



australian  
breastfeeding  
association

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION SPEAKER CONCERNED AUSTRALIA IS NOT SO BABY FRIENDLY**

Ms Randa Saadeh, a Senior Scientist with the World Health Organization (WHO), is speaking at the Australian Breastfeeding Association's national seminar series, **Breastfeeding Support: Everyone Wins** being held over the next 2 weeks. Ms Saadeh, from the Department of Nutrition for Health and Development at the WHO in Geneva, is stressing the need for hospitals, workplaces and the community to support mothers and babies to continue breastfeeding.

Current infant feeding practices in Australia are resulting in unnecessarily high hospitalisation rates. Early weaning increases, by five fold, the risk of respiratory disease, gastro, middle ear infections and obesity.

The Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) improves breastfeeding rates which result in fewer child health interventions, including costly hospital admissions. In Australia however, the number of BFHI accredited hospitals is just 20%. New Zealand boasts 90% of their hospitals with BFHI status as a result of strong government support.

'The BFHI is important not only in establishing exclusive breastfeeding, but also in ensuring ongoing breastfeeding success after hospital discharge. It also helps to ensure quality of care in health facilities', Ms Saadeh said.

Ms Saadeh discusses bringing Australia into line with minimum international standards of paid maternity leave, lactation breaks and facilities for all working women to provide support for them to continue breastfeeding.

For more information about the seminar and world class speakers:  
[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

For more details and to organise an interview with Ms Saadeh in your state please contact:

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