

Community Health Workers Shared their Insights from Breastfeeding Training

The trained community health workers shared their learning from the breastfeeding training they received. Their comments are presented under the training modules as follows:

Breastfeeding as a Key Child Health, Development and Survival

1. I understand that breastfeeding helps to develop a future intelligent workforce able to contribute to the country's economy.
2. I learnt about how breastfeeding contributes to reducing major causes of death of children including diarrhea and respiratory diseases.
3. I learnt that breastfeeding prevents malnutrition, and it can contribute to reducing stunting; a condition that affects the proper growth and development of children.
4. I understand that giving other foods to babies before the age of 6 months contributes to health issues such as diarrhea, pneumonia, and malnutrition.



Breastfeeding Counselling and Communication Skills

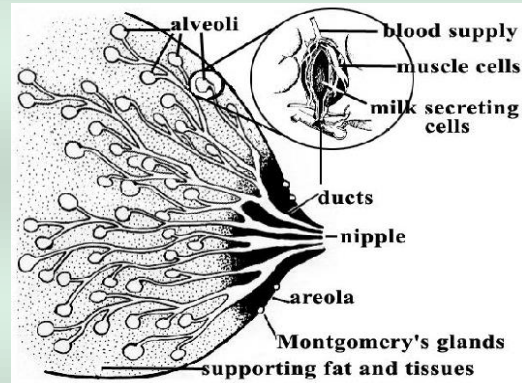
1. I have learnt how to counsel mom effectively through communication and sharing during the breastfeeding training.
2. I now understand that education, knowledge, and support are very important in breastfeeding. We need to encourage moms to breastfeed. Where a cultural practice is not harmful to mom or baby, we should not discourage moms from practicing them.
3. I have insight into what La Leche League is doing by providing breastfeeding support to moms.
4. I learnt that crying is part of babies' behaviour and that it is not only hunger that makes babies cry. Therefore, moms must be able to identify baby's needs.
5. Moms need to identify the baby's cues for feeding and not wait for the baby to cry before feeding the baby, so the baby can grow and develop well.



Breastmilk composition & Physiology of Breastfeeding

1. I learnt about the importance of colostrum in supporting the immune system of the baby. Also, I understand the difference between foremilk and mature milk.

- I understand from the training that exclusive breastfeeding provides all the nutrients and fluid the babies need in the first 6 months of their life. Babies should receive complementary foods after 6 months of their life.
- The understanding that I now have about the composition of breast milk will inspire me in supporting moms for breastfeeding. From the training, I realised that breastmilk is unique to meet the food and nutrient needs of the baby.
- I understand that breastmilk contains antibodies that help the baby to fight off viruses and harmful bacteria.
- I now have a good understanding of the difference between breastmilk and formula milk, hence the numerous benefits of breastmilk over formula milk for feeding babies.
- I learnt that breastfeeding frequently is good. That breastmilk supply depends on the removal of milk from the breast - just like demand and supply. The more the mom breastfeeds the more milk will be produced.
- I learnt that babies' facial shape is such that they can breastfeed effectively.



Early initiation of Breastfeeding

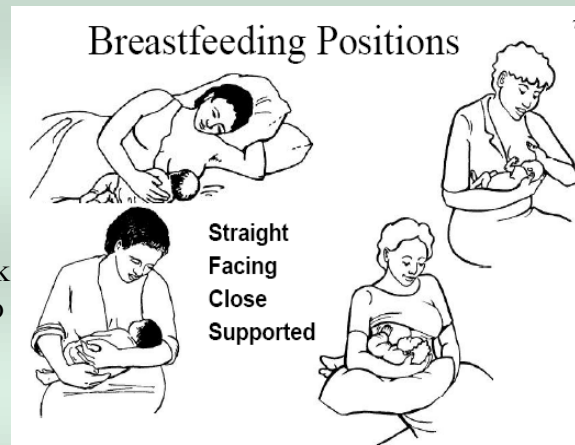
- I understand that the first milk, colostrum is rich in nutrients and antibodies that help to protect the baby from infection.
- I understand that skin to skin contact helps good development for the baby and bonding for both mom and baby.
- I now know what it means to do exclusive breastfeeding. I understand that when doing exclusive breastfeeding, mom gives breastmilk only to her baby for the first 6 months, does not give the baby any medicine unless recommended by the health care professionals.



Supporting Continued Breastfeeding

- I learnt that moms and other family members must show love and care for the baby because this also enhances the baby's psychological development.
- It is very gratifying to know that breastfeeding is free and does not cost the family anything but care for the mom. This can be a motivation for moms to breastfeed their babies and for the families to provide support.
- I have the understanding that mom can continue to breastfeed the first child while nursing the new baby if she does not have any health challenge and she wishes to do so.

4. I have learnt about proper breastfeeding position, and how to help mom to feel comfortable to continue to breastfeed.
5. I have learnt about how to hand express breast milk and to help moms to do it comfortably by sitting on a comfortable seat and having some privacy. Also, how to safely store the milk and bring the milk back to a safe temperature for the baby to drink.
6. I learnt that it is important to help moms to be comfortable and relaxed when breastfeeding.
7. It is important that babies should be fed regularly and whenever they want to feed. Babies should not be timed to feed.
8. I understand that complementary foods to be given to babies after 6 months must be of good quality to help the baby to grow and develop well.
9. I learnt that it is important to help moms know that when expressing breastmilk, they must make sure that her hands and the container she puts milk into are clean to prevent contamination of the breastmilk.
10. I now understand why there is no need to give water to babies before the age of six months. It is because breastmilk contains 87% water, therefore there is no need to fill the baby's small stomach with plain water when they can get it from the breastmilk.
11. I have learnt about the danger of too early and late complementary feeding for the baby. It will hamper the growth and development of the baby.
12. I have learnt how to identify if a baby is suckling correctly or not.
13. I now understand how to guide a mom to achieve good attachment in breastfeeding. nipple should be pointing to the nose, baby's mouth should be wide open, gently slide the nipple into baby's mouth, most of the areola should be inside the baby's mouth.



Breastfeeding in Special Circumstances

1. From the training, I got to understand the various common problems in breastfeeding such as engorged breasts, mastitis, sore nipple, and candida. Now I know how engorged breasts can be treated to prevent complications and establish milk flow again.
2. From the training, I learnt that good attachment helps the baby to suckle well, and poor attachment causes pain and could lead to other common breastfeeding problems such as grazed or sore nipple.
3. I learnt that HIV positive moms can breastfeed exclusively and continued breastfeeding with complementary feeding up to 2 years as long as the mom is following the recommended anti-retroviral protocols.



Creating a Culture for Protecting, Promoting & Supporting Breastfeeding

1. I now have a better understanding of how moms should hold the infant tummy to tummy, to get a good position for the baby to be able to feed well. To help moms achieve this we can observe mom breastfeed to see if she is doing it correctly or not.
2. I understand that breastfeeding has many benefits to moms also, including reducing the risk of bleeding, protection from getting pregnant, womb contraction, reducing the risk of breast cancer and depression. Highlighting these benefits to moms can encourage moms to breastfeed.
3. I learnt that moms need to be properly informed about breastfeeding. However, I need to know more about the implementation of the mother baby-friendly initiative.
4. I learnt how it is important to give adequate information about breastfeeding to the pregnant mom to help her prepare for the arrival and feeding of the baby.

