



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABA endorses ATO's retention of GST on Toddler Milks to safeguard informed feeding choices for Australian families

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) recently released a draft determination to retain the application of GST to all toddler milk products. The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) supports this tax, recognising that toddler milks are unnecessary, costly, and do not provide any additional nutritional benefits beyond what young children receive from regular food.

There is growing concern in Australia regarding the increasing popularity of toddler milks. Leading health authorities, including the World Health Organization, do not recommend these products.

ABA Executive Officer Victoria Marshall-Cerins stated that "Toddler milks are both unnecessary and unhealthy, and recommends milk or water as healthier and more affordable alternatives for children who are no longer being breastfed. Industry marketing practices often create uncertainty for parents regarding infant and toddler nutrition. Marketing strategies and cross-promotion of toddler milk products can influence parental choices and impede informed decision-making about child nutrition."

"ABA welcomes the ATO's draft determination (GST 2025/D1- Application of Toddler Milk) and commends this decision as an important step towards differentiating these products and reflecting them as unnecessary," said Ms. Marshall-Cerins. She also emphasised the importance of unbiased, evidence-based information and support for parents, noting that the WHO Code protects families from manipulative marketing regardless of feeding choices.

ABA congratulates the Government on its work to create new legal controls of the marketing of infant formula in Australia and calls on the Government to ensure that the new laws align with the full scope of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly (WHA) resolutions (the WHO Code) to protect breastfeeding and ensure parents' infant feeding choices remain free from commercial influence.

ABA is supporting the Federal Government to take its time in implementing the full scope of the WHO Code and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions.

ABA's recent submissions to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission 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.

ABA urges stakeholders—including government bodies, health professionals, and consumers to unite.

"Parents seek to make informed decisions for their children; however, they are often subjected to pervasive, misleading, and influential marketing. The ATO's decision to maintain GST on toddler milk products represents a significant step toward abating consumer confusion caused by the misrepresentation of health benefits associated with these products.

Our children deserve access to optimal nutrition based on evidence, free from commercial influence, which in turn empowers families to make the best possible feeding choices,” concluded Ms. Marshall-Cerins.

About ABA

- Today, ABA has over 28,000 members supported by more than 100 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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