Building your Breastfeeding Support Group on Social Media

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Many studies from around the world show that supporting moms on their journey can help them to successfully breastfeed and reach their personal feeding goals.

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Face-to-face support led to **20 percent less cessation** of exclusive breastfeeding before six months

**Telephone** interventions had no effect

**Layperson support** may be *slightly more effective* than that delivered by professionals, but both were superior to no support

-Impact of Breastfeeding Support, AAFP
Mothers who received:

**Sufficient** help with breastfeeding in hospital

**Contact details** for breastfeeding support groups

had a higher likelihood of breastfeeding late-preterm and term babies at 10 days and 6 weeks

-Association between breastfeeding support and breastfeeding rates in the UK, University of Oxford

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
The United States government made clear opposition for Breastfeeding Resolution at the UN:

“We recognize not all women are able to [breastfeed] for a variety of reasons. These women should have the choice and access to alternatives for the health of their babies, and not be stigmatized for the ways in which they are able to do so.”

-New York Times, July 2018
Loopholes of Support

when a formula feeding mom tells you she tried to breastfeed her baby, believe her
Loopholes of Support

Limted by jennacantlose and 679 others
 normalizebreastfeedinofficial U N I T E | #endthestigma Do you want to know why the U.S. was even able to #debate the breastfeeding resolution at the UN in the first place? Because they took the approach of #supportingmoms and pursuing access to moms.

• Two key points for the @nytimes article stood out to me:
  1. The formula industry has seen a significant drop in sales (while breastfeeding rates begin to increase in the US)
  2. They wanted to remove the stigma that FF moms experience for not breastfeeding.

• Why did they do this? Why did they claim to care so much about the stigma? Because they found a marketing loop hole in the breastfeeding community! They know that whether we choose to breastfeed or formula feed we need support. They chose to play the hand that supports the FF mom because she helps them make a profit.

• Did you know that most formula companies TEACH breastfeeding classes? This is their opportunity to be the expert on what moms should do if they experience any obstacle that prevents or interrupts the breastfeeding relationship. Genius! This gives them direct access to their market to offer their “solution” to all infant feeding problems! • What if we all just listened more to a mother who ultimately ended up formula feeding after making an effort to breastfeed? Every mom has different circumstances and not all moms have the support needed or feel strong enough to keep going.

• I know because I have been there. When I hit postpartum with my first son and was hospitalized with psychosis, our breastfeeding relationship ended instantly! I remember giving my baby the bottle for the first time in public after I returned and I remember feeling judged! If we can’t stand together as #women & mothers, don’t be surprised when corporations try to remove language like, “protect, promote, and support” from breastfeeding resolution in the name of ending stigma around formula feeding.

• #normalizebreastfeeding #normalizebfing 
#support #NBFsupport #nojudgment
BREAST IS BEST

We have worked hard to make known all of the benefits of breastfeeding babies.

Yet we may have worked SO hard that we are unable to see the damage we may have caused to those mothers who are unable or are unwilling to latch their babies.
FED IS BEST

The problem with slogans is that they don’t tell the WHOLE STORY

Many women slipped through the cracks of breastfeeding support in hospital because of the copy-paste-care that is given in US maternity care

Although the organization is pushing for “safe breastfeeding” practices, the words they have used to define themselves are contradictory, even though they are very catchy
Who is missing?

Breast is best

Fed is Best

Risk of Jaundice

Risk of Starvation

MOM

Baby's weight gain

Baby's pee/poop

Baby's suck patterns

Formula breast milk substitute is readily available in wealthy countries
A New Mantra

Encourage open dialog BEFORE & AFTER the first latch.

Check in with Mom about feelings of exhaustion and overwhelm.

How observant is the new mama? Does she know when her baby is hungry versus when her baby is full?

What is the new mama’s feeding goal?

Teach new mama about the FIST rule.

Teach new mamas to hand express an additional 1 tsp after each feed to ensure that she has a well-established supply.
Objectives

- Define how to create an online group
- Describe how to use LIVE video to connect with the public
- Identify Which social media platform best suits your posting style and availability
Where to Begin

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Things to remember

- Biggest challenge is to just get started! People can only find you once you’re online and they can only join your group once you’ve created it!
- Posts shouldn’t be a difficult process. They are the main line of communication in your group. Use them to develop your voice and to fell out your audience.
- Try ALL aspects of a platform before moving on to the next.
Things to remember (cont.)

- Millennial moms LIVE ONLINE.
- They crave community and support.
- They want to be part of the change that we all want to see!
- KEEP IT SIMPLE

Start here

Facebook
- Text + Image
- Groups
- Live Video
- Live Chat

Instagram
- Image + Text
- Groups
- Live Video
- Live Chat

Twitter
- Text + Image
- Groups
- Live Video
- Live Chat

YouTube
- Text + Image
- Groups
- Live Video
- Live Chat

Note: Professional hang out, but breastfeeding moms are not really using Twitter
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LIVE CHAT

- Stay Calm people will come and go
- Invite viewers to stay and comment
- Spontaneous vs Planned
- Get out of the box
- Be sure to SAVE the video for other uses
  - Story Save App
LIVE CHAT & SUPPORT

- Facebook is just you unless you have an iPhone
  - Spontaneous Live Chat from your website
    - Integrate Facebook Messenger from your business Facebook page to your website to chat with your site viewers
      - ManyChat
- IG Live you or w/ a Friend
- Youtube you or w/ a friend on Hangouts
- Twitter only offers Live Video, you cannot add friends
Take Advantage of the #InstaMom

- Make sure you snag your IG account & connect it to your FB page
- Announce a Scheduled Live Video in your bio that
  #momsofInstagram can look forward to.
  - Same day/time each week #mondaymotivation #tiptuesday
    #throwbackthursday #TBT
  - Topic + Support Q&A 30 minutes-1 hr
  - Link to your Facebook group from your IG bio
  - Create your own and always use popular HT
Come Together

Meetup in person to take a “boobie break” away from social media and connect in-person

- Meetups are encouraged at a park or your local library
- So that moms can SEE and observe many styles and methods of breastfeeding in person
- Moms need time with other moms who understand exactly what they are going through. It takes away the pressure to be a perfect parent. However, no judgment is allowed in these spaces (online/in-person) in any way, shape, or form.
- Although, they live online, it’s a great experience for breastfeeding moms to nurse NEAR each other. Those benefits include even sharing milk when necessary when mothers build trust.
Let’s Create
Your Group Today

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Title, Look, and FEEL

- Exclusive vs inclusive
- Who can find support here?
- What is the purpose of the group?
- How will the group give purpose to each parent?
What’s the difference?

Public business pages vs Public, Closed, Secret Groups on Facebook

- Accessibility
- Admin/Moderator Controls
- Growth and Advertising
#justdoit

It’s not scary! Get started right now!
Name & Location
Update the Cover Image

Tip: minimize the distractions because this is the face of your group and when you share your group link this is the image that they will see.
Important Group Settings

- What type of a group is it?
- Describe what happens when you join the group
- Selecting a cover image
- Create some rules
- Create an announcement post for new members to read.
- Create your customized link - For your marketing materials!!
- Some settings are only available on your computer or the desktop version of the site
**Group Type**

- What type of a group is it?
Group Description

- Your description should do these three things:
  i. Tell them what they will access once they join
  ii. Important Dates to remember
  iii. Link Back to your website because not everyone will click JOIN
Pin your Group’s Location
Relative Tags
Customize Your Group Link

- If you are web savvy and want others to know it, you cannot forget this step!
- What is your group goal? Are you only going to create one group or will you eventually have multiple groups?
- You can add the location to the link
- Understand why this step is so important?
Setup Questions for New Members

- What type of a group is it?
- Describe what happens when you join the group
- Selecting a cover image
- Create some rules
- Create an announcement post for new members to read.
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## Important Settings

**About**
- Discussion
- Chats
- Announcements
- Members
- Events
- Photos
- Moderate Group

### Search this group

### Shortcuts
- Berwyn, IL - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- Palm Coast - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- Charlotte, NC - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- Northern Wi/Mi - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- Detroit, MI - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org
- San Diego County - NormalizeBreastfeeding.org

### Change Privacy Setting

### Social Learning Units

*In this tab, you can make group resources easier to find and help people learn new things. Learn More*

### Membership Approval

- Anyone in the group
  - Only admins and moderators

### Chat Creation Permissions

- Members, moderators, and admins can create chats.
  - Only admins can create chats.

### Membership Preapproval

- Save time by preapproving membership requests. You can preapprove people based on their membership in other groups or using their email address. Learn More

### Membership Requests

*Learn more about people who want to join your group by asking them some questions. You can ask up to 3 questions, and only the admins and moderators will see the answers.*

### Ask Questions

### Posting Permissions

- Anyone in the group
  - Only admins

### Post Approval

- All group posts must be approved by an admin or a moderator.

### Story Posting Permissions

- Anyone in the group
  - Only admins

### Story Post Approval

- Photos and videos added to the group story must be approved by an admin or a moderator.
Say Hello

- Create some rules
- Create an announcement post for new members to read.
Find a Group Moderator

Finding help to manage your group

- You can’t do it all alone
- You can’t be online at every moment of the day
- Your reward for your online efforts is that you are growing a brand!
#ijustcant

- For those of you who had trouble following along or for those who don’t feel capable of laying the groundwork. You can apply to become an admin for a local chapter of NormalizeBreastfeeding.org.
- We create your group, share it to our pages, and put your PIN on our map where moms are looking for local groups every day!
- Follow our simple steps to keep your group active online and in-person
- We do allow you to share business posts in these groups as long as you are following the protocol.
1.4k in Charlotte And Growing

by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
A CLC from New York was moving to Charlotte, NC and was passionate about getting involved and starting a local chapter to support her own breastfeeding journey in a new town.

What started out as a small meeting between her and her co-admin quickly grew into a large group hosting monthly meetups at free venues to connect and support each other, in person!
In June of 2015, several mayors in the United States, accepted and approved my proclamation to make June 27th the International Day to Normalize Breastfeeding! The event went viral with over 4500 participants on our Facebook event, worldwide.

This event launched the Normalize Breastfeeding Tour and enabled me to travel to visit some of our local chapters in states where breastfeeding rates were drastically low.

Also, because of black breastfeeding rates being the lowest in the country, I set out to change what “American” breastfeeding looked like in the United States. I made it my mission to document diversity, across cultures and delivery methods of breastmilk.
2016

By the time summer hit in 2016, our admins in Charlotte were anxious to bring me out to document their city. They started reaching out to their local baby-friendly hospital, Novant Health, to see if they were in need of images. And they were!

By November, 2016, I was in Charlotte, speaking in front of their medical staff, telling them my breastfeeding experiences and sharing how breastfeeding has many diverse variations of normal.

I had the wonderful opportunity to participate in their breastfeeding resource fair with local breastfeeding business, and then we toured through the city capturing these local moms breastfeeding in public! I even had the opportunity to document families after postpartum recovery and the images are now used for their marketing materials.

Breastfeeding Support on Social Media
by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Experience Online Growth

Today that group has 1.4k members, they’ve created a safe-place online to learn from each other and support one another, and something to be excited about during their breastfeeding journey.

Breastfeeding Support on Social Media
by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
Give an approximate date when you joined your NBF local group
20 responses

How active are you in your breastfeeding support groups online?
20 responses

How long have you been breastfeeding your current nursling? Or at what age did your recent baby wean?
20 responses

How much support do you feel you have received since joining?
20 responses
Did you ever have a need for someone to take a closer look (in person) at your baby's latch?
- Yes: 35%
- No: 65%

Have you ever considered becoming a breastfeeding support professional?
- Yes: 55%
- No: 40%
- Maybe: 5%

Did you ever feel ashamed or judged for sharing your story or asking questions?
- Yes: 5%
- No: 95%

Will you continue to support breastfeeding moms beyond this group?
- Yes: 100%

Did you ever feel more educated about your body, your breasts, or your milk production after reading other posts/comments?
- Yes: 100%
- No: 0%
Did you learn to hand express your milk? Do you know why it is an important skill?

- 65% No, I had no idea that it was important.
- 35% Yes, learning to hand express can help to initiate an increase in my supply

What do/did you love MOST about your breastfeeding journey? (You can only choose ONE!)

- 30% Early bonding and skin to skin
- 10% Feeding on demand - minimal bottle prep
- 10% Comforting baby while sick, with specific antibodies in your milk
- 10% Using breast milk for other natural remedies
- 10% Nurturing your baby with your body’s maternal instincts
Groups Lead the Way

Online group creation and the gathering of moms in-person, locally, was the beginning of a whole NEW wave of breastfeeding support and community in that area!

Think of all of the amazing things YOUR GROUP can do for the future of breastfeeding!

Breastfeeding Support on Social Media
by Vanessa Simmons, CLEC, Photographer
No matter how we feed our babies, support is best for moms.

-Founder

NORMALIZEBREASTFEEDING.ORG