Breastfeeding
NATURE'S WAY

A Comic Book for Children aged 9 and above

BlueVeins
(Women's Health & Relief Services)
Note to parents:
This comic book is recommended for children aged 9 and above. We hope they'll have fun looking at the images while learning about breastfeeding and the environment. If you as a parent or teacher would like to have more information about breastfeeding and other resources available, please visit the WABA website at <http://www.waba.org.my>

Acknowledgment:

BLUE VEINS would like to thank the Child Health Foundation and World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) for the financial support in the production and distribution of this booklet.
Since the beginning of time, mothers have breastfed their babies...

But times have changed. Around the 1870s, powdered milk was invented.

With increasing production of powdered milk, manufacturers began to search for buyers for their products.
Then they had an idea, great for them but awful for us: transform human babies into consumers of cow's milk!

Powdered milk for babies known as baby milk or infant formula was produced.

Milk companies started investing lots of money in advertising. And, in just a few decades, they were able to change a human practice from the beginning of life.

It became easier to promote bottle-feeding, because many women now work away from home, and the majority of employers don't provide day care nor support breastfeeding mothers.
The results is that millions of women stopped breastfeeding their children, or breastfeed them for very short periods of time!

Interesting story, but so what?

The milk companies make a lot of money because they are smart...
And what can a little baby bottle hurt?

According to the World Health Organization, every year, one and a half million children die from the lack of breastfeeding. The baby bottle is very bad! A lot of doctors and researchers call it a "baby killer".

Many poor mothers don't have enough money to buy infant formula. They might end up giving their children a watered-down mixture with little nutritional value.

The water they use to prepare bottles, especially in places with no plumbing, is likely to be contaminated, causing infections and diarrhoea in the baby.

Cow's milk does not protect the baby, who still hasn't developed immunity against germs and bacteria.
Breast milk is the best and most complete food in the world for a baby. It has everything a baby needs and is "made to order" from mother to baby.

The breast milk also gives the baby protection against germs and microbes that cause illnesses. Breast milk is kind of powerful natural vaccine from mother to baby.

Breastfed babies are generally healthier and happier than bottle-fed babies.
OK, you win - Breastmilk is wonderful for children.

But what about that stuff about "preserving nature"?...

The protection that breastfeeding provides to the environment is also super important! Breastfeeding avoids destruction, pollution and waste of energy...

Come with me I'll show you...

Do you know, my friend, how much cow's milk is produced in the USA alone, for example?... More than 20,000,000 tons each year! That's the problem!

Each cow consumes around three and a half tons of feed per year. In order to produce this feed, nearly 10 thousand square meters of pasture is required, the size of two football fields, just for one cow.
In the search for pastures for the production of cattle feed, forests are cut down...

...or, worse yet, burnt. The fires, besides destroying the fertility of the soil, also destroy a large number of animals and plants, including species yet unknown.

Smoke also increases the "greenhouse effect": the layer of gases that surround the earth which stops the heat we receive from the sun from escaping into space.

For us to live safely, the "greenhouse or protective layer of gases cannot increase too much. It has to be just right.

Of the gases from which it is made, the second most important is "methane".

Cow dung makes up a good part of the methane in the atmosphere. The dung gives off some 100 million tons of gas per year!
During the manufacturing of babymilk and other infant foods, for example, the products are boiled at high temperatures, in a process which requires enormous amounts of energy.

Men, in order to produce electrical energy, build enormous dams on rivers in some regions, thus flooding forests and interfering with the ecological balance.

In other regions, they build nuclear power plants, which are extremely dangerous and cost a lot of money that could be applied to better things.
And just think of how much water, gas, electricity and fire wood is wasted in the world, every day, just in preparing, washing and sterilising bottles...

Breastmilk, on the other hand, doesn't waste any energy in its production, and it is always at just the right temperature.

Speaking of things that you never thought about, there is also the issue of transportation...

Wow! I never thought about that...

How many millions and millions of litres of fuel are wasted around the world for the transportation of infant formula?

How much smoke do the vehicles which transport this product release into the air? And how much waste do the ships spill into the oceans?
But breastmilk is always right there, at hand or at better, at breast.

And I'm still not finished!.. We haven't even talked about the waste...

...pollution and devastation to the environment caused by food packaging!

How much paper, plastic and metals are wasted in the packaging of infant formula?

Just in the United States, some 550 million cans of infant formula are produced per year. Lined up side by side, they would more than circle the earth!
And how much pollution is caused, when they are thrown away?

Bottles and nipples, made of plastic (a material amongst the worst pollutants), can last up to 450 years after being thrown away.

Breastmilk, on the other hand, goes directly from mother to child, with no need for packaging.

Breastmilk is the best first food for babies!
OK, you've convinced me - breastfeeding is really important. Besides being very good for children, it really helps to preserve the environment.

ALL RIGHT THEN, LET'S SPREAD THE WORD AND GIVE BREASTFEEDING OUR TOTAL SUPPORT!!
Child Health Foundation is dedicated to saving and improving the lives of children in the US and throughout the world. The focus of Child Health Foundation is improving the lives of children through education focused community activity, improved living standards, research, and numerous filed projects and is making lasting changes in child health.

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network of individuals and organizations concerned with the protection, and support of breastfeeding worldwide. WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF and NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

Mission of Blue Veins is to undertake initiatives for an improvement in the quality of life and uplift of marginalized and vulnerable communities specially women and children through awareness, action and advocacy. Blue veins is also working to protect, promote and support breastfeeding at regional, national, and community level and to re-establish and maintain a breast culture by eliminating all obstacles to breastfeeding. Blue Veins is also national focal point of WABA global youth initiative for breast feeding in Pakistan & coordinating mens support activities in South Asia with WABA. Blue Veins is actively involved in the advocacy for the ratification of ILO C183 and recommendation 191 of maternity protection in the breast feeding prospective at work place.
Just a minute... It can be great for them. But what dose breastfeeding have to do with us?...

Look, how cool—a mother breastfeeding! This is so important for all of us...

Don't you know? Breastfeeding benefits all of us, not just mothers and their children.

Breastfeeding has to do with, for example, the way of life and health of millions of children and their families throughout the world...

It has to do with what kind of people we will be when we grow up. Children who are breastfed are calmer and will be happier adults.

And it has everything to do with ecology. Breastmilk helps to preserve the environment.
The WABA YOUTH Initiative is a Programme initiated in 2006. The main objective is to get youths interested in breastfeeding and to develop and sustain young advocates to promote and protect breastfeeding through the perspectives of human rights, reproductive health and gender equality.

We believe for the success of any movement, it is necessary to involve youths. Even in the history of breastfeeding movements, youths were actively involved and took leading roles.

Many youths today may think that they are too young to make a real difference for breastfeeding. On the contrary, youth already exist in five social domains: Family, public, school, work and cyberspace. Young people can share with the others within these domains about the benefits of breastfeeding.

In line with this, the WABA youth Initiative, an international programme to initiate the movement in various countries, was launched. The main objective of the WABA youth initiative is to get youths interested in breastfeeding and to develop and sustain young advocates to promote and protect breastfeeding through the perspectives of human rights, reproductive health and gender equality.

If you are interested to get involved please log on to http://www.waba.org.my/youth/about.htm

Financial Assistance