Birth and Beyond Vermont:
10 Steps to Empower Mothers and Nurture Babies

Birth and Beyond Vermont Breastfeeding Training
The 16 hour learner workshop curriculum was adapted from the California Perinatal Services Network’s Birth and Beyond curriculum which was developed in collaboration with The Regional Perinatal Programs of California and Breastfeeding Taskforce of Greater Los Angeles. This training is intended to provide maternity care staff with the knowledge and skills to promote, protect and support a mother’s decision to breastfeed. In addition to the Learner Workshop, a Train-the-Trainer workshop for select staff is provided to help support the ongoing training needs at your facility.

Format of the Training Modules
The training platform is divided into 12 core modules. Each core module has a written set of speaker notes that can also be used as handouts for staff/trainees. The speaker notes correspond to the content and images in the training platform. Notes for each module include:

- Short description of the module with key messages/topics addressed
- Module Objectives, Rationale, and an Overview of the content
- Slide images and detailed talking points for each topic (the level of detail provided is designed to give background information for the speaker. Speakers are encouraged to reframe the talking points in their own words.)

Speaker notes also include detailed instructions for:

- Activities – with purpose, materials needed, time to allow, step-by-step instructions, points for discussion, and take-away messages.
- Teaching Tips – options for demonstrations, videos, discussion ideas, and navigation options in the presentation.

Curriculum Materials
The curriculum package includes the following materials:

**For Hospital Trainers**
- Binder
- Detailed speaker notes.
- Handouts organized by module for easy reference.
- PowerPoint platform with slides and relevant videos, animations, picture stories, and other training resources.

**For Trainees**
Detailed speaker notes – Trainees can review after the training for reinforcement and reference.

The Interactive, Relational Approach
The Birth and Beyond training modules use an innovative design approach that allows for flexible learning and strengthens the connection between the trainer and participants to enhance learning and retention. The curriculum presentation platform is highly visual and provides flexible navigation options to allow speakers to quickly and easily move throughout the presentation platform to respond to specific questions, share videos or picture stories, access additional resources as needed, and to meet targeted individual learning needs of staff. The approach complements adult learning styles, sets learning objectives, and enhances staff education through emotional triggers from photo images, picture stories, video, and audio.
Rationale
With the advent of presentation software such as PowerPoint®, which is used by millions of people worldwide, a standard presentation paradigm became the norm for presenters. This standard approach includes rigid (linear) slides that move sequentially from topic to topic and do not change after the presentation is set up. It has multiple bullet-point text, and small or nonexistent photos. The subsequent “top-down” teaching approach puts the trainer in charge of the information. This approach quickly became the standard teaching mode, even though there is little if any research to support its effectiveness in improving retention and learning.\(^1\)

The interactive, relational approach used for the Birth and Beyond curriculum challenges that paradigm with its focus on two powerful evidence-based learning techniques:

1. Highly visual imagery.

Visual Learning
Research shows that the brain seems to process text both visually and verbally. Thus, slides heavy with bulleted text may conflict with the words a speaker says and actually cause participants to feel overwhelmed and lead to boredom. Photo images, on the other hand, are processed almost exclusively visually and therefore do not cause the same conflict. Photos can greatly enhance the learning experience. Large photos, in particular, capture attention and lead to better encoding of information.

SHOW THEM!
In one study, the eyes of participants shown a series of news articles were first drawn to photo imagery, starting with the largest images. Readers typically scanned three quarters or more of the pictures before turning their attention to the text.\(^2\) In a related study, readers of news magazine articles were more likely to select and read articles that had photos.\(^3\) What the brain processes visually has the power to help learners absorb and remember the information better. According to Paivio’s dual Coding theory, the brain appears to have separate channels for visual and verbal information. Information presented both visually and verbally at the same time can produce superior results compared with presenting information in either format separately.\(^5\)

Hence, presenters who provide meaningful full-screen photos while verbally discussing the content enhance their ability to engage participants in the experience and create a more positive learning outcome.

\(^1\) Lane RA. (2007). Relational Presentation: A Visually Interactive Approach. Tuscon, AZ: Aspire Communications
Look at these slides to see the different impact that the visual slide has in capturing attention and conveying a message compared to a slide with bulleted text.

**Evidence Based Best Practices**
- Examine new research relevant to our perinatal practices
- Evaluate the best way to utilize the new information in our care of mothers and babies
- Collaborate to implement Best Practices in perinatal care

**Navigation that allows for interactive learning**
Interaction is a critical part of most human communication and relationship building. Whether immersed in a spontaneous childhood story, participating in a planning session with co-workers, or engaging a friend in café conversations, humans inherently feel a desire to connect with, and react to, other people. This helps us take in knowledge and make sense of our world. This need does not go away simply because people are in a classroom or learning situation. Numerous studies show that interactive learning opportunities provided through face-to-face learning, computer-based learning, and website design all contribute to enhanced learning and retention and enhance relationship building.

The Birth and Beyond curriculum, “10 Steps to Empower Mothers and Nurture Babies,” incorporates both of the innovative relational presentation components of powerful visual and interactive learning approaches. The curriculum allows trainers to adapt their message and teaching style to the needs, desires, and understandings of their audience.

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7 Lane (2007).
The Birth and Beyond Presentation Platform

The Birth and Beyond platform includes the following key components:

1. **One Idea per Slide.** There is only one idea per slide in a large text title, rather than multiple teaching points that can cause learners to become overwhelmed and/or bored.

2. **Full Screen Photos.** Most slides have a full screen photo to engage trainees and help tell the story or explain the message visually. Often these photos evoke an emotion that helps the audience relate to the message. Photos are carefully cropped to draw the eye to the most important aspects of the photo.

3. **Stories.** Photos that show what you are explaining rather than merely being decoration are more powerful. Many of the slide images depict the main content message. In addition, *picture stories* (photo series depicting a story) are included to allow staff to relate to the experiences of real people. These methods have a powerful effect on learning.

4. **Single Platform.** All modules are linked together in a single presentation platform with hyperlinks that allow the presenter to quickly and easily move throughout the presentation as needed. The main dashboard lists all modules, videos, picture stories, and other components. At any time, the trainer can return to this dashboard quickly to move to other areas of the platform. In fact, trainers can potentially move to any slide in the entire platform with no more than three clicks.

5. **Interactive Learning Components.** Many of the slides are structured to allow staff to indicate the topics they are most interested in discussing. This allows flexibility to set the priorities for learning, enhancing their ability to remember information that is most relevant to them. All components of the platform – PowerPoint slides, videos, audio sound bites, animations, etc., are linked together through hyperlinks in a single platform.

Practice Navigating Through the Presentation!

The presentation platform has many unique features to help you present an interactive training. Taking the time to play around with the features is absolutely essential and will increase your confidence and presentation skills.

**Dashboard**

The DASHBOARD is the main slide for the entire presentation - 12 Core Modules plus a separate reference section, videos, picture stories, resources, and optional material can be accessed by clicking on the buttons along the bottom of the main slide. The core modules are identified by abbreviated titles in two rows of buttons. Clicking on any one of the module titles (across the bottom of the dashboard) brings you to the content outline for that module.

Each module’s content outline is set up as a secondary navigation panel with buttons along the left side of its title slide. Clicking on the buttons in the outline brings you to the content for that section of the module.

**To Return to the Dashboard**

It’s easy to return to the dashboard any time you wish with one simple click on the BF icon back button in the bottom right-hand corner of every slide (or hit escape).

**To Exit the Presentation**

The easiest way to end the presentation is to hit the escape key.
**Navigation Panel/Buttons**
For each training module, the buttons on the left side of the screen serve as the **NAVIGATION PANEL**. This panel displays an outline of the key content to be covered in the particular module. This helps you see all the content at a glance. Clicking on any of these topics takes you to the details for that content.

**External or Separate Slide Show**
All modules have **EXTERNAL** (separate) slide presentations that branch off from particular slides. The external shows enable you to go deeper into the content and access additional slides that reinforce points or increase staff knowledge.

A button on any slide is your trigger to know that you there is an “external” or separate slide presentation on this topic. Look at Module #3 Promoting Breastfeeding and the “Educate Mothers” slide where four separate shows are imbedded. The buttons are your visual cue that this content branches off into an external or separate series of slides (Preconception, Prenatal, Birth, Postpartum). If at any time you wish to return back to the regular presentation, you can click the **BF icon back** button.

**Picture Stories**
A **PICTURE STORY** is a series of photographs that tell a story. The **PICTURE STORY** icon takes you to a page with picture stories. The speaker notes provide the detail and presenters can move through the slides, telling the story. Some will include an audio recording of a mom or nurse telling her story. Clicking on the story you want activates the audio recording and the series of photos that go with her story. These can be used to help illustrate a key point or to make the teaching point more personal for health care providers.

**Video**
Tips for Using the Presentation Platform

**Take time to practice before presenting!** Learning a new presentation style takes a little time and effort. Remember that innovative teaching techniques that may be different from your usual teaching style will require a little practice, and practice builds confidence. Many presenters find that once they begin using this type of technology they find a newfound freedom in presenting and are able to focus more on the important relationships with trainees that makes training fun and meaningful for everyone.

**Take time to learn the content.** No matter how knowledgeable you are about breastfeeding, it will be important to spend time reading through the speaker notes to become familiar with the content. How you present that content will be up to you, the knowledge level of your audience, and the amount of time you have available. Be assured that once you have done one or two training events it will become easier and easier.

**Facilitator Prompts.** For those who need reminders of key points as “triggers,” a short set of abbreviated speaker notes are provided that can be printed out or loaded onto an iPad© for reference during the presentation. The Facilitator Prompts include a small photo of each slide, simple bullet points to cover, any handouts that should be used, and activities or other brief teaching points to include.

**Remain Calm.** Remember: it is normal for presenters to feel a little nervous, especially when presenting a new topic or using new technology for the first time. If you become flustered, it is okay to let staff know you are learning, too. However, rather than calling attention to missteps, it is better to calmly correct the error and simply move on. If there are delays while waiting for a slide or video to come up, it is better to continue talking during the pause rather than pausing to wait for the slide to come up. This only calls attention to the delay. With practice, you will grow in confidence. If at any point you become lost in the platform, simply click the BF icon in the bottom right corner and you can return to where you need to go within 2-3 clicks.

**PowerPoint Tips:**
- If your cursor disappears while you are presenting, simply jiggle the air mouse to make it visible again.
- *If the hyperlink with the “hand” symbol seems to disappear, jiggling the mouse will make it visible again.*
- Use the BACK button to go back to the previous slide or hit escape.