

Breastfeeding Peer Support

PRESENTATION AT BEST START CONFERENCE BY:

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What is your experience with peer support?

- I support other agencies or a program within my agency where peer support is offered.
- I am would like to start a peer support program.
- I am about to start a peer support program.
- I have had previous experience with a peer support program, but I am not involved with one now.
- I am presently involved in running a peer support program.

What are you hoping to learn today?

- I hope to learn more about how and where to recruit volunteers for a breastfeeding peer based support program.
- I hope to learn more about effective training/enrichment materials for my volunteer base.
- I hope to learn how to impress upon my colleagues and clients the value of breastfeeding peer support.

What type of organization do you work for?

- Public health
- Hospital maternity unit
- Community health centre
- NP-led clinic
- Family Health Team or other primary care setting
- Aboriginal health access centre or other First Nations organization
- Child and youth organization
- Education (college/university)
- Non-profit community organization



Where in Ontario do you work?

Erie St. Clair LHIN

South West LHIN

Waterloo Wellington LHIN

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN

Central West LHIN

Mississauga Halton LHIN

Toronto Central LHIN

Central LHIN

Central East LHIN

South East LHIN

Champlain LHIN

North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN

North East LHIN

North West LHIN

Imagine...

You've just started a new job.

It's a job you wanted for a long time.

You're excited.

You couldn't sleep much last night, you were so excited.

Now it's your first day....

A solid green horizontal bar at the bottom of the slide.

Your day begins!



Your manager rushes in, and says you will be working with a new intern. He just started today too!

The manager gives you some quick instructions, and runs out to deal with some emergency situation.

You and the intern stare at each other.

Now what?

They gave you a manual when you were hired, but it seems kind of technical.

And you're tired.

And you need to go to the bathroom and you don't know where it is.

And the intern looks like he might cry any minute.



Maybe you should just start your computer...

You look all over but can't find the "power on" button.

The manual just says "turn on computer." So helpful.

The intern looks hungry and worried.

This is not how you imagined your dream job.



What would you do? What would help?



Your experiences?

What's most helpful :

- The employee manual?
- Your busy manager?
- Your new work colleagues, who have experienced what you are going through, who have found solutions for both big challenges (like the computer system) and small ones (like finding the washroom) and who have empathy for you

Peer support!

To quote the Mental Health Commission of Canada:

“Peer support works. Peer support is effective!”



What the research tells us:

One sample study:

Breastfeeding Medicine

Volume 6, Number 0, 2011

Early Postpartum: A Critical Period in Setting the Path for Breastfeeding Success

Susan M. Gross, Amy K. Resnik, Joy P. Nanda et al

What they did:

Data from Maryland WIC program:

- ❑ 35, 582 babies
- ❑ Three groups (depended on services at each WIC unit):
 - ❑ Peer Support
 - ❑ Lactation Consultant support
 - ❑ Standard Care

What they found:

Breastfeeding initiation:

- Peer support – 62%
- Lactation consultant – 54%
- Standard care – 48%



At three months

Percentage still breastfeeding either exclusively or partially:

- ❑ Peer Support: 36%
- ❑ Lactation Consultant support: 24.8%
- ❑ Standard Care: 25.3%



La Leche League Canada survey (2005)

Surveyed mothers across Canada who had attended at least one LLLC meeting.

Results:

- ❑ Average age of introduction of solids was between 6 and 7 months;
- ❑ Majority used no formula - of the small percentage who did, average age of introduction of formula was 9 months;
- ❑ Average age of weaning was 19 months.

A meta-analysis

Journal of Human Lactation 2010 August; 26(3): 314- 326

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling: From Efficacy through Scale-up

Donna J. Chapman, Katherine Morel, Alex Kojo Anderson et al

-reviewed 26 published, peer-reviewed, randomized,
controlled studies



Conclusions:

“The overwhelming majority of evidence from randomized, controlled trials evaluating breastfeeding peer counseling indicates that peer counselors effectively improve rates of breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity. Peer counseling interventions were also shown to significantly decrease the incidence of infant diarrhea and significantly increase the duration of lactational amenorrhea.

“We conclude that breastfeeding peer counseling initiatives are effective in both developed and developing countries.”

Breastfeeding Buddies Program of Waterloo Region since 2003....

- ❑ Health Nexus Grant to **address lower breastfeeding rates in priority populations** by offering peer breastfeeding support
- ❑ Used BORN data to identify geographical areas within Waterloo Region with the lowest breastfeeding rates
- ❑ Collaborated with community agencies located in targeted neighbourhoods to set up peer breastfeeding support through Me Breastfeed workshops and breastfeeding cafes



What is the ME? BREASTFEED WORKSHOP?

Free 2 hour prenatal breastfeeding workshop facilitated by trained peers; Breastfeeding Buddy volunteers.

Focus is to provide pregnant families with interactive, up to date information that normalizes breastfeeding and encourages mom to mom support.

Topics include:

- Why breastfeeding is normal
- The first 7 days after birth
- Position, latch and problem solving
- Community Resources



Each workshop has a BFB “**Demo Mom**” who breastfeeds her baby and answers questions.

Participant's receive a free book and community resources to learn about where to go for breastfeeding help in the future.

Preliminary Evaluations of “Me Breastfeed Workshops”

A PEER LEAD PRENATAL BREASTFEEDING WORKSHOP



Basis for evaluations:

- ❑ Workshop participants were asked to complete a survey at the start of the workshop (pre) and a survey following the workshop (post).
- ❑ Intent was to measure learning outcomes of workshop.
- ❑ The following are preliminary findings from the targeted workshops from March-September 2014.
- ❑ The findings below indicate the percent of responses for each question, but do not add up to 100% due to some missed responses.
- ❑ Analysis and interpretation of findings will be conducted in March 2015 when all programs are complete.

What were we measuring?

HOW WORKSHOP AFFECTS CULTURAL BREASTFEEDING PERCEPTIONS

- ❑ Normalizing Breastfeeding
- ❑ Create a breastfeeding culture through peer support
- ❑ Increase knowledge of community supports available



MOMS FEELINGS AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

- ❑ Increase comfort levels with breastfeeding
- ❑ To increase mothers' intentions to breastfeed
- ❑ An increase in confidence of mothers to breastfeed



Partners supporting breastfeeding...

- ❑ Partners are encouraged to attend and participate in workshop and are part of the evaluation process
- ❑ Message is conveyed that they are the number one indicator of their partner's breastfeeding success along with peer support



Normalizing breastfeeding

Participants were asked the following questions

		Very comfortable (%)	Comfortable (%)	A Little Comfortable (%)	Not Comfortable (%)
Pre	How comfortable are/would you be breastfeeding your baby in public (e.g. mall, restaurant, park, etc.)?	8	46	46	0
Post	Since coming to this workshop, how comfortable are/would you be breastfeeding your baby in public (e.g. mall, restaurant, park, etc.)?	31	61	8	0

Create a breastfeeding culture through peer support

Participants were asked the following questions

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Post	I felt welcome and accepted at the Workshop.	93	7	0	0	0	0
	The facilitators treated me, and my partner (if applicable) and what we said with respect.	100	0	0	0	0	0
	My breastfeeding questions were answered by the facilitators.	93	7	0	0	0	0
	The facilitators were knowledgeable about breastfeeding.	93	7	0	0	0	0

Access point for further community resources / Increase knowledge of community supports available

Participants were asked the following questions

		Yes (%)	No (%)	Unsure (%)
Pre	Do you know where to go for breastfeeding support and resources in the community?	50	21	21
Post	Since coming to this workshop do you know where to go for breastfeeding support and resources in the community?	93	7	7

Increase comfort levels with breastfeeding

Participants were asked the following questions

		Very Comfortable (%)	Comfortable (%)	A Little Comfortable (%)	Not Comfortable (%)
<i>Pre</i>	How comfortable are/would you be breastfeeding your baby?	46	46	8	0
<i>Post</i>	Since coming to this workshop, how comfortable are/would you be breastfeeding you baby?	69	31	0	0

An increase in confidence of mothers to breastfeed

Participants were asked the following questions

		Very Confident (%)	Confident (%)	A Little Confident (%)	Not Confident (%)
<i>Pre</i>	How confident are you in your knowledge about breastfeeding?	0	23	69	8
<i>Post</i>	Since coming to this workshop, how confident are you in your knowledge about breastfeeding?	38	62	0	0

An increase in confidence of mothers to breastfeed continued...

Participants were asked the following questions

		Very Confident (%)	Confident (%)	A Little Confident (%)	Not Confident (%)
<i>Pre</i>	How confident are you in your ability to breastfeed?	8	23	54	15
<i>Post</i>	Since coming to this workshop, how confident are you in your ability to breastfeed?	31	62	8	0

An increase in confidence of mothers to breastfeed continued...

Participants were asked the following questions

		Very Confident (%)	Confident (%)	A Little Confident (%)	Not Confident (%)
<i>Pre</i>	How confident are you in your ability to prevent/solve breastfeeding problems?	8	23	31	39
<i>Post</i>	Since coming to this workshop, how confident are you in your ability to prevent/solve breastfeeding problems?	31	69	0	0

Example: La Leche League

History:

- ❑ Founded in Chicago in 1956
- ❑ First group in Canada in 1961 – now in some 60 countries around the world



Volunteer La Leche League Leaders

Requirements:

- Breastfeed for at least nine months at time of application; expected to continue until baby outgrows the need
- Attend at least four LLL meetings if possible
- Recommendations from local LLL Leaders
- Complete training process with a representative of Leader Application Department and local Leader; reading requirements; communication and listening skills emphasized
- Connect to support system (other Leaders, Areas, Professional Liaisons, Medical Advisory Board, etc.)



What La Leche Leaders do:

- Lead monthly (or more frequent) meetings – can include drop-ins, toddler meetings, and couples meetings
- Provide help over the phone and/or in person (home visits), depending on the Leader's situation
- Provide help by email
- Refer mothers to other Leaders or to appropriate community resources as needed

Leche League Leaders also...

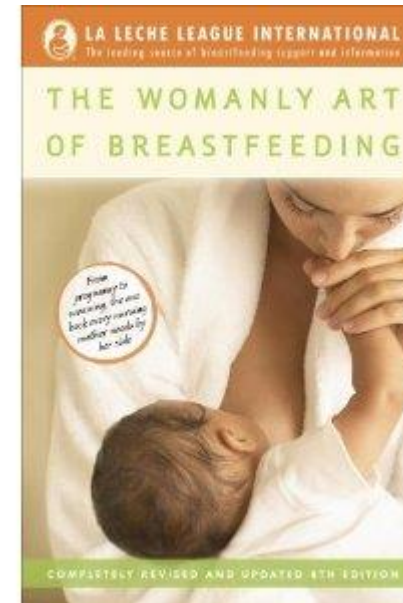
- Consult with other Leaders, Professional Liaison personnel, etc., as needed
- Participate in community breastfeeding committees and events
- Handle Group finances, administration, scheduling and do any necessary fundraising
- Pay annual insurance and participation fees, commit to keep up to date with current breastfeeding information, and keep records of their work
- Organize conferences and workshops

LLL meeting



LLL provides:

- ❑ Training for potential Leaders that is international – consistency among Leaders around the world
- ❑ Written resources such as The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding and information sheets in various languages – regularly updated
- ❑ Forums for mothers on the LLLI website



Example – M'Wikwedong Community Breastfeeding Circles



The Area

- ❑ Skirts both Lake Huron and Georgian Bay shorelines
- ❑ Summer – cottage country
- ❑ Winter – harsh winters with largest annual snowfall in Ontario
- ❑ Challenges – poor travel conditions and isolation

Breastfeeding Circles

- At M'wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Center in Owen Sound
- Satellite sites:
 - Port Elgin
 - Wiarton
- All circles meet monthly



New Peer Support Programs

- From client base and circles
- Experienced breastfeeding mothers
- Encouraged to become breastfeeding peer support volunteers
- Trained through series of 3.5 hour enrichment days
- Offered by IBCLC and LLL Leader

Topics Covered During Training

- Communication skills
- Reflective listening
- Breastfeeding management
- Problem solving



Women with Lower Rates of Breastfeeding

- ❑ Aimed at women from lower socio-economic background, younger women, women without support and Aboriginal women
- ❑ Complete cross section of women have attended groups
- ❑ Many facing significant social, financial and family issues
- ❑ United by common experience of pregnancy and breastfeeding



Success Story.....



Break



Business Case for Breastfeeding Peer Support



Group Activity

Supporters

Key points:

- Be confident in the value of the work you do! The research shows that peer support is effective and valuable.
- Know and respect the boundaries of peer support.
- Know your support network and make use of it.

Starters

Key Points:

- Be aware of the various models of peer support.
- Identify the peer support needs in your community.
- Connect with other resources for support and joint planning.
- You have solid evidence to bring to managers and other potential funders.

Sustainers

Key Points:

- ❑ You are a valuable resource to the peer support starters and supporters in your community.
- ❑ Evaluation is important for improving programs and assessing future needs.

Discussion Points

- What will you do what you go back to your agency to move breastfeeding peer support forward in your role?
- What is your one burning question for the presenters or the group?

The “power” in peers.....

...” I knew that breastfeeding was good for my babybut it was really overwhelming doing it alone.... there is something so powerful about being with other women and sharing in this right of passage... other breastfeeding women gave me the courage and support to meet my babies needs for as long as I wanted...”

Breastfeeding Buddy 2009



Thank you....please connect with us if you have further questions.....

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