

The Promotion of Breastfeeding in the Workplace using the Theory of Reasoned Action

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Breastfeeding Funny



(Mapa, n.d.)

Theory of Reasoned Action

- “To predict and understand motivational influences” on behavior that is not under the individual's conscious control (University of South Florida, 2006, para. 7).
- “To identify how and where to target strategies for changing behavior” (University of South Florida, 2006, para. 7).
- “To explain virtually any human behavior such as why a person buys a new car, votes against a certain candidate, is absent from work, or engages in premarital sexual intercourse” (University of South Florida, 2006, para. 7).

Breastfeeding and the Use of Reasoned Action Theory

Founded by Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) this theory corresponds with the topic of breastfeeding because it “provides an approach for explaining, predicting, and influencing human social behavior in any given behavioral domain”

(Bernaix, 2000, p. 201).



(Berggren, 2005)

Theory of Reasoned Action

- A woman's behaviour is determined by her intention to breastfeed.
- It is this intention that creates a woman's attitude about breastfeeding.
- This attitude creates an individual subjective norm within the woman's belief system.

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980 as cited in Manothaya, 2005).

Theory of Reasoned Action

Women who have the intention to breastfeed, due to their belief system, are more likely to breastfeed when they return to work because of the influences they have from others around them.



(Cable News Network, 2006)

Attitudes Have Two Components:



Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) explain a specific component influencing behavioural intent in breastfeeding women. It is called **subjective norms**.

(Garderisettes, n.d.)

Subjective norms also have two components:

They are **normative beliefs** (*what I think others would want or expect me to do*) and **motivation to comply** (*how important it is to me to do what I think others expect*)”

(Manothaya, 2005, para. 3).

In Relation to Breastfeeding...

- Breastfeeding mothers who return to work will have reflected on their own phenomenological experiences to develop their own beliefs about breastfeeding.
- These influences could include examples such as our societal perception of what a woman's role should be and how a woman's family has defined that role.
- Her spouse's ability to support breastfeeding and her employer's attitude on career women, who are also family oriented, will affect the woman's beliefs about the role of working mothers.

Subjective Norms In Relation to Action



Subjective norms create normative beliefs. A subjective norm is formed when a breastfeeding mother reflects on what people, who are important to her, think she should or should not do when returning to work.

(Chang, as cited in, Manothaya, 2005).

Normative beliefs...

...is defined as a “combination of a person's beliefs regarding other people's views of behaviour and the person's willingness to conform to those views” (Family

Health International, 2002, p.11).



INFACT Canada

Women, Work and Breastfeeding

(INFACT Canada, 2006)

The Outcome of Breastfeeding...



(Bloom Yoga Studio, 2005)

...will be determined by the mother's need to comply with her persuaders' attitudes as well as her own expectations for herself

(Fishbein, as cited in, Manothaya, 2005).

Nurses and the Promotion of Breastfeeding

- Nurses, through their own personal life experiences, education, and relationships with significant others, create specific attitudes and normative beliefs regarding the importance of providing support to breastfeeding mothers. Being aware of these individual beliefs is critical in a nurse's ability to promote breastfeeding.
- Bernaix (2000) states that, "educational programs designed to improve nurses' breast feeding knowledge and attitudes hold the most promise for increasing nurses' supportive behavior" (p. 208).

Nurses and the Promotion of Breastfeeding

- In other words, without educating nurses on the importance of breastfeeding, they themselves will not be able to convince mothers to continue to breastfeed when returning to work.
- If a mother has the belief about not being able to breastfeed when returning to work, it is essential for nurses to provide information to help the woman create strategies to overcome these challenges.



(Public Health Agency of Canada, n.d.)

Strategies to Tell “Mom” About:

Approach your employer with your desire to breastfeed or pump at work in a manner that is collaborative with both their needs and yours. Some employers may be resistant to this idea, but by approaching with a **collaborative, reasonable and flexible plan**, you may find that they will become receptive and open to your desires.

- If a designated private space at work is unavailable, be creative! Some ideas are your car, an empty supply room, or a conference room.
- Discuss your plans regarding feeding your baby with your caregiver prior to returning to work.
- If you decide to feed baby expressed breast milk while at work, start pumping 2 weeks prior and freeze the milk
- Return to work near the end of the week so your first week back will be shorter. Start off slowly with a few days and then gradually build back up to full time if possible.

Strategies to Tell “Mom” About:

- Prepare lunches, baby’s diaper bag, etc. as well as your pumping equipment and have it ready to go for the morning.
- Maintain proper rest and nutrition
- Maintain support from other nursing and working moms
- At work, pump often during non-working hours to keep your milk supply up (Ontario Public Health Association, 1996)



(River and Mountain Women’s Health, n.d.).



(Gardersettes, n.d.)

TRA in Relation to Strategies:

- “A specific behavior is defined by a combination of four components: action, target, context, and time” (Family Health International, 2002, p.10).
- Using these components an example is: Employers and mothers can join together to implement a breastfeeding friendly environment at work for employed mother’s who decide to provide breastmilk to their infants during work hours. It is the persuasive ability from health care providers and mom’s support systems that will encourage her to promote breastfeeding friendly environments within her workplace.



(The Pacific.net, n.d.)

The Right to Breastfeed

Despite many lobbying women's groups, "the right to breastfeed is not absolute ... and an employer or service provider has the right to attempt to show that it may be unreasonable or an undue hardship to accommodate a woman who wishes to breastfeed"



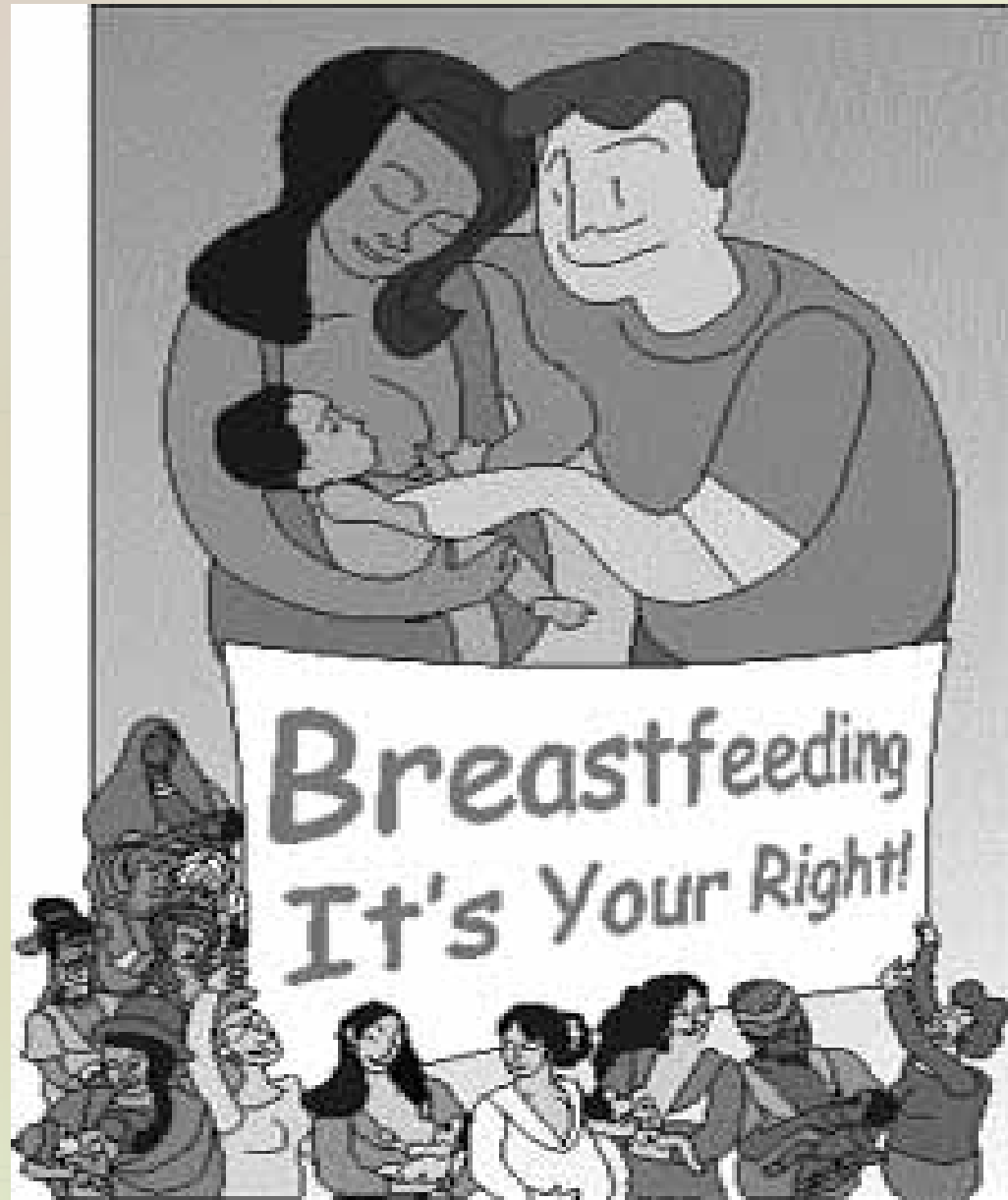
(WorldWIT, 2006)

(INFACT Canada, 2006, para. 5).

Workplace Breastfeeding

- Maintaining breastfeeding encouragement in the workplace through support groups and policy guidelines ensures the health of our mothers, babies, companies, and our society at large.
- With proper education, every member of the labour force can support nursing mothers, resulting in more productive workers and healthier children, and therefore, a healthier society in the future

(Wilson, 2003, para. 3).



(INFACT Canada, n.d.)

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