Realities of WIC Breastfeeding Mothers

A Photovoice Project
Introduction

- WIC has been increasing the support for breastfeeding for more than 7 years
- Delaware County WIC has seen a 10% increase in initiation
- Duration of breastfeeding has not increase proportionally
Healthy People 2010

Breastfeeding Goal

- 75% Breastfeeding Initiation
- 50% Breastfeeding at 6 months
- 25% Breastfeeding at 1 year

Breastfeeding has enormous public health implications
Breastfeeding Impacts:

- Quality of Life for all segments of society: children and adults, male and female.
- Health disparity
Community Based Participatory Research

- Recognizing community as a unit of identity
- Building on strength of resources
- Facilitating collaborative research
- Integrating knowledge and action
- Promoting co-learning and an empowering process
- Maintaining cyclical and iterative process

From Minkler and Wallerstein, 2003
Photovoice as a CBPR Method

- Improves the quality and validity of the research
- Illustrates the local knowledge
- Develops local theory
- Progresses towards action

All features important to CBPR
Photovoice: inductive questioning

- Enabled 7 WIC participants in Muncie, IN to record and reflect on their personal strengths and concerns about breastfeeding support

- Promoted critical dialogue and knowledge concerning support for breastfeeding mothers

- Provided a medium for the presentation of community participant’s lived experiences (Wang, 1999).
## Who Participated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants' Pseudonym</th>
<th>General Demographics</th>
<th>Personal Demographics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crystal</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47303</td>
<td>Family Unit: Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 28</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 2 children; each over 1 year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 15 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47304</td>
<td>Family Unit: Single</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 21</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 7mo old and breastfeeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 14 years</td>
<td>Working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47302</td>
<td>Family Unit: Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 27</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 3 children; 3mo twins still breastfeeding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 16 years</td>
<td>Just starting work again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47304</td>
<td>Family Unit: Married</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 30</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 3 children, all breastfed, not currently breastfeeding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 16 years</td>
<td>Worked with first two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47305</td>
<td>Family Unit: Living with Father of infant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 33</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 2 children, still breastfeeding 2mo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Education: 16 years</td>
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<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47396</td>
<td>Family Unit: Married</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 27</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 1 child just finishing after a year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 16 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Zipcode: 47304</td>
<td>Family Unit: Living with Father of Infant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age: 38</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Experience: 2 children, 13 years apart, both breastfed, still breastfeeding 2nd</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education: 14 years</td>
<td>Worked when breastfeeding 1st</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Photograph Assignment

- **Question**
  - What are the supports you have received to be successful in breastfeeding?
- **Photographs taken**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1st Assignment</th>
<th>2nd Assignment</th>
<th>Extra</th>
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<td>18</td>
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</table>
Analysis

Transcribing and Reading Text and Photographs using a software program, NVIVO 7

[Diagram: Qualitative Data Analysis: Step-by-Step]

Source: Adapted from Ulin, Robinson, and Tolley 2005, p. 144
Analysis continued

- Reading transcriptions
- Identifying text with software program (NVIVO 7)
- Verifying text with participants
- Developing codes and verifying
- Research
- Collapsing codes into themes
Results

- Sense of Community Support
  - Health Care Providers
  - Public Space
  - Workplace
  - Church
  - School
- Sense of Support from others
  - Father of Child
  - Friends
  - Mother
  - Children
- Importance of Role Models
- Sense of Strength Within
“Most of my pictures I took were just family pictures; them doing things together or my husband and them or my parents and them because that is my real support”.

Sense of Receiving Support
Sense of Mutual Support

- “We have been good support to one another, calling each other with random questions and concerns and all that”
- “… just reaching out to somebody who had done it before was important”
- “We just have a really tight friendship and part of it was that we were nursing together”
Sense of Emotional Support

“He has such high respect for me, for what I have done for his son. There is nothing else I could have done that would really make him appreciate me like he does.”
Importance of Role Models

“Breastfeeding sets a certain role model in our family.”

Crystal
Importance of Role Models

“I think there is that eternal concept of breastfeeding and [it] is very welcoming, nurturing, soft, come here and cuddle, you don’t turn them away”.

Crystal
Sense of Strength Within

- Finding and attending La Leche League
- Discovering how to talk to her mother about mother’s negative attitude
- Her mother had said: ‘if you don’t want to starve your child you should use formula’ and the participant thought “No way is she going to force this [giving formula] on us”
“It’s not what’s important to me. It’s what is important for them…. That’s the most natural way to feed them.”

Kathryn

Breastfed her daughter and now her twin sons
Sense within and the natural way

“They were exploring and discovering. It’s like breastfeeding.”

Crystal
Sense within of the natural way

“Its really relaxing sitting down and feeding them. They are really relaxed, you get really relaxed.”

Mother of twins
Social Actions

- Ideas developed during second session
- 3rd session participants developed the theme
  - 5 out of 7 participants participated
  - Follow up via email or phone
- Unable to complete social action
  - Participant moved for a job
  - Too busy juggling work and parenting
  - Participant working with husband’s job
  - Busy family activities
  - Another pregnancy
- Compromised with community interactions
  - Presented poster at County Fair
  - Presented poster at Community Artwalk
Results

- WIC women identified self determination and a belief that breastfeeding was the natural way to feed their. These beliefs and attitudes appeared to be very important in their success of breastfeeding.
- Positive attitudes about breastfeeding by the family, a friend or a partners increased the duration
- Community attitudes that did not encourage breastfeeding were a deterrent to feeling comfortable breastfeeding in church and other public places
- Workplace policies that did not acknowledge the needs of the breastfeeding mother were the most difficult to overcome.
Conclusions

- Participation within a targeted community can inform stakeholders of local knowledge and beliefs that can be incorporated for more effective interventions that increase duration.
- Participation in the project increased the participants awareness and interests in being change agents in their own community.
Limitations

- Adaptation of these findings to interventions is appropriate to this specific situation but should not be generalized.
- Analyzing is time consuming for many programs.
- Working in community is time consuming.
- Community involvement of young mothers can be difficult because of family obligations and jobs.
References

References continued

References continued

Thank You so much

This was a wonderful opportunity for me.

- It advanced my understanding of research
- It increased my understanding of qualitative work needed for assessing the community needs
- I have shared the methodology of photovoice with others at the
  - International Lactation Consultant Association Meeting, 2007
  - American Public Health Association Meeting, 2007

ILCA San Diego, 2007

APHA Washington DC, 2007