

BREASTFEEDING BREAKS: CALLING FOR A POLICY REFORM IN CANADA

1. INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Breast milk is rich in antibodies and nutrients, which makes it the best source of food for infants. The World Health Organization and UNICEF recommend only breast milk for the child's first 6 months.

2. THE CANADIAN REALITY

In Canada, women are guaranteed 15 weeks of paid maternal leave.

Afterwards, the national labour code does not offer protection for breastfeeding breaks.



BREASTFEEDING BREAKS ARE CURRENTLY UP TO THE EMPLOYER.



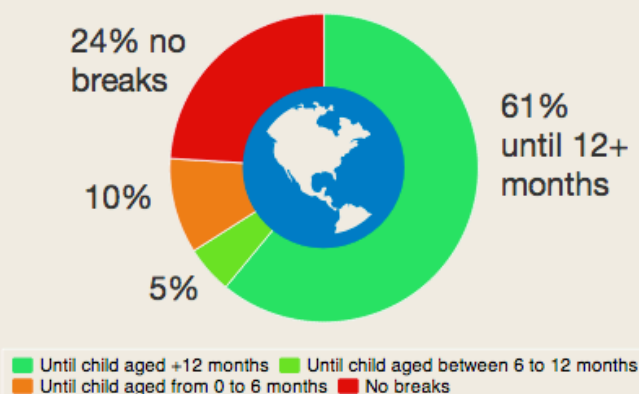
Approximately 2/3 of Canadian women return to work before their child reaches 1 year of age.

In Canada, about 4 in 5 babies are not exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months.



3. THE CANADIAN EXCEPTION

Months of breastfeeding breaks globally



By 2012, 143 countries had a policy on breastfeeding breaks. Canada along with Uganda, Zambia, Myanmar and a handful of developed nations is not on the list.



WHY IS CANADA FALLING BEHIND?

4. THE SOLUTION: REFORM THE LABOUR CODE

The government says that most mothers are able to extend their maternal leave up to 6 months. We say, what if those mothers want to go back to work. Policy on breastfeeding breaks enables women to make this choice.



LET'S PROTECT CANADIAN MOTHERS BY ADDING BREASTFEEDING BREAKS TO THE NATIONAL LABOUR CODE!



Winter 2014 Internship

In 2014 the IHSP welcomed ten McGill students from across the University for a 14-week Internship. Training sessions focused on communicating research findings to the media or general public, and gaining insight into different disciplinary approaches. In addition to in-depth research projects carried out in collaboration with faculty and staff, interns devoted ten to fifteen hours to short policy projects on a topic of their choice. Students were asked to frame an issue, find at least two points of supporting evidence and develop rudimentary policy recommendations. The above document reflects the short timeframe given to students to complete this task, and may not be a polished product.

Please note the opinions reflected in this document do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the IHSP.