



## **Support for Breastfeeding from The International Pediatric Association**

### **World Breastfeeding Week August 2018**

Acknowledging the 2018 World Breastfeeding Week, the International Pediatric Association (IPA) reinforces its commitment to promote breastfeeding by all women from all countries and socio-economic groups. The IPA acknowledges that breast milk is the most critical nutrition for all infants as highlighted by the theme “-Breastfeeding-: Foundation of Life”. Over the past decades, recommendations for breastfeeding have been strengthened by the evidence of the health advantages of breastfeeding for both the infant and the mother. Children who were breastfed have lower risk of otitis media, obesity, allergies, and cardiovascular syndrome(1). "Preterm breastfed babies have less chance of sepsis, bronchopulmonary dysplasia, necrotizing enterocolitis and retinopathy of prematurity." (2). Likewise, breastfeeding mothers benefit from having breastfed, with lower rates of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, type II diabetes and postpartum depression. These multiple benefits from breastfeeding demonstrate the contribution and relevance of breastfeeding as a global public health issue, for low- and high- income populations alike (3).

The best start for a healthy life for each and every child begins with exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life. It requires a multifaceted approach to support mothers to breastfeed by developing policies to provide paid family leave, providing quality child care and assigned well-equipped rooms for expressing breast milk and time allowed to express breast milk. As Pediatricians we join others (New York Times Letter to Editor; July 12, 2018) to urge all nations to protect, promote and support breastfeeding for the health and future of women, children, and families. IPA is committed to actively promote and support breastfeeding as a fundamental child right, for both survival and optimizing health and development. IPA will achieve this through global advocacy, capacity enhancement of pediatricians and through working with national

pediatric societies in addressing challenges for mothers to breastfeed, promoting exclusive breastfeeding, and through outreach work in populations with the greatest need, such as marginalized, at risk populations and in settings of conflict and humanitarian crises.

**Zulfiqar Bhutta**  
President, IPA

**Errol Alden**  
President-Elect, IPA

**William Keenan**  
Executive Director IPA

**Naveen Thacker**  
Coordinator of Development, IPA

**Berthold Koletzko**  
Strategic Advisor Lead, Nutrition, IPA

### **On behalf of the IPA Standing Committee and Member Societies**

#### References-:

1. Vennemann MM, Bajanowski T, Brinkmann B, Jorch G, Yücesan K, Sauerland C, Mitchell EA; the GeSID Study Group. Does breastfeeding reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome? *Pediatrics* 2009, 123 (3): e406-e410; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2008-2145.
2. Spiegler J, Preuß M, Gebauer C, Bendiks M4, Herting E4, Göpel W4; German Neonatal Network (GNN). Does breastmilk influence the development of bronchopulmonary dysplasia? *J Pediatr.* 2016, 169:76-80.e4; DOI: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2015.10.080. Epub 2015 Nov 25.
3. Grummer-Strawn LM, Rollins N. Summarising the health effects of breastfeeding. *Acta Paediatr* 2015, 104 (Suppl. 467):1–2; DOI: 10.1111/apa.13136.