

Exclusive Breastfeeding: the Gold Standard – Safe, Sound, Sustainable (WBW 2004)

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Exclusive breastfeeding for six months.

WBW 2004 aimed to send the message that exclusive breastfeeding is safe, sound and sustainable. As with previous years, the Campaign worked to stimulate activities worldwide to get more people to understand the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, and to develop ways to enable and empower mothers to breastfeed exclusively. The context for this was the new Global Strategy, which many government bodies and organisations were beginning to implement.

The campaign drove home the message that exclusive breastfeeding for six months means that the infant receives only breastmilk, from his or her mother or a wet nurse, and no other foods or drinks with the exception of drops or syrups consisting of vitamins, mineral supplements, or medicines during this time. After six months, breastfeeding should continue for two years or more, with complementary foods.

WBW 2004 specifically sought to address the long dilemma and confusion around the duration of optimal breastfeeding, which varied from three months, 3-6 months, 4 months, and 4-6 months. These messages were confusing and not at all in sync with the latest evidence-based recommendation of the Global Strategy, and needed clarification and reinforcement. This clarity was also critical in view of the fact that baby food companies were taking advantage of the confusion to market commercial complementary foods for infants below the six months period.

Breastfeeding and Family Foods: Loving & Healthy – Feeding Other Foods While Breastfeeding is Continued (WBW 2005)

Following on from the WBW 2004 theme of exclusive breastfeeding for six months, the 2005 WBW theme recommended continuing breastfeeding with complementary foods for up to two years and beyond.

