

A Description of a Male Focused Breastfeeding Promotion Corporate Lactation Program

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Objective

- At the end of this presentation participants will
 - Identify three lessons learned about a corporate lactation program that focuses on promoting breastfeeding through their male employees.
 - Identify the advantages to providing breastfeeding support through the fathers.

The role of the father

- Is one of the strongest influences on the initiation and duration of breastfeeding by mothers in the United States.
- 75% of all the mothers in a review of 11 studies identified the father as important in their decision to breastfeed.

From: Sharma M, Petosa R. Impact of expectant fathers in breast-feeding decisions. J Am Diet Assoc 1997;97:1311-1313

The role of the father

Even though fathers do participate in the feeding choice, most studies have found that they are poorly informed about the advantages of breastfeeding.

From: Voss S, Finnis L, Manners J. Fathers and breastfeeding: a pilot observational study. *J. Roy. Soc. Health* 1993; August:176-178. Freed GL, Fraley K, Schanler RJ. Attitudes of expectant fathers regarding breastfeeding. *Pediatrics* 1992; 90:224-227. Giugliani ERJ, Bronner Y, Caiaffa WT, Bogelhut J, Witter FR, Perman JA. Are fathers prepared too encourage their partners to breast feed? A study about fathers' knowledge of breast feeding. *Acta Paediatr* 1994;83:1127-1131.

Advantages to Employer Gained by Supporting Breastfeeding Mother

- Cost of training is not lost due to women stopping work
- Lower employee turnover rate
- Mother has greater concentration at work because of less worry over infant
- Higher morale and productivity among female employees

Meek JY. (2001). Breastfeeding in the workplace. *Pediatric Clinics of North America*, 48:461-474.

Rationale to Include Fathers in Employee Breastfeeding Support Programs

- The critical role that most fathers play in the infant feeding choice
- The father's influence on the success of the breastfeeding experience
- The reduction of infant health care costs, the need to provide equal benefits
- The potential reduction in male absenteeism as more and more men share equally with their partners in the care of their infants

DWP Father Breastfeeding Support Program

- Since 1990, a full-time on-site lactation program has been offered to male employees at the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LA DWP), a utilities company.

The Fathering Program

- Offers fathers and their partners:
 - group breastfeeding education classes
 - full individual lactation counseling for the fathers and their partners
 - breast pumps for the partner's use at home or at her work site

Group Breastfeeding Education Classes

- One of the major objectives of these classes is to help the father recognize and accept his vital role in the success of breastfeeding
- There are two classes, one class with partners and one class separated, at the request from the fathers.

Who participated?

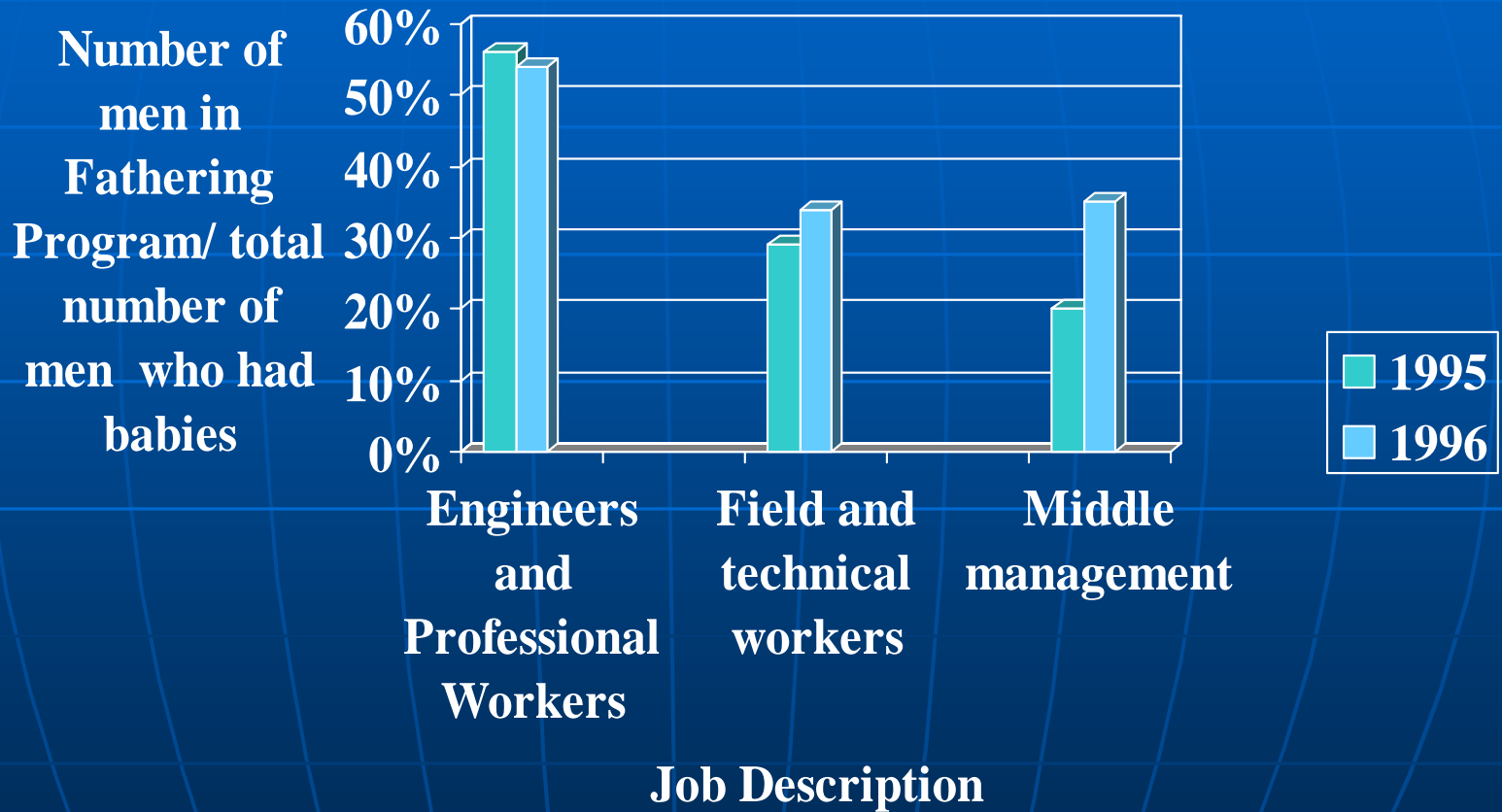
The male program participants were from diverse backgrounds.

Figure 1: Fathering Program Participants (1995-1996) by race

compared to distribution of race among LA DWP employees in 1996

	Program participants DWP	LA employees
	(%)	(%)
African American	6.3	10.56
Asian	12	6.3
Caucasian	53	40.48
Filipino	4	4
Hispanic	24	15.91
Other	1	1

Fathering Program Participants according to job classification in 1995 and 1996



Participation in the Fathering Program Grew

- Based on:
 - Word of mouth,
 - Fathers interest in the benefits of breastfeeding for the infant,
 - The female partners interest in getting a free pump rental.

Figure 2: Percent of Fathering Program Participants compared to all births at LA DWP

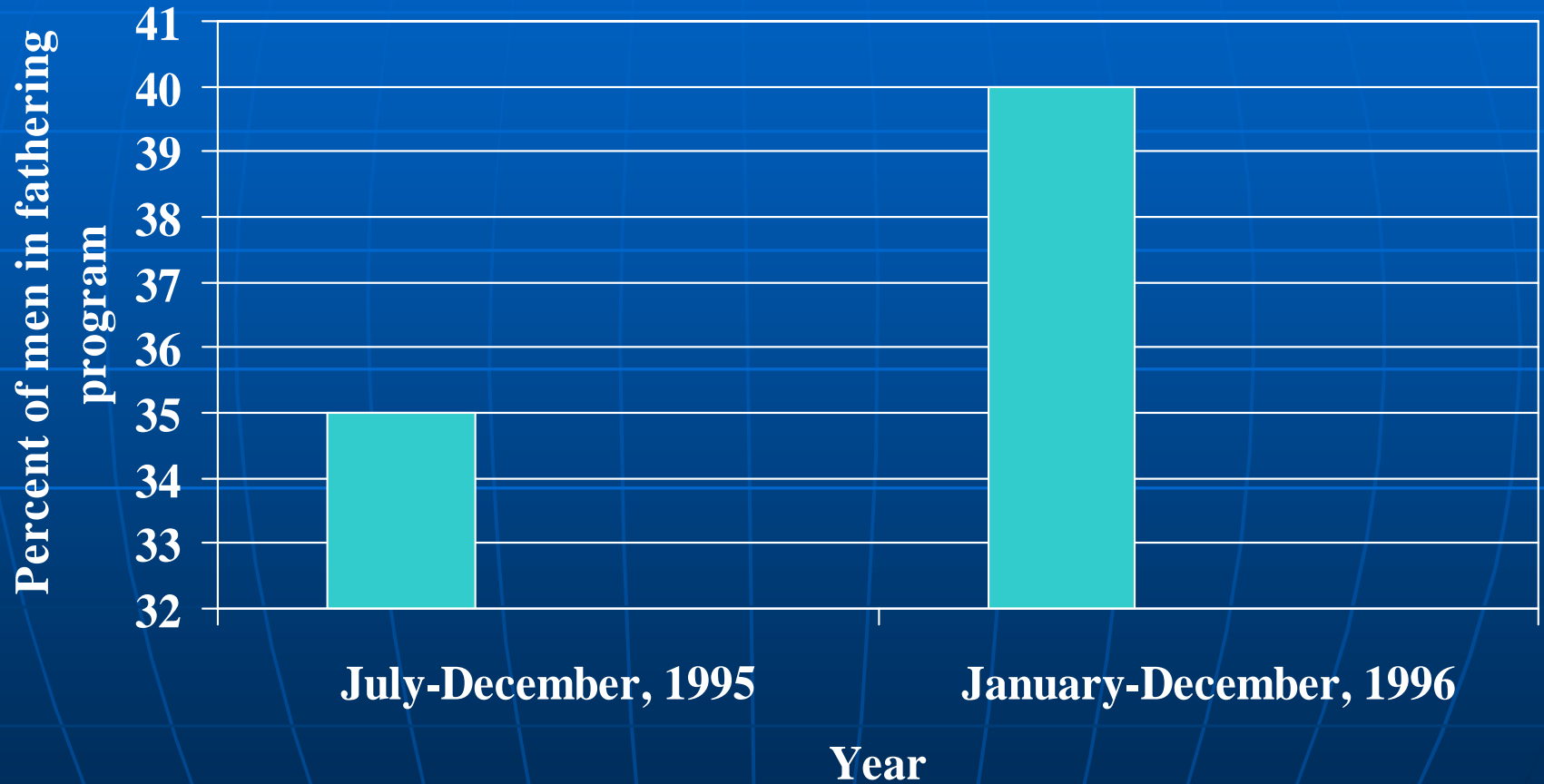
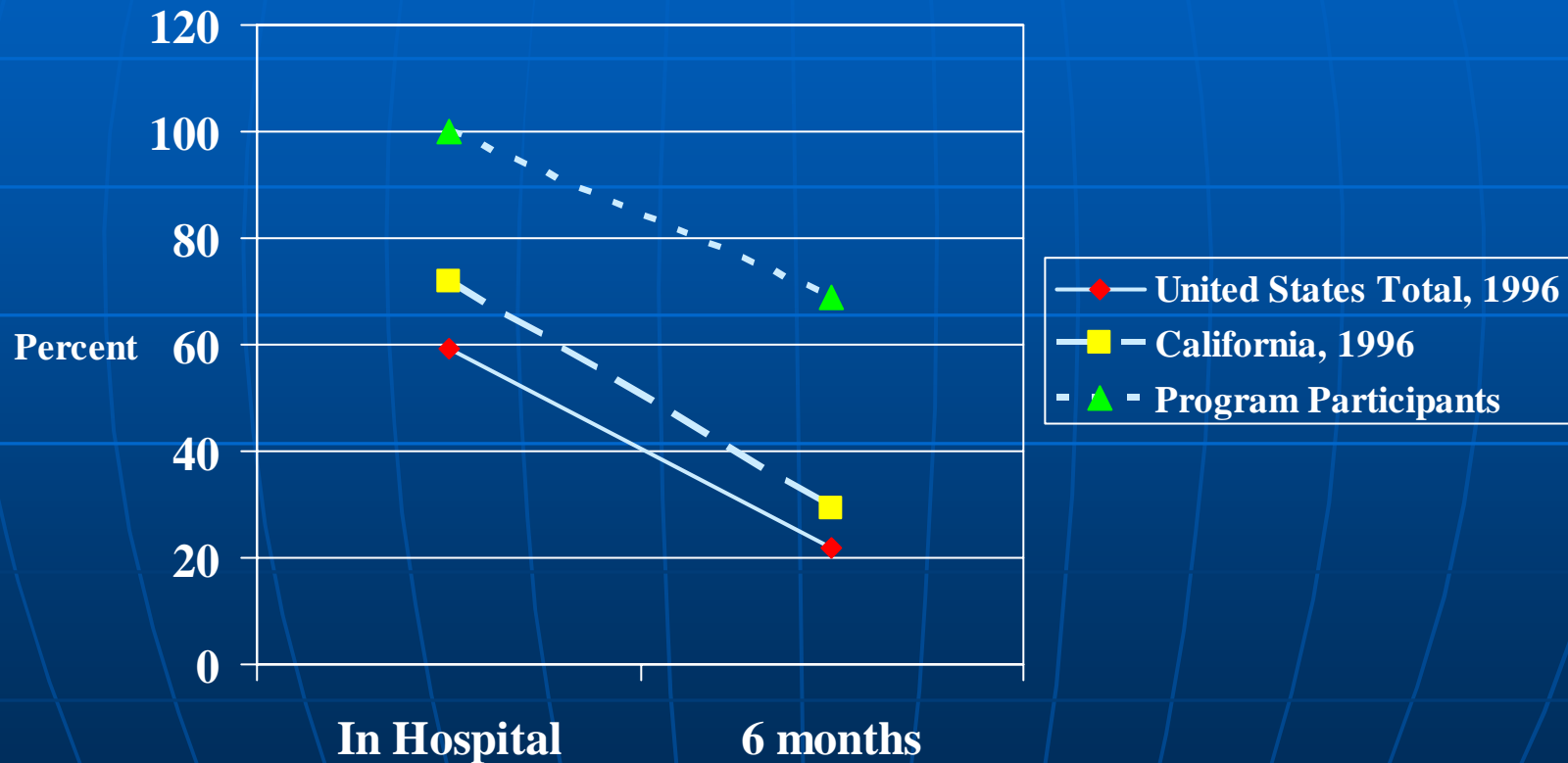


Figure 3: Breastfeeding Initiation and 6 Month Duration Rates Among Wives of the Program participants compared to California and National averages



Conclusions and Lessons Learned

- **Implementation of a breastfeeding support program that targets male employees and that is offered in a corporate setting is viable.**
- **There is a need to reduce fathers discomfort with the subject of Breastfeeding**
- **There are barriers to Breastfeeding Employee Support Program for Fathers**

Ways to reduce fathers discomfort with the Subject of Breastfeeding

- Emphasize the importance of the male role and how important the father is in the caring for the infant.
- Focus on the medical benefits for the infant and do not dwell on the subject of the breast.
- Discuss the technical aspect of breast milk expression ie the pumps.
- Provide concrete examples about how to support their partner ie bringing meals and changing diaper.
- Teach the men how to check for positioning of the infant at the breast and keep track of the urine output and bowel movements during the early breastfeeding period.

Barriers to Breastfeeding Support Program for Fathers.

- Supervisor feels pregnancy and breastfeeding issues are for women only.
- Supervisor refuses to allow the father to attend classes.
- Co-workers tease the father about attending classes.
- The educational site is not at the same location as the work site.

Different marketing strategies utilized for the Fathering Program

- Use of Photographs of men with babies
- Development of task oriented material
- Use of on-site health fair:
 - Placing the breast pump (a machine) in the front of the table during health fairs
 - Placing the breastfeeding books, kit and cooler materials in the back of the presentation table during health fairs

Different marketing strategies utilized for the Fathering Program

- Use of male and female dolls of diverse ethnicities
- Print the written materials in masculine colors such as red, blue, yellow and green
- Edit the written material to use appealing words for men such as saying expectant parent or father versus expectant families
- Use male references such as sports: ie call the class "Coaching Class for Expectant Fathers"