Breastfeeding Marketing: The New Environment

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Updating the USDA National Breastfeeding Campaign: Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding
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1. Breastfeeding has increasingly become the norm.
   - Rates at 6 months have doubled since 1997
   - Majority of WIC mothers breastfeed
National Breastfeeding Trends

Year

Percent Breastfeeding

Early postpartum
At 6 months
At 12 months
Exclusive at 6 mo

1997 Loving Support Campaign launched


Data Source: Pre-1999 – Ross Mothers’ Survey
1999-present – CDC National Immunization Survey
Breastfeeding Trends in WIC

Percent Breastfeeding

Year

Early postpartum
At 6 months
At 12 months

1997 Loving Support Campaign launched

Healthy People 2010 Goals

Data Source: Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System
2. The environment to support breastfeeding has improved considerably.
Inappropriate Maternity Care Practices

Employers with lactation accommodations

Number of IBCLCs

Employment legislation

Number of Baby Friendly Hospitals
3. But we still struggle with the same barriers we have for the last 25 years.
Surgeon General’s Workshop on Breastfeeding, 1984

- Recommendations
  - World of work
  - Public education
  - Professional education
  - Health-care system
  - Support services
  - Research
4. In spite of breastfeeding campaigns and attention in the media, beliefs about breastfeeding have not changed much.
Public attitudes regarding breastfeeding

- Infant formula is as good as breast milk
- I am comfortable when mothers breastfeed their babies near me in a public place, such as a shopping center, bus station, etc.
- Mothers who breastfeed should do so in private places only

Source: Healthstyles, 1999-2007
Effect of National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign on Beliefs about Breastfeeding

If a child is not breastfed, she/he will be more likely to get ear infections.
If a child is not breastfed, she/he will be more likely to get respiratory infections, such as...
If a child is not breastfed, she/he will be more likely to become overweight.
If a child is not breastfed, she/he will be more likely to get diarrhea.

Babies should be breastfed at least for the first 6 months.

Source: Healthstyles, 2003, 2005
5. How breastfeeding messages are framed is more important than the content of the message.
Breastfeeding frames in the media

- **The Good Mother**
  - Good mothers breastfeed their babies

- **Nature vs. Modernity**
  - It’s a natural process
  - Research shows that breast milk is the best food...

- **Experts vs. Mom**
  - Moms need experts to learn how to hold the baby and initiate the flow of milk

Source: Berkeley Media Studies Group: Talking about Breastfeeding: Why the Health Argument Isn’t Enough
Recommended frames

- Successful Breastfeeding Requires Support
- Breastfeeding Benefits Women’s Health
- Well Supported Breastfeeding Brings Well-being to All

Source: Berkeley Media Studies Group: Talking about Breastfeeding: Why the Health Argument Isn’t Enough
6. Effective marketing must appeal to emotions, experiences, motivations, not just information.

- Information about health rarely changes behavior.
7. Communication channels have changed dramatically

- Technology dependency
- Ubiquity of cell-phones/texting
- Learning through YouTube
- Saturation with advertising/messages
- “Democratization” of information
8. Millennials want to be “unique”

- Personalized messages
- Diversity
- Multi-dimensional
- Involved in communication process
WIC/non-WIC Gap in Breastfeeding

Data Source: CDC National Immunization Survey
Many states have passed legislation on breastfeeding accommodations.

Employment legislation

Source: La Leche League, 2009
Employers with lactation accommodations

Most states protect the right to breastfeed in public or exempt breastfeeding from indecency laws.
Physician statements on breastfeeding

- Agree that "The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh the difficulties or inconvenience"
- Agree that "Almost any mothers can be successful"
- Agree that "Pediatricians have little influence on mothers"
- Agree that "Formula fed babies are just as healthy as breastfed babies"
- Recommend exclusive breastfeeding

Source: Feldman-Winter et al., 2008
Inappropriate Maternity Care Practices

- Initiation after 1st hour
- Supplemented
- No rooming in
- Not BF on demand
- Use of pacifiers

Source: DiGirolamo et al., 2001 & 2008
Number of Baby Friendly Hospitals

Source: Baby Friendly USA, 2009
Number of IBCLCs

Source: IBLCE, 2009
Thank you!

www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding