



**Bridging the Gap  
Between Health Expert  
and Parent Friend**





**Goal  
Problem  
Process  
Empathize  
Define  
Ideate, Prototype, Test  
Strategy**

# Goal

Create a brand and program strategy for a new non-profit organization focused on making it easier to navigate raising health kids and taking good care of yourself.

# Problem

Millennials are disrupting parenting and health care



**90%** of new parents are millennials



**19%** of millennials view their doctors as proactively managing their health



**71%** millennial moms and dads turn to the internet or social media for help with their parenting

Maternal and child health outcomes are bad

POPULAR QUARTZ

### What's killing America's new mothers?

**American kids are 70 percent more likely to die before adulthood than kids in other rich countries**

A new study ranks 20 wealthy countries on childhood deaths. The US comes in last.  
By Sarah Kiff | sarah@vox.com | Jan 8, 2018, 4:00pm EST

BIRTHING WHILE BLACK

### New mom Serena Williams had to talk her hospital staff through saving her life

HEALTH 02/03/2018 11:54 am ET

### More Than Half Of American Babies Are At Risk For Malnourishment

The first 1,000 days of nutrition can set a child's course for life or perpetuate a cycle of poverty.  
By Lauren Weber

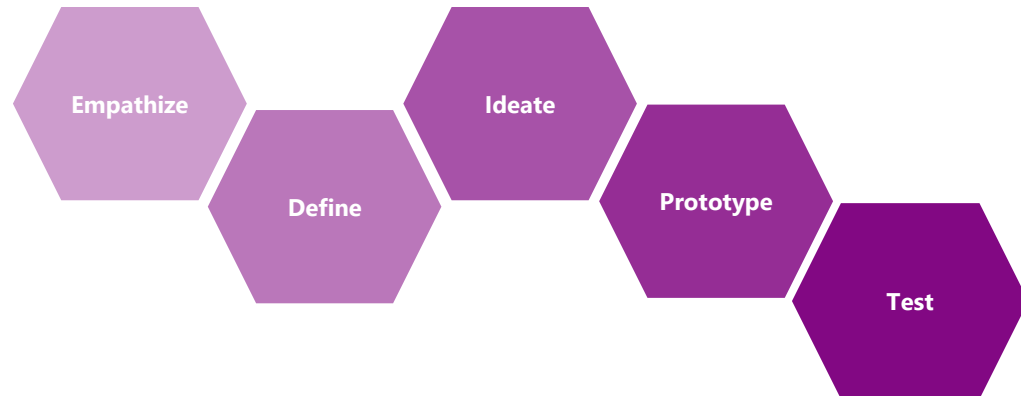
There are too many stories about moms being judged and shamed

"I hesitated to even bring it [formula] up with people, since it's like a dirty word."

# Process

We used a design thinking research process and a public health framework about the factors influencing health decisions and behaviors to guide the development of our brand and program strategy.

## Design Thinking Process



## Factors Influencing Health Decisions and Behaviors





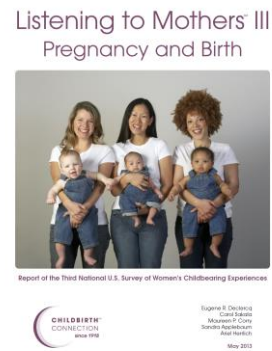
# Empathize

## Primary Research

1. Conducted interviews with 8 moms and 2 mom/dad pairs, recruiting interviewees from the social media networks of Mothership's Board of Directors with an emphasis on nutrition, birth, and breastfeeding experiences
2. Observed 4 family lactation consultant appointments at 2 pediatrics offices

## Secondary Research

3. Studied reports on national trends related to millennials and health care and parenting
4. Assessed the landscape of current work being done



# Empathize: Pain Points

"You feel like you should be doing so much, but you are not physically capable of doing much."

"I hesitated to even bring it [formula] up with people, since it's like a dirty word."

"The hospital had a breastfeeding hotline and no one ever answered. I emailed a nearby lactation consultant and she never replied. Researching this stuff is so difficult when you just returned home after birth."

"After searching the internet, I finally found an article with practical tips on weaning only to realize halfway through that it was intended for stay-at-home moms and not moms going back to work like me."



"My OB suggested that my goal to breastfeed for at least a year was unrealistic—that shocked me."

"My mother and OBGYN were not as helpful as I thought they would be. And, my Pediatrician was not a mother and just could not relate to my supply problems I was having; I constantly felt pressure to 'give in' to formula, which is a really terrible feeling of inadequacy and failure."

"I actually avoided ever scheduling one [lactation consultant appointment], though it could have been useful, because I didn't want to get pressured and shamed about the formula supplementation."

"My OBGYN answered my questions, but no one just hands you the information. You really have to do all the leg-work yourself."

# Empathize: Bright Spots

"I'm mostly just proud of myself for coming this far, for being patient with myself, and for being the best mom that I can be to [my child]."

"With apologies to my husband, I know that I can bring more comfort to my son than anyone else on the planet. We have this superhuman bond."

"Watching [my baby] learn something new or laugh is the highest high I have ever felt."

"It made me feel like a rock star. My husband would brag 'Look at our baby! Every ounce of him came from my wife!'"

"My two good mommy friends supported me and made such a big deal out of every little triumph. I don't know what I would have done without them. It allows you to feel happy in the smallest of successes."

"There are so many moments during pregnancy when you harp on the things you are doing wrong—that you shouldn't have eaten something or engaged in some type of activity. These happy moments remind you that it's not the little things that matter, but how you are taking care of yourself and your baby as a whole."



"My best mom friend, who is also a nurse, understands me, doesn't judge, and has medical knowledge."

"Looking back at my progress since [my child] was conceived, I'd say that I went from a pretty strong person to a total badass."



# Empathize: Human Factors Analysis

Physical	Cognitive	Social	Cultural	Emotional
<p>Many families are not getting the support that they need.</p> <p>Moms are not accessing support resources because they are not close to home, they are not affordable, and because people are not responsive to calls and emails.</p> <p>Moms sometimes need on-the-spot advice and don't want to have to travel somewhere.</p> <p>Moms enjoy their homes because they are personalized to them and cozy.</p> <p>Many moms cite natural and peaceful spaces as their favorite places.</p> <p>Moms are asking their physicians about nutrition, even though there are other professionals better suited to provide more tailored support for families.</p>	<p>There is information overload on the internet and many books that moms could read.</p> <p>Nutrition and breastfeeding advice can be confusing and there is a lot of contradictory information out there.</p> <p>It is hard to know what is credible and what is not.</p>	<p>Being a mom can be isolating.</p> <p>Moms are turning to other moms for advice and support.</p> <p>Moms trust other moms.</p> <p>Some moms feel they could not get through the challenges of motherhood without the support of other moms.</p> <p>Sometimes mom groups can also be judgmental with some dominant voices.</p>	<p>Religious, cultural, and lifestyle preferences (i.e. being a vegetarian Hindu) can make navigating the pregnancy and post-partum nutrition advice landscape difficult.</p> <p>Sometimes moms have to work hard to find information that is relevant to them and providers that are empathic to their needs.</p> <p>Millennial parents view themselves as the managers of their health, a role once filled by health providers.</p>	<p>Moms feel judged and pressured.</p> <p>Moms are afraid to ask for help for fear of judgment about something they did or did not do, particularly related to breastfeeding.</p> <p>Oscillating feelings of failure and accomplishment.</p> <p>Moms feel inadequately prepared for obstacles related to nutrition and breastfeeding and desire communications of realness and honesty about the grey area between breastfeeding at the breast and formula feeding.</p> <p>Moms feel like there are so many resources and so much attention paid to the baby and not enough to them and their needs.</p> <p>Moms trust their gut.</p> <p>Moms are proud of their babies and the accomplishments and milestones of their babies.</p> <p>Moms want to be seen and heard.</p>

# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

#1

## Information Overload

There's a lot of health information out there. And, millennials are sourcing health information from each other, the internet, social media, family, and others in their social networks, in addition to asking their health service providers questions. Moms also receive unsolicited advice. It's a lot to sift through.

## Curation

How might we help moms sift through it all?



# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

## #2

### Irrelevant Advice

Despite the plethora of information, it can still be hard to find what's personally relevant. Several moms were specifically frustrated about health professional emphasis on providing information about ideals vs. practical advice for their unique situations and then the subsequent rabbit holes of internet searches.

### Personalization

How might we help moms find what's relevant to them?



# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

#3

## Confusion

It's not always clear from an internet search or reading advice through a social media network what's credible and what's not. And, there's a lot of inaccurate information making the rounds. For some moms, relatability impacts credibility with them noting willingness to trust the advice of other mom friends they knew well more than others, including health professionals, because their friends "get them." They also noted being more interested in what someone had to say if they had a similar experience to them.

## Credibility & Relatability

How might we help moms identify reliable science-based advice that they feel they can trust?



# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

#4

## Lecturing

Most millennials want to be the managers of their own health care vs. be told what to do. Moms talked about how they best understood the nuances of their family's needs and encouraged other moms to go with their gut feelings. They still wanted advice from their health service providers, but it wasn't the only advice they considered.

## Empowerment

How might we help health service providers empower their patients/clients?





# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

#5

## Judgment

The moms wanted people to understand them and why they made certain decisions. They wanted their health service providers to view their well-being as a priority in addition to prioritizing the well-being of their baby, especially in the early postpartum period. They noted worrying about being judged for some of their choices, and many shared stories about their experiences of being judged by peers, colleagues, family members, and their own health service providers.

## Empathy

How might we help health service providers practice empathy in their health practices?



# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

#6

## Isolation

Some moms noted feelings of isolation during their child's first few months. Many actively sought out the company of other moms, in-person or digitally, and encouraged other new mothers to do the same. Having good mom friends helped create a positive motherhood experience for most of the moms we interviewed.

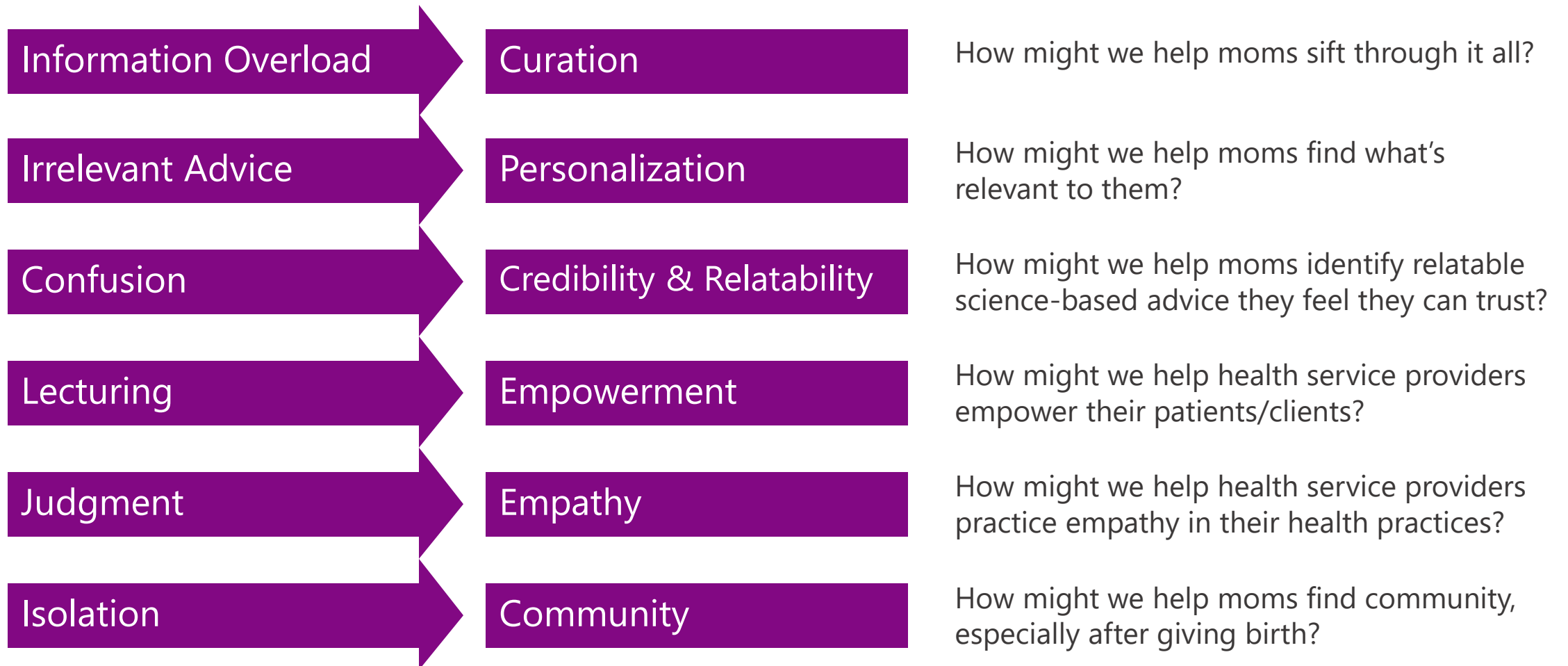
## Community

How might we help moms find community, especially during those first few months after a child is born?



# Define: Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

1-6





## **Define:** Key Insights and Opportunity Areas

“My best mom friend, who is also a nurse, understands me, doesn’t judge, and has medical knowledge.”

How might we create a similar experience for all moms and possibly even all parents in a systemic and equitable way?

# Define: Design Criteria

Must address multiple pain points from the key insights

Must be appealing to both moms and health service providers

Must have the potential to start small and scale sustainably as the organization grows

Must leverage multiple factors of influence on health decisions and behaviors

Must be able to be designed to prioritize and uplift diverse voices and experiences



Monroe Clinic

# Ideate, Prototype, Test: Co-design Sessions

10 virtual and in-person sessions  
with 27 moms and health service  
providers

Photo

Address: 16 Monroe Center St  
Grand Rapids, MI

## Details

**Services:** RD, IBCLC, and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors provide on-site services; 24-hour digital access to peer counselor. Meet the staff

**Access:** Has a WIC Program; Is able to bill insurance (all BCBS plans)

**Empathy:** All staff receive x empathy training; All staff are trained in breastfeeding basics; All nutrition and breastfeeding staff practice motivational interviewing and client-centered services.

**Space:** Meets satisfactory cleanliness and comfort standards.

**Type of Clinic:** Health Center  
- OB-GYN, Pediatrics, Dental, Nutrition, Breastfeeding Services -

**Hours:**  
**Clinic:**  
Mondays-Fridays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Nutrition Services:**  
Mondays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Breastfeeding Services:**  
Mondays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

clinic spotlight: Mom

## Resource Reviews

### What Foods to Avoid While Pregnant

Read More

### Expert Opinion

Average Scores for 5 experts

**A** Accuracy: Mixed

**S** Safety: Safe

Review Resource

Jane Smith, RD

**M** Mixed Comments:

**S** Safe

Pam Rodriguez, PhD, RN

**A** Mixed Comments:

**S** Safe

Read More Expert Opinions

### Mom Value

Average Scores for 50 Moms + care partners

**N** "Moms need to know" - 20%

**L** "I learned something new" - 70%

**R** "It's relevant to me + my family" - 30%

Review Resource

Annie Jones, mother of 3  
37 years old

**N** Yes Comments:

**L** Yes

**R** Yes

John Johnson, Father of 1  
29 years old

**N** No Comments:

**L** Yes

**R** No

Read More Mom Val



# Ideate, Prototype, Test: Iterative Discussion Guides

## Mom Co-Creation Discussion Guide Version 2

### As People Arrive:

- 1) Have them sign an NDA and complete the demographic survey
- 2) Ask them to pick out a card that best represents them as a mom and their parenting style/approach to parenting

### Parenting Style Icebreaker:

**Question:** How does your card best represent you as a mom and your parenting style/approach to parenting?

**Question:** Do you think your parenting style/approach to parenting affects you in your eating habits and your feeding routines with your children? Why or why not? And, how?

### Organization Basics and Brand Development:

- 1) Pass out the sheet of the organization's basics and walk them through the details of the organization.
- 2) Show them the brand guidelines deck that some volunteers, including students at Kendall College of Art and Design have put together.

**Question:** How does this brand make you feel?

**Question:** After telling you some of the details about our organization, do you think this brand is consistent with our vision? Why or why not?

### Program Development-Personalized Digital Resources:

**Question:** (read description of idea) What do you think of this idea?

**Exercise:** We brainstormed a potential list of factors that we think could impact your healthy eating and child feeding practices, and therefore impact the kinds of resources you would be interested in. We have listed out

several kinds of resources. (Pass out the ranking sheets.) **Please rank these in order of interest.**

**Question:** What types of healthy eating and child feeding resources are we missing?

**Question:** What specific topics do you wish you had more guidance on?

**Question:** What specific topics are you most interested in currently, if any?

**Question:** How do you like to receive your information and why? (for example, short how-to articles from someone you trust, long in-depth articles on different topics so you can make a decision on something for yourself, as a podcast, in video clips, etc.)

### Program Development-Empathy Training:

It is clear that moms and families want to be treated with respect and have their decisions supported.

**Question:** Can you describe an experience where you felt respected and supported as a mom?

**Question:** Can you describe an experience where you felt disrespected and unsupported as a mom?

**Question:** (read description of program) Would you use this website? Why or why not?

**Question:** What kinds of information would be most important to include in the profiles?

**Question:** If we included an opportunity to provide reviews of service providers and clinics, what, if anything would motivate you to complete a review?

### Wrap-Up:

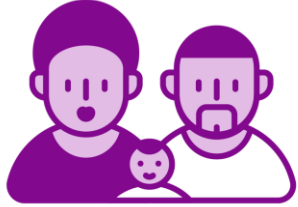
Thank you for taking time to participate.

**Question:** Do you have any final thoughts about anything we discussed today?]

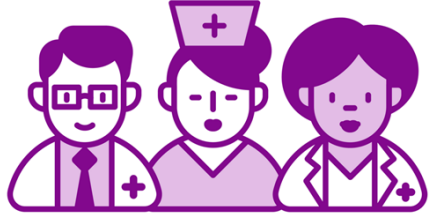
# Program Directions

Factors Influencing Health Decisions and Behaviors	Digital Health Education Community	Training and Certification Program for Health Service Providers
Policy	x*	x*
Community	x	x
Organizational		x
Interpersonal	x	x
Individual	x	

\*While neither program currently influences policy, both programs could impact future policies related to workforce training, health professional curriculums, and health service delivery with appropriate data collection and evaluation.



**Program 1:**  
**Digital Health Education Community**



**Program 2:**  
**Health Service Provider Training and Certification Program on Empathy and Empowerment**





# Brand Strategy

Strong

Uplifting

Inclusive



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Being a parent is not just a side hustle.

**YOU'RE CREATING THE  
FUTURE OF THE WORLD.**

We Bridge the Gap Between Health  
Expert and Parent Friend

Growing healthy humans is a tough job, and each family is unique. As a parent, getting the health information and support you want should be as easy and painless as turning to a friend that you know and trust.





# Ideate, Prototype, Test:

Digital Health Education  
Community Refinement

**Tools**

**Content**

**Design**

**Business Model**



**Co-designed with 8 mom dietitians to inform the pilot run**



# Friends with Health Benefits

Mothership's health education community is a digital platform where health experts who are also recent parents facilitate a community of parents, create content, and endorse resources on health topics parents care about that are not often well covered in doctors' visits, like nutrition, infant feeding, self-care, and child growth and development. These health partners are relatable. They share science-based information and advice. And, they understand the practical realities of parenting. Mothership health partners represent the diversity of families in the country, and it is our hope that parents can see themselves in them. Tools on the platform help parents sift through content, get to know health partners, and curate credible articles, blogs, videos, and podcasts relevant to them from across the internet and social media.







Martelle Esposito  
Grand Rapids, MI



Home



Health Partners



Classes



Interest Groups



Resources



Digital Library



Profile

# Welcome Back Martelle!

## New & Noteworthy



**BLOG**

# Purpose Over Perfection

Interests  Edit

 Logout

## Upcoming Classes



**HEALTH PARTNER**  
**Kristin Revere:**  
**Certified Doula**



**CLASS**  
**Creating the**  
**Future**

**05.01** Healthy Eating  
Dr. Margaret Spencer

**05.09** Breastfeeding  
Kristin Revere

**05.22** Healthy Eating  
Dr. Margaret Spencer

**06.07** Healthy Eating  
Dr. Margaret Spencer

**06.15** Healthy Eating  
Dr. Margaret Spencer

**07.02** Healthy Eating  
Dr. Margaret Spencer

- Home
- Health Partners
- Events
- Interests
- Resource Portal
- Favorites

- Profile
- Account

## Martelle Esposito



About etc. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia

[NUTRITION](#)[PREGNANCY](#)[BREASTFEEDING](#)

### My Classes

	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere

### My Discussion Groups

	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere

### My Support Groups

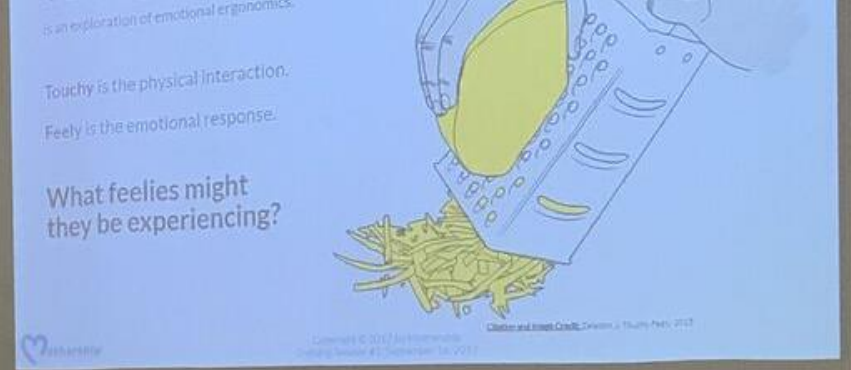
	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere
<b>05.09</b>	<b>Breastfeeding</b> Kristin Revere



# Ideate, Prototype, Test: Training and Certification Refinement

2 x full-day group workshop iterations

4 Additional group module iterations



# Be the Health Care Partner Millennial Parents are Looking For

Drawing from research in the fields of psychology, human-centered design, and human behavior, the one-day Mothership Certified training workshop focuses on providing knowledge and tools for health service providers on building connection and promoting empowerment in health practice when working with millennial parents. Topics include building empathy, practicing self-care, understanding and overcoming biases, reading emotional and cultural cues, reflecting on your patient's/client's journey, and connecting with and empowering your patients/clients through intentional communication design using space, language, nonverbal cues, and storytelling. The training program is targeted at a range of health service providers.





# Contact Info

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