Breastfeeding and Feminism - 10th Anniversary

The Breastfeeding and Feminism International Conference (BFIC), co-hosted by founder Paige Hall Smith, PhD, Professor, UNC-Greensboro and Miriam Labbok, MD, MPH, IBCLC, Professor, UNC at Chapel Hill and CGBI director, was held March 19/20, 2015, in Chapel Hill, celebrating its 10th year with growing participation and enthusiasm.

This year’s theme, “Breastfeeding, Social Justice and Equity: Reflecting, Reclaiming, Re-Visioning” brought in 70 speakers, presenting in 33 panels, breakouts, and poster sessions, in addition to the amazing keynote speakers: Dr Camara Jones, MD, MPH, PhD, president-elect of the American Public Health Association, shared her “Gardener’s Tale” on health disparities; Alison Stuebe, MD, MSc, presented on the important issue of breastfeeding and postpartum depression; returning favorite Jacquelyn Wolf, PhD, spoke on breastfeeding as the great social equalizer; Clifton J Kenon, Jr., DNP, RN, IBCLC from USAID led in creative thinking about how to include the next generation of “lactivists”, and Quinn Gentry, PhD, MBA, founder and CEO of Messages of Empowerment Productions, LLC, gave the final word on breastfeeding motivation and Black Feminism. Each of these keynotes and other invited speakers, including Anayah Sangodele-Ayoka, graduate nurse-midwifery/nurse-practitioner, of MomsRising and Liz Brooks, JD, IBCLC, past president of ILCA, offered different perspectives on the past, present and future of breastfeeding, social justice and equity, informing and inspiring the participants.

A special program was presented in honor of the 10th anniversary. This included a presentation by Anita Woodley (pictured right), award-winning entertainer, journalist and visual artist, creator of the critically acclaimed “Mama Juggs” & “The Men In Me” Shows. She presented her Mama Jugs character in a conversation designed to address the conference theme. We were especially honored that the entire Board of ILCA, the international lactation consultant association, chose to attend and participate throughout the meeting.

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We were also pleased to launch a new book, “Breastfeeding: It Takes a Village”, published by Praeclarus Press, based on the presentations of BFIC 2013. We invite you to visit the BFIC Facebook and web pages: http://breastfeedingandfeminism.org/ and https://www.facebook.com/BreastfeedingAndFeminismInternationalConference.

Please join us next year, March 20-22, 2016, as we continue into our second decade.

PROJECT UPDATE

Donor Human Milk Banking

The issue of ‘Donor Human Milk Banking in the US’ was explored in depth by Emily Taylor and Miriam Labbok, along with many students and colleagues, with support from the W.K.Kellogg Foundation. This exploration included a background literature review, a large number of key informant interviews, a physician survey, and a cost-benefit analysis.

The result of this effort is a manuscript available in the Tools for Action section of the CGBI website: http://breastfeeding.sph.unc.edu/what-we-do/programs-and-initiatives/tools-for-action-donor-human-milk-banking/, and a separate publication on the cost benefit of using human milk in the NICU will be made available, once published.

A summary of findings and recommendations are also available at this site, arranged under four categories that highlight the fact that the importance of human milk, especially for the most vulnerable infants, is not as yet the norm among providers or the public; there are very limited research funds available at this time, despite the immediate need for data and targeted analyses to inform action; the level of involvement of the federal government in human milk banking is controversial, however, national oversight and/or involvement is recommended; and there are several program issues that might be further explored to increase availability of human milk.

EMPower Breastfeeding:
Enhancing Maternity Practices Update

There are many exciting updates to share about the EMPower Breastfeeding initiative. In April, the EMPower team met in Chapel Hill to solidify project plans, share knowledge, and form relationships in preparation for the extensive and important work that lies ahead. This included members from the CDC, Abt Associates, Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute, Center for Public Health Quality (CPHQ), as well as numerous physician champions from across the country. Baby-Friendly USA provided training to the entire team on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria.

Coaches Julia Bourg and Sue Butts-Dion at a recent visit to an EMPower hospital.
Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It is the time of the year, yet again, when preparations for World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) are beginning in earnest. WBW has been celebrated for over 20 years, catalyzing continuing attention to the importance of breastfeeding protection, promotion and support. This event is held either the first week in August, to commemorate the Innocenti Declaration of 1990, or the first week in October, frequently to ensure that it happens at a time when media coverage may be more readily available and when populations are not away on their summer holidays.

This year, WBW is dedicated to Innocenti Declaration’s 4th operational target: Maternity Protection. The slogan is Breastfeeding and Work: Making it Work! Be sure to start planning now to address this important issue in your workplace. The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) created this annual celebration and offers downloadable materials at: http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/. Materials are available for download in multiple languages. All that WABA requests in exchange is that you let them know what you are planning to do, and share any stories about your organization’s journey. You can locate an activity pledge form for download at the same site.

As things slow down for the summer in many organizations, CGBI finds itself in acceleration mode. The EMPower project is starting its hospital support activities towards achievement of Baby-Friendly designation, and, while one W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) project is winding down, another is starting up, along with an interesting new project supported by the Kate B Reynolds Foundation in Forsyth County. The new WKKF project will increasingly support replication and sustainable scale up of our breastfeeding-friendly efforts, and the work in Forsyth County allows us to support early childhood development among all populations through optimal breastfeeding and child-responsive feeding from birth.

On the global front, CGBI has been pleased to have been invited to be an active participant in the UNICEF effort to revitalize breastfeeding support, most recently through the global Breastfeeding Advocacy Initiative (BAI). Kathy Parry and I attended the first official meeting of this group at UNICEF on April 29-30, and are involved in follow up activities. In addition, we both were invited speakers at the CORE Group meeting held on April 12-16. The concept of combining support for breastfeeding and for complementary feeding by educating infant and young child care-takers on feeding and satiety cues was extremely well received. Our thanks to TOPS for their support for the work to ensure that both breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary feeding programs include special attention to learning and respecting the child’s “cues” and needs for response from the caretaker.

One special treat for me in this quarter was to renew contact with so many La Leche League colleagues here, on the west coast, and globally as LLLI is also revitalizing and stepping up to address new challenges. Keep up the exciting work!

Best wishes,

Miriam
Jay Sharma, lawyer and consultant, is now the Executive Director of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, or WABA. WABA was formed on 14 February, 1991, and is a global network of organizations and individuals who believe breastfeeding is the right of all children and mothers and who dedicate themselves to protect, promote and support this right. WABA acts on the Innocenti Declaration and works in close liaison with UNICEF. WABA is well known for the development and continued support for the annual World Breastfeeding Week, a world-wide call to action to support breastfeeding globally and in local communities everywhere. This year's theme is in support of maternity protection: “Breastfeeding and Work: Let’s Make it Work!” (Read more in the Letter from the Director)

In his role at WABA, Jay is responsible for resource mobilization and leads the management team in the areas of overall policy and program development, WABA governance, administration and financial management. He is currently working to help WABA reach a wider audience through the use of social and other media, such as videos. He also works to cultivate partnerships and alliances that are contemporary, relevant and outcome driven.

Jay was born in Penang, Malaysia, and has returned to the place of his birth to join the WABA team after living in the UK for over 30 years. He was in attendance as one of several WABA representatives at the recent meeting of UNICEF’s new Global Breastfeeding Advocacy Initiative.

**EMPower Update**
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In May, the team began notifying hospitals of their selection into the EMPower Breastfeeding initiative. All hospitals participating in EMPower will be announced on the EMPowerbreastfeeding.org website in early July.

CGBI and CPHQ began Coach Visits in June and will continue to do so throughout the upcoming months. The visits to date have been exciting and productive, and the coaches are very much looking forward to meeting hospital teams. They will provide customized technical assistance to help maternity centers and birthing facilities implement evidenced-based practices, promoting optimal and equitable breastfeeding support and outcomes, nationwide. The ultimate goal for all is the achievement of the US Baby-Friendly Designation.
Alumni Spotlight:
Rebecca Costello, MPH, IBCLC

A proud native of Ithaca, NY, Rebecca studied public health and anthropology at Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. She wrote her senior thesis on the role of breastfeeding in public health, which sparked an interest in maternal and child health. After graduating, she lived and worked in various places including Colorado, Hawaii and New York City before moving to North Carolina in 2008 to earn her Master’s in Public Health within the department of Maternal and Child Health at UNC-Chapel Hill, graduating in 2010. She helped stimulate the development of the Mary Rose Tully Training Initiative and was in the first class, also completed in 2010. Following this she was hired as the first night shift lactation consultant at UNC Hospitals, and worked full-time there through 2013.

Rebecca became the new coordinator of lactation services at Women’s Birth and Wellness Center (WBWC) in Chapel Hill in January, 2014. She both sees patients in WBWC’s outpatient lactation clinic, and oversees efforts to expand and strengthen breastfeeding support at WBWC and in the wider community. Through a grant awarded to the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition, Rebecca’s role at WBWC now also includes coordinating a program to bring increased peer and professional support to African-American moms in Durham. She has also collaborated with CGBI to produce a version of Ready, Set, Baby customized to birth centers.

Carolina BEBES:
Birth and Breastfeeding: Evidence Based Education and Support

This spring, BEBES collaborated with UNC’s Student Wellness to hold Reproductive Health Trivia Night at Steel String Craft Brewery in Carrboro, NC. The event raised funds for the organization’s scholarship fund for Mary Rose Tully Training Initiative students. BEBES was able to award $450 in scholarships to help cover exam fees for students who will be taking the IBLCE exam this July.

BEBES congratulates its members who graduated this spring, especially its Executive Board members: Jeniece Alvey, Holly Krohn, Jaimie Lea, Katie Mitchell and Jennifer Schroeder. We look forward to seeing what great things our graduates accomplish in the coming years, and we are excited to welcome new leadership to BEBES: Nicole Carbone and Paige Schildkamp will be taking on the positions of Co-Presidents, and Joanna Percher will be the new BEBES Treasurer.

The BEBES leadership is currently planning projects for the coming year. Please be in touch with ideas for how BEBES can collaborate with you on your organizations’ projects or initiatives. uncbebes@gmail.com.
Publications:


Blogs:

Labbok, MH. Caretakers’ rights to support what is best for their family. April 18, 2015. Accessed online: http://www.breastfeeding4health.com/


Presentations:


Anderson KL. Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care. NC Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) Regulatory Section Spring Trainings: North Central Regional Training, Raleigh, NC. April 8, 2015; Western Regional Training. Hickory, NC, April 16, 2015; South Central Regional Training. Pine Hurst, NC, April 22, 2015; Eastern Regional Training. Rocky Mount, NC, April 28, 2015.


Houk K, Chetwynd E, Sullivan C. Advocacy for IBCLC Care: A Toolkit for Action Based on Cost
We welcome your feedback. Please send your comments or suggestions regarding Breastfeeding Exclusive to the editor at kathyparry@unc.edu

Be In Touch!

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