealt with each, one at a time and I enjoyed resting between each. I switched positions. I rested my right leg on the side, whilst I was kneeling on the left side and leaning on the edge of the pool. At that point the contractions were becoming almost unbearable.

I burst my bubble and asked my midwife how long she thought it would take. She smiled and said "Not so long, you're almost there". Then she said: "Do you want the children to be here with you?" I said "No, not now". After a few more contractions, I felt like pushing and I could experience a powerful grasp throughout my body. It was pushing very hard. I braced myself against the edge of the pool, my baby's head emerged, then his tiny body. The midwife grabbed him and I put him in my arms. It felt... indescribable... I was so happy; I was in seventh heaven, in a daze. My baby started nursing, his eyes were wide open, he was looking at me, then he looked at everybody. He didn't even cry, he just breathed regularly. I was holding him close to me and I murmured "Welcome, my love". In the meantime, the children and my husband joined us on the terrace. My daughter eagerly asked "So, is it a boy or a girl?". It took me a good ten minutes before taking a look! I finally held the baby slightly away from my body and announced "It's a boy". My daughter looked so disappointed... She wanted a little sister... She went in her bedroom, but it didn't last long. She came back saying, "Oh, well it doesn't matter!" Kohai was now part of the family and his big sister gave him a kiss. Since the umbilical cord had stopped pulsating, the midwife clamped it and cut it. My husband took the baby in his arms and I got out of the pool to deliver the placenta...

It was dark, it was 7 pm and our family had just grown bigger...

Paula Meyer, married to Jean-Yves, is a mother to 3 children (2 boys and a girl). She is also a doula. She has set up a non-governmental organization on birth in French Polynesia: Bebe fenua" (baby from the land/the country). Paula hopes to promote birth plans as she feels it is a useful tool for both parents and professionals.

Email: paulameyer@mail.pf

Website: www.bebefenua.est-la.info (still in construction)

Translated into English from French by Herrade Hemmerdinger

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8. Breastfeeding Challenges: Sandra Ramos, Paraguay

This is the story of Fabri, now 1 year old, who was born with such vibrancy to live that I did not have to push more than twice. He shot out like an American football.

He was born in a private institute that was not very breastfeeding friendly. Although I asked that he be brought immediately to breastfeed, they only brought him to me 2 hours after birth and after a lot of insistence on my part. They had also given him glucose. I emphasized that I would breastfeed him exclusively yet when they took him for his bath they gave him glucose or formula, telling me that his sugar level was low or because it was another nurse on duty who made a mistake or they said it was not noted down in his file.

Only when we were at home was I able to follow my dream of breastfeeding exclusively. Fabri latched on well but had no patience because my nipple was inverted. My extended family could not bear his cries, pressuring me to offer him the other breast or the bottle, but I knew that I could breastfeed from both breasts and on the third day we succeeded.

Returning to work was also a challenge. I knew colleagues who expressed milk but only breastfed for about 8 to 9 months and I wanted to breastfeed my son for a year. So I started to express my milk before returning to work to build an ample reserve. LLL helped me a lot, loaned me a breast pump so I could empty my breast within a few minutes with minimum interruption from work. My breast would refill during the hour I was with Fabri.

I remained steadfast although on 2 occasions, because of my job, I had to travel to Buenos Aires and Cordoba in Argentina for a couple of days. In my wish to continue breastfeeding, Fabri traveled with me. His father was very sad, as he was unable to be with him, but he respected my desire to keep breastfeeding.

My aim to breastfeed was for a year, but through LLL, I learned that WHO recommends breastfeeding for 2 years. This meant that I was only half way through the journey.

Breastfeeding to me is a pleasure, a unique moment of caresses, games, and pampering your baby. Now that he is older, this time is even more precious. Before he would only sleep but now we look at each other, smile at each other, talk to each other, "it's done" he tells me when a breastfeeding has ended and we switch to the other breast.

I have the impression that Fabri really enjoys breastfeeding, that this enjoyment comes from him, because he searches me out, he lifts my blouse, on the weekends we stay in bed for hours, playing and breastfeeding.

Fabri is a healthy, happy, smiling, lively child who has not been sick this year; has not had to take antibiotics or been in a hospital. He has only seen his pediatrician for vaccinations and wellness control. I am convinced that this is due to the fact that I exclusively breastfed.

Sandra Ramos de Gornati, Degree in Computer Sciences, works for a communications company in Paraguay, Lives in Luque, Paraguay
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FATHER SUPPORT

The Global Initiative for Father Support (GIFS) was launched at the Global Forum II, Arusha Tanzania, 2002. Fathers of breastfeeding children need to be supported too as our stories reveal. For more information about GIFS, the Father Support(FS) workshop, or to find out how you can be involved, please contact Ray Maseko rmaseko@realnet.co.sz; Arun Kumar Thakur arun_thakur@rediffmail.com or go to <http://www.waba.org.my/fathers/index.html>

9. The Father is a Remedy to Prevent Early Weaning: Professor Joel Lamounier, Brazil.

The father figure can be a decisive factor in breastfeeding duration. A research carried out in 2000 by Professors Joel Alves Lamounier, Medical School of UFMG and Francisco Silveira, of the Medical Sciences School of Minas Gerais, with data collected from 450 children in Carbonita, São Gonçalo do Rio Preto and Datas in the Valley of Jequitinhonha, concluded that the risk of early weaning in children who didn't live with their father was 1.62 times more than in those that lived with the father.

One of the variables that influenced weaning was the father's level of schooling. The risk of quitting breastfeeding was 1.47 times greater among families headed by men with more education. The professors believe the results are because of the family's financial situation. "Families that have a better economic condition look for other foods and are influenced by propaganda", says Lamounier.

The study also concluded that, even though relevant, the father's influence was not as important as an old companion of children: the pacifier. The risk of stopping breastfeeding in children that used a pacifier was 3.16 times more than among those who didn't use a pacifier.

According to Professor Silveira, the study was prompted by malnutrition rates in the city of Carbonita that was more than 10%, while the World Health Organization considers rates more than 3% a concern. The main cause of malnutrition was early weaning. "In our analysis of more than 20 variables, we concluded that the pacifier and the presence of the father were the most influential in early weaning" says Professor Silveira.

Campaign 2006 – Valuing the Father's Care: Enjoy Fatherhood

Professor Joel Lamounier, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

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Original article summarized by Pajuçara Marroquim, Brazil

10. Supporting the Breastfeeding Mother: Kelly Fosness, USA

Sending off too much company, answering the phone and sometimes being the "bad guy" when it comes to visiting family members are all ways Steve Knewtson pitched in to support his wife. "You really have to watch and make sure she's not getting too tired," he advised from experience raising their two children. "Having a newborn is a pretty touching time for both you and your wife, but you know she's going to be tired so you have to shelter her from a lot of things." Steve's wife, Heather, is one of several women who believes breastfeeding is an important element in the healthy development of the baby. And because the first six weeks of the child's life are the most critical for developing a successful breastfeeding relationship between the baby and the mother, the role of the new father becomes even more important.

"The father is going to be the number one advocate who cares about the baby as much as she does," Courtney Hohnholt, La Leche League Leader, said. "To have that support from dad is so critical in the course they play in the breastfeeding process, just to encourage mom and remind her that she's doing a good job and making mom feel pampered because in the beginning you're pretty tired. It's nice that dad can be a buffer zone."

According to a recent study in the Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics on whether support from a husband can help breastfeeding moms, of the husbands who were taught how to manage common problems women have with breastfeeding, one-quarter of the mothers were still breastfeeding exclusively or predominantly when their babies were six months old, compared with 15 percent of women whose husbands attended a class on general infant health and nutrition.

To Heather, Steve was a "cheerleader" supporting her throughout the breastfeeding process. "When you're both new parents, you're trying to do something you've never seen done before and he was my biggest support which made my breastfeeding relationship successful," Heather said. "My youngest, who is 21 months, is still breastfeeding." While Heather works full time at Michigan Tech University in the Dean's office of the College of Engineering, Steve is at their home in Hancock, doing what he does best: being a full-time dad. "It's a blast," Steve said. "I really enjoy it."

Kelly Fosness, Writer, The Daily Mining Gazette, Houghton, Michigan, USA, June 24, 2006

Email: kfosness@mininggazette.com

(Note: The full article, shortened with the author's permission, appeared in the Daily Mining Gazette on June 24, 2006)

11. Letter from a Wife in Peru

When Monica Mellado Acurio received an invitation on the Lactared Listserve of Peru to a La Leche League meeting on after 6 months, *The Art of Fatherhood*, she replied:

Dear Fanny,

Thank you for sending out this invitation for the meeting and the beautiful article on the role of the father in the raising and breastfeeding of babies. I would like to acknowledge my husband, Pedro Martin, for his invaluable support on this theme. He has shared with me all the easy and complicated moments in the bringing up of our 2 sons, Piero, 3 years old and Martin, 2, walking them to sleep, burping them after they have nursed, helping in the early morning hours, changing diapers, not letting them cry, etc. As he says: "All I lack is the ability to breastfeed them". Now that we are waiting for our third baby, a high risk pregnancy, his support is even greater and it can be said he is coping alone with our 2 sons. My gratitude and admiration goes out to him for being a wonderful representative of this new generation of fathers, who only lack the ability to breastfeed.

Mónica Mellado de Cifuentes, economist, married to Pedro Martin Cifuentes. They are parents to Piero Alessandro, 3 years 6 months, Martin Alonso, 2 years 2 months. A third baby is due in September. Monica feels that it is necessary to emphasize in this modern and globalized world, that the father is not only responsible economically but also is the giver of attention, love and care to his children.

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Editors' Note: *If you are a father supporting breastfeeding, or know of someone working with a father support group, please submit your story.*

NEWS FROM THE BREASTFEEDING WORLD

12. Meeting Sarah Amin and Susan Siew from Malaysia - Two Fantastic Women who Support Breastfeeding in Many Ways: Lakshmi Menon, India

Many individuals around the world are working faithfully and with dedication to support mothers in their breastfeeding experiences. In this issue, the Editors and the MS TF would like to highlight two of these persons- Sarah Amin and Susan Siew, Malaysia

Some of you have worked with Sarah and Susan, some of you have been in meetings and conferences with one or both of them, some of you have just read about them. For all of you, this is a snapshot of Sarah and Susan, for you to know them a little more and know why so many people around the world admire and respect them.

Sarah Amin

Deeply committed to promoting breastfeeding, Sarah Amin has worked with the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) since 1992 and is currently Co-Director of the WABA Secretariat in Penang, Malaysia. Through these 15 years, she has been involved in WABA's World Breastfeeding Week campaigns. She coordinates the Governance of WABA network and is closely involved in the Women and Work project. She is the author of *Nurturing the Future: Our First Five Years* (WABA, 1996).

Sarah is passionate about advocating for breastfeeding, and mindful of the challenges women encounter in combining breastfeeding and work. Sensitive to women's specific problems and needs, especially women living in developing countries, Sarah was instrumental in establishing WABA's Gender Project and

she initiated gender trainings for breastfeeding advocates. Realizing the need for men to be involved in infant feeding issues, she facilitated the formation of the Global Initiative for Father Support (GIFS) and encourages men to participate in the gender training workshops. She is also actively involved in the Maternity Protection Campaign.

Sarah received her training and education in development economics in Canada. Her commitment to breastfeeding and gender issues is also evident from her work on her Master's thesis: "Mobilizing Strategies of the Global Breastfeeding Movement: building alliance with the women's movement". Sarah is very thorough in her work and pays attention to minute details. With her vision embedded in high ideals, Sarah's work is nevertheless grounded in the realities of peoples' lives. Her compassionate nature and her deep concern for humanity makes it only natural for her to be involved in breastfeeding advocacy and to promote gender equality. At a personal level, with her selfless and caring nature, Sarah endears herself by being a good listener and a true friend.

Personal comment: Sarah first impressed me as a person who could appear calm while coordinating a large global meeting and making each participant feel welcome. Working with her on many projects over the years, I have gained great respect for her attention to detail, her reality-based ability to allocate scarce resources, and her gift of being a bridge from her own Asian culture to breastfeeding advocates from all over. We have also shared many memorable meals!"

Chris Mulford, RN, IBCLC, LLL Leader Reserve, working for WIC in South Jersey (Eastern USA)

Susan Siew

Susan Siew co-directs the WABA Secretariat and coordinates the WABA media and communications programme. She is also in charge of advocacy and social mobilization activities. She compiled the *Images of Breastfeeding Worldwide: a visual sourcebook for community action*. Her bright and cheerful creative style is influential in the production of WBW folders and banners, and other communication tools which never fail to attract both adults and children. Breastfeeding advocacy is her forte as can be seen from her active participation in international meetings and conferences, where she is a force to reckon with; with the successful incorporation of breastfeeding references in Conference Declarations and Statements. A great meeting planner and organizer, she organized the very successful WABA Global Forum in Thailand, 1996 and the Forum in Tanzania, 2002.

She is extremely committed to social issues and is involved with numerous international networks. Her work is of high quality as she believes in maintaining a certain standard especially in international work. She was the deputy director of the International Organization of Consumers Unions, Regional Office for Asia Pacific. Trained in design and communications, she worked as a graphic designer in Canada and the USA. Currently living in Penang, Malaysia, Susan is involved with local social development initiatives including the Sustainable Penang Initiative and Malaysian Interfaith, promoting non-handicapping and harmonious environments.

Personal comment: "Susan has been a dear friend for more than 25 years, and introduced me to social development issues. She has also encouraged and given me the confidence and necessary resources that have helped to broaden my interest in the wider breastfeeding arena. Her open-mindedness and sense of justice makes her a great person to work with". Pushpa Panadam

Lakshmi Menon has been active in the women's, consumer and health movements for 25 years. A trained librarian, she has devised a classification system with a feminist perspective. With information dissemination as her commitment, she has compiled, edited and documented several publications on development issues, especially on women and health issues. Based in Mumbai, India, Lakshmi is a Consultant to WABA and is currently co-coordinating the WABA Gender Programme.

Email: menonlak@yahoo.co.uk

13. Proposing the Revision of a Maternity Leave Law in Argentina and the Woman who Started the Action: Maria Luz Aguilo, Argentina

Small like a bird perched to take on the challenge, restless, always looking for what benefits mother and baby..... I am talking about Monica Tesone. She worked, thought, searched and got in touch with a delegate/representative who, of course after hearing her clear explanation, elaborated a project on a law that would allow mothers who breastfeed to have a leave of absence with salary for 7 months.

I thought of the road that she has taken. It was in 1988 when motherhood placed Monica at the door of La Leche League. It was at that moment that she began her search, looking for other doors. Taking all the necessary knowledge that she needed, her generosity overflowed to all the mothers and Leaders who came in contact with her.

She had been invited to give a presentation on breastfeeding to the legislators who were considering this proposed law and I was there to hear her. At 11.00 in the morning, the session started and all the breastfeeding specialists presented their speeches: Lic. Mónica Tesone, Dra. Ageitos and Dr. Cueto Rua.

Monica was smiling and very emotional. I was very proud that she was representing La Leche League and the thousands of mothers who feel drawn to their own needs, to the needs of their babies and the demands of their jobs.

The Provincial Representative Dr. Alfonsin (s), promoter of the law, gave the welcoming speech and started the session on breastfeeding. The meeting objective was to modify article 43 of the law which referred to maternity leave and to extend its parameters to the WHO recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months after birth.

Monica was invited to give her presentation. She helped us understand what could be the motivation for a business to be breastfeeding friendly. She saw in a study that mothers who had flexibility to breastfeed were more loyal to the company. They gave more to their work! There was an increase in loyalty and absenteeism was reduced to 28%. Health insurance claims were reduced and expenses for medications and hospitalization were also less. And in a wonderful way, she ended by saying:

"Future citizens are not constructed in the World of politics but in the World of the infants."

The above article was written by Maria Luz Aguilo, LLLLeader of Argentina, mother of Dolores 32, Ines 30 (married to León Marcelo and mother of a 21 months old toddler), Fernando 27, Francisco 24, Milagros 21 and Angeles 18.

Email: marialuzaguilo@speedy.com.ar

The original 8 pages article was summarized by Maria del Mar Mazza, LLLI.

Editor's Note: *"The Senate is currently discussing this law and will be registering their vote."*

For further information on this law (in Spanish) please contact:

Monica Tesone, LLLArgentina,

E-mail: monicate@ciudad.com.ar

14. Appeal to endorse the Innocenti Declaration 2005

Have you thought of becoming an Innocenti Declaration 2005 endorser? You can do so by clicking onto www.innocenti15.net The Declaration is available in 6 languages.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING

15. Breastfeeding: The Stories behind the Statistics: Barbara Behrmann, USA

What could be more natural than a mom suckling her baby? Natural yes, but instinctive, no. In *The Breastfeeding Café: Mothers Share the Joys, Challenges & Secrets of Nursing*, sociologist and author Barbara L. Behrmann explores why so many women's breastfeeding efforts are undermined, even sabotaged.

Part cultural critique, part support group, Behrmann weaves together stories with information, insight and facts. In exploring what it means to nurse in a fast-paced, consumer-oriented culture, Behrmann takes on the impact of routine hospital based practices, unfair marketing practices, barriers in the workplace, cultural attitudes, media stereotypes, economic obstacles and a wide variety of cultural controversies.

The Breastfeeding Café explores why so many struggle with what should be such a natural part of mothering. With sadness, regret, and a lack of support and assistance, many of them give up. But, as Behrmann explains, this doesn't have to be the case. The stories represent a diverse group of women from around the United States. From a homeless teenager to a scientist with a demanding travel schedule; from a fire fighter in a mostly male organization to a woman who donated her milk after her daughter was stillborn; from women who struggle with early difficulties to those who discover a new sense of empowerment, their accounts are honest, intimate and revealing.

An excellent resource for expectant women, new mothers, and those who work with them, *The Breastfeeding Café* educates, surprises, and inspires. "Breastfeeding isn't just important for babies," asserts the author, "it also matters to families and to the kind of parent-child relationships mothers want to create."

Barbara Behrmann, Ph.D., Author of *The Breastfeeding Café: Mothers Share the Joys, Challenges, and Secrets of Nursing*.

Email: barb@breastfeedingcafe.com

Website: www.breastfeedingcafe.com

16. Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation Announces a New Initiative - Center of Excellence

The Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) has set up a Resource Center for all its benefactors, well wishers, stakeholders and any interested person or group. The Center of Excellence will provide support in securing research updates and information on breastfeeding, complementary feeding and maternal nutrition. BBF has a collection of books, videos, journals and research studies and wants to continue adding to the collection.

Please help by sending books/ journals/ Audio & Video lists, catalogues and other resource information. Your support and assistance will help to build our Center of Excellence.

Shaheen Sultana, Coordinator
Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation
E-mail: BBF bbf@gononet.com

17. International Breastfeeding Journal

The International Breastfeeding Journal has been launched and is freely available [online](#). *International Breastfeeding Journal* is an [open access](#), peer-reviewed journal that encompasses all aspects of breastfeeding. Several articles that might be interesting to you have already been published.

Please submit your manuscript via our online submission system. For more information about the journal, contact me at ibj-editor@unimelb.edu.au or visit our instructions for authors.

Lisa H Amir, Editor-in-Chief
International Breastfeeding Journal 2006, Australia
Website: <http://www.internationalbreastfeedingjournal.com/>

18. Where There Is No Doctor: Available online – Hesperian Foundation

The classic manual, *Where There Is No Doctor*, is available online at www.hesperian.org. The manual provides practical, easily understood information on how to diagnose, treat, and prevent many common illnesses. With over 90 translations and adaptations of the book available worldwide, and millions of copies in print, the book is an essential health resource for individuals and communities around the world.

Information on translations of our books is available at:

http://www.hesperian.org/publications_translation.php

Lisa Gonzalves, Book Publicist/Promotions, Hesperian Foundation California, USA

E-mail: lisa@hesperian.org

Website: www.hesperian.org

19. Nutrition: the New International Magazine

Breastfeeding is the Issue theme for Issue 2 of *nutrition*, the new international magazine for nutrition practitioners in developing countries. In this issue, which is available for downloading and/or subscribing for the future at <http://www.nutritioninternational.org.uk>, there are articles on strengthening fathers' support for breastfeeding; on the pressure of work; on time for breastfeeding and other interesting topics. There is a section on Research and one on Resources. Nutrition International, based in the United Kingdom, edits and publishes *nutrition*. Issue 2 is available in English and Vietnamese.

20. LatchOn.org Community Newsletter

LatchOn.org has launched its first issue of a bimonthly newsletter to all members of the LatchOn.org community. Whether you are a project manager, a donor or just a curious visitor, LatchOn hopes to improve your LatchOn.org experience by bringing you news about projects and features.

What is LatchOn.org? It is a place that brings projects and donors together. So if you have a project that needs funding, LatchOn.org is the right place to start. If you want to fund a project that promotes breastfeeding or mother support, LatchOn.org has a variety of projects. Just click on the site:

www.latchon.org

Shelley Stanley, LatchOn volunteer administrator

CHILDREN AND BREASTFEEDING

Stories, comments, memories sent in by our readers

Ruth Hersey, LLL Leader, Haiti

Today my seventh graders were playing Taboo - filling up time in the last week of school. The word (to guess) was "hug" and the student said, "You get this from your mom."

The first answer yelled out by the team was, "Milk!"

The second answer was, "Money!"

And the third was the right answer, "A hug."

(* Seventh graders are about 12 or 13 years old.)

Karleen Gribble of Australia writes:

I heard that the newsletter was looking for stories etc. about children doing breastfeeding projects and thought you might be interested in the abstract art drawing my (then) 10 year old son (now 12) drew for me of a mother breastfeeding.

(Editors' Note: Look for Karleen's son's drawing soon on the WABA/GIMS web pages.)

Joni Seidenstein, Virginia, USA shares:

I was at a dance tonight and I was talking with a five year old who was breastfed for three years. I was nursing my one year old and she was asking if Nova (my daughter) had a bottle. I told her that Nova didn't use bottles. She asked about pacifiers and I said, nope we didn't use those either. Then she looked at me and said "She's just like me!"

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

21. Check out these Websites

Here's a link for today's Moscow Times story about the Moscow Mommy Milk group:

<http://www.moscowtimes.ru/stories/2006/03/15/015.html>

<http://www.cafepress.com/> In English. If you type in breastfeeding for the search, you will find lots of products that have breastfeeding slogans.

www.motherof7.com See story above

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/events/19th-iave-world-volunteer-1137081912/lang/en.html>

In English, World Network for volunteers

<http://www.elnacional.com.do/app/article.aspx?id=53910> Guinness Book of Records. Check Waba site as well

www.cachorros.com.ec a site that supports breastfeeding in Ecuador (Spanish)

http://www.drjacknewman.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=18&Itemid=42

http://www.podcastalley.com/podcast_details.php?pod_id=27299 (in English) Resources for breastfeeding

www.nutritioninternational.org.uk International magazine for Nutrition in developing countries. Available in English, Vietnamese and Portuguese.

<http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org> World Breastfeeding Week news and information from around the world

<http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/monitoringsnapshot.htm> Become a Code monitor for World Breastfeeding Week, available in English, Spanish and Portuguese

22. Announcements

Events during August, September, October 2006

For information on conferences/workshops/seminars in the USA, please access:

ibreastfeeding.com

19-20 August: 2nd. National Conference on Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding. Theme: Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding: Cornerstone for National Development and The way to achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Organized by Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation, National Nutrition Programme and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Dateline for application: 25 July. Please email : bbf@gononet.com

3 - 6 September: IX ENAM – National Breastfeeding Encounter "Breastfeeding: Conquering Health, Protecting Life". Porto Alegre, Brazil. For further information please email: enam2006@gmail.com

19-21 September: Forum on What Next project, Uppsala, Sweden, Dag Hammarskjold Foundation. This forum will explore and debate some of the most burning questions of our time - and the coming decades - in a stimulating and thought-provoking context. Activists, scholars, students, international and national civil servants, media people and other concerned individuals are invited. For more information, visit www.dhf.uu.se/whatnext/forum

21 October: 4th Annual Conference on Children's Health and the Environment by the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment, affiliated with the George Washington University Medical Center and the Children's National Medical Center. The Conference will address clinically important issues in children's health that are affected by the environment. For conference updates, please go to www.health-e-kids.org

23. Readers Share:

Hello Rebecca, Thanks for all the great info in the latest newsletter.
Rosemary Gauld, LLL Leader, South Africa

Thanks Pushpa! Very good newsletter. I am sharing it with my UNICEF health and nutrition colleagues in the region.
Greetings! *Oswaldo*
Dr. Oswaldo Legón, Regional Adviser Health and Nutrition, UNICEF TACRO - The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office. P. O. Box 0843-03045, Panama City, Republic of Panama

Congratulations. Each time the newsletter contains more interesting data of breastfeeding growth for the whole world and for the well being of babies and their families. Congratulations on this difficult task. It is also surprising to find various organizations that work for breastfeeding in this newsletter.
María Cristina Sáenz, Editor of Nuevo Comienzo, LLL Colombia

...and congratulations on the newsletter! This is one of the most wide-ranging I have read yet ...
It is really the content that was good! Kisses, *Analy*
Analy Uriarte Kivas and Alexandre A. Moreira, Brazil

"I have been reading the MSTF news letter. Great job!"
Rosha Forman, GMFI Associate and WABA Health Care Practices Task Force Interim co-coordinator, USA

"Thank you too for adding me to your newsletter mailing list. I have seen some interesting articles there."
Dr. Christine McCourt, Head of Graduate School, Thames Valley University, London, UK

24. Submission of Articles and Next Issue

We would like to receive articles of interest for this newsletter. The themes of interest should refer to any actions taken, specific work done, investigations and projects carried out from different perspectives and from different parts of the world which have provided support to women in their role as breastfeeding

mothers. In particular, please send articles that support GIMS for Breastfeeding and also articles that address father support.

The guidelines for contributing an article are as follows:

Up to, but not exceeding 250 words.

Name, Title, Address, Telephone, fax and e-mail of the author

Affiliation

Brief biography (5-10 lines)

Web site (if available)

Please be specific in including details where relevant: names of places, persons and exact dates.

To be received by the date specified in each issue.

If there is a lot of information, please write a summary of 250 words or less, provide a website url for readers to access the full report or article or send the full report/article and the MS TF will send it to WABA to place on the WABA website.

The date for submitting articles for consideration for the October/November/December 2006 issue is **September 10th, 2006.**

If you submitted an article and it didn't appear in this issue, it is being reserved for a future issue. **Volume 4, Number 4**, will be sent on **October 10th, 2006.**

25. How to Subscribe/ Unsubscribe to the Newsletter

If you would like to receive this newsletter:

Please send an email to the following email address: MSTFNewsletter-request@braesgate.com In the section that says Subject, please write the word "subscribe". Then send.

To end your subscription to the Newsletter:

Please send an email to the following email address: MSTFNewsletter-request@braesgate.com In the section that says Subject, please write the word "unsubscribe". Then send.

If you are having difficulty subscribing to the newsletter, please email Pushpa ppanadam@telesurf.com.py or Pili vapena@pla.net.py and we will help you.

Please share this newsletter with your friends and colleagues. For more information about this newsletter write to the Editors: Pushpa Panadam, ppanadam@telesurf.com.py , Pili Peña, vapena@pla.net.py

The opinions and information expressed in the articles of this issue do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of WABA, the Mother Support Task Force and the Newsletter Editors. For further information or topic discussion, please email the authors directly.

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network of individuals and organizations concerned with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding worldwide 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 Food Action Network (IBFAN), La Leche League International (LLLI), 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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E-mail: waba@streamyx.com,

Website: www.waba.org.my

The MS TF is one of eight task forces that support the work of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. The slogans being used by the newsletter were created by participants at the GIMS Workshops, Global Forum II, Arusha Tanzania, 2002 and are in the original or modified form.

Breastfeeding: The First Connection to Health, Well-Being and Community