

Child Survival and Development Report Card

Nagaland

Children are young saplings in the garden of life. To love them is to turn our minds to the bountiful creator. Ideally an infant thrives best on exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond along with adequate and appropriate complementary feeding starting after six months. This is critical for their health, development and survival.

Though there has been a significant improvement in the survival and development of children over the decades, however, lot more needs to be done. Let's see the situation in the state of Nagaland!. From the available sources we have the data on crude birth rate (CBR), which is 11.8 and the percentage of under weight children under the age 3 is 24.1.

Link of Malnutrition and Inappropriate Infant Feeding Practices

Undernutrition during first two years impairs cognitive development, intelligence, strength, energy and productivity. Child malnutrition occurs entirely during the first two years and is virtually irreversible after that. Optimal feeding practices during first year of life are critical to prevent malnutrition and to ensure optimal health and development of infants and young children.

According to the W.H.O., 60 percent of all deaths under the age of 5 are related to malnutrition.

Inappropriate feeding practices are related to 2/3rd of all under five deaths. According to the most recent estimates published in the *Lancet* 2003, 13-16 percent of all child deaths can be avoided if exclusive breastfeeding was 90 percent during first six months and continued breastfeeding was practiced. Another 6 % deaths can be avoided if adequate and appropriate complementary feeding after six months for two years of beyond was provided. Table 1, depicts the status of infant feeding practices in the state of Nagaland, which needs serious efforts to improve for achieving the GOI's Tenth Five Year Plan Goals.

Table 1: Infant Feeding Practices in Nagaland

	NFHS-1 1992-93	NFHS-2 1998-99	GOI's 10 th Five year Plan goals for 2007
% Initiation of Breastfeeding within 1 hour	64.3	24.5	77.5
% of Exclusive Breastfeeding 0-3 months	61.1	43.9	63.6
% of Exclusive Breastfeeding 0-6 months			
% of Complementary Feeding (6-9 months)	43.5	81.3	100.0

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