



Establishing an International Milk Line Building a bridge for breastfeeding mothers across China

Gina Weissman DMD, RN, IBCLC, FABM ; Adi Kliffer-Barmeir MA, IBCLC ; Dana Freivald IBCLC ; Orr Cohen BA
HalavM Breastfeeding Clinic



BACKGROUND

Breastfeeding is an unequalled way for providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants. However, mothers in China face complex barriers trying to meet their breastfeeding goals, and breastfeeding rates have been declining. Since the shift in Chinese policy regarding birth control, there are ongoing changes in family planning, which elicit the need to provide special attention to breastfeeding mothers. As of February 2022, there are 913 IBCLCs in China. A relatively small number in relation to the Chinese population of over 600 million women. The aim of our project was to help Chinese women acquire up-to-date knowledge regarding human lactation and breastfeeding, so that they could complete their certification as IBCLCs and help Chinese breastfeeding mothers.



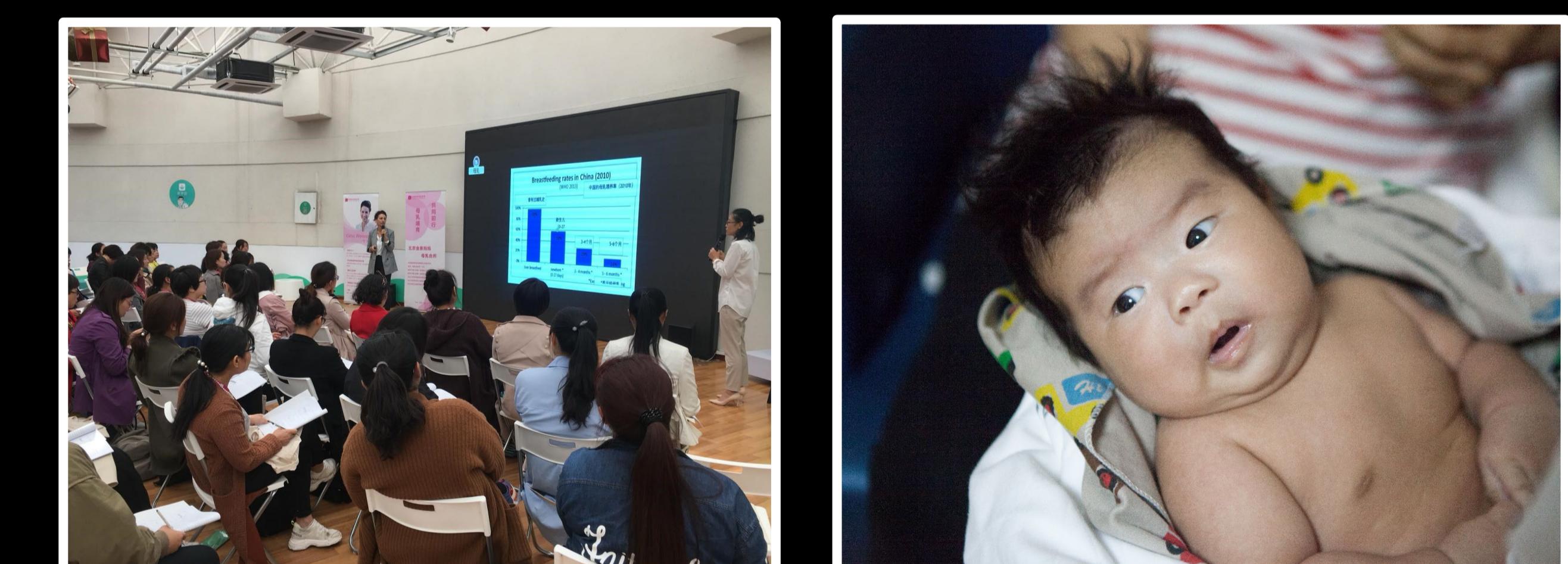
METHOD

A team of IBCLCs from organizations in Israel and China, designed a unique program that includes a course on breastfeeding and human lactation, meeting the prerequisite for the IBCLC exam, and a substructure to provide high quality clinical hours. Besides providing evidence-based information and operative practical tools to overcome common breastfeeding challenges, the course included practice of educational methods that would ensure effective teaching.



RESULTS

Graduate students of our first course are now counting their clinical hours through pathway 3 mentorship with local IBCLCs. They work in their communities, using their tools successfully, helping mothers and ensuring effective and enjoyable breastfeeding for both mothers and babies. The second course started in Guangzhou China.



CONCLUSIONS

Mothers in China have common breastfeeding problems and they need available Lactation consultants who are sensitive to their specific needs, and have a deep understanding of the cultural situation. Many women in China want to gain the IBCLC credential and they need accessible options to meet this goal. They have limited access to information and resources due to the internet regulation and lack of a textbook in their native language.



FUNDING SOURCES

None

REFERENCE

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