



Promotion of Lactation in a Digital World

Subject

Promotion of Lactation
in a Digital World

Presenter

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Abstract

The past decade has seen a rapid change in health promotion. Breast/chestfeeding promotion has not been part of these advances. Social media has changed how families access lactation information and how health providers share information. The global pandemic has continued to change health promotion, as most families have relied on technology for communication and access to healthcare. Unfortunately, formula companies have been at the forefront of using social media to promote their agenda for marketing artificial milk, against the recommendation of the WHO International Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Many healthcare providers wish to utilize social media to engage, educate, inform, and interact with their families. However, the immediate need to adopt online technology for virtual health and utilize social media for health promotion has left some professionals feeling challenged by the need to ramp up their technical abilities. Additionally, due to a lack of distinct guidelines and misunderstanding regarding privacy practices with social media, many healthcare providers are unknowingly sharing personal and private healthcare information. This presentation offers perspective on how breast/chestfeeding promotion is changing, the most common social media platforms for lactation, an exploration of how parents are using social media, how artificial milk companies are using social media, and how healthcare professionals can use social media effectively and ethically.



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Tips

- 5.04 Billion social media users around the globe.
- "Every minute of the day, more than 500 h of YouTube videos are uploaded, 66,000 Instagram and 243,000 Facebook photos are posted and around 350,000 tweets are sent." Moukarzel et al. 2020
- The amount of marketing dollars has rapidly increased in social media from 51.3 BILLION in 2017 to more than 207 Billion dollars in 2023. It quadrupled in 6 years. The top ad spend is on Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Linked In.
- Save the Children analysis reveals that six companies spend \$45 on marketing for each baby born worldwide - amounting to \$6.5 billion annually. ~Save the Children, 2018
- Be aware of how much data companies are farming from you when you sign up for information or "free" things. Example: They process: Personal details: your name; username or login details; password; areas or topics of interest; information provided in response to quizzes or surveys, Demographic information such as your gender; age/date of birth; nationality; job title, company information, education, work experience, and other professional information, etc. They are processing a lot of your information. These are digital vitamins. They nourish the marketing machine. But I still have not finished; they also processed your contact details and public social media handles. Your location data describes the precise location of where you are, your Purchase and payment details, your Employer details, and your Views and opinions. Bonus: They often sell your metadata to other companies.
- Digital Fingerprints and Digital Phenotypes - Tracking your Sleep/Exercise/Do Online
- Geofencing as a strategy
- Geofencing has been proven to be an effective strategy for breast/chestfeeding promotion. At the 2020 APHA conference, Billups et al. shared their geofencing strategy to increase black breastfeeding rates within the country of San Diego. They described exclusive breastfeeding rates at three months at 43% for white women and only 25% for black women. This is due to systemic racism, barriers to access and support, and inequitable social and medical systems. Their campaign was called It's Only Natural, and used web-enabled cookies to target specific populations. The marketing firm they hired expected a click-through rate of 0.6%, but the actual click-through rate was 1.2%, twice what was anticipated. The highest engagement was women in the 21-31 age range who identified as either parents and/or game lovers. Ultimately, the campaign had more than 1.5 million impressions in a two-month period, resulting in 18,854 landings on the Its Only Natural website. This is an example of how new technology, like geofencing, can be used to promote the breast/chestfeeding public health agenda successfully.



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- Counselling of Women to Improve Breastfeeding Practice, WHO. "There has been too much 'telling mothers to breastfeed' and 'telling mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding' but not enough emotional and practical support to enable and empower mothers to breastfeed." This is key. We need to change our message and how we approach promotion. It is not just about encouraging breast/chestfeeding; it is about leveling the playing field and ensuring the support is available and accessible. <https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/guidelines/counselling-women-improve-bf-practices/en/>
- Gen Z - Prefer Snapchat, Instagram, You YouTube; Watch 3.4 hours of SM video a day; 8-second attention span; 41% influenced by Influencers
- Millennials -Prefer Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram; Watch 2.4 hours of video a day; 12-second attention span; 38% influenced by Influencers
- Lupton et al., 2017, "You can do it any time, you don't have to do small talk, you just go—boom—and you just get the answer. And it's just a bit faster, and you can turn it off when you want."
- Social Marketing - audience benefit/target behavior/essence
- Influential Societal Forces: family and friends/healthcare providers/employers/formula industry/legislators
- Most parents do not share what they learn on the internet with HCPs
- What are the barriers we are working against: •Oppression•Racism in healthcare and access•Negative attitudes•Artificial milk marketing•Health Care provider misinformation••Lack of positive b/cf policies
- WIC Lactation Texting Program, highly used and liked by parents and professionals
- More than one-third of the users (n = 1,324, 34%) in the network predominantly shared, mentioned, or replied to others about pornographic content (PC) that sexualized breastfeeding
- Most lactation info shared on Twitter, 35.3% is for selling products, followed by 15.2 sharing research.
- Alianmoghaddam et al., 2019 found
 - Need reliable online infant feeding information
 - Smartphone apps can be a good option for promoting breast/chestfeeding
 - Information is accessed through weak ties among breastfeeding mothers on Facebook,
 - Utility of geographically distant infant feeding support via Skype.
- Black et al. found that special media breastfeeding groups: Women's use of the group increased self-efficacy, which was facilitated by the group's ability to provide education, a sense of community, the normalization of breastfeeding, easy access, and the extension of their breastfeeding goals.



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- This study by Robinson et al. wanted to see how online support impacted the black breastfeeding community. In particular, they looked at families using Facebook as support. The research found that, for the most part, online support was perceived to have a positive impact. Many parents stated that the Facebook groups helped them feel a sense of community and led to their own empowerment for breastfeeding and caring for their children. It was also noted that the Facebook groups helped shift their perception of breastfeeding and impacted their decisions around breastfeeding; in fact, some people reported that they felt an almost familial-like bond with the other members of the Facebook group. Here, we see social media as fostering community and connection.
- Using Social Media for Lactation Promotion
 - Stories
 - Make them laugh
 - Inspire them
 - Give them tips
- Check with your org: Look to your certifying organization and licensing board for social media clauses.

Questions?

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Notes



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