

## STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN: CAN IBCLC'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Sallie Page-Goertz

Ruth Sweet

She was the opening speaker at Sunday's Track 2: SUPPORTING BREASTFEEDING FAR AND WIDE.

The other sessions included three women who were working in other countries, one was Josephine, one was Maya Bolman who works at the Cleveland Clinic and established contacts with Russia and Belarus, and one was Kamini Naik, a physician in UAE. The second two have primarily worked to train staff while Josephine is mostly in direct contact with families.

Masha Walker was another speaker and emphasized the need to work on the upstream issues. As I listened to her I decided that Wisconsin could easily add something on advocacy to our various websites such as WALC and MMAW, and that we could find someone to speak about advocacy or Ban the Bags at the Dane Co Symposium.

The last 2 speakers described starting Baby Cafes in Boston and El Paso.

Because I was working as moderator at this session, I have none of my notes from this session but her complete power point is available to those of us who attended the conference and I could share this with anyone who wants the details of her talk. There are a total of 60 pages and incredible detail for a short presentation to about 15 people. She might be a useful speaker at a WALC conference.

IBCLC and ILCA and a number of other organizations are clearly starting to make a difference in policy issues: Margot Mann at the UN, Mary Rose Tully at JCAHO, International Labor Organization's policies, Infant feeding in emergencies policy changes, Women and Work policy development.

She debunked some Myths: **1** Lots of poor kids die – not much one can do about it. **2** Costs of reducing maternal-child mortality are high. **3** Reducing child mortality will accelerate population growth on an already overcrowded planet. **4** Corrupt governments thwart efforts to improve health & nutrition.

**IMPACT OF BREASTFEEDING** Suboptimal breastfeeding in the first 6 months leads to 1.4 million deaths/year. 40% of children under 6 months in developing countries are not exclusively breastfed.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?** \* UNDERSTAND that each country's policies affect children within and outside their borders. \* GIVE time, money, and expertise to reputable organizations. \* Use your networks to disseminate information regarding breastfeeding, impact of infant formula marketing, and in particular, breastfeeding in emergency situations. \* Remember, you'll find allies where you least expect them! \* LOBBY for increased official development aid from developed countries to developing countries to include support for breastfeeding protection, promotion and support.