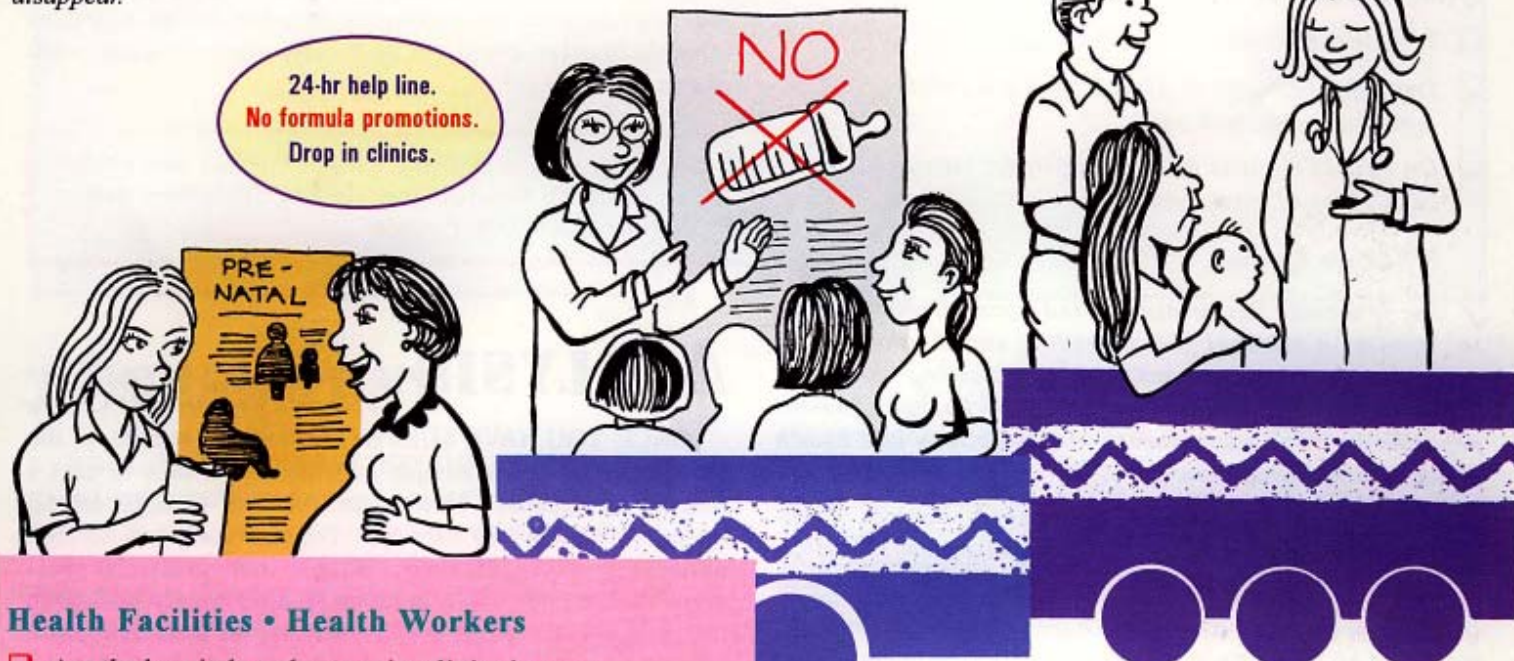


## What we know...

- ✓ Radio, television and newspapers have powerful influence on our opinions and relationships with others. We can work with the media to create supportive environments for breastfeeding.
- ✓ In Slovakia, a magazine called *Child* has agreed to publish one article about breastfeeding in each issue provided by the NGO, Pro Vita.
- ✓ In South Africa, a cartoon booklet 'Maria's New Baby' designed to promote the benefits of breastfeeding has been adapted into radio script.
- ✓ In Sweden, sports celebrities are helping to promote breastfeeding with a famous hockey player and his family appearing on a poster with the caption "Breastfeeding: the best goal!"
- ✓ Some parents and family magazines no longer advertise breastmilk substitutes, although images of bottles are slower to disappear.

- ✓ Hospital practices and routines often interfere with the establishment of breastfeeding. Health professionals have not been taught how lactation works, how to help women "latch on" their babies so nipples don't get damaged or how to solve breastfeeding problems. Well-meaning hospital staff, doctors and pharmacists may give new mothers gift packs with formula samples, bottles, teats and formula-company produced 'breastfeeding' information. Along with samples comes a not-so subtle message that breastfeeding women also should use 'formula'.

**Baby Friendly Hospitals**  
Practise Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.  
Educated and trained staff.  
No formula samples. No free supplies



## Health Facilities • Health Workers

- Are the hospitals and maternity clinics in your community baby-friendly?
- Is breastfeeding discussed at pre-natal programmes?
- How informed are members of the staff? Is there any post-natal support for breastfeeding, particularly once a woman has returned to her home?
- Does the hospital accept free supplies of breastmilk substitutes or distribute sample to mothers?
- Can a woman who is having trouble breastfeeding turn to the health facility for help?

## What we know...

- ✓ To date, more than 4000 hospitals throughout the world are baby-friendly and 170 countries participate in the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI).
- ✓ Initiation of breastfeeding soon after birth is crucial for successful breastfeeding and requires the full support of health personnel attending birth. Possibly the single most disabling factor for breastfeeding mothers is the lack of support from health professionals coupled with the lack of accurate information and sometimes just plain misinformation.

## Social Groups • Clubs • Organisations

- Do any clubs or social organisations in your community offer breastfeeding support?
- How are breastfeeding support groups promoted?

## What we know...

- ✓ Step 10 of the "Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding" is "Help start breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them".
- ✓ La Leche League International started in 1956 when a group of seven women got together to discuss their breastfeeding experiences. Today, support groups like La Leche League, Susu Mamas, IBFAN groups and ILCA provide crucial support to mothers outside of the health system. La Leche League has more than 8,000 certified leaders who reach over 100,000 women each month in more than 60 countries.
- ✓ In Norway, where close to 100% of mothers initiate breastfeeding, and more than 80% of babies are exclusively breastfed at three months, mother support groups are an important complement to the services of health care institutions.