

Title:

A Qualitative Description of WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Support

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References:

Cheng, T.L. and Goodman, E. (2015). Race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in research on child health. *Pediatrics*, 135, e225-e237. doi: 10.1542/peds.2014-3109. Hildebrand, D. A., McCarthy, P., Tipton, D., Merriman, C., Schrank, M., & Newport, M. Innovative use of influential prenatal counseling may improve breastfeeding initiation rates among WIC participants (2014). *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 46(6), 458-466. doi:10.1016/j.jneb.2014.05.005 Jolly, K., Ingram, L., Freemantle, N., Khan, K., Chambers, J., Hamburger, R.,... MacArthur, C. (2012). Effect of a peer support service on breastfeeding continuation in the UK: A randomised controlled trial. *Midwifery*. 28 (6), 740-745. doi: 10.1016/j.midw.2011.08.005

Abstract Summary:

Breastfeeding peer counselor programs have been successful in increasing breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. However, factors contributing to a counselor's success, particularly in the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) setting, has not been widely explored. We will present the results of our study regarding WIC breastfeeding peer counselors' experiences in providing breastfeeding support to women and infants.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to identify common themes emergent in successful breastfeeding peer counselors practice	The five emergent themes from the data analysis will be described: 1. Passionate empowerment 2. Whole Woman 3. Shared Experience 4. Helping 5. Uplifting
The learner will be able to describe Power Of Influence theory (POI) and its contributing role in breastfeeding peer counselors' success	Breastfeeding Peer Counselors' use of Power of Influence theory will be described: - influence strategy training -reciprocation, scarcity, consistency, liking, authority -1.5x more likely to breastfeed after POI

Abstract Text:

Breastfeeding peer counselor programs have been successful in increasing breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. However, factors contributing to a counselor's success, particularly in the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) setting, have not been widely explored. A qualitative descriptive study was conducted in which breastfeeding peer counselors from Dallas (WIC) were interviewed about how they provide support to mothers. The interviews were transcribed and inductive content analysis was used to analyze the transcripts using the procedure outlined by Graneheim and Lundman (2003). Transcripts of the interviews and observations were the unit of analysis. Meaning unit extraction, coding, and theme creation was a collaborative effort of three undergraduate honors nursing students and two instructor mentors. The analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that Breastfeeding peer counselors are successful because they passionately empower through shared experience by acknowledging the whole woman, helping, and uplifting. The five themes that were identified from the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor interview data included: *passionate empowerment, shared experience, acknowledgement of the whole woman, helping, and uplifting*. The five themes identified from the interview data demonstrate the elements of the Power of Influence (POI) program (Hildebrand et al., 2014). The breastfeeding peer counselors did not talk about how many women they led to breastfeeding initiation or how long each mom breastfed; rather, they shared the times when they made emotional connections with mothers. They attributed quantitative measures of success to the qualitative efforts of building hope, trust and confidence in the women they serve and mentor. The findings of this study provide support for the implementation and expansion of POI principles and strategies widely employed by breastfeeding peer counselors. POI principles and strategies can be enhanced by adding the concepts of building hope, trust and confidence through exhibiting passion, acknowledging the whole woman, sharing experience, helping, and uplifting. POI principles and strategies provide guidance for physical presence and influence, but may lack guidance on strategies to build the emotional connections that the peer counselors attributed to their success with mentoring mothers.