

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON BREASTFEEDING AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: BEYOND BIOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS

A critical perspective on breastfeeding and child nutrition

Welcome to our magazine's special issue. On this occasion, I am pleased to present contents from the Third International Congress on Breastfeeding and Nutritional Health in Early Childhood: "Beyond Biological Determinants", which was carried out in Bogotá, in May 2022, called by Fundación Éxito, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia's Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and the International Society for Social Pediatrics and Child Health (ISSOP).

There are no precedents in the country for a conference of this kind. Not only because of its size and scope, with over 5,500 attendees representing Colombia's 32 departments and 39 countries from five continents, but also because, for the first time, an event supported and disseminated by a multinational conglomerate company presents a critical look at child nutrition. The event brought together experts from around the world, pediatricians, nutritionists, and nurses with extensive experience in nutritional health issues, who adhered to critical theory, congress's guiding principle, questioned the role of academia, the commodification of child nutrition and breastfeeding, and the subordination of political power to market economic interests, with subsequent public policies that are not optimal for the health and well-being of children and mothers.

The articles published are the result of a personal request supported by Dr. Luis Jorge Hernández from Universidad de los Andes and Dr. Carlos Agudelo from Universidad Nacional de Colombia. The volume is made up of investigations, reviews, and essays that, in the order in which they are presented, address issues relevant to public health, such as: the influence of cultural and socioeconomic factors in the promotion of healthy eating practices in diverse contexts; strategies to support mothers in their decision to breastfeed, including telemedicine and community and hospital programs; the re-lactation process in situations where it has been interrupted; food fortification in developing countries; food policies aimed at vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic; human milk banks in Colombia; participatory building processes for food education and multicultural nutrition tools; and potential links between obesity and mental health issues.

We hope you find this content fascinating and helpful in better understanding the problems that we, as health professionals, scholars, and policymakers, confront when it comes to breastfeeding and baby nutrition.

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