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**Providing Current and Accurate Information on the Risk of Breastfeeding among HIV Positive Mothers in Order to Facilitate Community Agencies and Programs with Responsible Breastfeeding Education**

Author (s)

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**Introduction:** In response to the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic, the New York State AIDS Institute, Division of HIV Prevention attempts to educate the public and community organizations on a comprehensive array of HIV/AIDS specific prevention interventions. One area of HIV/AIDS prevention deals with curbing maternal to child transmission, one way this is accomplished is through educating on the risks and benefits of breastfeeding to infants.

**Objective:** Are threefold; first to provide current and accurate information to community agencies and programs on the risks and benefits of breastfeeding among HIV+ mothers, in order for it's inclusion in their current agency message on breastfeeding; second to dissuade community agencies from blanket endorsements of breastfeeding; thirdly to foster possible initiatives to promote formula feeding over breastfeeding of infants for this vulnerable population.

**Methods:** The explicate presentation of current factually accurate information on HIV/AIDS risks of transmission to infants via breastfeeding, as well as the potential overall health and developmental impact of breastfeeding on infants to community agencies.

**Conclusion/Significance:** Our policy presentation indicates that breastfeeding poses an increased risk of transmission to infants. For this reason it is necessary to include pro-formula feeding messages in community agencies' educational information as well as in programs on infant nutrition. Breastfeeding poses a significant risk of postpartum HIV transmission, this increased risk eclipses any short term health benefits. The incorporation of pro-formula feeding messages by community agencies into their education materials has the potential to dramatically reduce the risk of HIV transmission from mother to infants.