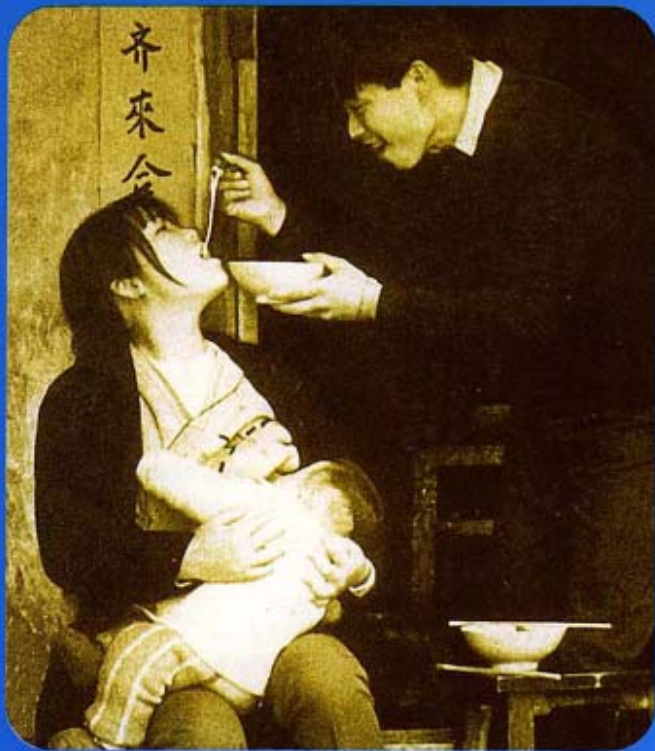


Breastfeeding: A Community Responsibility



A WOMAN'S CHOICE about how best to feed her child is a personal one. However, as no woman lives in isolation, her decision is influenced by many factors. Family members, health workers, the media, religious institutions, social traditions, the work place and her own education can all have a bearing on her decision to breastfeed - as well as her ability to continue breastfeeding for the optimal length of time.

Every woman should be able to count on full support from those around her to enable her to initiate and sustain breastfeeding. It is the responsibility of the entire community to see that the best possible nutrition and health is available to all of its members, beginning with its youngest.

A community is the people nearby - in the family, neighbourhood, at work, and in the town. People all around join to support the breastfeeding mother. Your community can be a vehicle for change.

Women feel supported when the community welcomes them to breastfeed in public, provides help to overcome difficulties, offers facilities to breastfeed at the work place; and when health professionals take an ethical stand against the promotion of breastmilk substitutes and use their influence to support women to breastfeed.

The theme for World Breastfeeding Week 1996, *Breastfeeding: A Community Responsibility* provides an opportunity for us all to evaluate our own communities and the attitudes expressed, to see if we are indeed supportive of breastfeeding.

In this action folder, designed to give you some solid ideas about WBW activities that you can organise in your own community, we will explore the *Triple-A* model for advocacy.

- **ASSESSMENT**
- **ANALYSIS**
- **ACTION**



Recognising the multifaceted influence of a community on breastfeeding, World Breastfeeding Week 1996 encourages groups and individuals, government, public and private institutions, employers and the media to protect, promote and support breastfeeding.