

Hospitals & Clinics

Monitoring Trends – an IBFAN summary • 2001

Practices which discourage breastfeeding

Companies should conform to the Code **at every level**, whether or not governments have taken any action (Art. 11.3 of the Code).

The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent WHA Resolutions state:

- No promotion of breastmilk substitutes in the health care system, including no free or low-cost formula, other substitutes or feeding bottles and teats
- No direct or indirect contact between marketing personnel and mothers
- Information and educational materials must contain specified details and warnings and must not have pictures or text that may idealise the use of breastmilk substitutes
- No gifts to health workers; samples are only allowed for research and evaluation at the institutional level; product information for health professionals must be limited to scientific and factual matters

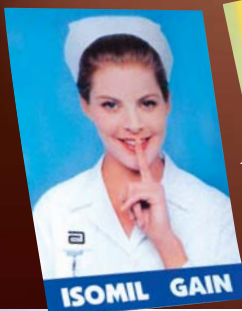


In Canada breastfeeding comes second.

DOCTOR RECOMMENDS:



Every day is Nutricia day.



Abbott guards over nursery.

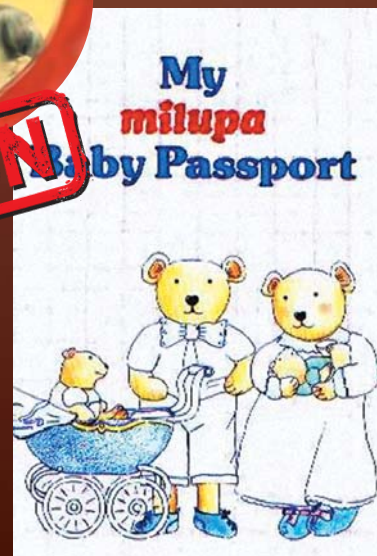


Nestlé Cerelac clock in hospital.

VIOLATION



Supplies under the sink: Bebelac, Nan, Enfamil, Similac and more. A loaded choice: which one will the nurse pick? It could be worth more than US\$ 450 to the company.



A Milupa citizen is born.



Japanese Snow in Taiwan all year long.

Nestlé, Abbott-Ross, Mead Johnson, Nutricia, Wyeth, Morinaga, Milupa, Snow Brand, Hipp, Humana and Danone all distribute gift items which usually show the company name or brand names (they're often the same).



Is it Abbott, Wyeth or Morinaga time?

Beautiful mothers use Mead Johnson. Leaflet given to mothers in out-patient clinic in Murmansk, Russia.



FIXING BRANDS AND COMPANY LOGOS

Hospitals and clinics present the most efficient means for companies to contact mothers both directly and indirectly in order to promote products. The promotion of formula, other baby foods, feeding bottles and teats in health care facilities implies medical endorsement and is prohibited by the Code. Examples of such violations are:

Use of equipment

Posters, calendars, clocks and growth charts are displayed in wards, mothers' rooms and waiting rooms. These items usually show the company name or brand names, or both and fix those names and logos in the minds of mothers and health workers.



Wyeth lands in Cook Islands, promoting S-26 Progress.

Information materials

Materials distributed in the health care system rarely contain the information required by the Code, such as a clear statement on the superiority of breastfeeding, the negative effect on breastfeeding of introducing partial bottle feeding and information about the hazards of inappropriate feeding methods. These materials frequently use pictures and text that idealise the use of breastmilk substitutes.



Companies distribute information which idealises breastmilk substitutes or implies that artificial feeding is equivalent to breastfeeding. Such info is found in hospitals in Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mexico, Italy, Taiwan, Togo, the UAE, Russia and the USA.

Friesland brings happy, playful times to Russia.

Is your car safer with a Milupa sticker?



Bottle feeding problems? Change brands!

All new moms get one free nurse.

Direct promotion to mothers

During their hospital stay or upon discharge, new mothers often receive gift packs directly from company reps or through health workers. Gifts include formula samples, feeding bottles, coupons and gifts such as diaper bags, diapers, bottle bags, towels, bibs, video cassettes and CDs. Cards inside the packs invite parents to fill in a form and return it to the company. The information goes into an electronic mailing list used by the company for targeted marketing at one, three, four or six months, times when mothers are most vulnerable.



Mead Johnson and Nestlé gift packs in Canada.

Get direct access to your own Registered Nurse throughout your pregnancy and up until your baby's first birthday through our **Ross Healthcare Hotline** 24 hours a day.



FREE NOW, PAY LATER

Monitoring in 2000 witnessed an alarming resurgence in free supplies, a time-tested technique to encourage routine bottle feeding. Baby food companies know all too well that free supplies are an effective way to interfere with breastfeeding and induce mothers into using their brands. 93% of mothers are likely to continue with the brand they were given at the hospital because of implied medical endorsement. For the company, free supplies are an investment that will be recovered through future sales. On average, each bottle-fed baby will consume US\$ 450 worth of milk per year.

The potential for brand loyalty and its influence on sales are so great that companies are known, for example, to enter into contracts with hospitals to be their exclusive supplier of free infant formula. On top of that they pay the hospital US\$ 25 to US\$30 per infant fed on that brand! In some countries, companies take turns supplying formula to hospitals. In North America, there are longer-term exclusivity contracts.

Free or low-cost supplies are usually unsolicited donations and are delivered at regular intervals. For example, a hospital in the UAE reports that it receives 26 tins of Wyeth's S-26 every week. In Mexico, 12 tins of Mead Johnson's Enfamil Pre-Maturos are delivered to one hospital every 4-6 weeks.



Free supplies to Malaysian, Hong Kong and UAE hospitals.

New samples; one dose, one bottle.

LOOK WHAT THEY'RE DOING!



WINNING FRIENDS

A doctor or nurse can influence the infant feeding decisions of thousands of mothers over the course of her/his practice. It is efficient for companies to win the friendship of health workers and use them as allies in promotion. By re-distributing leaflets, booklets, gifts and product samples to mothers, health workers endorse a company's products and help it to get long-term consumers.

While companies may not explicitly ask health workers to promote their products, the sense of goodwill generated by gifts and tokens provided by the companies can often persuade health workers to subconsciously favour one company's products over those of another. Many of the gifts offered to health workers are displayed on desks, etc and thus become direct promotion to mothers visiting the hospital or clinic.

Financial and other forms of material support are often given to individuals and professional associations. Although sponsorship is allowed under the Code, the line between genuine assistance and inducement is not easily discernible and conflicts of interest do occur. A 1996 WHA Resolution warns about such conflicts, which may interfere with professional support for breastfeeding.

According to the findings of the 2000 monitoring, financial support now goes more frequently to meetings and professional associations rather than to individuals. Wyeth provided fellowships and awards to nurses for attending a congress in Mexico, it sponsored a perinatal society meeting in the UAE and funded lunch boxes for a meeting in Taiwan. Abbott-Ross provided file covers for a symposium. Gerber sponsored educational sessions while Mead Johnson supported the message centre and district breakfast meetings at the 2000 annual conference of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Mead Johnson also provided two awards of US\$ 10,000 each for research in paediatrics plus expenses to the conference. Heinz Plasmon sponsored meetings, conferences and training sessions in Italy. Nestlé sponsored several seminars in Cambodia.



Nestlé – with you every day.



Abbott-Ross prescription pad.

Company reps are in and out of doctors' offices several times a week. During their short visits they share scientific findings but as a punch line, they always recommend a particular brand and leave booklets, gifts or product samples which get passed on to mothers. Mead Johnson, Nutricia, Hipp, Milupa, Abbott-Ross, Wyeth, Danone, Morinaga, Meiji and Dumex are all guilty of this practice.



Wyeth bedsheets donated to a hospital in Taiwan.



Doctors in private clinics get lots of samples; they get passed on to mothers.

Sometimes there's an invoice but no payment required.

This pamphlet forms part of a series of 5 IBFAN pamphlets which report on marketing trends. The benchmark standards are the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly Resolutions. The information is based on independent monitoring carried out by IBFAN groups around the world in 2000. The full report containing evidence of Code violations by companies is available in a 72-page IBFAN publication *Breaking the Rules, Stretching the Rules, 2001*. The report is available to non-profit groups at US\$ 6 and US\$ 15 to profit groups. A set of pamphlets costs US\$ 5. Prices are inclusive of postage.



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