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## Loosening The Grip Of Tradition

Dhariyawad block of Pratapgarh District, Rajasthan, is known for its five rivers. It has 166 villages and a population of around 2 lacs. In one of these villages, Mandvi, we meet Suraj, 6-months-old Gudiya's doting grandmother.

Even though she is 65 and suffers from backache, Suraj is determined to visit the Anganwadi Centre on MCHN Days and when take-home Rations are distributed. She does this to ensure that her granddaughter and daughter-in-law receive the services and nutrition supplements the Anganwadi Centre offers. Her son is a migrant labourer working in Kuwait. Due to the pandemic, he is yet to visit home and meet his only child. "My son is not here, so I have to take care of his daughter," says Suraj. She makes sure to fulfil her caregiving responsibilities.

However, a sense of responsibility is not enough. Lack of knowledge often leads to harmful practices. Suraj says, "When Gudiya was born, her mother breastfed her. We also gave her honey so that she has a sweet voice and *ghutti*." Feeding *janam ghutti* (gripe water) and honey immediately after birth is an age-old practice in these areas. Such is its prevalence that in neighbouring Chhoti Sadri block, even a frontline worker promoted gripe water rather than an exclusive diet of mother's milk!

People here believe that children cry because of acidity and upset stomach.

They give gripe water to relieve these symptoms. There is also a belief that it helps with teething. This can have dire consequences. The ingredients of gripe water are mostly not standardised and can cause infections and loose motions. They may contain sedatives like morphine, which can be harmful. For some families, the person feeding the child is more important than what is fed. They ask an elderly or distinguished person to feed the newborn due to the belief that the child imbibes their good qualities.

Rather than give honey, jaggery, etc., the child should be fed the mother's milk immediately after delivery. Initiating exclusive breastfeeding within an hour of birth reduces the risk of neonatal mortality. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months reduces an infant's chances of contracting gastrointestinal infections.

We explained this to Suraj so that she could make an informed decision about what's best for her granddaughter and not give in to tradition. RajPusht's Poshan Champions are counselling mothers and their families to help them adopt the recommended childcare practices. We are also training frontline workers to reinforce these messages. With these sustained efforts, we seek to promote the health and nutrition of both mothers and children.



Suraj with her granddaughter Gudiya

### BOTULISM & HONEY



Honey is commonly given to newborns as a prelacteal for the sake of ritual in India with perceptions of health, digestion, and voice improvisation. Unfortunately unknown, the real implications of honey feeding can be much more dangerous.

#### IMPACT

- **Botulism** is a rare and dangerous type of poisoning that affects the nervous system. Honey contains botulism spores; these spores release a toxin that can poison infants. It might lead to paralysis of the diaphragm, which means that infants cannot breathe on their own without a respirator until the disease is cured.
- Honey feeding to newborns creates dryness in the throat and at the same time delays hunger due to high calories, leading to delayed breastfeeding which might cause **hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)** in newborns.

#### PREVENTION

- Honey is a common cause of botulism in babies below 12 months of age. Any type of honey shouldn't be given due to the risk of botulism.
- Ensure early initiation of breastfeeding to prevent hypoglycemia in newborns.



## 1st-7th AUGUST

is celebrated as the World Breastfeeding Week to encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies. It commemorates the Innocenti Declaration signed in August 1990 by government policymakers, WHO, UNICEF and other organisations to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The photos here present glimpses of Breastfeeding Week 2021 in Rajasthan



# Breastfeeding Week 2021



# BestFeeding

## WBW21 | RAJASTHAN

- **41.6%** of children under 3 years of age in India are breastfed within one hour of birth while only **28.4%** receive colostrum in Rajasthan (NFHS-4)
- **54.1%** of children under 6 months are exclusively breastfed in India while **58.2%** are exclusively breastfed in Rajasthan (NFHS-4)



## | BARAN |

Special counselling on Early initiation of Breastfeeding at CHC Kishanganj by BPM Aakash Meena, & BPM Bhupendra Shakyawal. Importance of Breastmilk, and Colostrum feeding within one hour of birth were discussed.



PROTECT  
BREASTFEEDING  
*A Shared  
Responsibility*

## | DUNGARPUR |

WBW 2021 closing ceremony organized at Silohi AWC, Galiyakot. BPM Shelendra Chauhan discussed the benefits of colostrum and breastfeeding.



## | UDAIPUR |

RajPusht team initiated & re-operationalised Breastfeeding corners in 23 CHC/PHC facilities during the WBW. Visual from CHC Lasaria, Udaipur showing a pre and post status with BPM Ravindra (left) & Facility In-Charge Dr. Jagwati Bairwa (right) at the Breastfeeding Corner.



## | BANSWARA |

LS Indubala Trivedi of Talwara Block discussing importance of Colostrum during MCHN Day at AWC Sundarpur. She used job aid developed by RajPusht during the discussion



## | PRATAPGARH |

Awareness on importance of Early Initiation and Exclusivity of Breastfeeding, healthy diet, and weight gain during pregnancy, explained by BPM Saurabh Singh Parmar using job aids during the Suposhan Diwas celebration at AWC Kanad and Boriya, Anod block, Pratapgarh



Article on early initiation of and exclusive breastfeeding counselling at an Anganwadi Centre, Dungarpur



Story on Breastfeeding Week events in Dainik Bhaskar, Pratapgarh



Poshan Swaraj Abhiyan, a SAM identification and referral drive by District Collector, supported by RajPusht's Poshan Champions, Banswara



# Bahubali Masks Up

COVID-19 has reached Bahubali's village. How does he take care of his expecting wife and child? Simple! He masks up, washes his hands with soap regularly, and ensures uninterrupted care and good food for his family.

Following the test campaign in March 2021, we are back in the world of Bahubali, our larger-than-life protagonist, whose biggest muscle is his heart, full of love and care for his family. In the first phase of the latest campaign, live between 24 July-12 August, Bahubali addresses common doubts regarding pregnancy care and diet during the pandemic.



A poster encouraging men to take care of their family's mental health during the pandemic

Eight static/ GIF posts on critical themes of breastfeeding during COVID-19, maintaining a continuum of care, ensuring a nutritious diet, and mental wellbeing were aired during this phase. Half of the viewers were between the ages of 18-34. On average, a man between the ages of 25-34 viewed the campaign posts more than three times.

Have you met Bahubali yet? Click [here](#) to meet him as he poses a series of questions to his friends on Facebook.

Reach: 217,607

Impressions: 567,466

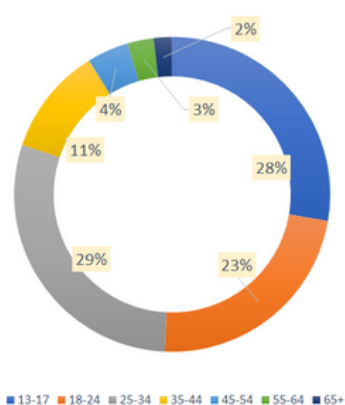
Reactions: 21,031



Page engagement: 32,329



♂ 97 % ♀ 3 %



## Match Us Up!

*It's time for the fastest finger first!*

Match the foods here with the corresponding food groups. Write your answers in the format: **S. No. (food) - S. No. ( food groups)** and WhatsApp them to 9650319196.

### Food

1. Bajra
2. Besan
3. Spinach
4. Guava
5. Cauliflower

### Food Groups

- A. Pulses & Legumes
- B. Fruit
- C. Vegetable
- D. Cereals & Millets
- E. Green leafy Vegetables



PC Chandra Prakash and ASHA Chanda Devi counsel mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding in Padakharadi Village, Bhinder Block, Udaipur



Team-building activity during training of Block Programme Managers and POSHAN Champions in Pratapgah



Dungarpur RCHO Dr K.L. Palat and RajPusht DPM Sukhender Kumar training ANMs regarding PCTS in Aspuri Block, Dungarpur



POSHAN Champion Teena Baranda counselling workers at an MNREGA site in Sector Thana, Dungarpur

# Agents of Change

*How ASHA Pratibha Jani from Banswara District transformed a village regarded as dangerous*



ASHA Pratibha Jani

“Don’t even think of going there. You’ll put yourself at risk,” people told ASHA Pratibha Jani. The place they were talking about is Oda Bassi, a village near Paloda in Garhi Block, Banswara District. Many consider it notorious as alcoholism is rife there, among both men and women. Due to its dubious reputation, Oda Bassi remained isolated and its inhabitants often didn’t receive the benefits of government schemes and entitlements.

However, that did not deter Pratibha, who had resolved to reach out to the people there. Her efforts ran into roadblocks, but Pratibha kept trying. One day, a woman with high-risk pregnancy had to be rushed to the hospital late at night. Pratibha arranged an ambulance for her, took the family to the hospital and stayed with them for two days.

After this incident, things changed. People realised that as a community health worker, Pratibha could support them and they could reach out to her in case of problems. ANM Laxmi Trivedi says, “People of Oda Bassi might not listen to us. But, if Pratibha says something, they do.”

With the community’s support, Pratibha began addressing issues in the village. She spread awareness about people’s entitlements and the services available at the Anganwadi Centre.

Nayan Kumar Vyas, Block Programme Manager, Garhi, Banswara, Rajasthan



She identified individuals who could set an example for others and with their help, reached out to all community members. “These efforts led to children getting vaccinated despite a belief in the village that infants should not be taken out of the house for the first few months. Pratibha regularly counselled women in groups, encouraged them to give up alcohol and tobacco during pregnancy, and helped them avail benefits of schemes like PMMVY and now, IGMPY. Her rigorous counselling, along with the support she provides to the village, has shown results.

Lady Health Visitor Vijaya Kumari says, “The socio-economic condition of Oda Bassi has improved significantly. Most women are now availing services at the Anganwadi Centre.” Dipika Raut, Block Chief Medical Officer, Garhi, felicitated Pratibha for her work.

Pratibha exemplifies the difference health workers can make to communities. RajPusht is building upon their experiences to strengthen its community mobilisation initiatives, such as Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) meetings.

PLA meetings led by ASHAs can enable people to learn from each other and tackle pressing issues. It helps them come up with tools and approaches suited to their contexts and lifestyles. As Pratibha did in Oda Bassi, we seek to catalyse a social movement for better health and nutrition across Rajasthan.



ASHA Pratibha demonstrating how to prepare Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) to combat diarrhoea during a home visit in Oda Bassi village