

**Best Moment.**

"Seeing the mothers from my classes becoming advocates and cheering each other on."

Lydia, Certified Lactation Educator  
Age: 44  
Hometown: Los Angeles

Lydia has one eighteen year old son, who was combination fed for 3 months in the hospital. After learning later that her son hadn't needed formula, she became a peer educator to make sure other families are better informed.

Biggest Challenge: "The regret I still have that I used formula."

Biggest Supporter: "My mother."



**Best Moment.**

"When my first mentor, Lucy, asked me to be a leader in a mother-to-mother breastfeeding support group."

Kimberly, IBCLC  
Age: 49  
Hometown: Philadelphia

Kimberly has six children, ranging from ages twenty-three to two years old. All of her children have breastfed and the difficulties she had breastfeeding her first child led her to become a peer counselor and, later, a certified lactation consultant.

Biggest Supporter: "My children."



**Best Moment.**

"When I got my niece to breastfeed her baby."

Nakeya  
Age: 33  
Hometown: Los Angeles

Nakeya is the mother of three children, a sixteen year old daughter, a nine year old son and an eighteen month old baby. With no examples in her community and the first in her family to breastfeed, she successfully breastfed all three children with support from hospital staff.

Biggest Challenge: "Letting my children wean themselves off the breast."

Biggest Supporter: "My family."



**Best Moment.**

"When my son gained enough weight for me to return to exclusive breastfeeding."

Naheemah  
Age: 31  
Hometown: Orange

Naheemah has one newborn son, who was combination fed in the first week of life due to low birth weight and now exclusively breastfeeds at eight months.

Biggest Challenge: "Waiting for my breastmilk to come in...and worrying that my son wasn't getting enough (to eat)."

Biggest Supporter: "My husband."



**Project.** Breastfeeding rates have improved among all women in the U.S., yet disparities still persist in breastfeeding among African American women.

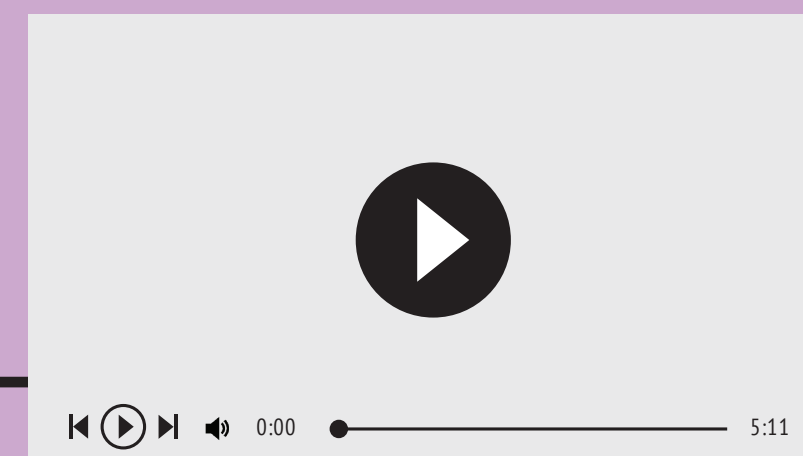
Much of the educational material on breastfeeding targeting African American women consists of images of black women next to re-purposed content developed for a general audience. This is problematic because while African American women may face similar challenges as other women with regards to sustained breastfeeding, there are also cultural issues specific to the African American experience that must be addressed in order to develop meaningful outreach. While factors such as difficulty breastfeeding, lack of workplace accommodations, and inadequate training among health care workers play a role, another major barrier is poor community support. The African American Breastfeeding Project is an online video project designed to collect the unique stories and breastfeeding experiences of African American mothers as a resource for new mothers, their families and communities. The goal of making these stories available online is to establish breastfeeding as a social norm in the African American community.

This project will benefit others in the breastfeeding community as a case study of how digital and social media can be used to build online communities of support. At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to 1) recognize the key components of culturally competent social outreach and 2) understand why formative research about a target population is necessary when developing outreach materials.

**Goal.** Make breastfeeding a community responsibility.

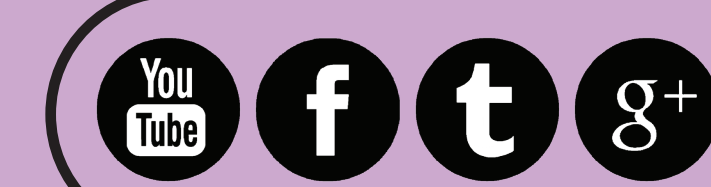
**RECORD STORIES** about the unique experiences of black mothers and lactation consultants...

1



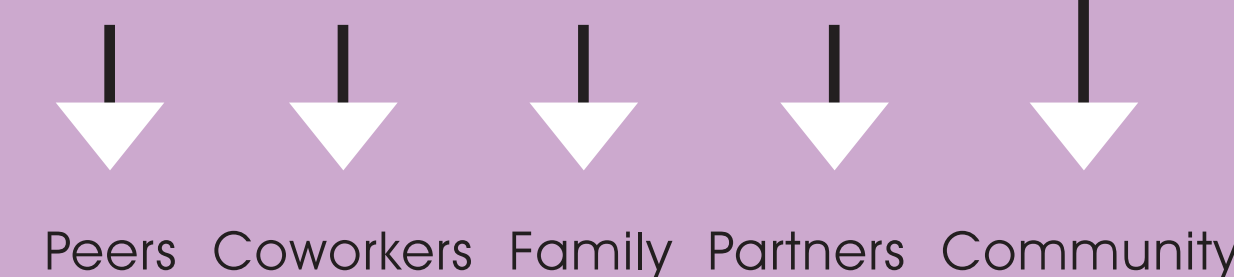
**SHARE VIDEOS** online using social media...

2



**ENCOURAGE SUPPORT** by creating empathy and understanding for breastfeeding mothers.

3



Elizabeth  
Age: 43  
Hometown: Los Angeles

Biggest Supporter: "My husband."

Kimarie, CLC  
Age: 57  
Hometown: Decatur, GA

Biggest Challenge: "Not having support from professionals, friends or family in 1978 when I had twins."

Sandra, IBCLC  
Age: 49  
Hometown: Los Angeles

Best Moment: "Giving back to the teen moms I work with, because WIC did so much for me...when I had my first child at 19."

Jasmine  
Age: 32  
Hometown: Compton

Best Moment: "Finding a birthing center that supported my plan for a natural birth and my commitment to breastfeed my son."

**Status.** This is an ongoing media project.

**4 PUBLIC SCREENINGS**

- 2014 National Medical Association Annual Conference
- August 2014 Soulfood For Your Baby Nursing Meetup
- April 2015 Breastfeed LA Community Meeting
- October 2015 CSUN Lactation Education Course

**15 VIDEOS** presenting personal stories from mothers & breastfeeding advocates.

**22 INTERVIEWS** representing the diverse range of breastfeeding experiences in the black community.

**776 MINUTES** of footage with the goal of developing a feature length film with outreach campaign & print materials.

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FILM/MEDIA

# The African American Breastfeeding Project.com

Using digital narrative and social media to build support for breastfeeding in the African American community.