

## What is Baby Milk Action?

Baby Milk Action, as part of a global network, acts to stop misleading marketing by the baby feeding industry. We protect breastfeeding and babies fed on formula to prevent unnecessary illness, death and suffering.

We are a not-for-profit organisation and, to preserve our independence, we take no corporate funding. We are funded by development organisations, charitable trusts, our members and supporters. We are the UK member of the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), consisting of more than 270 groups in over 160 countries.



Your support helps us to monitor companies, work for strong laws and expose conflicts of interest. Above left: Carbon Footprint of Formula, Status of the Code Report, WHO/UNICEF/IBFAN. Above right: Patti being interviewed about Nestlé on CNN Mexico.

## Protecting breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the cornerstone of child survival. There is no food more locally produced or sustainable than breastmilk. A breastfed child is less likely to suffer from gastroenteritis, respiratory and ear infections and other illnesses.

In areas with poor water, sanitation or health care, improved breastfeeding practices and reduction of artificial feeding could save 800,000 children's lives a year - 1 baby every 40 seconds - more than would be saved by the provision of adequate water, sanitation and vaccination.

## Protecting babies fed on formula

Breastmilk substitutes are legitimate products, but must be marketed appropriately. We work to protect the right of all families and health workers to accurate, independent information on infant feeding. The International Code requires companies to comply with its provisions on composition, labelling and marketing, independently of government action, so that the risks of artificial feeding are minimised.

**We are not anti-formula - just anti-irresponsible marketing**

## Join or donate to Baby Milk Action

Your support is essential to keep us going as an independent organisation. To become a member or donate online visit: [www.babymilkaction.org/shop](http://www.babymilkaction.org/shop)

Annual membership is £12 unwaged, £36 waged, £48 family. There is also a pay monthly option. Organisations can affiliate (fee depends on turnover).

Alternatively, send a cheque to the address below with your name and contact details or telephone us with card details.

### Policy



Contact Patti Rundall OBE, our Policy Director for information on how we help governments and the United Nations bring in policies to protect children. [prundall@babymilkaction.org](mailto:prundall@babymilkaction.org)

### Our Patrons



Hollie McNish, one of Britain's most exciting poets, is best known for her poem *Embarrassed* and the collection *Nobody Told Me* that won the Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry.



Gabrielle Palmer, nutritionist and author of the groundbreaking *Politics of Breastfeeding*, a book that has never been out of print since it was first published in 1988. Gabrielle was a founder of Baby Milk Action.

### Monitoring and Support

If you see harmful marketing report it! Caroline Harrower, who coordinates our volunteer monitoring team, will help you. [monitoring@babymilkaction.org](mailto:monitoring@babymilkaction.org)

For everything else contact Lisa Woodburn. [info@babymilkaction.org](mailto:info@babymilkaction.org)

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Cover Photo from IBFAN Calendar 2019 / © LLL France



**BABY MILK ACTION**  
IBFAN UK



## What we do & How to help us

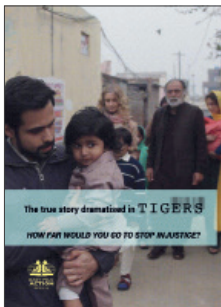
**Protecting breastfeeding**  
**Protecting babies fed on formula**

## Holding companies to account

Baby Milk Action works to protect the right of parents to accurate, independent information and support on infant and young child feeding, whether they are breastfeeding or using formula. With our partners in the global network IBFAN we monitor baby feeding companies to see if they obey internationally agreed marketing standards.

## Working for responsible marketing

We have helped stop many harmful marketing practices. For example, baby pictures have been removed from labels of formulas for newborn babies and 'breastfeeding is best' messages have been added. But there is still much more to do. We helped the European Parliament vote to reduce sugar levels in baby foods and label them from 6 months, but this is not yet law. Products for babies over 6 months are still aggressively advertised and carry idealising logos and claims suggesting that they will 'protect' babies or make them cleverer. In the UK, but not everywhere, companies must admit that formula is not sterile and may contain harmful bacteria.



The feature film *Tigers* dramatises the true story of a Nestlé baby milk salesman from Pakistan who exposed unethical marketing practices with our help. Nestlé is the target of an international boycott because of its harmful baby food marketing.

## Helping the public to force changes

Nestlé is the world's largest food company and uses its power to drive down standards and grow a lucrative market expected to be worth \$70bn by 2019. The Nestlé boycott and the laws that we've helped bring in have stopped some dangerous tactics, but Nestlé and other baby feeding companies such as Danone, Abbott, Reckitt Benkiser/Mead Johnson continue to market in ways that mislead and harm child health. A key tactic is to pour funds into marketing that masquerades as 'education'. Through such sponsorship companies pretend that they can be trusted as partners in child health. We are supporting the campaign for a new Treaty to hold corporations accountable for their Human Rights abuses.

## Protecting health in emergencies

We helped bring about the adoption of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes at the 1981 World Health Assembly, the first global tool to control marketing. We work with health ministries at the Assembly to bring in new Resolutions that keep pace with marketing practices and scientific knowledge. We work to improve the safety and quality of baby foods and integrate the Code and Resolutions into global trading standards and Guidance for Emergency Relief workers.



We work with IBFAN, UNICEF, WHO and partners to protect babies during emergencies where breastfeeding is a lifeline. Appeals for help in emergencies can be misleading. Companies exploit this with donations that can do more harm than good.

IBFAN volunteers helping Filipino mothers after Typhoon Yolanda.  
Photo: Arugaan, Philippines

## Countering risky trade agreements

We help governments deconstruct industry arguments and resist the 'chilling' effect that the prospect of new trade agreements is having. Governments have a sovereign right and duty to protect child health. Over 70 countries have now introduced laws implementing the International Code and Resolutions, but the industry continues to fight "a rearguard action against regulation on a country-by-country basis" (Euromonitor 2008). Laws can have a marked impact on formula sales, breastfeeding rates and health. Kenya brought in a strong law in 2012 with IBFAN's help. The Kenyan national survey shows that by 2014 exclusive breastfeeding rates almost doubled from 2008/9 (up from 32% to 61%). This contributed towards the reduction of infant mortality from 52/1000 to 39/1000.

## Training & monitoring the regulations

We offer online training to our supporters and other organisations on monitoring the International Code and Resolutions and taking action.

## The Baby Feeding Law Group

We are the secretariat of the Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG) bringing UK health professional and mother support organisations together. BFLG works to improve EU and UK legislation in line with the International Code and Resolutions. It speaks with one voice to the UK Government and the EU.

## Reporting harmful marketing

Our volunteer team coordinates the BFLG monitoring project and encourages the public to report Code violations to Trading Standards and the Advertising Standards Authority. We have won cases against misleading advertising.



Above: Launching the Conflict of Interest Coalition at the United Nations.

Left: IBFAN's Breaking the Rules 2017 global monitoring report.

## Conflicts of Interest

Because we are independent we are free to speak out about company influence and malpractice. In 2000 we helped change the conflicts of interest rules governing scientific advisors in Europe. In June 2011 we helped launch the Conflict of Interest Coalition at the United Nations. It is supported by 162 organisations and networks representing over 2,000 groups. We help professional bodies improve their policies. Our common objective is to safeguard public health policy-making from undue commercial influence.

## Resources and membership

Our website has a resources that you can use to explain what is happening. Your support is vital, so please become a member, send a donation or buy the IBFAN Breastfeeding Calendar 2019!