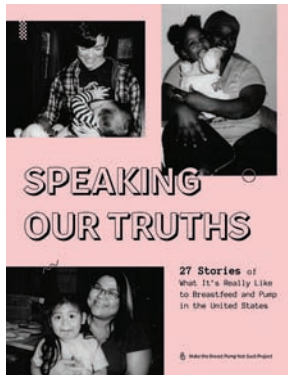


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Speaking Our Truths—27 Stories of What It's Really Like to Breastfeed and Pump in the United States

Make the Breast Pump Not Suck Project, 2018, paperback, \$10.00,
 Download pdf for free.

Available from:

<https://www.makethebreastpumpnotsuck.com/researchandstorycollection/>

Speaking Our Truths is a collection of stories that bring to light the lived experiences of mothers trying to make breastfeeding work while juggling the impacts of personal health, family life, healthcare systems, jobs, societal messages, and expectations. Each story presents a summary of the participant's experience, followed by a question and answer section. The publication came out of the work of *Make the Breast Pump Not Suck*, a collaborative focused on alleviating the burden of breastfeeding and pumping in the United States through innovation and advocacy. The group has spearheaded two hackathons, and a third is in the works.

Throughout the publication, we are repeatedly exposed to obstacles facing breastfeeding and pumping parents, but at the same time are consistently presented with potential solutions. The researchers clearly state that these stories are supposed to trigger action from all possible players. In a section titled, "How to use this book," the authors directly appeal to both obvious and potential stakeholders for help. Each story ends with a section titled: "What could have made it better," in which participants offer their own suggestions: "Removal of white healthcare providers' biases in their care of patients of color . . . More paid leave . . . More creative support from lactation consultants . . ."

We found it hard to find something to criticize about this work because we were inspired by its creation. However, there is the possibility that the informal appearance of the publication may result in it not getting the recognition and attention it deserves from some stakeholders.

Regardless of appearance, for those of us passionate about the rights of families to reach their highest potential, this publication can be used as a tool for advocacy work. It is an easy read and has clear room for next steps. With a better understanding of what can be improved, we can work toward meeting the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months (AAP, 2005; WHO, 2001). At the moment, there is no set date for a third *Make the Breast Pump Not Suck* hackathon, but perhaps this publication can help the movement gain momentum to make breastfeeding attainable, supported and celebrated for all those who would wish it to be.

References

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- World Health Organization. (2001). *The optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding: Report of an expert consultation..* Retrieved from https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/67219/WHO_NHD_01.09.pdf?ua=1



Katy Baker-Cohen, BSN, RN, IBCLC, RLC, is a maternal child public health nurse home visitor for the Philadelphia Nurse Family Partnership, an organization supporting first-time low-income families from pregnancy through the child's second birthday. Katy is also the owner of Crescent Lactation Care, LLC and does lactation support home visits in Philadelphia. Katy brings her public health lens into the lactation work she does, finding ways to support new parents holistically and always bringing the full picture of their life into the story of their breastfeeding/chestfeeding experience. Katy is the mother of two children, who keep her passion alive for this work.



Cara Puff, MEd., IBCLC, RLC, began her career in women's healthcare as an adolescent family planning counselor and educator. After obtaining a degree in Health Education and a master's degree in Urban Education, she taught Biology and Health Education in the Philadelphia Public School District for 11 years. Driven by a desire to return to helping women and their families, she completed Drexel University's Human Lactation Consultant Program. She currently works as an outpatient IBCLC at Lifecycle Woman-Care & The Birth Center, as well as a hospital-based IBCLC at Temple University Hospital for the Breastfeeding Resource Center.

FAMILY Act Action Tool

The National Partnership for Women & Families has launched an online action tool for individuals to contact their Members of Congress to ask them to co-sponsor and advocate for swift and thorough consideration of the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act: <https://secure2.convio.net/npwf/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1308>

NPWF has also updated its FAMILY Act advocacy toolkit. The toolkit includes talking points, key polling and research, a call script, and sample letters to the editor: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/workplace/coalition/family-act-coalition-toolkit.pdf>

Source: USBC