It Takes a Village: Promoting breastfeeding at the community level

Breastfeeding Grand Rounds 2013

**Moderator:**
Mary Applegate, MD, MPH

**Speakers:**
Ruth Lawrence, MD
Stephanie Sosnowski, BS, ICCE, IBCLC, RLC

**Major (though absent) contributor:**
Kimarie Bugg, MSN, MPH

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Email:
bfgr.ny@gmail.com

Viewer Call-In
Phone: 800-452-0662
Fax: 518-426-0696

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Thank You!

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

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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

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](http://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!
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Community Environment

- Cultural values & local norms

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

www.breastfeedingrose.org
P.O. Box 1076
Lithonia, GA 30058
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