

# Beyond the Survey:

Engaging in Program Evaluation  
(and having fun while doing it)



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# Background

- Who we are and how we came together



LAURIER Inspiring Lives. Manulife Centre for Community Health Research breastfeeding buddies

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# Overview of Project

Three components:

- 1) Qualitative Program Evaluation
- 2) Documentary about Peer Support & Breastfeeding
- 3) Resource for Young Moms (comic)

These started as somewhat separate entities, but we have come to see each as related to the program evaluation goal of understanding program processes and impacts (#1 Above).



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## First, Some Numbers

### Total Participants to Date

- 78 Documentary Participants
  - BFB volunteers
  - Mothers
  - Partners
  - Professionals
- 11 Breastfeeding Buddies follow up interviews
- 10 Young Moms Focus Group
- 5 BFB Focus Group Participants

n=104

- Plus: our team (12), partners (5), artists (2), filmmakers (3)



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## Documentary



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## Process

- Idea
- Review of what exists
- Becoming clear on what we wanted to produce (and what we didn't want)
- **Theme: Reweaving communal knowledge related to breastfeeding and "it takes a community" to breastfeed a child**
- Research Ethics, Recruitment, Filming, Editing....



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## Weaving Our Common Threads

- Interviews with: Breastfeeding Buddies, Breastfeeding mothers, Partners of breastfeeding mothers, Professionals, Breastfeeding Buddies Coordinator
- A resource for prenatal programs and for those interested in the BFB peer support model
  - Challenging Myths
  - Partner Perspectives
  - Supportive Communities
    - Breastfeeding Buddies
    - Peer Model in the context of other supports



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## Highs & Lows

- Hearing stories
- Amazing experts
- The film team
- Having fun
- The footage coming together to tell a story
- Fed in to the program evaluation
- Takes longer than anticipated
- Details
- Lots of filming required
- Unforeseen events
  - Weather
  - Technical problems



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## Resource for Young Moms (comic)

- Background
- Literature Review
- Focus Group
- Vision
- Comic artist contracted
- Production



RebeccaRoher.com



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## Vision Emerged

- Colourful, not text heavy, humorous,
  - Address our concerns: evidence-based
  - Relevant to young mom concerns
- Making it relevant
- Diversity of experience, appearance, ethnicity
  - **Feeling judged as risky, incapable**
    - Are these women well served?
  - Wanting to breastfeed
  - Emphasize strengths
  - Role of grandmas, partners, peers, "good" support
  - Busting Myths



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## Highs & Lows

- Hearing stories
  - Learning from literature
  - Strengths of young moms
  - Potential for better supports
- Realities of young mothering in our current context
  - Process took longer than anticipated



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## Qualitative Program Evaluation

- Program Logic Model
  - [http://med-fom-familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/facilitier\\_modele\\_logiques\\_CJPE-2002\\_f.pdf](http://med-fom-familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/facilitier_modele_logiques_CJPE-2002_f.pdf)
  - [http://med-fom-familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/logic\\_model\\_e.pdf](http://med-fom-familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/logic_model_e.pdf)
- Evaluation Plan
  - Follow up with workshop participants



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## Main Questions

- 1) What is working well and what can be improved in the implementation of the Breastfeeding Buddies education and support programs from the perspective of participants and volunteers?
  
- 2) Are the BFB education and support programs achieving its intended outcomes from the perspective of participants and volunteers?



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## Methods

- Community-Based, qualitative, arts-based approach, exploratory
- Interviews
- Me Breastfeed Workshop recruitment – request to contact 5 weeks post birth
  - Matched and unmatched
- To date: 27 agreed to contact
  - 10 people ignored our 3-4 contacts
  - 2 no shows
  - 1 outright not interested due to formula use
  - 3 not contacted yet
  - 11 participants so far



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## Key Program Evaluation Findings So Far (Across all Ps)

- Building community – BFB uses a community development approach
  - Leadership and personal development of buddies
  - Program reaches beyond formal participants
    - Potential for social network mapping?
- ADVOCACY



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### Key Program Evaluation Findings So Far

- Specific program logistical concerns
- BOTTLE FEEDING CULTURE
  - Lots learned about benefits of breastfeeding – some very skeptical
  - Impact of demonstration mother
  - BACKLASH – how do we navigate this?
    - "A lot of kids are formula fed and they turn out just fine"
    - "like I'm sure formula has all the nutrients that the baby needs so it's fine but just don't talk about it."
  - Myths and Misinformation abound
    - Coming in with "Its hard, painful"; friends, coworkers that were unsuccessful
    - Leaving unaware of cluster feeding, weaning for work
    - what are effective ways to address them?



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### Key Program Evaluation Findings So Far

- ISOLATION & AVERSION TO HELP SEEKING
  - We need to be present and less passive in our support to mothers
  - Though BFB workshop sent the "GET HELP ASAP" message clearly for some
- Unclear about hospital interventions and formula USE
  - C Section mother and challenges related to birth interventions and health care professional advice
  - In our small sample, seems a lot of supplementation (6/11)
- Diversity of experiences and frames of mothers



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### Overall Learning & Reflections



Quality of partnerships matters  
Need mutuality  
Connection  
Trust



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### Overall Learning & Reflections

Integrate the arts in evaluation and knowledge transfer

<http://www.spiritysol.com>

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### Biting off more than we can chew?

Timelines  
Unforeseen circumstances  
Ethics application  
Filming challenges  
Collaboration takes time

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### Value of qualitative methods

Can capture complexity

Example: at least 4 babies are being breastfed in our sample that would not have otherwise – a survey would not have captured this outcome

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## Intervention before it is too late



How can we reach moms more effectively with the right support at the right time?

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## So much misinformation & myths



Insidious nature of our bottle feeding culture

Present a big challenge when the competing narrative is a \$45 Billion industry

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## Unexpected outcomes



- Preconception learning for our staff and students
  - 9 RAs, 1 videographer
- Preconception education in classroom
- Further partnership & funding opportunities

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### It's worth it

Program knowledge and ideas for changes

New forms of knowledge exchange

New Ideas for future intervention, KTE, research

Community Impact

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Artistic images courtesy of

Catie Atkinson  
<https://www.etsy.com/shop/StudioSpiritYSol>

Rebecca Roher  
<http://rebeccaroher.com/>



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