WHAT IS BABY MILK ACTION?

Baby Milk Action is a non-profit organisation that aims to end the suffering and death caused by inappropriate infant and young child feeding. We work within a global network to bring in, strengthen and defend regulations that make products safer and ensure that marketing is responsible and independently and effectively monitored.

The global network is called the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN). It has over 270 citizens’ groups in more than 160 countries. We are funded by development organisations, charitable trusts, our members and supporters.

PROTECTING BREASTFEEDING

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 a bottle-fed child is more likely to die than a breastfed child.

Improved breastfeeding practices and reduction of artificial feeding could save many thousands of children’s lives a year, more than would be saved by the provision of water, sanitation and vaccination.

PROTECTING BABIES FED ON FORMULA

Breastmilk substitutes are legitimate products for a child who is not breastfed and does not have access to expressed or donor breastmilk. 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.

Baby Milk Action is not anti formula but we are anti irresponsible marketing.

JOIN BABY MILK ACTION

Become a member by joining online at: www.babymilkaction.org/shop

Annual membership is £7 unwaged, £18 waged, £25 family. There is also a pay monthly option.

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

CAMPAIGNING

Contact Mike Brady, Campaigns and Networking Coordinator, for information on campaigning to hold companies to account - including the Nestlé boycott - and working for action by governments and enforcement bodies.

POLICY

Contact Patti Rundall OBE, Policy Director and Co-Chair of IBFAN, for information on policy, conflicts of interest and legislation.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Contact Verity Croft, our Office Manager, or Lisa Woodburn, our Post Room Manager, for information materials, to arrange a Baby Milk Action stall for your event, to become a member or to make a donation.

Email: info@babymilkaction.org
Telephone: + 44 (0) 1223 464420

WWW.BABYMILKACTION.ORG

WHAT WE DO & HOW TO HELP

Protecting breastfeeding
Protecting babies fed on formula

MISLEADING PROMOTION

Cover: Mead Johnson advertisement for Enfamil formula
PROTECTING HEALTH IN TRADE POLICIES

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 defend the Code and Resolutions at the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the UN body that sets global food composition, labelling and trading standards.

HELPING THE PUBLIC TO FORCE CHANGES

Nestlé is targeted because of its harmful practices. It is now one of the four most boycotted companies on the planet. The Nestlé boycott has forced an end to some tactics, but other dangerous ones continue. Nestlé invests in an anti-boycott team, sponsorship of health workers and public relations - pretending that it can be trusted. Through our publications, campaigns, petitions and demonstrations we also expose the practices of other companies such as Danone and Mead Johnson. We are in communication with company executives, their boards and shareholders. We work with the ethical investment sector and the media.

STRENGTHENING LAWS

We encourage governments to bring the International Code and Resolutions into legislation. There are now over 60 countries with strong laws in place. Some of these laws are so successful that industry analysts complain about increasing breastfeeding rates and the need to fight "a rearguard action against regulation on a country-by-country basis" (Euromonitor 2008). We stop laws being weakened – successfully defending the regulations in the Philippines in 2007. But the threats by industry continue. In Mexico, where breastfeeding rates are low, we are encouraging the Government not to partner with Nestlé and Pepsi and other junk food companies and to bring in laws to protect child health.

TRAINING & MONITORING THE REGULATIONS

We provide training to our supporters and other organisations on monitoring the International Code and Resolutions. We help policy makers implement legislation. Our online training courses and other materials help raise awareness.

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 enforcement authorities.

IMPROVING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

We coordinate the BFLG monitoring project and produce monitoring reports for Trading Standards and the Advertising Standards Authority. We have won cases against misleading advertising. BFLG’s film Infant Formula Explained, is used to train health workers and inform parents and carers.

THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST COALITION

We do not accept corporate funding and 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. Our common objective is to safeguard public health policy-making from undue commercial influence.

RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIP

A range of free resources which you can use to explain what is happening and merchandise in our online Virtual Shop. Your support is vital for our work. If you have not done so already, please do become a member.