

Our position on breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best form of nutrition for babies to ensure a good start in life. Breast milk provides all the nutrients that a growing baby needs. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first six months of a baby's life and can continue beyond six months with appropriate types and amounts of solid foods¹.

Boots fully supports breastfeeding and therefore supporting breastfeeding mothers is an important element of our customer offer, our product range and our ongoing product development strategy. We continue to:

- Offer a range of products to support breastfeeding and breastfeeding mothers
- Promote breastfeeding as the best option in our communications with mothers and mothers-to-be, such as Boots Parenting Club, Baby & You, Boots.com, Boots WebMD and instore leaflets
- Provide Mother & Baby Rooms in selected stores
- Publish store guidance that briefs our staff to offer support to mothers who wish to breastfeed in our stores

We also recognise however, that not all mothers are able to breastfeed and some are either unable or simply choose not to breastfeed exclusively for six months².

Our ambition is to offer an appealing, affordable, high quality and accessible range of Boots brand products that support breastfeeding and help to establish a healthy start in life. We will support all mothers with their chosen feeding method whether breastfeeding, bottlefeeding, complementary feeding or weaning.

We also adhere to UK and European law³ controlling Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula governing the in-store presentation and promotion of products and provision of information and educational material on infant feeding and follow the WHO guidelines.

This position statement reflects both our dedication to meeting our customers needs and a responsible and informed approach to baby feeding.

Vicky Pennington
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Quality and CSR

Position support document

On breastfeeding

Background

The following highlights findings from the most recent UK Infant Feeding Survey, 2005²

- The initiation rates for breastfeeding were 78% in England, 70% in Scotland, 67% in Wales and 63% in Northern Ireland
- 45% of all mothers in the UK were still breastfeeding at 6 weeks and 25% by 6 months
- Three quarters of all mothers had given milk other than breast milk by 6 weeks and 92% by 6 months
- Exclusive breastfeeding is 45% at one week, then 21% by 6 weeks, 7% by 4 months and negligible by 6 months
- 84% of mothers said they were aware of the benefits of breastfeeding
- 51% introduced solid foods before four months of age and only a tiny proportion delayed the introduction of solids until around six months

References

¹ Infant Feeding Recommendation. Department of Health, May 2003

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4096999.pdf

² Infant Feeding Survey, 2005

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles-related-surveys/infant-feeding-survey/infant-feeding-survey-2005>

³ Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations. SI 2007 No. 3521