



health

Department of
Health
FREE STATE PROVINCE

**WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK AND THE TSHWANE DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR
BREASTFEEDING IN SOUTH AFRICA WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK IS CELEBRATED
ANNUALLY FROM 1 TO 7 AUGUST**

6 August 2012

The slogan for this year's Breastfeeding Week is "Understanding the past...planning for the future. Celebrating 20 years of BFHI (Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative)"

World Breastfeeding Week celebrates its twentieth anniversary in 2012. This time it focuses on the progress that has been made on the implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding which was adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) ten years ago.

Implementing the Global Strategy effectively is essential to increase breastfeeding rates, especially exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, and to reach Millennium Developmental Goal (MDG) 4, namely to reduce under five mortality by two thirds.

After consultation from WHO and UNICEF, a breastfeeding consultative meeting took place in Tshwane in August 2011. The objectives were to build consensus on policy and programme changes to reflect new evidence on breastfeeding, including in the context of HIV & Aids, identify the critical next steps for South Africa to promote, protect and support breastfeeding as a key child survival strategy, and to mobilise support and commitment to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.

Participants of the National Breastfeeding Consultative Meeting concluded with a declaration known as the "Tshwane Declaration of Support for Breastfeeding" which declared South Africa as a country that will actively promote, protect and support exclusive breastfeeding as a health intervention to optimise child survival, irrespective of the mother's HIV status.

Actions taken thus far:

A Child Health Workshop took place on 30 and 31 July 2012 in Bloemfontein where the implementation of the Tshwane Declaration of Support for Breastfeeding was discussed in detail.

On Friday, 3 August 2012, the Mangaung Mother's Milk Alliance (MMMA) was formed. This meeting was attended by representatives from the public and private sector (paediatricians, dieticians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and audiologists, and nurses working at maternity, neonatal, postnatal, paediatric and gastro wards).

The following facts sheets are attached as background information:

- Breastfeeding: child survival, benefits.
- Background, implementation and implications of the Tshwane Declaration.
- The Tshwane declaration of support for breastfeeding in South Africa.

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