

COUNSELLING & BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

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INTRODUCTION

To be successful breastfeeding women need practical help and support from all quarter's specially health care providers. .This means women needs accurate information about optimal infant and young child feeding and timely counseling. Lancet in 2008 (earlier evidence) has provided unequivocal scientific evidence that *'breast feeding promotion'* could work through one to one or group counseling and no other method like mass media promotion are effective in increasing early and exclusive breast feeding rates.

COUNSELING Vs ADVISING

Counseling is a way of working with people in which you understand how they feel , and help them to decide what to do in a different situation like Breastfeeding. Meaning when you counsel a mother , you do not tell her what to do, you help her to decide what is best for her. You listen to her, try to understand how she feels. You help her to develop confidence, so that she remains control of her Situation.

Advising means when you advice someone , you may tell the person, what you think he or she should do.

Who will be the counselor

Health workers who care for the mother and young children in maternity facilities, hospitals and health centre. They are midwives, community health nurses, pediatric nurses and doctors who work in periphery. Also the frontline workers- AWW, ANMS, Helpers, SHGS, ASHA, TBA etc.

COUNSELLING SKILLS

1. Listening :
2. Learning
3. Building confidence
4. Giving support and checking understanding

Listening & Learning skills

- Use helpful nonverbal communication
- Ask open questions
- Use responses and gesture which show interest
- Reflect back what the mother says
- Empathize –show that you understand how she feels
- Avoid words which sound judging

SKILL 1-Use Non-Verbal Communication

Use **nonverbal communication**:-means showing ,attitude through posture,expression, gesture everything except through speaking. It will makes mother to feel that you are interested in her, and it will help her to talk to you.

Some useful verbal communications:-

- Sit by the side of the mother
- Maintain appropriate distance
- During discussion keep attention towards mother (eye to eye contact)
- Remove barriers
- Give time to listen to her
- Show attention towards mother and her baby

SKILL 2 : ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

Open question are very helpful. In answering their mother will give some .more information. usually it start with how? What? Where? Why?

For example - How breast feeding is going for you ?

Closed question- Have you breastfeed your baby. Answer-yes/ no

SKILL 3: USE RESPONSES AND GESTURES THAT SHOWS INTEREST

It will encourage the mother to talk more.
gesture- nodding the head, smiling, say
Aa, haha

This shows a mother that you are also
interested in her.

SKILL 4: REFLECT BACK WHAT THE MOTHER SAYS-

Means –repeating back what a mother has said to you. It shows that you have heard and encourage her to say more.

Example- mother says- My baby was crying too much last night.

You could say- Your baby keep you awake crying all night.

SKILL 5: EMPATHIZE

Identify mothers feeling after she has said how she feel.

Example-mother says- My baby want to feed very often and it makes me feel so tired.

Empathize- You are feeling very tired all the time then?

SKILL 6: TRY TO AVOID- JUDJEMENTAL WORD

Right, wrong, well, badly, good enough, properly

If you used these words too much make a mother feel that she is wrong or there is something wrong with the baby.-

- Judging question-Do you have any problem during breastfeeding.

Non judging question-How is breastfeeding going for you.

Remember: Good communication skills can facilitate good breast feeding by mother.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE, GIVING SUPPORT AND CHECKING UNDERSTANDING

It is necessary that the breast feeding mother should have confidence in herself. Confidence ensure success in breast feeding . In primigravida, they often loses confidence resulting in accepting pressure from the family and friends ,for starting artificial feed the baby. So counselor must help her to rebuild her confidence to resist these pressure.

Confidence \$ support skills

- Accept what a mother thinks \$ feel
- Recognise & praise what a mother & baby doing right
- Give practical help
- Give relevant information \$ check understanding
- Use simple language
- Make one or two suggestions, not commands

: STEPS OF BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN MOTHER

Skill-1 Accept what she feels or thinks.

Example- I give him water because days are warm

Acceptance-Do you feel sometimes baby needs water.

SKILL2: RECOGNISE AND PRAISE THE RIGHT THINGS SHE DOES FOR HER BABY

If you praise the mother in front of others it encourages the mother and inspires others. Then if you give a suggestion she will accept it.

Example: Mother says-my child is 15 months old and still breastfeeding. She also eats luthuri, tea, bread etc.

Praise word : It is good that you are still breastfeeding your child and also giving the complementary food.

SKILL 3: GIVE PRACTICAL HELP

Practical help given at the appropriate time increases confidence of the mother.

For example: Mother says- No I have not breastfeed my baby yet, my breast are empty and it is too painful to sit up.

Practical help: Let me make you more comfortable. you provide a pillow or chair to her. Give her a drink.

SKILL 4: GIVE RELEVANT INFORMATION AND CHECK UNDERSTANDING

- Give information which is relevant to her situation now, not which is relevant after few weeks.
- Give in the positive way. It does not sound critical or make the mother to think that she has done something wrong.
- Until you have built the mother confidence, by accepting what she says and praising what she does well, don't give new information or correct a mistaken ideas.

Example- Sonu 2mo wants to feed so often these days- he is suddenly very hungry- I think I don't have enough milk.

Response 1 - Sonu is growing fast . Healthy babies have these hungry times when they grow fast . Sonu's growth chart shows that he is getting all the Breast milk that he needs. He will settle in a few days.

Response 2 – Sonu is growing well. Don't worry about breast milk supply. It is good to give breast feeding exclusively for 6 months and then you can start complementary feeding.

SKILL 5- USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE

- Don't use scientific terms or technical statement
 1. Exclusive breast feeding should be done upto 6 months of age.
 2. The baby does not need anything other than breast milk till he is 6 months old

SKILL 6- GIVE SUGGESTION INSTEAD OF COMMANDS

- Example 1- Feed your baby by cup.
You may feed your baby by cup.
- 2. You must feed your baby 10 times a day
It might help if you feed your baby more often

Remember- Building confidence of the mother is the key to successful breastfeeding

BREAST FEEDING SUPPORT

This year world breastfeeding week theme- “ Breast feeding support – close to mothers” . It highlights breast feeding peer counseling. A community support system for mother is essential when the mother not visiting the health care facility. Continued support to sustain breast feeding can be provided by variety of ways.

1. Peer counseling programme is cost effective , highly productive way to reach a larger number of mothers more frequently.

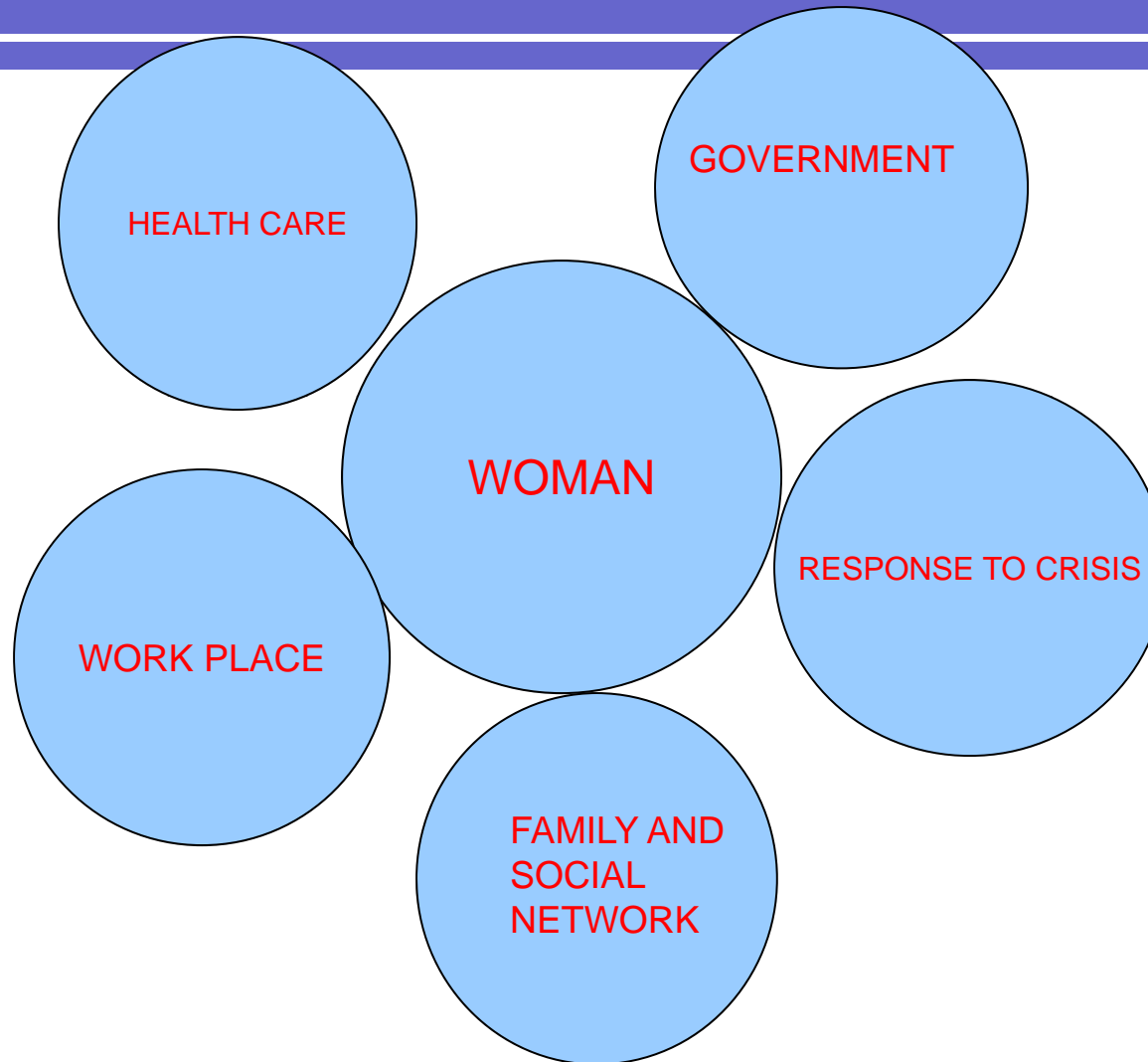
2. Peer counselor can be anybody from the community. Who is trained to learn to support mothers.

3. Trained peer counselor must be readily available in the Community. So that mother can contact immediately if she has problem or issues with breast feeding

CIRCLES OF SUPPORTS

- 5 circles of support
 1. Family and social network
 2. Health care
 3. Workplace and employment
 4. Government/ Legislation
 5. Response to crisis or emergency

Five circles of supports



Women at the centre circle

1. **Women** are in the centre because **presence or absence** of support **impact them directly**.
2. **Mothers** are considered **active participants** in the support dynamic both provider and recipient (By global initiative for mother support 2007)
3. A successful breastfeeding mother.

Family and social network

1. Family members, husband/ father/partner/and friends composed the mothers immediate and continuous support network.
 - What family and friends can do—
 - Provide emotional support and practical help like delivered groceries, cook meals, clean the house
 - Take care of other siblings
 - Listen and be supportive. Boost mother's confidence in breastfeeding

What the husband can do

- Help around the house
- Reduce stress for his partner.
- Care for the baby other than feeding like – changing the diaper, give bath, go for walk

Social network

- Social support include community support at the market place, within religious context, at neiberhood park.
- Support during pregnancy , reduce stress
- Support during labour and birth empowers the mother
- Social support increases the mother's confidence in her ability to breast feed.

Health care system

This include multitude of opportunities to support breastfeeding

1. Mother friendly antenatal care
2. Care during labour and baby
3. Care during postpartum period
4. Postnatal care

That facilitate bonding and optimal infant feeding.

5. Health worker who are trained in counseling skills support mothers before and after birth.

Workplace and employment

- Working women face challenges and need support to succeed at working and breastfeeding.
- Employer can provide – maternity leave, breastfeeding area and milk storage space in work place

GOVERNMENT /LEGISLATION

1. Legislation that combats aggressive marketing of breast milk substitutes.
2. Enact paid maternity leave.

Response to **crisis** or **emergency**

- This circle represents the need for support if women finds herself in an unexpected and or serious situation with little control
- Situation that require special planning and support are-
- Natural disasters
- Refugee camps
- Divorce proceedings
- Critical illness of mother or baby
- Living in a area of high prevalence of HIV

How to establish community breastfeeding support

- Frontline workers are involved to establish a community breastfeeding support
- This group meets every 1-4 weeks and discusses about breastfeeding advantages.
- They share experiences, encourage each other & discuss practical ideas.
- The group needs a peer counselor who trains them & corrects the mistaken ideas.

- The group needs up to date materials from health workers to educate themselves about breastfeeding.
- Successful breastfeeding mothers in this group can also help each other at other time.
- They can also visit each other at their place when they are worried or depressed & solved the mothers problem

CONCLUSION

- All pregnant women & lactating mothers need accurate information, encouragement & help/assistance to succeed in optimal breastfeeding. They need someone to answer their questions & solve their problems during breastfeeding. For this all the frontline workers & health care providers must acquire the skills in IYCF counseling & management.



THANK YOU