

## Ethnic Awareness

### African American

#### Values

Family  
Older adults  
Religion and members of clergy

#### Beliefs/Practices

Think illness is a punishment by God  
Think breastfeeding is old fashioned  
Think breastfeeding is embarrassing  
Think breastfeeding ties the mother down  
The mother may be thought to be unclean because of bleeding after delivery  
Believe in fate  
Give formula early  
Give solids early  
Follow older female relatives' advice about breastfeeding and taking care of babies  
Don't leave the house for one to six weeks after delivery  
Follow African traditions related to health

#### Foods Often Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Salty, sweet and greasy foods  
Caffeinated drinks  
Sassafras tea

#### Foods Often Not Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Milk	Citrus juices
Grains	Onions
Fish	Alcohol

#### Communication

Like direct and honest discussions  
Rude to talk slowly to a person  
Like eye contact when talking, but look away when listening  
A lot of eye contact is considered rude  
Mothers will openly disagree, but still want to talk even though they disagree

#### Counseling Strategies

Be open and honest  
Say what you mean  
Do not talk slowly to the mother or her family  
Help the mother to make choices by herself and to believe in her choices  
Give clear and straight to the point directions, without being bossy.  
Help mothers understand that formula makers are more worried about making money than about the health of babies  
Respect mothers that follow family traditions  
Include family members (if present) in the discussion when talking to a mother

## Ethnic Awareness

### American Indian

#### Values

Family  
Tribal healer (medicine man)  
Older people  
Their culture and traditions

#### Beliefs and Practices

May think colostrum is harmful to baby  
Give baby formula, tea or broth until milk comes in  
Mothers often think they do not make enough milk  
Mother's mother helps to decide how to feed baby  
Herbs are used to treat illnesses  
Let baby decide which nipple (breast or bottle) he/she likes best, if baby likes bottle more mother may stop breastfeeding  
Father is head of the family  
All family members help to raise the child  
High amount of abuse (sexual and physical)- might not be comfortable breastfeeding in front of some people  
Alcohol and drug abuse is common  
Diabetes is very common  
May be embarrassed to breastfeed in public

#### Foods Often Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Herbal teas are recommended for mothers  
Corn meal is given to mothers following delivery to help her recover and to help the mother make enough milk

#### Foods Often Not Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Greasy foods  
Alcohol

#### Communication

Will not ask questions until they trust the person they are talking to  
Like distance

#### Counseling Strategies

Use praise (some may not want to be praised in front of peers)  
Talk to the mother about breastfeeding very early in her pregnancy  
Breastfeeding as natural  
Validate personal knowledge  
Like one-to-one contact  
Do not limit activities to work sheets and lectures  
If learning requires reading, have them paraphrase a paragraph  
Allow adequate wait time for responses  
Begin working in small groups then bring small groups together in a larger group  
Allow adequate body space  
Explain breastfeeding can reduce the risk for diabetes and overweight in mother and baby

## Ethnic Awareness

### Asian (Chinese and Japanese)

#### Values

Family  
Older people (parents, grandparents, etc.)  
Children

#### Beliefs/Practices

Other family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) often live in one house  
Usually will not touch people they do not know well  
Husband is in charge of the family  
Wife's "job" is to care for her family

#### Foods Often Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Pigs feet in ginger and vinegar  
Hot tea or rice water in place of iced drinks  
Chicken and others meats  
Chicken and meat broths  
Coffee  
Spices

#### Foods Often Not Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Most fruits and vegetables  
Seaweed  
Bean sprouts  
Cold drinks  
Juices  
Rice water

#### Communication

Do what older members of family say  
May not want to discuss problems with others  
Rarely shows emotion or pain  
Does not like a lot of eye contact  
Will say what they think you want to hear even when it is not how they feel  
Nice and polite when talking to others

#### Counseling Strategies

When father is present, talk to him first  
Do not touch  
Don't stare

## *Ethnic Awareness*

### *Caucasian/American*

**Value**

Each person is more worried about themselves than the family  
Being on time and keeping to schedules  
Technology (computers, televisions, cars, etc.)  
Money and success  
Privacy (Doesn't share a lot of problems with others.)

**Beliefs/Habits**

Breasts are thought of as sex objects  
Mothers often have jobs outside of the home  
Children often go to day-care  
Breastfeeding makes breasts sag

**Foods Often Eaten During Breastfeeding**

Beer  
Healthy foods

**Foods Often Not Eaten During Breastfeeding**

Chocolate  
Garlic  
Cabbage  
Broccoli

**Communication**

Like eye contact  
Say hello with a smile  
Touching is ok

**Counseling Strategies**

Be friendly and warm  
Keep appointments  
Smile  
Look at the person you are talking to

## Ethnic Awareness

### Hispanic

#### Values

Family more than just each person  
Mother and mother-in-law's thoughts about parenting  
Extended family (grandparents, aunts, sisters, etc.)  
Father as head of household  
May be embarrassed to breastfeed in public  
Mothers

#### Beliefs/ Practices

Baby may become sick if the mother breastfeeds when she is hot or angry  
Believe breastfeeding will make breasts sag  
May not breastfeed the first few days after birth because think colostrum is not clean  
May give weak herbal teas to newborn babies  
Give babies less than three months old foods other than breastmilk or formula  
Stop breastfeeding when baby is about three months old

#### Foods Often Eaten During Breastfeeding

Chicken soup  
Atole (corn flour drink)  
Avena (oatmeal)

#### Foods Often Not Eaten During Breastfeeding

Hot Sauce  
Beans  
Chocolate  
Coffee  
Pork

#### Communication

Like to touch more  
Sit closer than other cultures  
Talk more  
Use hands a lot when talking  
Don't argue  
May agree with the person they are talking to even when they don't agree  
May dislike talking about personal things  
Treat older people with respect  
Think long eye contact is impolite  
Warm and friendly

#### Counseling Strategies

Treat older people with respect  
Discuss how breastfeeding makes baby healthier and closer to mother  
Offer early prenatal breastfeeding education  
Include mother's support person (baby's father, grandmothers, sisters, etc.) when teaching about breastfeeding  
If mother gets hot and sweaty and doesn't want to breastfeed, suggest she take a shower before breastfeeding baby  
Mother will rarely ask for help so you will need to call her

## Ethnic Awareness

### South East Asian

#### Values

Family, not just one person's needs  
 Mothers being able to work and have others feed baby  
 Older people (parents, grandparents, etc.)  
 Children that are well behaved and obey  
 Intelligence

#### Beliefs/Habits

Father is in charge of the family  
 Take care of the mother the first few weeks after baby is born  
 Breastfeed in own country; bottle-feed once in America  
 Marry and have children during teen years  
 Mother may not bathe in the first month after baby is born  
 Crying out would shame family  
 The head is sacred; it is not touched

#### Foods Often Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Soup containing:

- |                   |                    |               |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| • pork or chicken | • salt             | • carrots     |
| • ginger          | • black vinegar    | • cauliflower |
| • black pepper    | • bok choy/cabbage | • potatoes    |

wine, champagne, beer or brandy  
 hard boiled eggs

#### Foods Often Not Eaten by Breastfeeding Mothers

Raw vegetables and fruits:

- |                |           |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| • sweet potato | • spinach | • citrus fruits | • cabbage |
| • Mung beans   | • melon   | • watermelon    |           |

sour foods	ice cream	sticky rice
salt water and shellfish	chili	fried foods
unboiled water	fatty meats	peanuts
cold drinks (soft drink, cows or soy milk)		intestines

#### Communication

May not like to discuss problems with others  
 May not show emotions or pain  
 Does not like a lot of eye contact  
 May be ashamed to ask for help  
 May say what they think you want to hear even when it is not how they feel  
 Usually will not touch people they do not know well  
 Nice and polite when talking to others  
 May laugh when nervous

#### Counseling Strategies

Talk to the father first since he is in charge of the family  
 Let mother know that breastfeeding may make her baby smarter  
 Let mother know that breastfeeding may make her child behave better  
 Share that educated, smart American women breastfeed  
 Do not stare  
 Do not touch mother or baby (unless you ask first)