

Breastfeeding Attitudes and Knowledge

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Definition of the Issue

- Studies have shown that breastfeeding decreases an infant's risk of asthma, obesity, diabetes, leukemia, and ear infections.
- The CBC indicates that only 43% of women breastfed their babies for six months and only 22% breastfeed for twelve months or longer.
- Prior knowledge and attitudes towards breastfeeding greatly influence a parent's decision about the type of nutrition to give their children and whether to take the action of breastfeeding their child or not.
- Knowledge determines attitudes and attitudes represent what actions parents will choose.
- Studies have shown that the preconceptual population is lacking the important education regarding breastfeeding.

Nursing Implications

- Nurses specifically school nurses can teach school age children the importance of breastfeeding.
- Provide positive feedback to teen mothers who are breastfeeding.
- The link found between breastfeeding knowledge and choice to breastfeed will hopefully generate discussion and increase awareness and then develop more educational opportunities.



Review of the Literature

- Positive correlation between populations breastfeeding knowledge and attitude toward breastfeeding (Kang, et al., 2005).
- Preconceptual population is lacking education regarding breastfeeding (Spear, 2007; Kennedy, 2000; Tarrant & Dodgson, 2007).
- Females have slightly more knowledge about breastfeeding compared to males (Kang, et al., 2005).
- Only 21% of low-income students have reported hearing about breastfeeding at school (Forrester, 2001).
- Population who was breastfed has a more positive attitude towards breastfeeding (Juliff, Downie, and Rapley, 2007).

Areas of Further Study

- Perform further research of a larger sample size and in numerous high schools and universities.
- Additional research involving a more diverse sample will provide more accuracy.
- Perform the exact same study and handout same questionnaire.
- The perspective of home schooled children was not included.
- The exact curriculum of the population researched was researched. This could provide knowledge of what breastfeeding education is effective.

Recommendations

1. **Implement breastfeeding education starting at the elementary level.** More formal education needs to be offered regarding breastfeeding importance in elementary education, if breastfeeding rates are to increase in the future.
2. **Educate patients on the importance of breastfeeding.** Nurses need to realize that many new mothers, especially those with little education, may not have knowledge regarding breast milk and its essential nutrients that help fight disease.