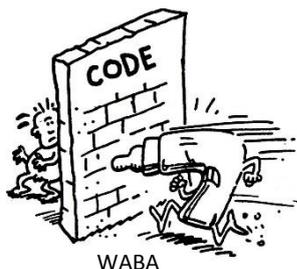


## Saturday May 21st 2016 - the 35th anniversary of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes

**What is the Code?** The World Health Assembly is the highest global authority on health made up of nearly all the countries of the world (including Ireland). It meets each year and in 1981 they collectively agreed to adopt the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Every second year the Code and its implementation is reviewed with additional resolutions added to it in some years. These resolutions then form part of the Code.

The Code calls on countries to protect breastfeeding by stopping the inappropriate marketing of breast-milk substitutes (including infant formula), feeding bottles and teats.



It also aims to ensure breast-milk substitutes are used safely when they are necessary – without decisions influenced by commercial marketing.

Ireland implemented parts of the 1981 Code into legislation but unfortunately has not implemented the subsequent resolutions. Thus there are some large gaps in protection which can be exploited by formula and related companies to undermine good health of mothers and babies in Ireland.

Some of the issues we have in Ireland that breach the International Code include:

- Aggressive marketing in the guise of ‘information and advice’ via social media, magazines, tv ads, and more.
- Formula company sponsored or hosted “education” events for health professionals.
- Formula company sponsored baby fairs and other mother and baby events.
- Formula company sponsoring/branding charities and charitable events.

**Purpose of this marketing in breach of the Code?** To undermine breastfeeding, increase profit margins, gain brand/product recognition and loyalty. Target audience – expectant parents, new parents and their wider family and friends, health workers - and anyone else who will listen!

The breast-milk substitute business is a big one, with annual sales amounting to almost US\$ 45 billion worldwide. This is projected to rise by over 55% to US\$ 70 billion by 2019. Ireland is one of the world’s largest producers and exporters of breast-milk substitutes - with our government allocating funding to increase these exports further.



### Some ways to celebrate 35 years of the Code

Take photos or videos of yourself, colleagues, family holding a homemade sign.

Some suggestions for the text:

- Protect Parents, Babies and Health Workers - Keep Marketing OUT of Healthcare Facilities
- Follow the International Code and Protect All Babies
- I/We Follow the International Code – do you?
- For a healthy future protect our babies now – Enforce the Code
- The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes protects me too

Put the photos around your workplace and your personal social media

Post on Facebook, Twitter and other social media. Send your photos to IBFAN IRELAND Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1597083980605030/permalink/1597350297245065/>

## You might also like to share your photos/videos with:

- The HSE <https://www.facebook.com/HSElive/?fref=ts>
- Department of Health Ireland [https://www.facebook.com/search/137397119614151/local\\_search?surface=tyah](https://www.facebook.com/search/137397119614151/local_search?surface=tyah)
- World Health Organization: <https://www.facebook.com/WHO/?fref=ts>
- UNICEF <https://www.facebook.com/unicef/?fref=ts>
- UNICEF Ireland <https://www.facebook.com/UNICEF.Ireland/?fref=ts>
- Simon Harris (Health Minister) <https://www.facebook.com/DeputySimonHarris/?fref=ts>
- Food Safety Authority Ireland <https://www.facebook.com/FSAI>

## Let some of the companies that violate the International Code in Ireland know that the Code protects you and that you protect babies and their families.

Share your photo/video on the pages of Code violators:

- Nestlé - Infant formula brand name SMA: [https://www.facebook.com/Nestle/?fref=pb&hc\\_location=profile\\_browser](https://www.facebook.com/Nestle/?fref=pb&hc_location=profile_browser)
- Danone - Aptamil (<https://www.facebook.com/AptaclubIreland/?fref=nf>) and Cow & Gate (<https://www.facebook.com/candgbabyclubireland/>) infant formula brand names. Sponsors of the First 1000 Days Campaign in Ireland <https://www.facebook.com/First1000DaysIreland/?fref=ts>
- NUK Ireland <https://www.facebook.com/NUK-Ireland-254647847893216/timeline>
- Tommee Tippee Ireland: <https://www.facebook.com/tommeetippeeireland/?fref=ts>

## For Twitter users:

- [Nestle UK & Ireland @Nestle\\_UK\\_IRE](#)
- [Danone @Danone](#)
- [Cow & Gate UK@cowandgate](#)
- [NUK Ireland @NUKClodna](#)
- [tommee tippee UK @tommeetippee\\_UK](#)
- [UNICEF @UNICEF](#)
- [GlobalHealth.ie @ifglobalhealth](#)
- [Simon Harris TD @SimonHarrisTD](#)
- [Department of Health @roinnslainte](#)
- [HSE Ireland Verified account](#)
- [@HSElive](#)
- [UNICEF Ireland @unicefireland](#)

*Thanks to IBFAN Ireland for all the links*

## The Code Day of Action was created by Commercial Alert

Include the hashtag: [#ProtectParentsAndBabies](#) to link your photo to their Facebook page

## Why protect breastfeeding?

Globally, nearly 2 out of 3 infants are not exclusively breastfed for the recommended 6 months—a rate that has not improved in 2 decades. Breast milk is the ideal food for infants. It is safe, clean and contains antibodies which help protect against many common childhood illnesses. Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese and less prone to diabetes later in life. Women who breastfeed also have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers. Inappropriate marketing of breast-milk substitutes continues to undermine efforts to improve breastfeeding rates and duration worldwide.

New analyses have revealed that increasing breastfeeding to near-universal levels could save the lives of more than 820 000 children aged under 5 years and 20 000 women each year. It could also add an estimated US\$ 300 billion into the global economy annually, based on improvements in cognitive ability if every infant was breastfed until at least 6 months of age and their expected increased earnings later in life. Boosting breastfeeding rates would significantly reduce costs to families and governments for treatment of childhood illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and asthma.

Victora CG, Bahl R, Barros A et al. Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effects. *Lancet*. 2016;387:475-490.

Rollins NC, Bhandari N, Hajeebhoy N, et al. Why invest, and what it will take to improve breastfeeding practices? *Lancet*. 2016;387:491-504.

## Some more ways to celebrate 35 years of the Code

- Remind colleague health workers that all health professional codes of professional practice and the HSE staff code highlight avoiding commercial influence in health care information and decisions
- Find out more about what the Code is, why it is important, how to implement it
- Share what you learn with colleagues, family and friends, especially young people – anyone who will listen!

### More info:

#### Supporting the Code and protecting babies, parents and health workers in Ireland

<http://www.babyfriendly.ie/resources.htm>

**The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes** and subsequent relevant resolutions of the World Health Assembly <http://ibfan.org/the-full-code>

**WHO/UNICEF/IBFAN joint report "*Marketing of breast-milk substitutes: National implementation of the International Code – Status report 2016*"**, includes tables showing, country by country, which Code measures have and have not been enacted into law. It also includes case studies on countries that have strengthened their laws or monitoring systems for the Code in recent years, what challenges countries face in doing so, and where the focus must be on further efforts to assist countries in more effective Code implementation..

Download report (full 4.3 Mb)

[http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/code\\_report2016/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/code_report2016/en/)

**Baby Feeding Law Group Ireland** Aim: To protect the health of all babies in Ireland, by ending marketing practices which commercialise infant and young child feeding, threaten breastfeeding and undermine good health. To enable healthcare workers to encourage and protect breastfeeding. <https://www.facebook.com/Baby-Feeding-Law-Group-Ireland-826195350729808/>