

5. Transforming Hospitals and Healthcare Practices, Improving Breastfeeding Support

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (WBW 1992)

Th Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative is the second operational target of the *Innocenti Declaration* 1990. It calls on all governments to ensure that every facility providing maternity services complies to all of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding by 1995. 'The Ten Steps' (as it is commonly called) was set in the joint WHO/UNICEF statement "Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding: the special role of maternity service." The Ten Steps serves as a checklist for maternity services to ensure that they take all the necessary steps to support the early initiation of exclusive breastfeeding. This includes skin to skin contact, no separation of mothers and babies and the provision of ongoing support for mothers after they leave the hospital.



This drawing by Pablo Picasso is used by the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI).

The very first WBW campaign focused global attention on activities aimed at changing hospital practices to support breastfeeding. For decades, poor hospital practices posed serious obstacles for women to breastfeed. Among other factors, this is primarily due to the separation of mother and baby right after birth, the lack of knowledge and skills by health staff to support women in breastfeeding, and the provision of artificial milks at the onset of a child's birth. At the time of the campaign, globally, most hospital practices hindered rather than supported a mother in breastfeeding.