THE REVOLUTION WILL BE LATCHED

We Are The Course We’ve Been Waiting For:
Centering Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice in Lactation Education

United States Breastfeeding Committee
National Breastfeeding Conference & Convening

Webinar Outline
WHAT WE’RE COVERING

- Breastfeeding Rates & Systemic Racism
- The Need for Black Lactation Providers
- Call to Action
- Questions, Answers, Discussion
THE B.L.A.C.K. COURSE

Honoring Those Who Have Transitioned

Our Ancestors
Our Loved Ones
Our Colleagues
Our Stars

THE B.L.A.C.K. COURSE

What Is The B.L.A.C.K. COURSE?

OUR TEAM

NGOZI D. WALKER-TIBBS
LYDIA O. BOYD
TANEFER CAMARA
FELISHA BROOKS-FLOYD
Position Statement: Ngozi D. Walker-Tibbs

- I am the youngest child of John and Lillie Ramsey.
- I am proud that my mother was born by a black midwife in Alabama in 1942.
- I am married to my college sweetheart for 29 years and we have five breastfed children ranging in age from 26-13. We have a one year old grandson who is our absolute joy.
- I have a Master’s in Public Health and a Bachelor’s in Maternal Child Health
- I am a doula, childbirth educator and trainer and IBCLC. I am also studying to be a midwife assistant, health coach and fitness instructor
- I love black people and strive to promote health in the black family.
- My experience as a public health professional, mother, health consumer and community advocate, validates and qualifies my work and authority to speak on this subject
- I seek to honor my Creator and ancestors through my life by serving my community with my whole heart. I will stand for my sisters and use my voice and whatever platform I am given to promote equity, justice and healing.

Position Statement: TaNefer Camara

- I am an unapologetically African/Black cis gendered Woman. My lineage runs deep as I am a 7th generation American with African ancestry from the Akan, Fulani, Mandinke, Susu and Yoruba tribes of Africa.
- I am a Wife and Mother of 3 birthed and breastfed children. I am The 8th child and only daughter born to my mother.
- I hold a bachelors degree in Psychology and Health education with an emphasis on community health and healing.
- I am an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, Former WIC peer counselor and Traditional birth Nsansi (doula) and Post-Partum healer and Maternal Health Strategist.
- I have over 15 years experience in public, private and non-profit sector work in Social services, research, advocacy, health promotion and program implementation.
- I believe in the advancement of black maternal health lead by, for and with black women of all backgrounds including those without formal educational or advanced degrees.
- My lived experience as a mother, professional and patient within the system validates my work and qualifies me as an authority on the subject.
- It is my goal to advance black maternal health through creative and strategic measures that challenge the status quo and amplify the voices of those most vulnerable.
Today's Poll

Does the lactation field need to be more racially and culturally diversified?

Breastfeeding Rates & Systemic Racism

Historical impact and implications on breastfeeding rates, initiation, duration and attitudes among Black women today.
Is it race or racism?

Black Infants are 15% less likely to be breastfed than white infants

Black babies 9 times more likely to be given formula than white or Latinx babies

Breastfeeding rates in our states

https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/reportcard.htm
The Need for Black Lactation Providers

- Lower Numbers Due to Systemic Racism
- The Importance of Breastfeeding Peer Counselors
- From The Hospital To The Home
  - The Value of Various Lactation Providers
    - Hospital, Birth Center, Community, Home
Uncovering our origins and cultural traditions

African Civilization & Culture

UBUNTU
I Am Because You Are
Sub-Saharan Africa leads the world in exclusive breastfeeding

56%

Babies born in Eastern and Southern Africa were exclusively breastfeed for first six months of life.

Breastfeeding is not taboo or hidden.

We Never questioned what God or the Universe blessed us with until man asserted that his ideas were superior to what was given naturally.

"Go back to fetch it" Symbol of the wisdom of learning from the past to build for the future.
Today we will learn...

How Black bodies, our reproductive organs and our breast milk have been game pieces in white supremacy’s social capital.

- Lydia O. Boyd, CLE

Let your Lactavist Mind Consider

- How The Experiences of Enslaved Black Women & Families Have Painted A Picture of Breastfeeding For Their Children
- How Elder Women Who Experienced Slavery Handed Over Their Experiences of Motherhood, Breastfeeding & Bonding With Their Children & Future Generations
- How The Trauma of Enslavement Over Multiple Generations Shows It’s Face Today in the Black Community
- How Slavery Has Impacted How Current Elders Support & Nurture Families & Their Decision To Breastfeed
Acknowledge These Factors

- Inhuman physical, emotional, & mental treatment
- Inhuman medical practices during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period
- Extreme malnourishment
- Enslaved people were worked literally until their bones broke and their muscles shredded from their bones
- Child molestation was commonly practiced and normalized and still is today
- Enslaved people were treated more harshly when they showed human emotions during times of loss

The Wet Nurse

A person who provides their breast milk to a baby other than their own either for hire or within family or communal structures.
Why The Wet Nurse?

- Milk Supply
- Aesthetic Reasons
- Perceived Dangers of Breastfeeding
- Inconvenience of Breastfeeding
- Lactation Induced Infertility
- Financial Profit

Wealth Was Built On Wet Nurses

Advertisement: "For sale—A Wet Nurse, about nineteen years of age, with her second child, six weeks old, will be sold now for cash, fully guaranteed. Also—A Black Female Nurse, who can cut out and fit well. Also—Several Negro House-Servants, Mechanics and Field Hands. Those who wish to purchase would do well to call on the holder. Price: $50.00. Pay to J. W. BOAZMAN, 137 Gravier st." (New Orleans Daily Crescent, December 21, 1850)
Telling Our Stories

- They Were Here Property
  - by Stephanie Jones-Rogers
- The New Jim Crow
  - by Michelle Alexander
- Medical Apartheid
  - by Harriet A. Washington

The Gaps!

- Wealth
- Educational
- Employment
- Zip Codes
- Health
Assumptions?

- Do Black Women Want To Breastfeed?
  - In the hospital – At delivery
  - At home
  - At work
  - When they return to work/school
- So Why The Assumptions

Nonconsensual Treatment

- Did You Ask For Consent To Touch Them
  - Prenatally
  - At Delivery
  - Antepartum/Postpartum
  - Well-Baby Checks
  - Lactation Follow Up
- Did They Give You Consent
- Why Does It Matter
Call To Action

- Surgeon General Call to Action I 2011
- Where Are We Lacking Today & Why
- Early Formula Supplementation Hurts The Microbiome of Black Babies
- Advocacy & Allyship For Black Birthing Families in the Hospital & In the Community

The Alternatives
Lactogen Infant Formula

The Fultz Quads & Pet Milk
No MedoLAC

Newborn Nurseries
Healing Going Forward

- Validation of Trauma
- Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome
- How To Support Black Families
- Healthy & Appropriate Allies

"The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations that we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us."
- Audre Lorde

Validation Of Trauma
“No one can be liberated under the weight of oppression!”
-Dr Joy DeGruy

Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome impacts of generations.
Adaptive survival behaviors in African American communities throughout the United States and the Diaspora. It is a condition that exists as a consequence of multigenerational oppression of Africans and their descendants resulting from centuries of slavery. A form of slavery which was predicated on the belief that African Americans were inherently/genetically inferior to whites. This was then followed by institutionalized racism which continues to perpetuate injury.

M.A.P

M: Multigenerational trauma together with continued oppression;
A: Absence of opportunity to heal or access the benefits available in the society; leads to
P: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome.
Racial Equity Webinar Series

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

Impact on Black Breastfeeding

“Race is not a factor on health outcomes, Racism is a factor on health outcomes.” - Dr. Clifton Kennon

How to Support Black Families?

74% Black
86.6% White

Breastfeeding Disparities Exist.

“At the root of what’s happening to black women and their birth outcomes, as well as their disparities with breastfeeding, is an issue about racism and bias.”
"Black mothers were nine times more likely to be given formula in the hospital than white mothers."

"This fact alone accounted for about 20 percent of the racial disparity in breastfeeding duration between black and white mothers.

How to Support Black Families?

We need equitable access to the IBCLC Certification.
#happyIBCLCday
LISTEN TO BLACK WOMEN!

Don’t Police Black Bodies and Families!

Normalize Breastfeeding in the Black community!

Explicit bias
- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias / operates consciously
- Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “we don’t rent to ________”

Implicit bias
- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously
- Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.
Black Women Do Breastfeed!

Questions?

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Let's Stay Connected

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