

IDEAS for ACTION



What you and your community can do

- Translate this action folder into your local language and distribute the information.
- Write to TV stations, newspaper/magazine/website editors to thank and congratulate them for positive breastfeeding practices, or point out to them if their contents undermine breastfeeding.
- Tell your friends about the benefits of breastfeeding and encourage fathers to give their support.
- Get some friends together and organise shows or set up an information booth in your community.
- Place a breastfeeding car sticker at the rear window of your car.
- Expose your children to the culture of breastfeeding via books, comics, stories, observing the habits of different mammals and other creative activities.
- Be familiar with core breastfeeding messages.
- Keep updated on the issues of breastfeeding and HIV/AIDS and environmental contaminants.
- Place breastfeeding messages or event announcements on business signboards and public transportation.
- Work with local libraries to have a display of breastfeeding books (adult and children) from their collection, a listing of websites (if Internet access is available at the library), and start a breastfeeding reading club.



Internet use sites (libraries, cafés, etc) and directly to families.

- Set up a breastfeeding email 'warm line' for parents to ask questions and get referrals, in addition to telephone and face-to-face counselling. Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia has begun this recently, and they get requests from all over the world.
 - Create a set of web-based breastfeeding review topics and competency tests for clinic and hospital staff to be able to access 24-hours a day.
 - Develop an email distribution list to send out occasional updates on breastfeeding literature and practices. Target families, health professionals or policy makers.
 - Identify important policy and research documents on-line; copy and distribute to colleagues without Internet access.

Work with Local Health Clinics and Hospitals

- Hang banners, signs, or posters to celebrate BWB.
 - Set up a display of breastfeeding information in lobby, cafeteria, or waiting room.
 - Present statistics on local breastfeeding rates, barriers, and promotional efforts to meetings of nurses, doctors, administrators, and other staff to encourage further assistance and support for mothers.
- Organise a "Breastfeeding Paper of the Week" among health workers; give a prize for most correct answers on a post-test of the Paper. Arrange for "continuing education" credits.

Work with the Media

- Monitor popular radio and television programmes. Suggest that new babies be breastfed and portray accurate information. Respond to inaccurate information (this could be an opening for having a news story or interview to correct the misinformation).
- Use songs to convey and reinforce messages. Air over local radio stations, play in clinics, use in 'sing-a-longs' in classes and childcare centres.
- Create radio, television or Internet teaching programmes on parenting, breastfeeding and infant nutrition. In Honduras, a radio station conducted 11 programmes on Nine golden rules of breastfeeding, complemented by radio spots and a song, a brochure for mothers, a guide for health workers, and a diploma for course participation.
- For print and broadcast stories provide journalists with story ideas, people to interview, events to cover (like shows, dances or contests). Cultivate working relationships with these journalists.
- Participate in call-in or talk shows on radio and television and live chats on the Internet.
- Where radio and television are government controlled, encourage collaboration between media, appropriate government Ministries, and grassroots community groups.

Work on the Internet

- Create a list of good breastfeeding websites and distribute at

continued from page 4 (Key points on HIV/AIDS)

- The highest risk of HIV transmission to the breastfed baby appears to be during the early weeks and months of breastfeeding when it may be indistinguishable from transmission occurring during pregnancy or during birth. Although the risk of transmission of HIV through breastfeeding by an already-infected mother continues as long as the baby is breastfed, it appears to be reduced with increasing age, particularly the baby exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life.
- Breastfeeding should continue to be protected, supported and promoted generally, as most mothers are not infected or do not know their HIV status. Indeed, in 2001 less than 1% of women making antenatal visits in Africa for example even have access to VCT.
- The provisions of the International Code and the BFHI should continue to be implemented even in areas with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS.
- The best way to protect babies from becoming infected is to protect their mothers from being infected with HIV by their sexual partners.