

INTERNATIONAL LACTATION CONSULTANT ASSOCIATION

1500 Sunday Drive
Suite 102
Raleigh, NC 27607 USA
Phone: (919) 787-5181
Fax: (919) 787-4916
Email: info@ilca.org
Web: www.ilca.org



120th Session of the WHO Executive Board - Provisional Agenda Item 4.6

Statement by Maryse Lehnert-Arendt, Representative of the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), an international NGO in official relations with WHO

Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the 120th WHO Executive Board meeting.

Madam Director general, dear delegates

The International Lactation Consultant Association, ILCA, is an international association open to all health care professionals interested in human lactation. Membership includes nurses, physicians, dietitians, and researchers many of whom are International Board Certified Lactation Consultants.

The present statement is supported by IBFAN, the International Baby Food Action Network.

ILCA and IBFAN welcome the EB document 120/10 Oral health: Action plan for the promotion and integrated disease prevention.

We also appreciate the clear recognition of the role breastfeeding plays in promoting health, including oral health, as expressed in the 2003 World Oral health Report. Indeed, the start of good oral health is laid in infancy with the infant feeding decision. We all have seen the shocking images of infant tooth decay, named the baby bottle tooth decay syndrome, caused by sugary liquids given in baby bottles. We know today that the consumption of sugar is one of the major reasons for the tooth decay in populations. Breastfeeding promotes oral health, preventing tooth decay and leading to an optimal development of the oral cavity.

ILCA and IBFAN thus also much welcomes the clear link between oral health and promotion of healthy diets, particularly of lower consumption of sugars, called for in the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. We would, however, also appreciate to see a similar link made to the 2002 Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding adopted in WHA resolution 55.25, This link at policy and strategy level as well as at the implementation level would draw a clear relation between good oral health and the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding in health programmes.

In this way we would be aiming at synergistic effect with greater potential of coordinated approaches across life-cycle and across technical areas all aiming at improving overall health and preventing diseases and their underlying causes, including those directly related to oral health.

Thank you