

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**CONTACT:**

Judy Erickson

Marketing Manager

SAGE Publications

Tel: (805)410-7720

Email: media.inquiries@sagepub.com**NEW RESEARCH EXPLORES THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY IN BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELING
STUDY FOUND IN THE MOST RECENT ISSUE OF *JOURNAL OF HUMAN LACTATION***

Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore (February 15, 2007) — The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend that mothers breastfeed throughout the first 6 months of their baby's life. Despite the increase in breastfeeding rates across the world, the number of mothers nursing in the US is low compared to other developed countries, and low-income populations and minorities tend to have even lower rates of breastfeeding than other groups.

Researchers in the current issue of the *Journal of Human Lactation*, the official journal of the International Lactation Consultant Association, published by SAGE, suggest that it's important to fully understand how ethnicity effects breastfeeding counseling so that nursing can be effectively promoted in a multiethnic country like the US.

The study looked at the impact of peer counseling on breastfeeding among inner-city, lower income, Latina women. The intervention group received prenatal and postpartum home visits, in-hospital support, in addition to the usual breastfeeding education from the hospital. The control group only had conventional breastfeeding education at the hospital.

The study results showed that mothers were more likely to continue breastfeeding if they received focused support. Mothers in the intervention group were between 10 and 66 times more likely to nurse exclusively at 2 months postpartum (depending on their subgroup in the Latino community) when compared to the mothers in the control group.

"We are still far from reaching the AAP and WHO recommendations for exclusive breastfeeding through the first six months of life," write the authors, Alex K. Anderson, PhD, MPH, Grace Damio, MS, CD-N, Donna J. Chapman, PhD, RD, and Rafael Pérez-Escamilla, PhD, "and there is a need for further studies to determine why different ethnic groups respond differently to early breast feeding promotion interventions."

The article, "Differential Response to an Exclusive Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Intervention: The Role of Ethnicity" in the February 2007 issue of the *Journal of Human Lactation* can be accessed for a limited time at <http://jhl.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/23/1/16>

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The **International Lactation Consultant Association** (ILCA) is the professional association for International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) and other health care professionals who care for breastfeeding families. To access an IBCLC in your community, or to learn more about promoting, protection, and supporting breastfeeding, visit the ILCA website at www.ilca.org, or contact the ILCA Office at info@ilca.org, or (919) 787-5181, ext. 209.

The ***Journal of Human Lactation*** is the official journal of the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA). Written for professionals by professionals, the **Journal** deals with the practical topics that nurses, lactation consultants, midwives, nutritionists, public health and social workers, therapists, and physicians face every day. <http://jhl.sagepub.com>

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