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Message from the Editor

Dear readers,

2011 has come and gone so quickly and with a blink of an eye, while 2012 is upon us. Looking back over the past year, where WABA celebrated its 20th anniversary – there have been so many positive events, actions and developments taking place around the globe and yet at the same time there is still so much to be done.

World Breastfeeding Week 2011 was amazing as we explored new territory – using social media and reaching a much younger audience – the young people of today. We were greeted with much enthusiasm, wowed by the speed in which communication and exchange took place and boosted by a healthy dose of youthful energy. I was definitely invigorated... I hope all of you also experienced this during your WBW celebrations. We certainly look forward to 2012 where we will be celebrating the 20 years of WBW!

As we begin to wind down and celebrate the holiday season with our family and friends...the lyrics of this song comes to my mind... my grown-up Christmas list; not for myself, but for a world in need:

No more lives torn apart
That wars would never start
And time would heal all hearts
Every man would have a friend
That right would always win
And love would never end
This is my grown up Christmas wish.



Season's Greetings and Happy New Year to all and may we all be well and happy.

Julianna Lim Abdullah, IBCLC
Editor, e-WABALink

Announcing the theme for World Breastfeeding Week 2012



Understanding the Past - Planning the Future: Celebrating 10 years of WHO/UNICEF's Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding

Objectives

1. To recall what has happened in the past 20 years.
2. To celebrate successes and achievements.
3. To assess the status of implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding.
4. To call for action to bridge the remaining gaps in policy and programmes on breastfeeding /infant and young child feeding (IYCF).
5. To draw public attention on the state of policy and programmes on breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding.
6. To showcase national work at global level.

1. Current News

Rhode Island stops offering formula, encourages breastfeeding

The state of Rhode Island has become the first state in the USA to eliminate the distribution of free formula milk packs. The move by the state's seven birthing hospitals to stop giving away free samples of infant formula to new mothers in an effort to encourage breastfeeding. State health officials hailed the decision on Monday, noting that breastfeeding has been proved healthier than formula for both infants and mothers. Stephanie Chafee, a nurse and the wife of Gov. Lincoln Chafee, called the decision a critical step toward increasing breastfeeding rates.

"As the first 'bag-free' state in the nation, Rhode Island will have healthier children, healthier mothers, and a healthier population as a whole," Chafee said. "This is a tremendous accomplishment."

The state health department said breastfeeding puts mothers at lower risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer and type 2 diabetes while protecting babies against gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases, among other health problems.

Thirty-eight percent of Rhode Island mothers nurse their babies six months after birth, compared with 44 percent nationally, according to a report issued this year by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. State Health Director Michael Fine said the state hopes to raise the percentage of Rhode Island mothers nursing at six months to 60 percent by 2020.



Source: Reuters & Washington Post

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/29/us-breastfeeding-idUSTRE7AS2J520111129>

Maternal separation stresses the baby – Research finds

A new research published in Biological Psychiatry provides new evidence that separating infants from their mothers is stressful to their baby.

The standard practice in a hospital setting, particularly among Western cultures is to separate mothers and their newborns. Separation is also common for babies under medical distress or premature babies who may be placed in an incubator.

Researchers measured heart rate variability in 2-day old sleeping babies for one hour each during skin-to-skin contact with mother and alone in a cot next to mother's bed. Neonatal autonomic activity was 176% higher and quiet sleep 86% lower during maternal separation compared to when the baby has skin-to-skin contact.

Prof John Krystal, Editor of Biological Psychiatry commented on the study's findings, "This paper highlights the profound impact of maternal separation on the infant. We knew this was stressful, but the current study suggests that this is major physiologic stressor for the infant".

This research addresses a strange contraindication: in animal research, separation from mother is a common way of creating stress in order to study the damaging effects on the development of the newborn brain. At the same time, separation of human newborns is common practice, particularly when specialised medical care is required (e.g., incubator care). "Skin-to-skin contact with mother removes this contraindication, and our results are a first step towards understanding exactly why babies do better when nursed in skin-to-skin contact with mother, compared to incubator care," explained study author Dr. Barak Morgan.

Source: Science Daily

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/11/111102124955.htm>

Breastfeeding seeps into Maltese culture



Malta is becoming more of a breastfeeding-friendly culture, according to Paediatrics Department chairman Simon Attard Montalto.

At the turn of this century, breastfeeding here ranked low compared with countries worldwide, but more than 10 years working on it breastfeeding has practically doubled. Nearly 70 per cent of newborns are now breastfed when discharged from hospital.

The most worrying factor remains the advice provided to new parents, Prof. Attard Montalto said at a seminar about the subject which was well attended by mothers and fathers.

A study published in 2008 showed that, of a sample of 403 women who opted to breastfeed, only 38 per cent were still breastfeeding at six months. Around 200 of them had stopped because they had received wrong advice from the medical and social community. Had they been given the right advice, 93 per cent of the whole group would have continued breastfeeding.

The advantages outweighed the disadvantages, Prof. Attard Montalto said. Complications and contraindications were rare and vitamin deficiencies could be countered with supplements.

"Breastmilk is the longest scientific experiment to this day. It is the natural food that has been around as long as humans," he said, adding it had a good head start on any other form of nutrition for babies.

"It is sometimes as perfect as it could get, automatically adjusting regardless of the mother's health," he added, recalling images of physically weak mothers, from Third World countries, feeding healthy-looking babies.

Source: www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111122/local/Breastfeeding-seeps-into-Maltese-culture.395011

Nurse-in over breastfeeding incident in courtroom

A nurse-in is planned to protest the actions of a district court judge who questioned a mom about whether breastfeeding a baby was appropriate in the courtroom. A Michigan (USA) judge publicly reprimanded a woman after she breastfed her son in his courtroom.

Mom Natalie Hegedus said she started breastfeeding her 5 month old baby in Judge Robert Hentchel's Van Buren County courtroom recently when her case was called. Hegedus claims that she sat all the way at the back of the courtroom and nursed discreetly with her shirt "covered everything".

She was there after a bench warrant had been issued because she'd previously failed to show up on a boating ticket. She said she only brought her son because he was sick with an ear infection. According to court transcripts the judge asked do "you think that's appropriate in here?"

"My response was very gauged and I said that considering the fact that my son is sick and he's hungry and the fact that it's not illegal, I don't find it inappropriate," said Hegedus. The judge said something to the effect of, "it's my court, it's my decision and I do find it inappropriate".

"Needless to say, I left in tears. I've never felt so humiliated" said Hegedus. Protestors estimate more than 50 people will take part in the protest.

Source: <http://www.wvmt.com/news/paw-1398838-planned-protest.html>
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2061812/Michigan-Judge-Robert-Hentchel-humiliates-woman-breastfeeding-son.html>

1. Current News

China may ban Infant Formula Ads to encourage Breastfeeding



China may ban sales promotions and advertising for milk formula designed for babies younger than six months in an effort to encourage breastfeeding, the Ministry of Health said.

The government is canvassing public opinion on a draft plan, the ministry said in a statement on its website yesterday. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said it supported measures to curb the use of infant formula, whose sales in China more than doubled in four years.

"There is a hyper-aggressive push to get the emerging market hooked on infant formula," said Dale Rutstein, UNICEF's chief of communications in China. "Our biggest concern is that the advertising of breast-milk substitutes is very aggressive."

Infant formula makers advertise "very seductive" claims about breast-milk substitutes, UNICEF's Rutstein said. Some even imply that children fed the powder will become geniuses or violin maestros, he said.

"More and more mothers are being duped that infant formula is better than breast milk, which can never be the case," Rutstein said.

Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-09/china-may-ban-infant-formula-ads-to-encourage-breastfeeding-2-.html>

Breastfed babies are smarter and get a better chance in life

The UK government is urged to act on new research that shows the importance of a baby's early weeks to success in later life.

Encouraging disadvantaged mothers to breastfeed should be a key part of the government's plan for improving social mobility, according to leading academics and health experts.

Their demand comes as research into the effects of breastfeeding, to be presented at a conference in London, shows that it can boost children's IQ and health and reduces the chances of behavioural and weight problems.

A commission established to oversee the strategy has devised a list of key indicators by which social mobility can be measured, enabling the government to see where intervention could make the most impact.

Researchers at the University of Essex's Institute of Social & Economic Research and the University of Oxford have spent the past two years looking at the impact of breastfeeding, excluding other factors such as social class, home environment and parents' education. A body of recent research shows that an individual's behavioural and psycho-social outcomes have a significant impact on adult earnings and education. Differences in children's cognitive development emerge at early ages, and the importance of timely parental investments is increasingly recognised as a major factor in fostering child development.

"If research can demonstrate the extent to which positive outcomes are the result of breastfeeding, rather than arising from social factors, then there is a strong case for supporting and encouraging breastfeeding as an early intervention policy that can improve a child's life chances, particularly targeting young and disadvantaged mothers."

The research shows there are many positive effects of breastfeeding: it reduces the likelihood of a child having behavioural problems at age five – 6% of full-term babies breastfed for four months have these issues compared with 16% of formula-fed babies; it increases the IQ of children breastfed for four weeks or more by around three points; it reduces the chances of a baby needing hospital treatment for diarrhoea or lower respiratory tract infections. Currently there is a large social gap in breastfeeding rates, with the most privileged mothers being several times more likely to breastfeed than the least privileged, according to the policy document.

Dr Emilia Del Bono, an economist at the ISER, said: "There seems to be evidence of benefits of breastfeeding in relation not just to health – which are already widely known – but also, and perhaps more controversially, in the cognitive, emotional and behavioural domains. There is a strong argument that the government should include breastfeeding on its list of social mobility indicators."



Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2011/oct/09/breastfeeding-link-to-social-mobility?newsfeed=true>

I. Current News

Supermodel Miranda Kerr back to work – and breastfeeding



The ravishingly beautiful model, 28, is back in spectacular shape only weeks after having her baby. Breastfeeding seems to be doing wonders for new mom Miranda Kerr — she posted a photo of herself nursing 3-month-old son Flynn while at a shoot for Victoria's Secret on Thursday.

Miranda has become enthralled with breastfeeding.

The first photo of the baby posted on her Web site, shot by husband Orlando Bloom, showed her nursing him. "The photo was one of the first photos Orlando took," Miranda later said.

"We both loved it and we wanted to share it.

"The pleasant surprise was that it also had the added benefit of promoting breastfeeding which to me is the most natural thing in the world and I love it. I intend to breastfeed for as long as I can," she added.

What does her husband Bloom think of her post-baby body?

"It's genetics," he said on The Ellen DeGeneres Show on Friday. "It's amazing. She looks incredible."

When DeGeneres asked how she got back into shape so quickly, Bloom, 34, responded, "A lot of breastfeeding."



Source: <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/showbiz/article-23915610-picture-of-orlando-blooms-wife-and-baby-reopens-breastfeeding-debate.do>

WABA's former seedgrant recipient Ibu Robin Lim wins CNN Hero of the Year award



Robin Lim, an American woman who has helped thousands of poor Indonesian women have a healthy pregnancy and birth, was named the 2011 CNN Hero of the Year on Sunday night.

Through her Yayasan Bumi Sehat health clinics, "Mother Robin," or "Ibu Robin" as she is called by the locals, offers free prenatal care, birthing services and medical aid in Indonesia, where many families cannot afford care.

WABA is especially proud of Ibu Robin's achievement – she was one of the earliest recipient of the WABA Global Initiative for Father Support (GIFS) Seedgrant Award in 2005 – for her project to promote exclusive breastfeeding among mothers in Indonesia and starting a Father's Club to encourage fathers to support breastfeeding.

In Indonesia, the average family earns the equivalent of \$8 a day, according to the International Monetary Fund. But a baby delivery costs about \$70 at a hospital, and a Caesarian section can cost as much as \$700. Lim believes Indonesia's high maternal and infant mortality rates are caused in part by these costs, which many women cannot meet.

"The situation is bad... babies are unattended, deliveries have become commercialized, and mothers die from hemorrhage after childbirth because they can't afford proper care," Lim told CNN earlier this year.

The CNN Hero of the Year was chosen by the public after an 11-week vote on CNN.com. For being named Hero of the Year, Lim will receive \$250,000 for her cause. That's in addition to the \$50,000 that she and the rest of the top 10 Heroes each received for making the top 10.

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/11/living/cnn-heroes/index.html>

Radioactive infant formula found in Japan

A Japanese food manufacturer Meiji announced in December that its quality controls detected deadly radioactive cesium in the infant formula it produces. This is the most recent of such discoveries in Japan, some nine months after the deadly earthquake and tsunami that killed thousands and seriously damaged a nuclear power plant in Fukushima.

Concerns over food safety have peaked since the March 11 disaster with high levels of radiation found in vegetables, milk, seafood and drinking water although Japanese authorities continue to insist that no health risk is posed.

A company source indicated that the cesium may have entered the milk in the hot air used to dry the formula. Meiji voluntarily recalled its 'Meiji Step' formula.

Source: <http://www.energypublisher.com/a/POKZPNXWH30/64983-Japan-jolted-by-radioactive-infant-formula>

<http://yourlife.usatoday.com/health/story/2011-12-06/Radiation-traces-found-in-Japanese-baby-formula/51672392/1>

I. Current News

DHA used in infant formula products comes from genetically modified algae

One of the most vulnerable segments of the population – infants – are being affected as chemical giant Martek Biosciences uses cronyism to have its patented GMO products classified as organic. The National Organic Program is trying to correct this, but in the meantime the “organic” infant formula or baby food parents feed their children could contain industrial Frankenfood.

The story of how this state of affairs came about reveals much on how politics and profit can undermine food safety. Here’s a timeline on how the word “organic” is being undermined, creating a health threat for babies who are fed with formula.

- 2002: Food manufacturers begin supplementing infant formula and baby food with synthetic forms of Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) and Arachidonic Acid (ARA). These polyunsaturated omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, naturally present in breast milk, are important components of the human brain and eyes. Although the form of DHA/ARA used in infant formulas is structurally incompatible with the form found in human milk, food manufacturers market their products with the claim that their formulas will make babies more intelligent.
- 2006: In spite of the fact that its synthetic DHA/ARA is from laboratory-grown fermented algae and fungus through the use of hexane, a petroleum by-product and EPA-identified neurotoxin, Martek applies for organic status for its products. The USDA’s National Organic Program (NOP) tells Martek its synthetic DHA and ARA does not qualify as organic. Martek attorney J. Friedman ignores the decision of NOP staff and contacts NOP director Barbara Robinson to have the decision reversed.
- 2009: A front page Washington Post article, “Integrity of Federal ‘Organic’ Label Questioned” uncovers the Martek story. The article quotes Martek’s lawyer saying “I called Robinson up, I wrote an e-mail. It was a simple matter.”
- 2002-2010: Parents and medical professionals observe reactions in babies fed with products containing Life’s DHA, the product name Martek gives its patented GMO version of naturally occurring fatty acids. The range of infant health problems includes difficulties breathing and gastrointestinal disorders. When affected babies are no longer fed the formula, the ailments disappear. Although Freedom of Information Act requests reveal hundreds of FDA adverse event reports, the FDA is slow to react.
- 2011: FDA announces it will investigate claims that DHA/ARA infant formulas support brain and eye development. The National Organic Program is now trying to remedy its 2006 decision by asking Martek to formally ask permission of the NOP’s National Organic Standards Board to use its DHA and AHA in organic products.

These oils appear to be added to infant formula primarily as a marketing tool designed to convince parents that formula is now “as close as ever to breast milk”. Substantiating this thesis is a Martek investment promotion from 1996 which reads as follows: “Even if [the DHA/ARA blend] has no benefit, we think it would be widely incorporated into formulas, as a marketing tool and to allow companies to promote their formula as “closest to human milk”

Source: <http://www.prisonplanet.com/dha-used-in-infant-formula-products-comes-from-genetically-modified-algae.html>
<http://ecochildsplay.com/2011/12/08/beware-usda-organic-baby-food-contains-gmo-dha-and-ara/>

For more information on this matter please also visit The Cornucopia Institute – DHA Safety Concerns
<http://www.cornucopia.org/dha-safety-concerns/>

Chief Minister of Penang opens lactation room at the State Government Office

The Chief Minister of Penang, Lim Guan Eng opened the first lactation room in the State Government Office recently.

Now breastfeeding mothers working in state government office can use the room to express milk for their babies. The room which costs RM3,000 (approximately US\$1,000) is situated in the Information Department of the Chief Ministers office on the 47th floor of office complex.

State Youth and Sports, Women, Family and Community Development chairman Lydia Ong Kok Fook said that 80% of employees in the office complex were female and 30% of them had recently given birth. “We are looking into setting up more of such rooms in other departments within this complex and also in other state buildings. The Penang Municipal Council is also in discussion to include breastfeeding rooms as a requirement got the approval of building plans,” she told a press conference yesterday.

She also added that the state had allocated RM50,000 (US\$16,000 in 2012) to promote Penang as the first Breastfeeding-Friendly State in Malaysia.

Source: <http://thestar.com.my/metro/story.asp?file=/2011/12/2/north/10016370&sec=north>

2. News from Core Partners



ACADEMY OF BREASTFEEDING MEDICINE (ABM)

**16th Annual International Meeting,
November 3-6, 2011 • Miami, Florida, USA**

The 16th Annual International Meeting presented by the *Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine*, will include world-class speakers providing cutting-edge research and clinical information on current issues in breastfeeding medicine. The Meeting on November 5-6 is open to all health professionals.

The *ABM* Annual International Meeting focuses on the most authoritative and up-to-date clinical information on breastfeeding, spanning both maternal and child health issues. A significant educational opportunity, the 2011 meeting is an ideal context for health professionals to continue their professional education in a highly respected, stimulating environment, while earning continuing medical education credits. This year's meeting will once again offer the one-day course, "**What Every Physician Needs to Know About Breastfeeding.**"

To register online, please visit:

<https://www.conference.com/eventmanager/OnlineRegistration.asp?EventCode=554>



INTERNATIONAL LACTATION CONSULTANT ASSOCIATION (ILCA)

**Call to Action: New Perspectives in Human Lactation
July 25-29, 2012
Orlando, Florida, USA**



The ILCA Annual Conference provides a rich learning environment for lactation professionals and others who assist mothers and babies with breastfeeding. It offers current and aspiring lactation consultants information on cutting-edge lactation practices and research to equip you in giving optimal breastfeeding care and support to mothers and babies.

<http://www.ilca.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=3972>



INTERNATIONAL BABY FOOD ACTION NETWORK (IBFAN)



**BABIES NEED
MOM-MADE
NOT MAN-MADE!**

WORLD BREASTFEEDING
CONFERENCE 2012
LET'S PROTECT EVERY FEEDING MOTHER

December 6 - 9, 2012, New Delhi, India.

**On December 6, 2012,
there's only one place
for you to be:**

NEW DELHI

Exactly one year from now, we assemble in New Delhi to take our cause forward.

Please mark these dates in your calendar to ensure your participation in, what will be, the beginning of a significant move forward for the breastfeeding movement, worldwide.

A formal invitation and details of the conference shall follow soon.

**Let's protect every
feeding mother!**

3. News from Secretariat

Getting to Zero: Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination, Zero AIDS-Related Deaths – Making GETTING TO ZERO a Reality for HIV-Infected Mothers and Their Children

The Statement brings critical updated information on this complex issue of HIV and infant feeding policy guidelines and decision making; and the important role of exclusive breastfeeding in HIV intervention and child survival!

To read full statement please read <http://www.waba.org.my/pdf/wad2011-statement.pdf>



“What Women need to know on HIV and Infant Feeding”

The short document aims to guide all women in understanding this complex issue better, and help them make informed decisions on needed treatment and infant feeding for both maternal health and prevention of HIV transmission to infants. All health and women’s health activists will find this document most useful!

<http://www.waba.org.my/pdf/wad2011-wwntk.pdf>

Enhancing Education in Lactation Management in the Undergraduate Medical Curriculum



Penang Medical College and World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) will be holding a 2-day conference on May 3 and 4, 2012 on the above topic. This conference aims to present and discuss current status of lactation management curriculum in Malaysian medical schools. There will also be perspectives from other regions as well as updates on the newer evidence and practices in lactation management and medical education. The programme will include workshops focusing on enhancing current curriculum. Our list of speakers includes international authorities in breastfeeding and medical education such as Dr Audrey Naylor, Wellstart International, USA; Dr Felicity Savage, Institute for Child Health, UK; Dr Miriam Labbok, University of North Carolina, USA and Dr Arun Gupta, IBFAN Asia.

Venue: The Northam All Suites,
Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, Penang

WABA Steering Committee Election 2012

WABA will hold its Steering Committee Election for three Steering Committee (SC) positions to take up office on 1 January 2013 until 31 December 2015.

The current three Steering Committee members’ term will end by 31 December 2012 leaving the SC positions vacant for the following regions.

1. Africa (currently held by Lourdes Fidalgo)
2. North America (currently held by Dr Miriam Labbok)
3. Latin America (currently held by Marta Trejos)

Nominees must fulfill the following criteria:

- i) Be a mobiliser, networker and communicator;
- ii) Have roots in various geographical regions and an international perspective;
- iii) Be a key player in institutions and willing to provide support to WABA;
- iv) Have a range of leadership skills and understanding of issues;
- v) Be an endorser of WABA;
- vi) Has to be a legal resident in that region and currently working for an organization based in that region;
- vii) Each nominee must have the support of at least four or more WABA endorsees through the nomination form.

Nomination papers for election will be sent out early January 2012. Both nomination and voting can be done electronically.

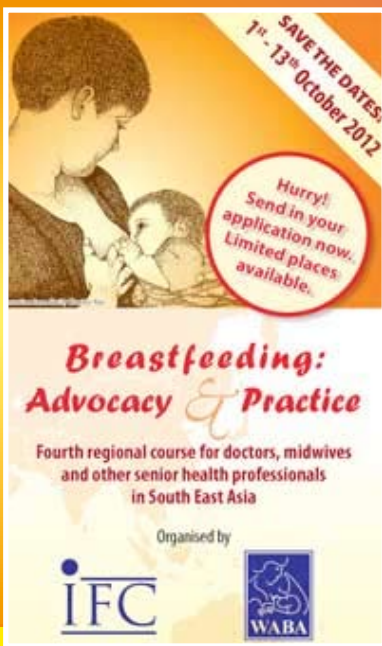
If you know of WABA endorsees who meet the above criteria and are keen to serve on the SC, please encourage them to be a candidate.

For more information please contact:
sita.letchmi@waba.org.my

Participants: Medical curriculum committee members and educators in medical schools across the country particularly those responsible for any part of the curriculum that touches on lactation management and other interested persons.



For more information or to indicate interest to participate, please contact Ms Pei Ching at info@waba.org.my.



BREASTFEEDING ADVOCACY AND PRACTICE

A Regional Outreach Course by the Infant Feeding Consortium,
From the Institute of Child Health, London, and WABA.
Keep the dates! 1-13 October 2012
Penang, Malaysia

In response to repeated requests for in-depth training on breastfeeding and young child feeding to be made available regionally, WABA and the Infant Feeding Consortium are offering a 2-week course in Penang. Similar courses in the past few years have resulted in many positive improvements in the clinical practices of previous participants.

The course is specially designed for doctors and other senior health professionals from the South East Asian region who are responsible nationally or locally for:

- clinical care of mothers and infants
- teaching short courses
- pre-service curricula for health professionals
- advocacy and policy development
- implementation of programmes such as the BFHI.

The Infant Feeding Consortium directs the 4-week course Breastfeeding: Practice and Policy at the Institute of Child Health, London, and they will be responsible for organising the course in collaboration with WABA. Teaching will be conducted mainly in English, with some use of Bahasa Malaysia.

For any queries, please contact Ms Pei Ching at peiching.chuah@waba.org.my

To reserve a place please complete the Application Form at

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/embeddedform?formkey=dFFzeWNvUU9rc0tpMDZUWDNnY01WekE6MQ>



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