

IDEAS for ACTION

To promote women's health:

- Establish and/or promote programmes to improve the physical and emotional health of girls and women, including quality nutrition, smoking prevention and cessation, physical activity, formal schooling, and family planning.
- Help women with acute or chronic health conditions, such as tuberculosis, hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS, and drug addictions, receive humane health care.
- Organise a 'best practices' seminar on pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and women's health for families, health care providers, health care payers (insurance and government), law-makers and government officials.
- Collect information on deficiencies, adequacies, and superiorities in breastfeeding and women's health protection, promotion and support in your community. This could include health clinics, worksites, hospitals, and community groups. Award those with best practices.

To foster humane and appropriate birth practices:

- Collect information at the local, regional or national level on women's perinatal health:
 - greatest barriers to a healthy pregnancy
 - important issues for a safe and informed birth experience.
- Organise families in your community to ask for improvements in maternity care:
 - access to health care and social services
 - childbirth education classes based on factual information that teach how to manage the work of labour
 - new parent classes on baby care and breastfeeding
 - healthy lifestyles for the family
 - acceptable and effective birth-spacing methods.
- Ask local hospitals and health providers about their antenatal, childbirth, and post-partum services. Suggest changes (refer to *Care in Normal Birth* and *Evidence-Based Guidelines for Breastfeeding Management During the First Fourteen Days*) that can humanise mother-baby care, improve patient satisfaction, and save money and resources.
- Encourage training programmes for birth attendants, doulas, and other childbirth supporters.
- Review health standards, policies, and laws pertaining to birth and newborn care; collaborate with physicians, lawmakers, and officials to change those that mandate procedures in birth and the early post-partum that can interfere with mother-infant attachment and breastfeeding.

To promote breastfeeding:

- Add breastfeeding as greater component in local, regional, and national "Safe Motherhood" Initiatives and other maternity or baby health programmes.
- Establish or promote breastfeeding information and support classes and outreach programmes within your community.
- Create breastfeeding committees or coordinating groups

at local, regional, and national levels.

- Strengthen the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI):
 - encourage local hospitals to become Baby-Friendly
 - help those hospitals which are already Baby-Friendly to maintain their quality, evidence-based practices
 - broaden BFHI criteria to include birthing care and care in HIV prevalent settings.
- Support the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes* and subsequent WHA resolutions on infant feeding:
 - urge government leaders and hospital administrators to use the Code in the development of laws, regulations and contractual agreements



- educate colleagues and community members on the Code, how it is violated, and how this impacts families in your community. Encourage them to follow the Code.

To foster an environment of mother support:

- Discover local resources and services for postnatal medical and social care, such as home visitors, food programmes, family planning and mother-to-mother support. Tell colleagues and mothers about these resources.
- Support the development or maintenance of mother-to-mother support groups in local communities.
- Work to implement the new International Labour Organization Maternity Protection Convention (183) and Recommendation (95) in your country, and its provisions voluntarily in local worksites. For specific action ideas, visit the WABA webpage on the ILO Campaign: <http://www.waba.org.br/actilo.htm>
 - understand laws and policies on maternity leave and mother's working conditions in formal and informal sites
 - identify resources and services for crèche facilities in the work place
- Join and endorse the GIMS and act locally.