Examining Western Elimination Communication Practices and Outcomes: An Online Survey

Janelle Boram Lee, Melanie Soderstrom, & Warren O. Eaton
Department of Psychology, University of Manitoba

Poster presented at Development 2014: A Canadian Conference on Developmental Psychology, May 2014, Ottawa

**Elimination Communication (EC)**
An infant potty training approach based on practices in some Eastern countries, often without the use of diapers.

**Research Questions**
- What are the characteristics of parents who use Elimination Communication?
- How do they practice EC?
- What are the outcomes for potty training success and parental satisfaction with EC?

**Method**
Online questionnaire via SurveyGizmo.com

**Recruitment:**
Respondents were parents of a young child who has used, or is using, EC.
- Facebook Newsfeed ads
- ~116K 20- to 45-year-old women
- Recruited from Canada, USA, and UK
- EC-related key words (E.g., attachment parenting, cloth diapers, and elimination communication). Each week to 45% of respondents were parents who have used or are using EC.

**EC Parent Demographics:**
- 62% of respondents were from North America (N=183):
  - Canada: 56
  - United States: 62
  - U.K.: 36
  - Other: 29
- 90% of EC parents self-report middle to high SES status (N=180):
  - High SES: 81
  - Middle SES: 89
  - Low SES: 10

**EC Parent Characteristics:**
- 54% male, 46% female; N=183
- 83% of EC infants were breastfed (N=180)
- 50% of EC infants have no siblings in the home (N=178)
- Daycare (23%)
  - Only child in home: 90
  - 1 sibling: 54
  - 2+ siblings: 34
- 12th grade or less (6%)
  - Some college (28%)
- 12th grade or less (6%)
  - High school or equivalent degree (11%)

**Sample Comments about EC:**
- “EC is a choice, not a cultural norm
- Highly motivated parenting
- Very high breastfeeding rates and lengths
- Broad spectrum of EC usage
- EC works

**EC Users Report Potty Success:**
- Most infants had potty success with poop at all ages.
- Gradual increase over time.

**EC Users Report Potty Success:**
- Defined as >90% receptacle use
- 98% of EC users would recommend it to someone else!

**Acknowledgements**
This research was funded by the Department of Psychology at the University of Manitoba.

**Correspondence**
M_Soderstrom@umanitoba.ca
Warren.Eaton@umanitoba.ca
Leebr@myumanitoba.ca