

## “NOTHING CAN BREAK THE BOND...” DOCUMENT ANALYSIS OF THE BROWN MAMAS BREASTFEED BLOG PROJECT

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## Presenter Disclosures

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The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

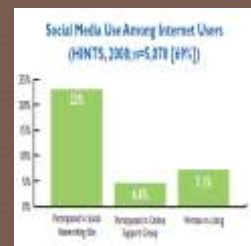
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## Background

- Breastmilk is the optimal form of nutrition for infants. (WHO, 2009)
- African-Americans (Blacks) have the lowest breastfeeding rates. (US DHHS, 2011)
- Gaps in the literature regarding determinants contributing to this disparity.
- Few studies have examined the process or experience of breastfeeding in Black women. (Ma & Magnus, 2011)

## Blogs

- New opportunities for health communication (Chou, 2009)
- “Enable “bottom up” as well as “top down” exchanges. (Sweet & Simons, 2009)
- Being used to promote & support breastfeeding (West et al, 2011)



## Purpose & Research Questions

- Purpose
  - To understand Black women's experiences of breastfeeding using online documents.
- Research questions:
  - What lead Black women to the decision to breastfeed their children?
  - How do Black women describe their experiences of breastfeeding?

## Data Collection

- Google Blog Search engine was used to search blog homepages with the keywords 'black AND breastfeed' in March 2012
- Limited to:
  - personal blogs with public access, featuring breastfeeding stories from multiple African-American women, which were posted since 2010
- First 50 results were reviewed
- Three blogs were selected
- Two blogs included in this analysis



## Child Health & Development

### "securing a healthy future for them"

- Majority of women
- Most used the "best" in describing breastfeeding
  - "I loved...that I was giving her an advantage in terms of her mental and physical development."
  - "I wanted to nourish my child with the best possible nutrients"

## Fulfilling Experience

### "nurtured my patience and potential as a mom"

- All women noted overall positive experiences
- Bonding major factor in breastfeeding decision
  - ▣ "I love breastfeeding because it is a beautiful experience...nothing can break the bond of a mother and child who breastfeed!"
  - ▣ "Bonding and intimacy. Love that he feels safe and secure when he is in my arms."

## Importance of Social Support

### "no one I knew had done it, and I got little support"

- Mixed experiences
- Some indicated family history
- Health provider support post-partum was mixed
  - "I come from a breastfeeding family" and "both my mother and my aunt did... Even my father expected that I would breastfeed."
  - "Looking back on the situation, if only I had the medical advice and support I needed I would have nursed her well after 2 months."

## Conclusion

- African-American women are breastfeeding.
  - ▣ Child health & development and bonding are major factors
  - ▣ Social support is important yet often lacking.
- Blogs are a feasible tool for breastfeeding promotion and social support.
- Findings can aid in planning & implementing breastfeeding promotion programs.
- More research is needed focusing on African-American women who are breastfeeding.

