

World Breastfeeding Week 2005:
Breastfeeding and Family Foods:
Loving and Healthy Calendar Announcement in English, French, Spanish and Italian & Action Folder text downloadable at www.waba.org.my

Enclosures with this Issue

- WABALink Readership Survey
- 2005 International Breastfeeding Conference "**Breastfeeding, the natural state**"
- 2005 Progress Report on Breastfeeding (Ten years after Beijing)
- 10th Annual International Meeting of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine "**Taking Breastfeeding to New Heights**"
- Creation of a Virtual Resource Map :Database of birthing & breastfeeding organisations around the globe
- Global Day of Mobilisation Against Poverty, War and Unilateralism

WABALink is a current awareness service. The inclusion of inserts is for the purpose of sharing with the breastfeeding community, useful and current materials. The views expressed in the articles, supplements, and other inserts, etc. however do not necessarily reflect the views, or policies of WABA or its Core Partners.

The Tsunami Tragedy



www.npr.org/news/images

On December 26, 2004, a massive earthquake (9.3 on the Richter scale) which unleashed massive tidal waves, wiped out towns and villages, left more than 300,000 people dead, 27,000 missing and some 1.2 million homeless in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Maldives, Bangladesh, Seychelles and Somalia. UNICEF estimates that children account for more than one-third of deaths.

3 months later, the Asian Development Bank estimates that the four worst-hit countries still faced a hefty aid shortfall of US\$5.3 billion. And it was also three months later, a powerful underwater earthquake struck again, off the west coast of Indonesia. It was evident that this latest jolt, sent a web of fear that gigantic waves would again hit many of the countries that are still struggling to recover from the December disaster.

The question to ask ourselves is this. Are we going to let this tragedy remain just a tragedy or are we going to learn from this horrifying experience and be prepared for future emergencies. While donations and aid has been pouring in, the message that we need to send out is that donations of baby foods does more harm than good. In emergencies and relief situations, breastfeeding is of critical importance. It saves babies' lives. IBFAN/ICDC in the wake of the tsunami tragedy, produced a wonderful document called "Fact Sheet on Feeding Babies in Emergencies". This document is available in English, French, Spanish and Thai on www.ibfan.org and on www.waba.org.my. The WABA website also carries links to other important resources on breastfeeding in emergency circumstances.

While the world stood still in shock of the events from Dec 26, 2004 and the subsequent mobilisation of funds and aid, let us not forget that providing short-term relief is only one aspect of aid. It is the long term rebuilding of shattered communities that requires constant reminders.

Longer maternity leave significantly reduces infant mortality

A groundbreaking international study has found that a year of paid leave for new mothers not only improves babies' health but significantly reduces infant mortality.

Research examining the effect of maternity policies on child health outcomes in 18 industrialised countries from 1969 - 2000 found that every 10 weeks of extra maternity leave cut the infant mortality rate -deaths of babies up to a year old by 2.6 percent.



The cause of the apparent connection between leave and deaths is unknown but may be due to longer periods of breastfeeding and better healthcare. The study by an academic from Columbia University, published in the Economic Journal concludes "these results support the hypothesis that an extension in the length of leave enhances child health through parental time with the child".

The study examined leave policies in 18 OECD countries including U.K., the US and Japan. A related study based on US data, found that longer leave improved other health outcomes in addition to cutting mortality rates.

Source : *The Guardian*. 16 Mar 2005

C183 Maternity Protection Convention, 2000

Now Ratified by **11** countries

Country	Ratification Date
Albania	24.07.2004
Austria	30.04.2004
Belarus	10.02.2004
Bulgaria	06.12.2001
Cuba	01.06.2004
Cyprus	12.01.2005
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/english/convdisp2.htm>

Thank You

WABA thanks the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) for adopting a resolution that calls for the collaboration with organisations that are committed to working for women's human rights. Read this important resolution at : <http://congress.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=99122033&Language=EN>. Now is a great time to contact your national ICTFU affiliate to propose working together on Maternity Protection. To find national affiliates, go to : <http://www.icftu.org/addressbook.asp?Language=EN>

- Chris Mulford, Co-coordinator
WABA Women and Work Task Force

STOP PRESS!.... India's IMS Act Saved

On 5th April, 2005, the Government of India decided NOT to repeal the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 (IMS Act) as amended in 2003, while clearing the "Food Safety and Standards Bill 2005" for Cabinet approval. This brings a heartening end to a successful campaign to "Save the IMS Act" which started in January 2005, when the Ministry of Food Processing Industry (MOFPI) put up a proposal to repeal the IMS Act under the propose Bill.

The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) spearheaded the campaign to fight for and save the IMS Act which was a beacon for all countries who sought to improve the the health and development of their children.

BPNI planned out a comprehensive strategy to inform people, media, political parties, key government departments, key individuals, and several NGO's working on public health, women's and children's issues, citizens rights groups, professional bodies, economists and journalists to gather support. WABA and IBFAN came out with overwhelming support and representations were made to UNICEF, who were able to generate support to save the IMS Act through their offices.

Jointly a People's Petition was sent to the Prime Minister, the President and the Ministers concerned.

The media provided unprecedented support and their stories made it an issue of great importance and in the end, history was created by the breastfeeding movement in India in saving the model Act.

-Arun Gupta, National Coordinator, BPNI

Baby Growth Charts- Parents given wrong advice on best weights for infants says WHO latest study

Parents could have created health problems in later life for their babies by overfeeding them because charts used to measure their growth were based on wrong assumptions two decades ago, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said recently.

The growth charts used by baby clinics were drawn up in the US but have now been found to have been based on babies fed mainly on formula milk.

A new seven year study carried out by WHO shows babies who were exclusively breastfed for six months are healthier and leaner than those who hit the norm on the current growth charts.

The WHO study, carried out in collaboration with the United Nations University, shows that recommended weight gain based on breastfed babies would be 7% less. This has led to fears that the old charts could be playing a part in the obesity epidemic.

Now the WHO is to draw up new charts and scrap the old measures, causing potential revolution and possibly a furore among health visitors and paediatricians.

There is growing evidence of a link between a baby's early growth and later development of obesity -related diseases such as a heart problems and diabetes.

The WHO Multicentre Growth Reference Study collected data from 8440 babies in six countries - Brazil, Ghana, India, Norway, Oman and the US - from 1997 to 2004.

Source: *The Guardian*, 5 Feb. 2005

Perchlorate in Breastmilk and Dairy Samples Separating Fact from Mayhem

The recent news about a study which found perchlorate in breastmilk and dairy samples caused confusion and alarm among parents and health care providers in the US by not providing sufficient information about average content of perchlorate in breastmilk, how much is transferred to the infant and what, if any are the adverse effect of such exposure. Breastfeeding remains the best choice in a polluted world. Even though environmental contaminants have been found in human milk, the innumerable benefits for both baby and mother far outweighs the risks. Dr. Jack Newman, MD, FRCPC in his response to the perchlorate issue, "there is no doubt that there are toxins in breastmilk. Why do people imagine that somehow infant formulas are free from toxins? Toxins may interfere with the baby's cognitive and neurological development. Yet breastfed babies do better on cognitive and neurological testing than artificially fed babies in virtually every study ever done. "

Canadian pediatricians suggest new breastfeeding guidelines

The Canadian Pediatric Society has made a new recommendation that women should feed their newborns only through breastfeeding for the first six months, then start adding solids and other liquids .



The new guideline brings the society in line with the World Health Organisation which came to the same conclusion in 2001. The society also said that breastfeeding can continue for up to two years as other foods are added.

The society also warns that cereals marketed for babies are not sterile and may introduce micro-organism into the infant's system before it's equipped to handle them.

Data from the Statistics Canada indicates 85 percent of Canadian mothers start off breastfeeding but only 19 percent continue to do so exclusively at the six-month stage.

Source: *CBC News*, 9 Mar 2005

Editor's Note : *Better late than never!!!!*

FACT ABOUT THE STUDY AND PERCHLORATE

- The study is based on a very small sample size of 36 mothers in 18 states across the USA.
- The said study did not directly measure infant perchlorate exposure.
- Perchlorate is both natural occurring and man-made chemical found in the environment.
- Perchlorate competitively inhibits iodine uptake in the thyroid gland, and its secretion into human milk.
- The only known complication is hypothyroidism which is easily treated with supplements of iodine or in rare cases thyroxine. There has been no evidence or increase incidences of hypothyroidism reported in the USA.
- Impairment of thyroid function in expectant mothers may affect the fetus and newborn, including delayed development and decreased learning capacity.
- Human contamination comes from water and food exposures (includes water, cow's milk and vegetables).

Source: www.breastfeedingtaskforla.org-perchlorate-breastmilk.htm. Feb 25 2005

Are you listed in the WABA-UNICEF Directory of Experts?

WABA in partnership with UNICEF has compiled a Directory of Experts in the field of breastfeeding and appropriate feeding issue.

If you wish to be listed in the Directory, please download the questionnaires from the WABA website < www.waba.org.my/expform.doc > and send to the WABA Secretariat.



News from the Secretariat, Penang, Malaysia

Secretariat News, Project Development and Outreach

January • WABA Secretariat staff planning meeting held at Penang Hill • Koh Kah Ling attended the International Conference on Achieving the Millenium Development Goals in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia •

February • WABA's Birthday • Design, layout, printing and mailout of the World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) Calendar Announcement in English • Gender Training and Strategy Meeting reports were produced • Seedgrants for Maternity Protection were made available • Gender Case Studies project underway •

March • Family day for WABA Secretariat staff at the Spice Garden in conjunction with the visit by Beth Styer, WABA Steering Committee Chairperson • The Mutiara Sanctuary- WABA's new Meeting Room opened by Beth Styer and preceded by traditional blessings of the room represented by the various cultures of Malaysia • Translation, printing, layout and mailout of the WBW Calendar Announcement in Spanish, French and Chinese • Susan Siew attends the APAN General Assembly and SCN Conference in Brazil • Chris Mulford in Penang to work on Maternity Protection Seedgrants and funder's report • Penny Van Esterik works with WABA on HIV and Infant Feeding, Gender and Innocenti + 15 plans • Production of GBPM 3 report, finalised by Koh Kah Ling and Sarah Amin • Koh Kah Ling attends the South East Asian Women's Training Camp (SEAWIC) in Kuala Lumpur • Lynn Emmanuel and Tini attended the launch of NAV 6 Center of Excellence, at the University Science of Malaysia, Penang • Annual Report to SIDA 2004 completed •

April • Linux Server briefing by Shern Tech to the WABA Secretariat • WABA Global Breastfeeding Partners Meeting III Report printed • Annual Report to DGIS completed • WBW Action Folder text and illustrations, posted on WABA website • Writing, design production of WABALink by Julianna Lim Abdullah

Visitors to the Secretariat

January • Nand Wadhvani, rehydration.org, Costa Rica •

March • Penny Van Esterik & John, York University, Toronto, Canada • Chris Mulford, ILCA, USA • Beth Styer, Chairperson, WABA Steering Committee • **April** • Hideo Ando • Devinder Sharma •

Apply Now!!!!!!

World Breastfeeding Week 2005 Seedgrants

WABA would like to invite groups who are organising WBW 2005 and are in need of funds to translate and produce materials into their local language to apply to WABA for WBW Seedgrants. We have about 5-10 Seedgrants, to be given out, each amounting to US\$500 to US\$1000. Do write to the WBW Coordinator at waba@streamyx.com detailing your organisation's background, plans for celebrating WBW and what materials you intend to produce. **Closing date 10 June 2005.**

Happenings 2005

- April 7 ■ World Health Day
- May 12-15 ■ NZLCA Conference, Auckland, New Zealand (www.lactcon.org.nz)
- June 2-3 ■ 15th Annual National Breastfeeding Seminar, Canada
- June 13-July 8 ■ Breastfeeding Practice and Policy Course, London, England (www.cich.ich.ucl.ac.uk/CICH)
- July 1-5 ■ 7th ICAAP International Conference on AIDS in Asia & Pacific, Kobe, Japan (www.icaap7.jp)
- July 2-5 ■ LLLI 19th International Breastfeeding Conference, Washington, USA (www.lalecheleague.org)
- July 8-12 ■ ILCA Annual International Conference & Meeting, Chicago, USA and ILCA's 20th Anniversary (www.ilca.org)
- July 19-23 ■ Second People's Health Assembly, Ecuador (info@iphcglobal.org)
- July 24-27 ■ 3rd International AIDS Society Conference, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (www.ias-2005.org)

Aug 1-7 ■ World Breastfeeding Week

- Sept 1-3 ■ WABA Core Partners Meeting, Penang, Malaysia
- Sept 5-7 ■ WABA Steering Committee Meeting, Penang, Malaysia
- Sept 21-25 ■ 10th International Women and Health Meeting, New Delhi, India (www.10iwhmindia.org)
- Sept 28-30 ■ ABA International Breastfeeding Conference, Hobart, Australia (www.cdesign.com.au/aba2005)
- Oct 12 ■ IBFAN's Anniversary (www.ibfan.org)
- Oct 20-24 ■ 10th Annual ABM Meeting, Denver, Colorado, USA (www.bfmed.org/abm2005.html)
- Oct 27-30 ■ 10th AWID International Forum on Women's Rights and Development, Bangkok, Thailand
- Nov 21-25 ■ 1st International Conference on Childcare in Islam, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (www.susuibu.net.my)
- Nov 27-30 ■ 4th International Congress on Women's Health, New Delhi, India (www.etuc.org/tutb/uk/survey.html)

Read more about it at www.waba.org.my

- 1 Towards Healthy Mothers and Children : A Gender and Rights Approach to Breastfeeding Promotion <www.waba.org.my/pdf/Towards_Healthy_Mothers_and_Children.pdf>
- 2 UNICEF UK BFHI - Govt. to strengthen breastfeeding promotion and protection <www.waba.org.my>



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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).

