

Assess your community: sample questions

Schools

- ☐ How do young people learn about breastfeeding?
- ☐ How early do the influences begin?
- ☐ Do dolls in children's pre-school play area come with bottles?
- ☐ Do secondary schools and colleges cover breastfeeding in biology or health classes?
- ☐ Is there support for young mothers who continue to attend school?

What we know...

- ✓ *Most children are not exposed to breastfeeding or any form of breastfeeding instruction in school. A teenage mother will receive little support in breastfeeding from her school. Medical curriculum generally gives little or no attention to the science and practice of breastfeeding.*



Family

- ☐ Do family members understand the need to help with household chores when a mother is breastfeeding?
- ☐ Do they realise that a breastfeeding mother needs extra food and extra rest?
- ☐ Do grandmothers and mothers-in-law appreciate and support the decision made by mothers to breastfeed?
- ☐ Do fathers understand that there are many opportunities for bonding in addition to feeding an infant, such as bathing, cuddling and burping?

What we know...

- ✓ *A survey of 115 UK mothers has shown that the partner's attitude to breastfeeding is the biggest factor influencing feeding decisions. If the father approved of breastfeeding, three quarters of infants were totally breastfed; if the father was indifferent or disapproving, the proportion fell to less than 10%. Other members of the family and friends, a new mother's mother may also have a positive influence by being supportive.*
- ✓ *Breastfeeding improves household food security. Breastfeeding is total food security for infants up to about six months of age.*

An important calculation which has often been ignored, is that of the contribution to the world's food supply of human milk. Millions of tonnes of additional breastmilk would be produced if infants were breastfed in their first 4-6 months and were continued to be breastfed, right through their second year.

Restaurants • Business • Public Places

- ☐ Does a woman feel comfortable breastfeeding her baby in public eg. in buses, shopping centres?
- ☐ Do waiters and owners in restaurants understand that babies too must have their meals?
- ☐ Do shops selling breastmilk substitutes have any understanding of the Code?

What we know...

- ✓ *Breastfeeding in public is often met with disapproval. Breastfeeding is a woman's right and a child's right. Creative steps to make it acceptable are vital. In 1994, UNICEF commended a US restaurant for encouraging women to breastfeed.*
- ✓ *At the Soekarno International Airport in Jakarta, Indonesia, the feeding bottle symbol has been replaced with an image of a breastfeeding mother.*
- ✓ *A bank in Brazil produced a credit card for members of the National Pediatric Society featuring a colour photograph of a breastfeeding infant.*



MEDIA: Programmes include breastfeeding images. Reporters are educated in breastfeeding matters. Should not accept infant formula advertising. Features breastfeeding issues in health sections.

Media

- ☐ How is breastfeeding presented in the press?
- ☐ What about television programmes? Have any daytime or prime series raised the issue of infant feeding?
- ☐ Are any local celebrities known to breastfeed?
- ☐ Do infant formula manufacturers advertise in publications, on the air or on outdoor media (billboards, public transit, etc.)?