

Ideas for an education session for health workers

Use of formula in young infants

Target audience:

All healthcare staff who care for pregnant women, infants under six months and their parents/caregivers.

Three categories are suggested though individual services may vary:

- a) staff with responsibility for providing information, discussion and assisting learning of skills for formula use (e.g. midwives, neonatal and paediatric nurses, dietitians)
- b) staff with responsibility for providing information and discussion but not assisting learning of skills (e.g. doctors, health promoters, social workers)
- c) staff with responsibility for providing basic information in response to queries and who prepare formula feeds (e.g. health care assistants)

Session time:

The allocated session time is 40 minutes theory plus additional practice relevant to individual role.

Purpose:

To raise participants' awareness and to provide them with knowledge and skills to assist mothers who are not breastfeeding or are considering not breastfeeding their infant. This session is to be used in conjunction with breastfeeding promotion and support course. It assumes prior knowledge and skill covering the importance of breastfeeding, communication skills and of the protection of breastfeeding.

Learning aims: at the end of this session and linked practice (as relevant to role), the participant should be able to:

- Explain the importance of breastfeeding and possible risks from not breastfeeding, in a manner that would be suitable for a parent
- Describe main issues related to formula use
- Discuss issues in communication of this information to parents
- Demonstrate communication with parents (as relevant to role)

Session Outline:

1. *Importance and risks*

- Brief review of normality, recommendations and importance of breastfeeding
- Other options: Partial breastfeeding, partial formula use; expressed mother's milk; donor bank milk. Cup feeding.
- Highlight possible risks from not breastfeeding: mental, physiological and emotional development, immune system, short and long-term health
To infant, to mother, Economic, time and social, Environmental
- Infants over six months, need for mother's milk or formula plus complementary foods

2. *Issues related to formula use*

- Discuss why mothers may decide not to breastfeed
Knowledge, culture, marketing, self-image, confidence, support
Previous experiences
Situations that do not prevent breastfeeding: medications, illness, separation
- List what is required for formula feeding
Water: local supply safe? Judging water temperature. Issues with bottled water
State types of formula commonly available and their appropriate use,
Contamination risks of powdered formula, unsuitable products
Equipment needed (for cleaning, sterilising, feeding), including energy for hot water and clean surface
Formula use away from home
Baby-focused feeding: feeding cues, patterns and amounts, using a bottle and pacing feeds
- Describe components of informed decision-making
Is suitable information provided and understood?
Can a decision be carried out: Is formula use acceptable, feasible, affordable, sustainable and safe in the particular situation?

3. *Communication*

- Discuss:
Giving information and listening vs. telling what to do
Information and “Guilt”
Professionalism or own experience and views
Minimising likelihood that breastfeeding mothers will be influenced to use formula
Referral
Main principles of assisting adult learning of skills (category a only)
- Pair practice of communication skills for:
providing information (all),
discussion and counselling of individual situation (a & b),
assisting learning of formula use including parent preparing (a)

4. *Preparation and feeding of formula*

- State the principles of safe and hygienic preparation and storage of formula
- Practice:
Prepare formula feed (from powder) following standard guidelines (including sterilisation) (a & c).
Demonstrate assisting a parent to learn to prepare and use formula safely (a).

Supporting materials:

BFHI Link, newsletter of the Baby Friendly Initiative in Ireland

www.ihph.ie/babyfriendlyinitiative

Types of Infant Formula: Issue 24

Importance of breastfeeding and breast milk: Issues 5, 6, 11, 27, 31, 35, 38

Providing information on formula use without marketing: Issue 6, 11, 24, 37

Possible risks of formula use: Issue 8

Feeding with a cup: Issue 10

Starting complementary foods: Issue 13

Feeding cues: Issue 33

Safe Food / HSE: <http://www.safefood.eu/en/Publication/Consumer-Information/>

How to prepare your baby's bottle feed

Baby Friendly Initiative UK

<http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk/page.asp?page=95>

Preparing a bottle feed using baby milk powder

Sterilising baby feeding equipment

English, Bengali, Chinese, French, Hindi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Urdu, Albanian, Polish

Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute: Guide to Formula Feeding, in development

Background for session facilitator:

World Health Organization, Food Safety

<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/micro/pif2007/en/index.html>

Guidelines for the safe preparation, storage and handling of powdered infant formula

Staff and parent versions and poster

English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic

HIV and infant feeding counselling (2000): A training course

http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health/documents/fch_cah_00_2/en/index.html

Includes sessions on counselling, assisting learning to prepare feeds safely. Developing country focus

Revised WHO principles and recommendations on infant feeding in the context of HIV – November 2009

http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health/documents/9789241598873/en/index.html

Additional info is available on Right to Choose, whose rights, etc