

Quintessence Foundation

November 2004

Breastfeeding Challenge 2004 Canada beats the Aussies!!

The Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge was a big success! The Challenge, this year held on October 2, coincides with Canada's the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week. This year's the World Breastfeeding Week 2004 theme, *Exclusive Breastfeeding: The Gold Standard — Safe, Sound, Reliable* was easily promoted and supported through the Challenge.

A total of 2,335 babies breastfed at 11am local time on October 2nd- 2,158 Canadian babies joined by 177 American babies. This beat the Aussie record set on August 1st 2004 of 1,664 babies and also the Canadian record of 1,895 (plus 349 American) babies set on October 4th, 2003. The number of babies and mothers taking part increased as did the number of sites – there were 144 sites this year. The Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge is for the most babies breastfeeding simultaneously at 11am local time in a set geographical region (i.e. province, territory, state or country). The winners are worked out as a rating based on the birth rate.

The “winners” this year were as follows:

Category A: more than 50,000 births

#1 Quebec, Canada	4.8
#2 Ontario, Canada	3.9
#3 Texas, US	0.2

Category B: 10,000 to 50,000 births per year

#1 B.C., Canada	4.8
#2 Hawaii, US	1.3
#3 Saskatchewan, Canada	1.1

Category C: less than 10,000 births per year

#1 Nunavut, Canada	5.7
#2 Yukon Canada	3.2
#3 Newfoundland/Labrador, Canada	1.2

2004 Largest Site - Number of participating babies

#1 Victoria	104
#2 Ottawa	81
#3 Vancouver	65

2004 Largest Region - Number of participating babies

BC Canada	637
Ontario Canada	516
Quebec Canada	347

2004 Site Count - Number of participating sites

Ontario Canada	31
BC Canada	27
Newfoundland/Labrador, Canada	15

Challenge locations varied and included *Starbucks*, *Chapters Book Store*, an aquatic centre, fall fair, *Capilano College*, *Sub Shop* and *Jelly Beans & Giggles* as well as hospitals, health units, homes, malls, government buildings and the great outdoors. (Read the story on page 6 to see why we smiled to see Starbucks on this list).

Group Names

Groups that took part in the Challenge were both informal and formal. Two names that caught our attention were from New Brunswick, the *Mommies & Tummies Club* and from Nunavut, the *Mothers Against Formula*. Just think - if the Mothers Against Formula established a group in Alberta or America they could go by the acronym *MAFIA!*

Great Ideas

There were many great ideas but a book mark from Cranbrook caught our attention. It was a bookmark with the title “Ready Set Dial” and a listing on one side of local numbers of interest regarding pregnancy and postpartum

Check out our Quintessence Foundation Website: www.babyfriendly.ca

with the date of the Challenge on the bottom. On the back-side they thanked and listed their twenty donors. The slip, slightly wider than a regular bookmark, was printed on bright pink paper.

There were sites in all ten Canadian provinces and three territories as well as 13 US states. Thank you to all the site organizers and participants! We couldn't do it without you all taking part. We hope next year there will be a greater number of sites and families – please start encouraging others to participate! The Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge is held on the first Saturday of October each year. **Mark October 1, 2005 on your calendar now** (and spread the word)! Watch the WABA website (www.waba.org) for the World Breastfeeding Week 2005 theme.



Taking the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge in Port Carling, Muskoka, Ontario.

By Kelly Coker BScPhm, RPh

For the first time, this year Muskoka had a site for the Quintessence Challenge. Muskoka is a “cottage country” region in Central Ontario. Port Carling is a small village within Muskoka that is home to some 600 year-round residents. On Oct 2, nine moms and babes from around Muskoka gathered in Port Carling for the official event. These families came from miles around, some driving an hour to get to our event! After a solid month of beautiful sunny days and high temperatures, we were greeted the morning of the challenge with torrential pouring rain, 60 km/h winds and a frigid temperature of 8 degrees! Needless to say, our event (which was initially scheduled to be outside in a lovely river-side park under the beautiful fall colours of Muskoka) had to be moved inside. We moved the event across the street to my home.

We had a lovely gathering which included many of the older, previously breastfed, siblings of the participants. We enjoyed a morning of conversation, play, warm herbal teas and healthy snacks. Each mom received a “UNICEF Golden Bow”.

What was most thrilling about this group of nine, was the age of the nurslings. In an era where we are collectively concerned about breastfeeding duration rates, it was fabulous to have 6 of our 9 breastfeeding babes over the age of 1 year! We had 2 newborns, a 5 month old and 6 babes which ranged in age from 15 months to 3.5 years!

We made the local press - twice. They printed an article on the Friday before which told of the event and then showed up at my home on Saturday morning get a few pictures and details. They published a picture and small blurb the following week. It was pretty great to see breastfeeding in our local papers!

If you would like to share your experience of either participating in the 2004 Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge or organizing a site please send us your stories and we will share them in the next newsletter.



Cowansville, Quebec 2004



Springdale, Newfoundland, 2004

**Check out the
Breastfeeding Calendar
at**

www.volunteercowichan.bc.ca

Continued on page3...

Quintessence Challenge in Cranbrook, BC

By Diane Cameron PHN

We celebrated World Breastfeeding Week with a community event that supported women and families through pregnancy and beyond. We set up display tables which included La Leche League, midwife, doulas, prenatal education, public health (nutrition, dental, nursing, audiology, speech), car seat safety, chiropractor, massage, Pregnancy Outreach Program, and CHIP (Community Healing & Intervention Program). We had the Breast-feeding Challenge at 11am and events every half hour after that. Participants were treated to Mother Goose session, infant massage, car seat demonstration, and belly casting. Our model for the belly casting was from the Better Babies Pregnancy Outreach program. We had a tremendous number of door prizes e.g. baby sling, massage, pizza, clothing, toys, fitness pass, swim passes etc. The local Save on Foods donated a large tray of fruit and Subway provided sandwiches which everyone enjoyed.

World Breastfeeding Week Community Celebration A Success Once Again!

By Fatima Campos

This year the Region of Peel's World Breastfeeding Week Celebration was held in Mississauga, Ontario. Regional Council proclaimed the week in Peel, which was highlighted by a World Breastfeeding Week event. Over 50 families attended, including some families that had recently weaned. The event was covered by the local papers and participants declared it a success.

Community partnership is a key to success. Our partners included: La Leche League Canada (LLC) - Brampton and Mississauga chapters and the Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) in Mississauga. LLC obtained many prize donations, OEYC provided part of the entertainment and all assisted with planning and hosting the event. Teen volunteers helped throughout.

The puppet show, the LLC stroller friendly walk, and the 11 am "Challenge" were some of the events for this fun-filled morning. All had a great time and asked us to do it again next year.

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Website: www.babyfriendly.ca**

Quintessence in Dunnville, Ontario

By Sue Smith RN IBCLC

It was a small but enthusiastic group that began to gather on a rainy Saturday morning Oct 2, 2004. But our spirits were not dampened as we shared experiences and refreshments. Seven mother-baby pairs attended along with five older siblings. Each mom was given a yellow rose, signifying the gold standard, and a yellow bow to wear with the description of the meaning to convey to those they meet.

Of the seven who registered, one pair was late and one independent 14-month-old did not want to nurse at the prescribed time of 11am! So our total was five wonderful couples.

The interesting period was when a reporter from the local paper came... a young single male who tentatively entered the room, obviously unsure of the scene he might encounter. We welcomed him enthusiastically and I was so proud of the mothers who answered his questions with knowledge and passion, expounding not only on the many health benefits to mother and infant but also the growth and development aspects that are the outcome of the special bond of breastfeeding. I could not have done it better! His article was very positive and he and his readers gained a great deal of information about breastfeeding. A wiser young man.

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Celebrations in Squamish BC

By Karrie Thornitt

I was recently asked if I wanted to coordinate the Breastfeeding Support Group. As there really was no group participation at that point, I saw the Challenge as a good opportunity to get things rolling in our community. Due to illness in the summer, I was left with one month and thanks to Quintessence materials was able to pull it off. After having *Subs Plus* agree to host, I went crazy with flyers all over town (at least 120), notified the newspaper right away and the local radio station. The *Squamish Chief* printed an article, a letter to the editor and two short mentions of the event. *Mountain FM* radio interviewed me and played the four minute interview September 30th. Our local chiropractor donated time to assist with the display and also donated a door prize. The other door prizes were donated by the Sea to Sky Community Services Society. Save on Foods donated juice and fruit upon request (the day before the Challenge!)

We were small; however for the first time participation and the short time planning was done, we did awesome. Thank you so much for the work you put into the kit. I used those materials for display. I also photocopied handouts on Exclusive Breastfeeding, Complimentary Foods and the Global Strategy onto brightly coloured paper. These materials along with the Support Group brochure were on the display table. I will use that information on a regular basis for the families in our communities. *Ed note: Karrie wrote a great letter to the editor after October 2nd pointing out that they had not provided any post event coverage and emphasized the benefits of breastfeeding and the need for community support.*



Prince George, BC 2004



Montreal, Quebec 2004
- Twins

Photo by: David Friedman

Victoria, BC 2004



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Week 2005 theme.

Breastfeeding, Politics and Pollution

Newspaper articles

Many of us have experienced the annual ritual that always seems to correspond with the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week – the release of a media alert and coverage of a negative angle on breastfeeding or human milk. This year the ritual continued with publication in the Canadian papers of a study on contamination of human milk complete with negative headlines. The study was done to identify varying levels of flame retardants called polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) in mother's milk samples collected from women in the Puget Sound area including ten women from BC. These chemicals are thought to have a negative effect on cognitive development. Flame retardants are commonly used in a great number of products including furniture, electronics, automotive interiors and plastics.

Unfortunately, the focus of the media coverage did not emphasize that in our polluted world mother's milk is absolutely the best way to feed young children. Children who receive mothers milk have improved immune function, a lower risk of developing cancers, better neurological function and retinal development, all issues that are of concern for children exposed to pollutants. All children are exposed to pollutants, starting in utero and continuing postpartum. In Scandinavian countries governments have banned flame retardants resulting in companies like Ikea and Sony Electrics have replacing PBDE with a relatively inexpensive compound in their products. These changes have resulted in decreases in the presence of PBDE in mother's milk – indicating a decrease body load in Scandinavians. Governments in North America have not taken the same action. For more information please access the following:

Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility has several fact sheets for both physicians and mothers about pollution and breastfeeding. They are available in both English and Spanish, at:

<http://psr.igc.org/ihw-download-materials.htm#ihwFactSheetDwnld>

The Breastfeeding Coalition of Washington's summer 2003 newsletter, Breastfeeding Matters, has an overview of the PBDE issue available

at: http://www.hmhbwa.org/pdfs/BCW_newsletter_summer2003.pdf

The study report, press release, and related materials will be available at: www.northwestwatch.org/pollution

Conference presentation

At the *Art of Breastfeeding Conference* held in Raleigh, North Carolina, October 11-13, 2004 Katherine Shea's thought provoking presentation on contaminants in

human milk emphasized the importance of human milk, especially in a polluted environment. As a pediatrician, Katherine made it very clear that breastfeeding and the provision of human milk to infants and young children is *the best method of feeding*. The take home message was we need to clean up our polluted world and we need to encourage women to keep breastfeeding.

Katherine also emphasized that finding pollutants in human milk is a concern for all of us as humans as it indicates that pollutants are present in all of our bodies. She also mentioned the numerous contaminants are found in formula. Katherine talked about the "tag alongs" which are the pollutants such as lead that are present in varying amounts in our bodies and are downloaded to our children in certain situations. She pointed out that since 1951 there have been 80,000 synthetic chemicals developed with less than 1% tested for neurotoxicity, long term effect or safety for humans. Although a frightening thought, it must be kept in mind that by not breastfeeding we deprive our children of the important benefits of human milk, expose them to risks of formula while only delaying exposure to certain tag along contaminants as they will be exposed to these chemicals in childhood.

All mothers should be strongly encouraged to breastfeed and:

- ♦ Go organic (if not scrub all fruits and vegetables with a brush under running water)
- ♦ Moderation in all things (variety reduces the risk)
- ♦ Consider non food exposure (beauty products, occupations, recreation, indoor air quality)

All of us should consider how we can reduce our impact on the environment through the products we buy and encourage our leaders to introduce effective controls of pollutants. Contaminated breast milk is not acceptable and mothers should not be placed in the position of worrying about the safety of their milk. We need to clean up our environment and until that is achieved the headlines should state "Breastfeeding - a must in this polluted world".

A Milk Bank for Australia

Early in 2005, a private milk bank will open in Victoria, New South Wales Australia. This accomplishment represents eight years of work by Margaret Callaghan, a Melbourne-based lactation consultant. The new bank plans to screen and pasteurize milk operating in a manner similar to the Red Cross blood service. The pasteurized donor milk will be offered to premature infants whose mothers are unable to supply sufficient milk for their own infants. The proposed new bank has raised questions in Australia regarding the need for regulation.

The Numbers game in Canada and the US

Which province has the highest percentage of women doing any breastfeeding at 3 months?

Answer: In Canada the province with the highest percentage of mothers doing any breastfeeding at three months is Ontario at 67%

Which state has the highest number of mothers who exclusively breastfeed their children until 6 months?

Answer: Oregon (26.8 %) (88% of mothers do some breastfeeding, with 54% still doing some breastfeeding at 6 months. In 1999, Oregon was one of the first states to pass legislation to protect women's rights to breastfeed in public).

What are the national averages for any breastfeeding?

Answer: Canada 81.9% - USA 71%

Which province has the biggest increase in breastfeeding initiation? *Answer: Quebec 71%*

Which province has the highest breastfeeding initiation rate? *Answer: British Columbia 95.2%*

Which province has the most Baby Friendly hospitals?

Answer: Quebec (2)

Which state has the highest number of hospitals per capita working on the BFHI?

Answer: Oregon

Which states have met the Healthy People 2010 objectives? (The Healthy People 2010 objectives are: 75% of new mothers initiate breastfeeding; 50% continued to breastfeed for at least six months and 25% continued to breastfeed for at least 12 months.)

Answer: Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington

For more information on Canada check out: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsp/rhs-ssg/index.html>.

For more information on US visit CDC's Web site www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/NIS_data/index.htm.

Save the date...

October 17-18, 2005

"Human Milk Banking: A Global Perspective on Best Practices" Conference

Washington, DC

Global Strategies for Health in the 21st Century

Sometimes it seems like a struggle to make people understand why breastfeeding is important if not even more important in the 21st century. Help comes in a new WHO/FAO report called *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*, adopted in May 2004. It refers to non communicable diseases which include chronic diseases such as cardiovascular conditions, diabetes, stroke, cancers and respiratory conditions. This report states:

...The strategy addresses two of the main factors for non communicable diseases namely diet and physical activity... Globally, the burden of non communicable diseases has rapidly increased. In 2001, non communicable diseases accounted for almost 60 % of the 56 million diseases annually and 47% of the global burden of disease [these figures are expected to rise to 73% and 60% respectively by 2020]. In view of these figures and the predicted future growth in this disease burden, the prevention of non communicable diseases presents major challenges to global public health...

The report mentions the importance of breastfeeding in several places including these statements:

Maternal health and nutrition before and during pregnancy, and early infant nutrition may be important in the prevention of non communicable diseases throughout the life course. Exclusive breastfeeding for six months and appropriate complimentary feeding contribute to optimal physical growth and mental development. Infants who suffer prenatal and possibly postnatal growth restrictions appear to be at higher risk for non communicable diseases in adulthood.

The information in this report emphasizes the importance of breastfeeding in the 21st century, as a public health strategy for healthy children leading to healthier adults and a decreased global burden of disease. Check the report out at:

<http://www.who.int/hpr/nutrition/ExpertConsultationGE.htm>

Some getting taller, Others shorter: maybe it's the breastfeeding?

Researcher John Komlos of Munich University found that while average heights for European men and women have gotten taller over the last 100 years, Americans are getting shorter. He points out that social change such as universal health care and better nutrition are key. In contrast "America has eight million people with no job, 40 million individuals with no health insurance, 35 million living below the poverty line, and a population that exists mainly on junk food.." Since nutrition during pregnancy and early childhood is felt to be key it would be interesting to look at the effect of breastfeeding on adult height in this type of study.

Public Breastfeeding:

Israel: The Jerusalem Post Internet Edition published an article by Judy Siegel-Itzkovich (Aug. 15, 2004) on breastfeeding in public. The copy I received had the title *Public smoking or public breastfeeding? Smoke please, we're Israeli* – I'm not sure if this was the official title but it surely fit. In Israel, public breastfeeding is discouraged and most work places do not accommodate the needs of breastfeeding mothers. Sounds very familiar doesn't it! The author states, *It's ironic that the government allows - even encourages - workplaces and public facilities to have separate rooms for smokers, but won't accommodate mothers who want to breastfeed or pump their milk.... Smoking kills, while breast milk has kept humanity alive through the millennia. Could one explanation be that many men smoke but none breastfeed?*

The article outlines the usual responses from uninformed individuals unresponsive of breastfeeding and the fact that Israeli women do, what their sisters around the world do, in the face of lack of support and sometimes outright rejection of breastfeeding, resort to what is viewed as the cultural norm and bottle fed formula. In the article a physician comments *"it is rare that a worker has problems taking 10 minutes to smoke a cigarette - which is bad for him - or to make a cup of coffee and take food breaks. So why aren't women automatically given time to pump? There is so much evidence now that breastfeeding for the first year strengthens a baby's system and helps prevent a lifetime of diseases such as diabetes, heart attacks, obesity and so on that I think this is now a very urgent issue."* Whereas some of us live in locations where public smoking is severely limited, one would hope that the restriction of a practice that results in poor health and death would mean greater support for practices that promote life-long health – breastfeeding being a key factor.

Illinois: The governor of Illinois has just signed the Right to Breastfeed Act a new law which prohibits anyone from asking a woman to stop breastfeeding in public places.

Maryland: In Silver Springs Maryland group of irate moms there staged "nurse-ins" at Starbucks coffee shops after a nursing mom at one Starbucks was told to cover up or go to the bathroom to feed her baby.

North Bay, Ontario: The wife of the mayor of North Bay writes a column in the North Bay Nugget. Her Oct 25th column on polite behaviour or lack of same stated: *Young mothers must stop breastfeeding in public. We all squirm at the sight of an infant stuck to what a three-year old knows is a private part. And don't rationalize rude behaviour by telling us that it is a perfectly natural function. So is vomiting, dear, but we don't want to watch you do that, either. Particularly while dining in a nice restaurant.* One breastfeeding advocate thought such nonsense should not go unchallenged resulting in about 50 responses to the paper's online response to the column. Benefits of breastfeeding, the writer's ignorance, the inappropriateness of the comment etc were all addressed. My favourite came from "Tracey" in Tallahoma, Tennessee who wrote, *Perhaps in a perfect world, the columnist could live with like minded persons perhaps on an island far away, and the rest of the normal world could carry on without having to worry about someone being offended at the sight of someone feeding her child.* I'll vote for that!

Donor Milk Banking Growing

The Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) had its annual meeting in October. The most exciting development is the opening of a new milk bank in North Texas and four more sites actively working on setting up banks. There are currently seven American banks – California, Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, North Carolina, Texas and North Texas and one Canadian bank in Vancouver, British Columbia. The four states soon to open banks are – Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and South Carolina.

In Canada, we hear lots of enquiries but no concrete action so far. How can Canadian health professionals support the development of milk banking thus enabling this priceless resource? We each need to take action to get additional banks established in Canada. Each one of us needs to take responsibility for taking action – raise awareness by talking about the need for donor milk banks to people in your community, raise money, write to your health department and your government, make a stand, write a proposal. An excellent resource is the Baby Friendly Resource Binder (available from the BC Baby Friendly Network, www.bcbabyfriendly.ca). One whole chapter is devoted to milk banking and ideas for how to get a bank started. All it takes is one person with a dream – are you that person?

HMBANA will have two documents available as of January, 2005 – an updated version of *Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of a Donor Milk Bank* and a new document called *Best Practice for Expressing, Storing and Handling of Human Milk*. Also spread the word – the Human Milk Banking Association of North America is holding an **international conference called Human Milk Banking: A Global Perspective on Best Practices** - to celebrate their 20th anniversary year. The conference will be in **Washington, DC on October 17th and 18th, 2005**. This wonderful conference will bring together international speakers and representatives from milk banks around the world. Start saving those quarters and check out: www.hmbana.org for more information.

From the Journals

H. Jernström, J. Lubinski, H. T. Lynch, P. Ghadirian, S. Neuhausen, C. Isaacs, B. L. Weber, D. Horsman, B. Rosen, W. D. Foulkes, E. Friedman, R. Gershoni-Baruch, P. Ainsworth, M. Daly, J. Garber, H. Olsson, P. Sun, S. A. Narod. (2004) Breast-feeding and the Risk of Breast Cancer in BRCA1 and BRCA2 Mutation Carriers. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, 96,14,1094-1098.

<http://jncicancerspectrum.oupjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/jnci;96/14/1094?eaf>

This small study indicates that women at high risk for breast cancer (i.e. carry a genetic mutation known BRCA1) reduce their risk by 50% by breastfeeding for a cumulative total of more than a year.

Hanna N, Ahmed, K, Anwar M, Petrova A, Hiatt M, Hegyi T. (2004). Effect of storage on breast milk antioxidant activity. *Arch Dis Child Fetal Neonatal Ed.*, 89, F518-F520.

The authors examine the effect of refrigeration and freezing on antioxidants in breastmilk and formula. Formula has a lower antioxidant activity than breast milk, fresh or frozen. For maximum antioxidant activity, breast milk should be used fresh, within 48 hours of expression.

Collins, C., Ryan, P., Crowther, C., McPhee, A., Peterson, S., Hiller, J. (2004). *BMJ*, 329, 193-198.

This Australian study examined the effect of artificial teats (bottles & dummies) and cups on breastfeeding in 319 infants (23-33 weeks gestation). The authors found dummies had no effect on breastfeeding for children of this gestation and did not reduce the hospital stay. Cup feeding increased the proportion of babies discharged breastfeeding but increased the length of stay. The authors concluded that although the study provided some support for avoiding bottles, more research is needed.

Lovelady, C.A., Whitehead, R.A., McRory, M.A., Nommsen-Rivers, L.A., Mabury, S., Dewey, K.G. (1999). Weight change during lactation does not alter the concentration of chlorinated organic contaminants in breast milk of women with low exposure. *JHL* 15, 307-315.

This longitudinal study of American women concluded that moderate weight loss in lactating women with low exposure to environmental contaminants did not increase contamination concentration in breast milk.

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Website: www.babyfriendly.ca**

QF Contact information

If you would like to get this newsletter or make suggestions please check our website:
www.babyfriendly.ca

Contact us at: babyfriendly@canada.com

Write to us at: Quintessence Foundation, Suite 501-4438
West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4R8

Funding

Funding for Quintessence comes from charitable donations. The Foundation abides by the principles of the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes and will not accept funding from any sources who do not support the Code. To make a donation please send a cheque to our listed address and a tax receipt for donations over ten dollars will be provided.

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*Quintessence Foundation
Suite 501- 4438 West 10th Ave,
Vancouver, BC, V6R 4R8
Charitable number: 89941 1425 RR00001*