Breastfeeding: Love and Health for Life
January marks the start of PAHO's 112th year.

Breastfeeding makes babies smarter!
Adults who were breastfed as children score 2 to 5 points higher on cognitive development indicators. Breastfeeding is also associated with higher educational achievement. 

Pan American Health Organization
Breastfeeding protects mothers against breast and ovarian cancer!
Women who do not breastfeed have a 4% higher risk of breast cancer and a 27% higher risk of ovarian cancer. They are also at greater risk of hypertension and cardiovascular disease (2).
Breastfeeding is good for the environment!
Human milk is a natural, renewable food that involves no packaging, transportation, or fuel to prepare. Every one million formula-fed babies consume 150 million containers of formula, many of which end up in landfills (2).
Breast milk protects against diseases!
Breast milk is full of immunoglobulins that protect babies against pneumonia, diarrhea, ear infections, asthma, and other conditions (2). Breastfeeding immediately after birth is important because newborns have immature immune systems. This is why breastfeeding is also called “the first vaccine”.

Pan American Health Organization

- April 7: World Health Day
- April 22: International Mother Earth Day
- April 25: World Malaria Day
- April 26 - May 3: Vaccination Week in the Americas
- April 28: World Day for Safety and Health at Work
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**Pan American Health Organization**

May 3 World Press Freedom Day
May 15 International Day of Families
May 17 World Hypertension Day
May 19 – 24 World Health Assembly
May 22 International Day for Biological Diversity
May 31 World No Tobacco Day

**Not breastfeeding increases health care costs!**
In the United States alone, if 90% of mothers exclusively breastfed for 6 months, $13 billion a year would be saved more than 900 deaths would be prevented (3).
Breast milk: a champion’s first food!

Breastfeeding in the first hour of life reduces the risk of dying in the first month by almost 20% (4, 5). It also improves motor development. When babies are breastfed, everyone wins (6)!

Pan American Health Organization

June 4: International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
June 5: World Environment Day
June 14: World Blood Donor Day
June 16 - 20: PAHO Executive Committee Meeting
June 17: World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
June 26: International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking
June 26: International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
Mothers have the right to breastfeed anytime and anywhere! All of society has a role to play in supporting mothers and babies so that they benefit from this natural renewable resource (7).
Supporting working mothers to continue breastfeeding is good for business! It improves employee productivity and morale and reduces absences to care for sick children (8, 9).

Pan American Health Organization

August

August 1-7 World Breastfeeding Week
August 9 International Day of the World’s Indigenous People
August 12 International Youth Day
Breastfeeding helps prevent overweight in children!
Longer breastfeeding may reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity by about 10%, helping fight the serious chronic diseases associated with these conditions (1).
Breastfeeding needs continued protection, promotion, and support! The WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes provides guidelines to prevent the inappropriate marketing of breast milk substitutes, including infant formula, feeding bottles, nipples, follow-up milks, and other products advertised as full or partial substitutes for breast milk [10, 11].
Breastfeeding promotes attachment! Sensitivity is enhanced when breastfeeding mothers interact with their infants. Longer breastfeeding is also associated with more sensitive maternal responsiveness and the security that comes with attachment (12, 13).

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<td>World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day</td>
<td>Universal Children’s Day</td>
<td>International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women</td>
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Formula is not the same thing!
Each year, more and more discoveries are being made about the nutritional and immunological components of breast milk and how they relate to growth and development. No formula can ever replace breast milk or the closeness that breastfeeding brings to both mother and child (14).

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December

Pan American Health Organization

December 1 World AIDS Day
December 2 112th PAHO Anniversary
December 3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
December 3 Pan American Physician Day
December 10 Human Rights Day
Fernando Javier Sendra, an Argentine cartoonist, is well known throughout Latin America for his insightful and clever character “Yo Matías” (Me Matías).

Mr. Sendra is the author of over 20 books, including 10 of the Yo, Matías series. In 1990, his comic strip Prudencio (now called “Yo, Matías”) began to appear in El Clarín, the most popular daily newspaper in Argentina. Since 2002, Mr. Sendra graciously developed images for PAHO to use to promote breastfeeding. The positive response to these materials in the Americas illustrates the power of humor to deliver a public health message. Images of Matías are currently being used to promote PAHO’s breastfeeding campaign under the banner “Breastfeeding: Love and Health for Life”.

In 2010, in front of all the Ministers of Health of the Americas, Mr. Sendra was awarded PAHO’s Champion of Health Award as recognition of his contributions to public health.

Referencias
