

# Talking with New Moms about Breastfeeding

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## What do women want?

- To be listened to
- To be confirmed
- To get consistent advice

“Two sides of breastfeeding support: experiences of women and mid-wives”

<http://www.internationalbreastfeedingjournal.com/content/5/1/20>



## Barriers in Hospital?

- No referral to LC
- LC too busy
- Mom too busy
- Mom/baby sick



## First Things First: Connection Before Content

“People don’t CARE what you know  
until they know you care.”

--Anonymous

Tools for Connection:  
**Active Listening Skills**  
3 Step Counseling Technique

Step 1 -Use open-ended questions  
and probes to explore concerns

Step 2-Affirm feelings

Step 3- Educate to target concerns

- Information comes last!

Step One:  
**Open-Ended Questions**



North Miami Beach WIC, Miami, FL

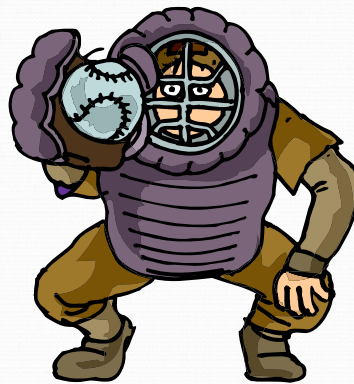
- Help mothers feel safe sharing thoughts and feelings
- Avoid making them feel interrogated
- Have no right or wrong answer
- Build trust and openness

## Examples of Closed vs Open Questions

- Has your baby latched on yet?
- **Tell me about what happened when you tried to latch your baby.**
- Do you want me to take your baby to the nursery so you can get some sleep?
- **What do you know about the benefits of rooming in with your baby?**

## Probes & Padding

- Clarify mom's initial reaction
- Open up conversation
- Use extra words to soften questions



## Step Two: Affirm Feelings

- Most important step
- Let's mother feel she has been heard
- Instills self-confidence by drawing attention to what she is doing well



***Look at how content your baby looks ! He's  
happy to be with you!***

## Affirming is HARD

- This step is the most difficult to master
- Many people, especially health professionals, want to jump to Step 3 - Education
- How can you include this step in your counseling sessions?
- Practice, practice, practice!!

## Using 3 Step Counseling

**Open ended question** - 'Hello Mrs. Jones, my name is Tess, I'm the lactation consultant here at the hospital. How is breastfeeding going?'

"I don't think my baby likes me.'

**Probing statement** "Oh? What makes you say that?"

"He arches back whenever I try to latch him on."

**Affirming statement** - "I can see how you might think he doesn't like you." OR "That must be very worrying."

**Another open ended question to introduce education** - "How do you feel about trying again while I watch?"

## Step Three: Education



Miami-Dade WIC

**Adults learn best when you:**

- Target info to mother's concerns
- Feed information in small bites
- Give several options
- Keep it simple
- Reinforce the information

## Most Common Challenges

- Giving information before the client is ready to hear it
- Burnt offerings
- Probe and affirm **AGAIN**



## In Summary

- More and more women want to breastfeed their babies
- They rely on our help to make this happen
- The 3 Step Counseling Technique results in a positive experience for moms and their care givers