

## August 2006 Breastfeeding Awareness Month

This year's theme is Code Watch: 25 Years of Protecting Breastfeeding.

Research is clear that breastfeeding is optimal nutrition for infants. Breastfeeding provides nutritional and health advantages that last far beyond infancy, and offers health benefits for mothers, as well. Nearly all women are able to breastfeed when they receive consistent and accurate information, and are supported by the healthcare team, family, and community in an environment that is breastfeeding-friendly.

Highlighting the importance of protecting breastfeeding in communities is what this year's theme celebrates. The theme celebrates the 25-year history of the International Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes, which provides guidelines for the appropriate marketing of infant formula and bottle-feeding products. Unethical marketing practices (advertising alternatives to breastfeeding directly to consumers, giving away free formula samples, discounts, free formula to hospitals, etc.) undermine breastfeeding and glorify other infant feeding alternatives that can cause women to question their ability and/or confidence to breastfeed.

What can you do?

- \*Learn more about the code at [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org)
- \*Know which companies are code violators available at [www.ibfan.org](http://www.ibfan.org)
- \*Examine your own setting/office and make sure formula/bottles are not being promoted
- \*Educate mothers you counsel about practices that can undermine their breastfeeding goals. Provide referrals for follow-up support to Julie at WIC (263-1380) or the hospital they deliver at.

WIC will again honor our breastfeeding moms during the month.

**Babies were born to be Breastfed**

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