



World Alliance for
Breastfeeding Action

 familyinitiative

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY 2019

Joint WABA and Family Initiative message

Dads are key team players for successful breastfeeding!

Fathering norms are constantly changing. Fathers nowadays are [more involved](#) in the day-to-day care of children and share more work at home, a [vital and ongoing change](#) in the long road towards [gender equality](#). Fathers are more and more involved in caring for babies and have a profound influence on breastfeeding. So how do we ensure that fathers are fully informed about how they can provide the most effective support for breastfeeding?

Breastmilk is the best food for the baby and [breastfeeding benefits](#) mother, family, society and nations. [WHO recommends](#) exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary food up to two years of age or beyond. Studies have shown that fathers [involvement](#) and [emotional support](#) are crucial for mothers to complete her breastfeeding journey. When fathers receive [breastfeeding education](#), [materials](#), and professional support, breastfeeding rates are significantly higher.



The best support that fathers can provide is when both parents form a [parenting team](#). Fathers can build a unique bond with their baby by actively interacting, cuddling and caring for the baby during exclusive breastfeeding. Both the parents [can decide as a team](#) on their breastfeeding goals, how best they can support each other, what will be each parent's responsibilities and how they can share the domestic tasks, especially if there are older children who also need care. Communication is critical to forming a winning breastfeeding team.

"Fathers-to-be, current fathers, and father figures, let us join our hands together and support mothers during breastfeeding, playing our role in building a strong family bond, and closing the gap of absent fathers."

***Thulani Velebayi
MenCare Trainer with Sonke Gender Justice***

The [World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action \(WABA\)](#) and [Family Initiative](#) wish the best to all involved and supportive fathers. Happy Father's Day 2019!

**#HappyFathersDay2019 #WABA #FamilyInitiative #EmpoweringParentsCampaign
#Breastfeeding #WBW2019**

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