
From: Chrissy Mackinnon
Sent: Monday, 9 November 2015 9:04 PM
To: Adjudication
Subject: A91506 & A91507 – Infant,Nutrition Council – submission”
Categories: Submission

To The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission,

As a mother & a health professional I am writing to ask you to strongly reconsider your proposals to extend MAIF for a further 10 years. I feel the WHO code is needed instead & it should be enforceable. I work with mothers & babies in many roles, as an ABA group leader & counsellor, a midwife, a childbirth educator & a BFHI educator & assessor. In every one of these roles I am challenged between explaining what the WHO code is & how in Australia we have a watered down version that is ignored by formula companies & supermarket chains making it seem a useless document. We are trying to encourage breastfeeding & our hospital does not give out any samples of infant formula, dummies or teats & no one accepts gifts from formula companies. However every week it doesn't matter which catalogue comes in the letter box -formula is advertised as well as bottles & baby food from 4 months which is against our own Australian dietary guideline since 2003. It is very disheartening that the government helps on one hand by funding the ABA helpline which is overwhelmed by calls from mums wanting correct breastfeeding information but on the other hand bows to pressure from the formula companies & lets them have free reign with advertising without penalty. Allowing toddler formulas to be exempt from the code would be wrong as mothers do not see them as any different from the baby formulas, they have just been invented to get around the code!

The lengths that some mothers go to keep breastfeeding is astounding where others seems to give up & bow to society pressure to use bottles & commercial products to keep working or due to not wanting to breastfeed in public or from misinformation given to them about the way breastfeeding works where they doubt there own natural abilities & feel a manufactured product is better. The evidence for health benefits is overwhelming for both mother & baby let alone the emotional benefits from the close bond. Mothers need more support & tighter regulations to help protect this unique situation not less.

Please consider adopting the WHO code or at the least enforcing the MAIF code.

Yours sincerely,
Chrissy Mackinnon