



MEDIA RELEASE

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Protecting the Warm Chain: ABA Calls for Full Implementation of the WHO Code to Safeguard Breastfeeding Support

As World Breastfeeding Week 2025 begins, the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) is calling on the Government for comprehensive legislative action to protect the “warm chain” of support for breastfeeding families by fully implementing the provisions of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (WHO Code) in Australia.

The theme of this year’s World Breastfeeding Week, “Prioritise Breastfeeding: Create sustainable support systems,” highlights the importance of coordinated support for families, across communities, workplaces, and health systems. ABA emphasises that this warm chain is undermined by the aggressive and misleading marketing of infant formula and toddler milks, which continues to influence infant feeding decisions and erode confidence to breastfeed.

ABA Executive Officer Victoria Marshall-Cerins said: “Breastfeeding is a public health imperative, it should not be a choice shaped by commercial interests. The WHO Code exists to protect all parents—regardless of how they feed their babies—from manipulative marketing. It’s time Australia moved beyond voluntary, industry-led frameworks and adopted strong, enforceable legislation.”

Following the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission’s (ACCC) landmark decision in February 2025 to revoke authorisation of the ineffective MAIF Agreement, ABA urges the Federal Government to act swiftly in drafting new statutory regulations that reflect the full scope of the WHO Code and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions.

ABA’s recent submissions to the ACCC and the Department of Health and Aged Care highlight critical gaps in the current proposals for new legal protections, including:

- The exclusion of retailers from regulation.
- The unchecked marketing of toddler milks that cross-promote infant formula.
- The targeting of health professionals as marketing conduits.

“The marketing of formula is not just about selling a product—it’s about shaping culture, policy, and parents’ confidence,” said Marshall-Cerins. “We must protect the warm chain by ensuring families receive unbiased, evidence-based information and support in feeding their infants.”

ABA calls on all stakeholders—government, health professionals, and civil society—to stand together in support of breastfeeding and infant health. The time for action is now.

Click [here](#) for more information about WBW 2025.

About ABA

- Today, ABA has over 30,000 members supported by 120 local peer support groups around Australia .
- In the last 12 months ABA volunteers have supported almost 60,000 calls and web-based chats on the National Breastfeeding Helpline and LiveChat services.
- More than 2 million users have accessed the Association's worldclass website with breastfeeding and parenting information.
- ABA's 700+ volunteer breastfeeding counsellors and educators also run free local support groups, Breastfeeding Education Classes and provide feeding advice at community events across Australia.

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