

Promoting Pride in Breastfeeding through Selfie

Authors: Yen Ang (DrPH, MSc, RD), Pong Kwai Meng (FRCP(Glasg), FRCP(Edin), MRCPCH), Tay Pai Lim (RN), Ch'ng Keat Hui (BSc), Chun Teik Lan (SRN).

INTRODUCTION

Asia has the highest number of smart phone users in the world. People spend plenty of time interacting with each other in cyberspace using various social networking medium in their smart phones. Facebook, instagram or twitter are now used as platforms to share news, stories or to promote pretty much anything. Health promotion approaches need to also change to appeal to this social media obsessed world.

PURPOSE/METHOD

Though many believe in the benefits of breastfeeding, nursing in public is still not a common practice in the conservative society of Malaysia. Our purpose is to educate the public that breastfeeding is not something to hide; but rather it is natural, to be respected and can even be flattering. Mothers should be so proud of it that they could do a selfie while nursing her baby.

In conjunction with the hospital's 10 year anniversary of being a baby friendly hospital, we created a breastfeeding selfie contest. A breastfeeding support group Facebook page was created. Any interested contestant was given one week to submit their breastfeeding selfie through the Facebook page. Voting was open for 2 weeks. The only restriction imposed on the eligibility was that the winner must be present at the award ceremony which would be held in our hospital in order to claim the prize.

FINDINGS

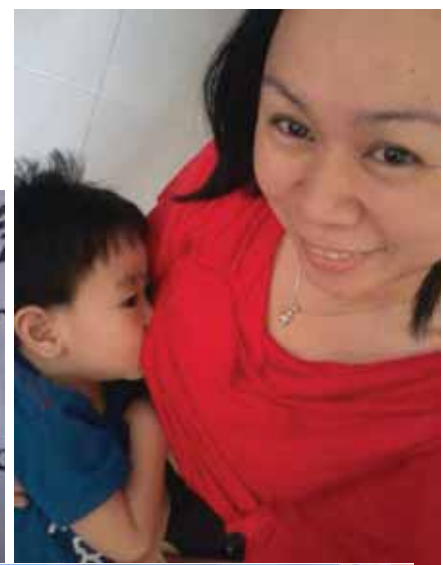
We received 775 likes on our Facebook. There were 32 submissions of selfies, 29 of them were Chinese. The "Most Liked" winner went to the entry which received the most "likes". The "Best Picture" went to the mother who wore the t-shirt bearing the word "supply" while her baby wore a t-shirt "demand". Each winner was awarded with a cash prize and either a hamper or hotel buffet dinner voucher.

CONCLUSION

We had a modest response to our selfie competition, but it was within our expectations. Very few organizations have held selfie breastfeeding competition in Malaysia and we were actually worried we might get backlash from some conservative moms or mother-in-laws. However we believe that with younger generation and interconnectedness of the cyber world, certain cultural taboos could be shattered. It is our hope that our selfie competition will help promote pride in breastfeeding in our digital world.

COMMENT

Breastfeeding in Asia especially among the Chinese is still not a widely accepted practice. Through the selfie competition, we wanted to encourage women to embrace breastfeeding as a right, and to take pride in the practice.



PENANG ADVENTIST HOSPITAL

Operated by Adventist Hospital & Clinic Services (M) (255697-M)

465, Jalan Burma, 10350 Penang, Malaysia
Tel: (+604) 2227200 LoCall: 1-300-88-4325
E-mail: enquiry@pah.com.my Website: www.pah.com.my

Fax: (+604)2280443
Facebook: fb.com/pahpg

