

Media Release
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THIS BUNDLE OF JOY IS LONG OVERDUE

Scandinavian countries have enjoyed parental leave for over 40 years. Even Tanzania provides it. Australia will finally soon be joining many countries around the world in recognising and implementing a Paid Parental Leave Scheme.

The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) welcomes the 2009 Federal Budget announcement.

'It's a good start', ABA President Querida David said. 'Whilst not the 26 weeks that ABA lobbied for, we hope that this marks the first step in a comprehensive plan to provide flexible working arrangements for all parents.'

ABA recommended that government sponsored paid maternity leave should be available at an adequate level for all women for the first 6 months of their baby's life, to enable and support exclusively breastfeeding to 6 months in line with national and international health authority recommendations on infant feeding. In addition, the ABA would welcome the introduction of paid maternity leave for all mothers, including those who are self-employed or not in the paid workforce.

Most Australian mothers begin breastfeeding recognising that it is the normal way to feed their baby and that human milk provides all the nutrition their newborn baby needs. However they need support to continue. Breastfeeding is not a lifestyle choice. The support of breastfeeding is not a responsibility that lies just with mothers. Mothers need the support of their families, peers, communities, workplaces, health professionals and governments to continue breastfeeding.

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