

# The Community Health Fair as a Tool to Address Maternal and Infant Health



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## INTRODUCTION

**Purpose:** We aim to determine the need and effectiveness of “community engagement” in addressing important issues for pregnant women and mothers with young children in the North Charleston area. To this end, we conducted a “Family Health Fair” in partnership with the Lowcountry Pregnancy Center to address maternal and infant health.

**Community Partner:** The Lowcountry Pregnancy Center (LPC) provides a wide variety of free services, including medical services, educational programs, supplies, and counseling geared toward pregnant women and their families.

**Need:** According to the SC Dept. of Health and Environmental Control, on an average day in 2009, there were 172 live births, 80 born to unmarried mothers and 7 born to mothers under 18 in SC. 74.5% of SC residents received adequate prenatal care.

## METHODS

A Family Health Fair was conducted on March 1, 2014 from 10am-1pm at the LPC’s North Charleston location with the following educational booth topics: Breastfeeding and finding support, When to call your pediatrician, Home safety, Pharmacy, Developmental milestones, Legal issues.

**Surveys:** Participants were asked to complete pre- and post-surveys as they entered the health fair and after they completed visiting all booths.

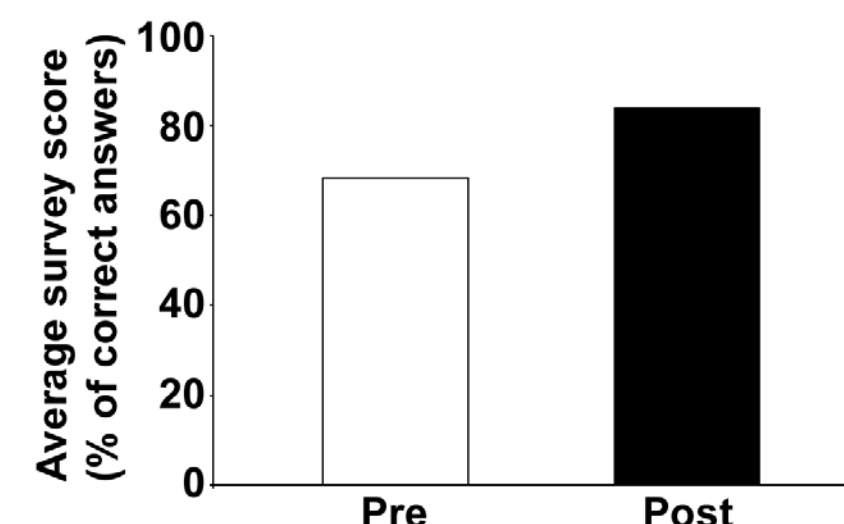
- Breast milk provides balanced nutrition to your baby. (T/F)
- Postpartum depression is the same as “baby blues” and will pass with time. (T/F)
- You should call the pediatrician if your 6 month old child has a fever of 100F. (T/F)
- You should call the pediatrician if your child has a rash and a fever.
- Tablecloths and large place mats can pose a danger to small children. (T/F)
- It is safe for the crib to have soft pillows, soft bedding, large stuffed animals, and bumper pads.(T/F)
- Should you tell your pharmacist that you are pregnant or breastfeeding? (Y/N)
- When is the best time to take your medicine? (Before/After breastfeeding/Anytime)
- What position should you put a baby in to sleep? (side/belly/back)
- How should I pick up my baby or toddler? (pull up by hands or wrists/lift from under armpits)
- Why is having a health care power of attorney important?
- What document should I use to designate a person to make health care decisions for me should I not be able to make them for myself? (Healthcare power of attorney/Five wishes document/both)
- Were the topics covered useful to you?
- What topics do you wish were covered?

## 1. Table of Pre- and Post-survey Responses

| Question topics                | Pre-survey correct responses (n) | Pre-survey correct responses (%) | Post-survey correct responses (n) | Post-survey correct responses (%) | Improvement (%) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Breastfeeding/Finding Support  | 17                               | 60.7                             | 22                                | 84.6                              | 23.9            |
| When to call your pediatrician | 15                               | 53.6                             | 15                                | 57.7                              | 4.1             |
| Home Safety                    | 20                               | 71.4                             | 26                                | 100                               | 28.6            |
| Pharmacy                       | 22                               | 84.6                             | 24                                | 92.3                              | 7.7             |
| Developmental Milestones       | 19                               | 73.1                             | 26                                | 100                               | 26.9            |
| Legal Issues/Parental Rights   | 13                               | 46.4                             | 20                                | 69.2                              | 22.8            |

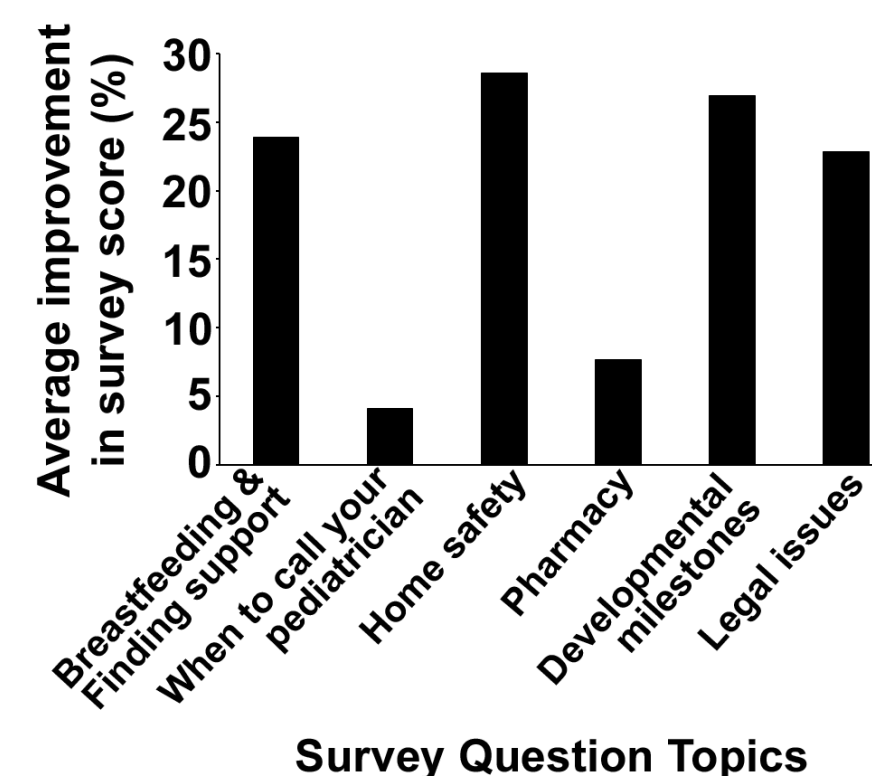
**Table 1:** Pre- and Post-survey responses. Each topic contained 2 questions. Pre:  $n = 14$ , Post:  $n = 13$ .

## 2. Comparison of Pre- and Post-survey scores



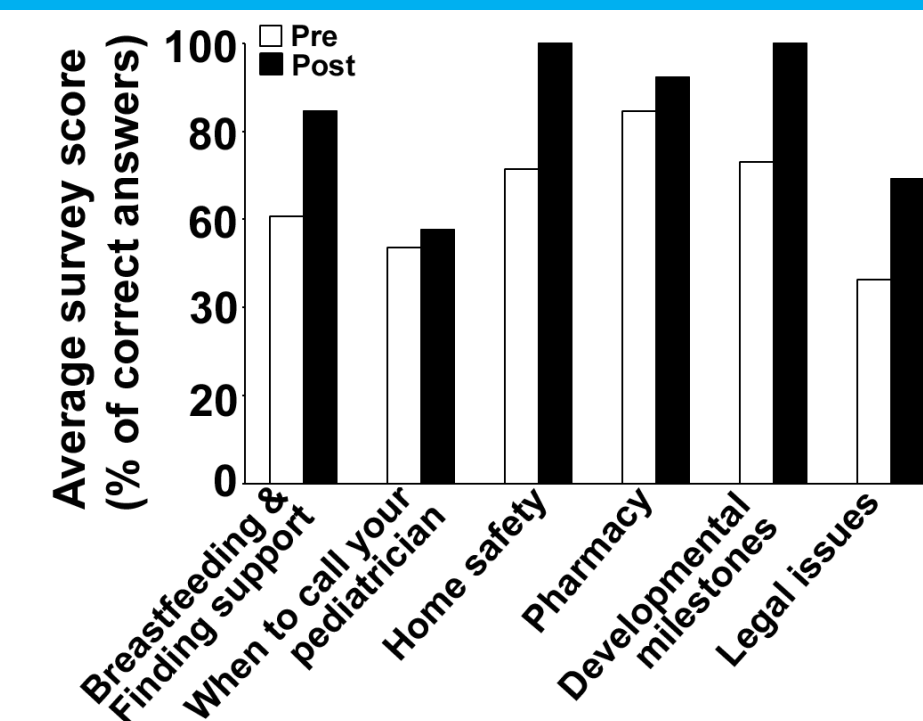
**Figure 1:** The average percentage of correct survey answers was increased in the post-survey (84%) compared to the pre-survey (68.3%) responses. Pre:  $n = 14$ , Post:  $n = 13$ .

## 3. Improvement in Survey Scores per Topic



**Figure 2:** Participant knowledge improved in all health fair educational booth topics. The greatest improvement in the number of correct responses was observed in Home Safety (28.6%) and Developmental Milestones (26.9%).

## 4. Comparison of Pre- and Post-surveys per Topic



**Figure 3:** The percentage of correct responses were increased for all booth topics. Prior to the health fair, participants were most knowledgeable in pharmacy topics (84.6% correct) and least knowledgeable on legal issues (46.4% correct). All participants answered 100% of the post-survey Home Safety and Developmental Milestones questions correctly.

## CONCLUSIONS

These results provide indicate that the health fair was effective in promoting maternal and infant health among North Charleston area mothers and mothers-to-be. We recommend focusing future LPC educational programs on topics related to When to call your pediatrician, Breastfeeding, and legal issues/parental rights.

- The average post-survey response was improved by 15.7%.
- The most improvement in correct survey responses was observed in home safety and developmental milestone topics (improved by 28.6% and 26.9%, respectively). 100% of post-survey responses were correct.
- The least improvement was observed for when to call your pediatrician. This may be an area that needs more focused attention in the future.
- Prior to the health fair, participants were most knowledgeable on pharmacy topics, but least knowledgeable on legal issues.
- Participants wished to learn more about “how to breastfeed” newborn vaccinations and parental rights.

Our interprofessional approach to the health fair allowed us to expose the community to a variety of topics that we were passionate about.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the Graduate Student Association, Babies R Us, Costco, and Publix for their generous donations.