It Takes a Village: Promoting breastfeeding at the community level

Breastfeeding Grand Rounds 2013
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Evaluations

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Why Focus on the Community?

• Disparities in breastfeeding initiation and duration
  – Race/ethnicity
  – Income level
Healthy People 2020 Goals

• Breastfeeding initiation: 81.9%
• Breastfeeding at 6 months: 60.6%
• Breastfeeding at 12 months: 34.1%

Progress since 1993

% of Infants ever breastfed by birth cohort: U.S. 1993-2006
Progress Since 1993 – by Race

% Infants ever breastfed by birth cohort and race-ethnicity: U.S. 1993-2006

Progress @ 6 Months – by Race

% of infants still breastfed at 6 months old by birth cohort and race-ethnicity group: US, 1993-2006
Contributing Factors

• Poverty?
• Maternal age?

Progress– by Race & Poverty

% infants ever breastfed by poverty income ratio (PIR) and race-ethnicity: US, 1993-2006
Progress—by Race & Maternal Age

% of infants ever breastfed by maternal age and race-ethnicity: US, 1993-2006

![Bar chart showing the percentage of infants ever breastfed by maternal age and race-ethnicity for Under 20 years, 20-29 years, and 30 years and older across different racial groups.]

Contributing Factors

- Cultural norms
- Peer groups
- Healthcare provider expectations
- Role models
- Family support
- Images
- Workplace barriers, esp. for low-wage workers
Need for Community Engagement

- Deeply engrained norms & expectations
- Need culturally appropriate role models and resources
- Social support from family and peers

Community Engagement

- Nothing About Us Without Us!

Motto made popular by South African disability-rights activists
Historical Trends

- Efforts to reverse 1900’s slide in breastfeeding rates
- Active in white middle class
- Need to broaden the focus
- BFGR 2004 – Promoting Breastfeeding in Minority Communities, Dr. Michal Young

Community Engagement

- Socio-ecological framework
- Health influenced by many factors unrelated to health-care
- Social determinants of health
Socio-Ecological Framework

Individual Assets

• Knowledge – why & how
• Attitudes – embarrassment vs. comfort
• Skills & confidence

• These don’t develop in a vacuum
Interpersonal Environment

• Dads

Interpersonal Environment: Role Models

• Grandmothers
• Sisters, aunts
• Friends
Interpersonal Environment: Peer Support

- Peer counselors
- Support groups

Organizational Environment

- Discussed in many past BFGR broadcasts
- To watch again, go to:
  www.albany.edu/cphce/whgr/shtml
Organizational Environment: Healthcare

- Birthing facilities
  - “Trouble getting breastfeeding going” -- #1 cause of early weaning
    - *Listening to Mothers III* survey, Childbirth Connections

- NICUs

Organizational Environment: Employers

- Employers
  - PAID maternity leave – BFGR 2012
  - Positive attitude
  - Nursing breaks
  - Nursing/pumping space
    - not in the bathroom!
Employment Environment: Lactation Rooms

NYS Legislative Office Building

Employment Environment
Organizational Environment: Childcare Providers

Organizational Environment: Businesses
Community Organizations

Orange County Health Department
WIC Office
Sullivan County fair

Faith Communities
Community Environment

- Cultural values & local norms

Community Environment

Created and reinforced by families, faith groups, civic groups, public figures, media...
Everyone Can Help Make Breastfeeding Easier!

- US Breastfeeding Committee breastfeeding support stories:

A Warm Chain for Breastfeeding

- Successful breastfeeding, needs a “warm chain”
- Support throughout the community
  – Build mother’s confidence
  – Show them what to do
  – Protection from harmful practices

John Dobbing, et al.
The Lancet 1994
Questions from the Listening Audience
Evaluations

Please fill out your evaluation and post-test online.  
albany.edu/sph/coned/bfgr/bfgr13.htm

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