



**FIRST STEPS  
NUTRITION  
TRUST**

The first ten years  
2011 - 2021



# FIRST STEPS NUTRITION TRUST







## Who we are

First Steps Nutrition Trust is a public health nutrition charity that supports good nutrition from pre-conception to five years. First Steps Nutrition Trust works wholly independently of any commercial funding and 2021 marks our tenth anniversary.

## What we do

First Steps Nutrition Trust works to support health workers as they support individuals and families, and to promote better policy across the pre-conception to five-year nutrition space. We do this through:

-  **Protecting infant feeding** through the provision of evidence-based information on infant milks, review of claims made for products and promotion of better regulation.
-  **Acting as a source of evidence-based information** for health workers, providing practical photographic resources which show what eating well looks like for different population groups.
-  **Promoting better policy** by the provision of expert evidence-based resources and working to support better infant feeding policy both in the UK and globally.
-  **Working in partnership with other charities and NGO** by offering expert input and working collaboratively with others on issues relating to good nutrition in the pre-conception to five-year space.

I am delighted to be patron of First Steps Nutrition Trust and fully support the great work they do supporting mums and pre-school children to eat well.

**Jamie Oliver, Patron, First Steps Nutrition Trust**



I recommend First Steps Nutrition Trust as the FIRST place to look for evidence-based, independent, practical, clear communications for eating well and eating sustainably from pregnancy through early years. The information, communication style, ethos and advocacy promoted by this trust is exemplar in a world of confusion and misinformation about healthy eating during pregnancy and beyond.

**Professor Annie Anderson, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, University of Dundee, and Patron, First Steps Nutrition Trust**



I can't think of any other organisation that does such amazingly thorough work and provides health workers with exactly what they need - truly independent information about foods for infants and young children.

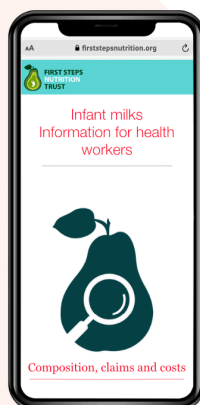
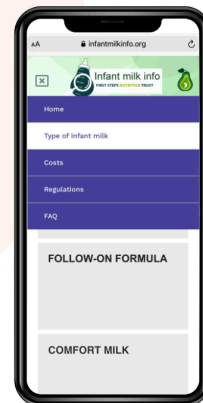
**Patti Rundall, OBE, Director Baby Milk Action and Patron, First Steps Nutrition Trust**



# Protecting infant feeding

## What we do

We provide up-to-date, expert information on the composition of infant milks available on the UK market. We provide independent information so that health workers and families can find out about products without having to negotiate their way through marketing information from the companies who produce them. We provide information about the types of milks available and answer lots of common questions people may have about them. This information can be found on the website [www.infantmilkinfo.org](http://www.infantmilkinfo.org).



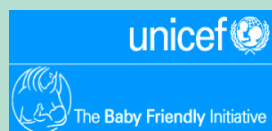
We also look in more detail at claims made about infant milk products, the ingredients used and potential issues relating to their safety and how health workers can work within the WHO Code. This information can be found on our First Steps Nutrition Trust website.

## Who do we work with?

First Steps Nutrition Trust acts as the secretariat for the Baby Feeding Law Group UK and works with 30 member organisations to bring the WHO Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes into UK law.



We also work closely with Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative and all those organisations promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding across the UK.



*With the staggering array of infant feeding products on the market today, it is critical health professionals and parents have access to credible, unbiased information on infant feeding products, free from commercial influence. First Steps Nutrition Trust has fulfilled this brief admirably.*

*It is invaluable work that supports Baby Friendly's efforts to improve health services, and we are extremely grateful for First Steps Nutrition Trust's work.*

## What will we do next?

**Sue Ashmore, Programme Director,  
Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative**

We will continue to provide up to date information on infant milks and to answer any questions health professionals have related to their safety, usefulness and efficacy. We will continue to provide evidence to support the need for better regulation of infant milks in the UK and work with our partner organisations to protect infant feeding in the UK.

# Acting as a source of evidence-based information for health workers

## What we do

We provide practical photographic eating well resources to support health workers in their work with pregnant women and families with children under 5 years. The resources are updated regularly and summarise key aspects of UK policy.

## What difference do we make?

The work we do is widely accessed by health workers – it is all open access and can be used to improve public health by anyone who works within the principles of the WHO Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. We make our photos accessible to other public health groups and sell hard copies of resources at cost price.

## What will we do next?

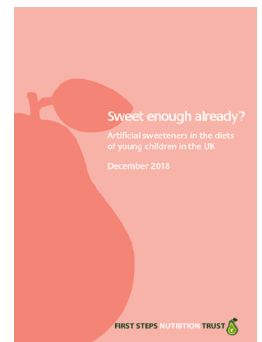
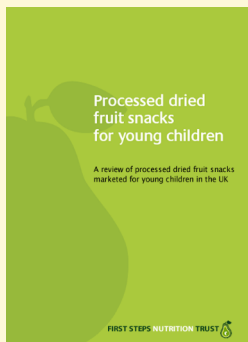
We will continue to update and develop the resources and listen to the needs of midwives, health visitors, family workers and others who support mums-to-be and new families.



# Promoting better policy

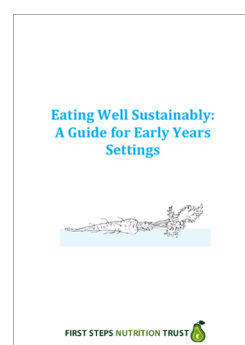
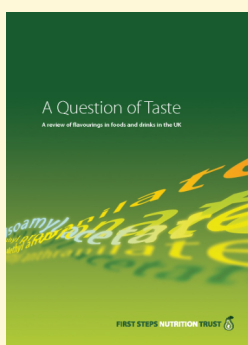
## What we do

We believe passionately that good nutrition from pre-conception to five years should be high on the policy agenda. Over the past 10 years we have responded to every relevant Government consultation and have sent information and resources to policy makers to support them in their decision making. We have looked at commercial baby foods, the use of flavourings, sweeteners and azo dye colours in foods, the importance of a strong welfare food safety net and have championed healthy and sustainable food in early years settings. Most recently we have looked at how to enable young children to be a healthy weight in the first 1000 days.



## Who do we work with?

We have worked closely with a number of networks and organisations including The Obesity Health Alliance, Eating Better, The UK Food and Poverty Alliance and Sustain Children's Food Campaign. We provide information to Government Departments across the UK and answer queries from a large number of individuals and organisations. We give talks at a wide range of events in the UK, and globally, and work with academics on relevant topics to support research and publications relevant to the work we do.



## What will we do next?

We will continue to champion good food and good nutrition for mums to be and new families, picking up issues that are neglected by other groups and raising their profile to keep issues on relevant agenda. We will continue to support other charities and NGO as well as policy makers and continue to champion conflict of interest free working.

# Championing good nutrition

*"First Steps is a force for good and provides a wealth of knowledge to health visitors"*

*"First Steps Nutrition Trust makes a huge difference to early years nutrition with their brilliant resources"*



*"I can't remember what we did before First Steps came along to provide independent information on infant milks"*

*"I use information and resources from First Steps all the time in my work knowing they are evidence-based and up-to-date"*



*"Helen has been an inspiration to many people in public health - but her legacy will continue in First Steps"*



*"Thank you for your persistence in protecting infants and young children from poor nutrition and commercial exploitation"*

# Ten years of support

First Steps Nutrition Trust was established by Dr Helen Crawley in 2011 to fill gaps in information and support around food and nutrition in pregnancy and the early years. The charity has been primarily funded by **Lizzie Vann** over the past 10 years, and the charity now has funding in perpetuity through a pension fund.



*I wanted to invest money to promote better food quality, limit harms and promote better regulation for young children. In Helen, I found the perfect partner, someone passionate about nutrition, and driven and knowledgeable about these issues. So after 10 years of incredibly hard work establishing First Steps, look what has been created – better information, better choices and pushing for better regulation - a wonderful organisation that does fantastic work on behalf of all our children. What's not to like? I hope to continue funding it for the rest of my life.*

Lizzie Vann, Funder

The first charity trustees Professor Carolyn Summerbell, Dr Lucy Cooke and Anna van der Hurd expertly steered the charity through its first 6 years, and we are very thankful to them as well as all our subsequent trustees Anna Rosier, Professor Sian Robinson, Professor Barrie Margetts, Professor Nisreen Alwan, Marjon Willers, Dr Amy Brown, Dr Vicky Thomas, Rob Percival and Dr Marko Kerac. The charity has had three patrons from its inception: Jamie Oliver, Dr Annie Anderson and Patti Rundall – and we are grateful for their support and the promotion they have done of our work. We are also grateful to other research, charity and individual funders and donors over the years: Jean Crawley, Doro Marden, The Scottish Government, The Welsh Assembly, University College London, The A Team Foundation, The Institute of Health Visiting, Health Education England and The Big Lottery.

Thanks also go to all those who have worked with the Trust over the past 10 years: Rosie Leyden, Sally Geeve, Helena Little, Pauline Styles, Erica Hocking, Susan Westland, Arabella Hayter, Diana Hawdon, Georgia Machell, Sarah Weston, Jessica Mitchell, Zoe Brewster, Caroline Donovan, Emma Taylor, Ella Sparks, Rosa Sparks, Rosie Dodds, Bahar Ghodsian, Natalie Hickman, Alex Sanchez, Dr Vicky Sibson, Sian Clarke and Rachael Wall. Thanks also to everyone who has kindly reviewed our resources and given us ideas and inspiration along the way.



**First Steps Nutrition Trust**

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[www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)  
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