CGBI has a New Website!

The Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute is proud to announce the launch of our newly re-designed website. In addition to the site’s informative content, the improved navigation and aesthetics are developed to provide an improved user experience. Our new homepage displays several new menu options that highlight our main tasks at CGBI. The site also features a rolling “testimonial” section on the homepage to help visitors get acquainted with various featured information.

We are also pleased to be featuring a web portal designed to meet the needs of our project hospitals in the Breastfeeding-Friendly Healthcare (BFHC) Project. This new portal will facilitate collaboration and synergy through sharing among project hospital teams and stakeholders. This site is secured with a “Members Only” login and allows members to share resources, participate in a discussion forum about successes and “lessons learned,” and have ready access to BFHC materials.

We continually strive to update the site to allow stakeholders to access current research, training, and programmatic endeavors. We invite you to explore the new features in detail, and to write to us to let us know what you think. Please check out our newly designed website (www.sph.unc.edu/breastfeeding) and provide your feedback to Brook Colgan at brook@email.unc.edu.

Reframing Birth & Breastfeeding Conference: Successful Synergy

By Paige Hall Smith, PhD, MSPH

Since 2005, the Breastfeeding and Feminism Symposium Series has brought together academic scholars, practitioners, activists, and policy makers from the United States and abroad who are interested in considering feminist perspectives to address breastfeeding as a health priority for women and children. The symposia stimulate a growth in public discourse and scholarship on the sociocultural, economic, and political constraints to women’s infant feeding choices. In addition, the symposia focus attention on how public health approaches to breastfeeding must go beyond promoting health to include serious consideration of the realities of women’s lives, which are complicated by structural inequities that feminists investigate through gender, race, and class analysis.

The 6th symposium held March 11-12 in Chapel Hill was co-sponsored with the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services. The partnership provided an opportunity to offer participants an even greater diversity of topics and speakers across two different tracks related to birth and breastfeeding. The conference highlighted the power of synergy between and among organizations supporting normal birth and breastfeeding. Birth and breastfeeding – two experiences that are intimately and biologically linked in women’s lives – are often discussed through the “lens” of the medical model of treatment, as illnesses to be cured, rather than normal and significant events along the reproductive continuum that need to be supported and protected.

“It was an honor to introduce this unique conference that created a synergistic movement toward our common goal: to improve birth and breastfeeding.” ~Ruth Wilf

Reframing Birth and Breastfeeding speakers Miriam Labbok and Eugene Declercq, and co-host Ruth Wilf.
Dear Colleagues and Friends of CGBI:

To quote from a well-known American musical, ‘June is busting out all over!’ While academia may be slowing down in the summer months, work in breastfeeding support seems to be on an upswing as we prepare for World Breastfeeding Week; the Breastfeeding Medicine journal-sponsored 3rd Breastfeeding Summit; presentations on the Mary Rose Tully Training Initiative for the International Lactation Consultant Association Conference; work with the USBC at the American Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors; and the AHRQ-funded Interstate Collaborative on Implementing the Ten Steps, to be held right here at UNC in the fall.

CGBI had a productive springtime. We cohosted the annual Breastfeeding and Feminism Symposium, this year in collaboration with the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services Annual Meeting. In addition, Emily Taylor spoke at the NC AWHONN and NC WIC Annual Update meetings; Brook Colgan and I lectured at the Lactation Consultant Comprehensive Update and the Triangle Breastfeeding Alliance Conference; Barbara Cameron presented her work on breastfeeding in child care via a CDC webinar; and I was honored to be a Distinguished Speaker at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics, sandwiched between Newt Gingrich and Joe Biden. In other exciting news, Brook has been invited to co-chair the Clinical Instruction Task Force of ILCA, IBLCE, and AARC with Jan Barger of Lactation Education Consultants; Nathan Nickel received the 2011 CGBI Scholarship for breastfeeding research; Ellen Chetwynd completed data collection on her ground-breaking survey on Lactation Consultant reimbursement, and Emily and I continue to serve as Technical Advisors to the Perinatal Quality Collaborative of North Carolina in ongoing work to increase exclusive breastfeeding during the maternity stay...and beyond!

On a more somber note, breastfeeding lost a good friend and a dedicated partner with the passing of Dr. Michael Latham. Emeritus Professor at Cornell University, Michael was a dedicated nutritionist for the world and an early and enthusiastic supporter of global breastfeeding policy. He was also a brave and kind friend, willing to throw himself into the fray when needed to defend those who could not defend themselves. As such, he was a father and hero to all vulnerable children of the world, and a fast friend to all mothers caught between the desire to breastfeed for the health of their children, and the pressures of the irresponsible marketing-related actions of the infant food industry.

With good wishes and hoping you have a wonderful summer (or winter for those ‘down-under’),

Miriam Labbok, Professor and Director, CGBI

The theme for World Breastfeeding Week this year is: TALK TO ME! BREASTFEEDING - A 3D EXPERIENCE

Focusing on engaging and mobilizing youth in intergenerational communications on breastfeeding policy, advocacy and support work. Co-chairing work with La Leche League international on the US Breastfeeding Committee, we are bringing attention to the many aspects of the Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding that address the need for improved communications.
Breastfeeding-Friendly Healthcare Update
by Nathan Nickel, MPH, PhD Candidate

The emphasis on improving hospital-based lactation support in Healthy People 2020 and the US Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding demonstrates the increasing attention to providing quality, evidence-based breastfeeding support in maternity centers. CGBI strives to be on the forefront of efforts to improve hospital-based breastfeeding support; one of the Institute’s primary activities in this arena is the Breastfeeding-Friendly Healthcare Project (BFHC). The BFHC is a multi-site operations research initiative designed to enhance breastfeeding support at hospitals serving low-wealth populations, and to study and improve strategies for implementing the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding in North Carolina hospitals, with an ultimate goal of ensuring all North Carolina moms receive high quality care. BFHC’s approach of working with multiple hospitals provides a unique opportunity to learn how varying contextual factors and hospital characteristics interact with implementation efforts.

Preliminary results suggest that several strategies may be useful across a variety of settings: buy-in by hospital leadership; formation of an influential multi-disciplinary taskforce; implementation of skills-based hands-on training; and, perhaps most importantly, the collection of, reporting of, and rounding on hospital breastfeeding rates to catalyze action. Other research-related products emerging include the evaluation of tools to assess hospital breastfeeding support and the study of organization-level implementation theory vis-à-vis implementation of the Ten Steps. These and other project results are actively informing State and national efforts to promote implementation of these practices.

BFHC hospitals have made great strides in improving support for breastfeeding mothers and infants since the start of the project. We expect to see even greater improvement when we complete the project assessment scheduled for the fall of 2011.

AAP’s Section on Breastfeeding NC Chapter
My role as Breastfeeding Coordinator
by Laura Sinai, MD, MSCE, FAAP

Support of the breastfeeding mother has been an integral part of my career since I became a neighborhood pediatrician after completing my residency and fellowship. I must admit that while I was an enthusiastic supporter from the beginning, my knowledge base was initially quite limited. I owe a huge debt to the countless mothers who taught me about normal breastfeeding.

I was very lucky to find myself practicing in an area where breastfeeding was the norm and doing everything possible to succeed was the general attitude of my patient population. Many of my earliest treatments would be considered "wrong" nowadays, but were completely in line with what I was taught at two of the finest children’s hospitals in the USA. Luckily, the local lactation consultants were readily available and happy to educate us physicians. And I must repeat that I owe the greatest thanks to the mothers themselves. Their collective experience and perseverance showed me over time what was possible, what was ideal, and that there is more than one right way to solve all sorts of problems. Listening to and observing hundreds of nursing mothers’ views and experiences on breastfeeding was the best education possible.

In 2004 I moved to North Carolina and joined a practice in a smaller city with a high unemployment rate. Breastfeeding rates were particularly low in the state as a whole, and especially so in my hospital and pediatric practice. With that, I realized that I had to do something more active than just supporting one nursing mother at a time. Continued on page 4
Breastfeeding and Feminism
Continued from page 1

Speakers from across the United States, Canada and England, in addition to UNCG and UNC-CH, addressed the many different "frames" that we use to conceptualize, discuss, and "market" breastfeeding including gender, intervention levels and systems changes, biology, risks and benefits, evidence, and rhetoric. The speakers also reinforced the importance of careful messaging around breastfeeding promotion and the need to move beyond language, images and concepts that send messages that "good mothers breastfeed" – breastfeeding is a health behavior not a moral choice. In addition, a number of speakers talked about representations of breastfeeding in the media (including newspapers, television and YouTube). The day after the symposium a number of people participated in meeting of the Gender Working Group of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, of which Dr. Smith, along with Renu Khanna of India, also present, are co-coordinators.

Carolina BEBES Update
By Kathy Parry, MPH Candidate

The BEBES students finished up the Spring semester with an exciting presentation from Cecilia Tomori about the dilemmas of nighttime breastfeeding. Additionally, informational surveys were placed in each of the 11 lactation rooms on campus. T-shirts and onesies will still be available over the summer as we prepare for a new cohort of students. BEBES is proud to congratulate our outgoing leaders who recently graduated: Ellen Chetwynd, Zahra Reynolds, Rachel Scheckter and Amy Valdar. We wish them the very best of luck in their continued unfolding as Maternal and Child Health professionals and thank them for their dedicated service in BEBES. For more information go to studentorgs.unc.edu/bebes/.

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Photo: BEBES at Brunch
Top: Kathy Parry, Amy Valdar, Dr. Miriam Labbok, Sarah Leff, and Jessica Phipps.
Bottom: Rachel Scheckter, Zahra Reynolds, and Ellen Chetwynd.

Associate’s Corner: My Role as Breastfeeding Coordinator
Continued from page 3

A longtime member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I became a member of the AAP Section on Breastfeeding. In 2007 I was thrilled at the invitation to become the North Carolina Chapter Breastfeeding Coordinator (CBC) of the AAP Section on Breastfeeding.

The role of the CBC encompasses nearly everything that could be considered breastfeeding support and advocacy. The support includes but is not limited to the following: 1) Advocacy – collaborating with state coalitions and fostering the understanding of breastfeeding as normative; 2) Education – sharing successful outpatient breastfeeding business models, disseminating coding tools to state pediatricians, encouraging pediatric residency programs to adopt the AAP breastfeeding education program, encouraging hospitals to adopt policies that support breastfeeding; and 3) Policy – working with local and state legislators to enact breastfeeding supportive legislation. In keeping with the above, I became the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition Chair in January 2010 for a two-year term and I frequently provide breastfeeding CME lectures throughout the state.

The current national political environment has been steadily turning more and more supportive of breastfeeding. While this country has a long way to go before we can say that breastfeeding is the most common form of infant feeding, we are making inroads to that end. I intend to continue my breastfeeding advocacy until breastfeeding is truly the norm in this country.