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December 13, 2013

Thomas McInerny, MD, FAAP  
The American Academy of Pediatrics  
141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098

Dear Dr. McInerny:

We are writing to express our extreme dismay regarding AAP's partnering with Mead-Johnson relative to your endorsement of infant formula in the Enfamil hospital discharge bag. The use of AAP's name, logo, and publication in formula marketing materials given to new mothers at discharge is distressing, especially because such a marketing tactic is in direct opposition to evidence-based best practices with regard to infant feeding. Your decision also violates AAP's own 2012 policy statement on breastfeeding. Your policy statement clearly discourages the distribution of commercial formula discharge bags and also endorses the Model Hospital Policy from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, which states "Nursery or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit discharge bags offered to all mothers will not contain infant formula, coupons for formula, logos of formula companies, or literature with formula company logos."

The US Surgeon General has denounced the practice of giving out commercial discharge packs and formula marketing materials in her 2011 Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding. The distribution of these discharge materials from the formula industry is a problem that undermines breastfeeding and the health of children. It implies that the hospital endorses formula use in general and a specific brand in particular. This practice is a highly successful marketing tactic that is even recognized as such by HIPAA. Thus, the fact that AAP has not only endorsed Mead Johnson's marketing practice, but has added its own logo to commercial formula company materials shows a serious lack of commitment to the health of children and affects the credibility of your entire organization.

We are deeply disappointed by your current action, as well as by similar previous actions. We urge you to quickly cease contributing to the marketing of infant formula through your endorsement of Enfamil formula. Please work to remove your name, logo, and materials from a marketing endeavor that has been repeatedly shown to reduce breastfeeding duration and exclusivity, that is in direct opposition to the Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding objectives for the nation, that puts profits above health, and that results in adverse health outcomes for the children you are supposed to protect.

Sincerely,

Alisa Sanders, RN, IBCLC, RLC, CCE  
President  
United States Lactation Consultant Association