

Ideas for Action

TEACHERS AND PARENTS

- Contact your local school board and those in charge of curriculum development. Suggest breastfeeding be included in the curriculum for subjects such as Human Development, Family Life Studies, Sociology, Psychology, History, Women's Studies, Home Economics, Health Education, Science and Biology.
- Campaign for breastfeeding education to be part of recertifying requirements for teachers of all of the above subjects.
- Develop a Breastfeeding-Friendly Nursery School Initiative (*see box on 10 Steps*).

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

- Review books in the library for positive breastfeeding images and practices. Replace unsupportive books with better options.
- Ask the children to interview their mothers and neighbours about their breastfeeding experiences. Discuss the answers in class and correct misinformation.
- Develop guessing games to discover the purpose of the components of breastmilk.
- Develop a colouring book for children about breastfeeding or use WABA's colouring book *Breastfeeding: Nature's Way*. Have a story, song or art competition about breastfeeding.
- Have the children ask parents and neighbours when and how their babies first started to eat other foods. Discuss the answers in class and investigate why there are differences in the ages and foods that mothers introduce.
- Inspect school rooms for toys that promote bottle feeding, such as baby dolls with bottles or pacifiers. Ask parents and teachers to replace them with breastfeeding dolls and feeding utensils for children.
- Place posters, brochures and other information about breastfeeding in school-based health centers and family education centers.



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

- Develop a task force to review and update curricula to assure the integration of breastfeeding in appropriate areas such as: in images of mothers and babies, in science modules on reproduction, in nutrition modules on infant nutrition, in sociology curriculum on the breast-bottle controversy and North-South relations, in current events modules on food security and ecology, in history modules on the profession of wet nursing and breastfeeding culture and practices.
- Use or adapt the model curriculum that was developed by the New York State Department of Health for all levels for children from ages five (*pre-primary*) through eighteen (*secondary*).

- Establish a school policy that allows adolescent mothers to bring their breastfeeding babies to school or to express milk during the school day.
- Establish a school policy that supports teachers and staff who are breastfeeding while working.

TERTIARY EDUCATORS

- Introduce new types of questionnaires and methodologies for obtaining information on infant feeding practices.
- Have students monitor TV presentations on breastmilk substitute use and breastfeeding. Discuss them in their classes, such as Marketing, English Literature, Sociology, History and Law.
- Have students do searches on breastfeeding and formula feeding in the Internet and discuss the sites that they find.
- Bring a breastfeeding mother to school with her baby and let her talk about her experience.
- Establish on-campus child care and breastfeeding/milk expression facilities for teachers, staff and students to use.
- Have students write a term paper or thesis topic on an issue related to breastfeeding.
- Develop a student apprenticeship or practicum to work with health clinics and schools to inform the community about the importance of breastfeeding and appropriate infant feeding practices.
- Have the students tell their breastfeeding history and analyse their own or their mother's experiences.
- Develop a Woman and Baby-Friendly University Initiative (*see WABA website*).
- Integrate breastfeeding into all levels of curricula in all professional training schools: Economics, Finance, Marketing, Ecology, History, Business, Sociology, Anthropology, Women's Studies, Psychology, Social Work, Microbiology, Chemistry, Education, Law, Medicine and Art.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

- Initiate a breastfeeding clinic at the medical, nursing, nutrition and other health professional schools.
- Sensitise your fellow faculty, department heads, deans and others to the need to review and improve the breastfeeding content of existing curricula and/or teaching materials.
- Sensitise key staff of ministries of health and education to the need for curriculum reform and urge them to include pre-service curriculum work as part of a comprehensive national breastfeeding programme.
- Use textbooks with good information on breastfeeding. Demand that textbooks be revised to include state of the art information on breastfeeding and lactation management.
- Participate in or devise internships, fellowships or other intensive educational experiences focusing on breastfeeding promotion and clinical lactation management.
- Include lactation management in health professional licensure exams and standards of practice.
- Participate in active sharing of experiences, lessons learned, models, resources with others in your own professional organisation or through existing networks on the Internet.