

# Who's Who?

## A glance at breastfeeding support in the United States

Lactation support is often needed to help mothers initiate and continue breastfeeding. There are many kinds of help available for breastfeeding mothers including peer counselors, certified breastfeeding educators and counselors, and lactation professionals such as the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC®).

Breastfeeding support is valuable for a variety of reasons, from encouragement and emotional support to guidance and assistance with complex clinical situations. Mothers benefit from all kinds of support, and it is important to receive the right kind at the right time. The breastfeeding support categories listed below each play a vital role in providing care to mothers and babies.

Breastfeeding Support Types	Prerequisites	Training Required	Scope of Practice
<b>Professional</b> <i>(International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, IBCLC®)</i>	Recognized health professional or satisfactory completion of collegiate level health sciences coursework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 hours of lactation-specific education</li> <li>• College level health science courses</li> <li>• 300-1000 clinical practice hours</li> <li>• Successful completion of a criterion-referenced exam offered by an independent international board of examiners.</li> </ul>	Provide professional, evidence based, clinical lactation management; educate families, health professionals and others about human lactation.
<b>Certified</b> <i>(i.e. Certified Lactation Counselor, Certified Breastfeeding Educator, etc.)</i>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-120 hours of classroom training</li> <li>• Often includes a written exam or “certification” offered by the training organization</li> </ul>	Provide education and guidance for families on basic breastfeeding issues.
<b>Peer</b> <i>(i.e. La Leche League, WIC Peer Counselor, etc.)</i>	Personal breastfeeding experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18-50 hours of classroom training</li> </ul>	Provide breastfeeding information, encouragement, and support to those in their community.

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# Breastfeeding Support Credentials

TITLE	TRAINING TIME	DESCRIPTION
<b>International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)</b>	90 hours lactation specific education, 300-1000 clinical practice hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 college level health professional courses (14 academic credits)</li> <li>6 health related continuing education courses,</li> <li>Pass a criterion-reference exam</li> </ul> <p>The International Board Certified Lactation Consultant possesses the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to provide quality breastfeeding assistance to babies and mothers. IBCLCs specialize in the clinical management of breastfeeding which includes: preventive healthcare, patient education, nutrition counseling, and therapeutic treatment.</p> <p><a href="http://ibclce.org/certify/eligibility-criteria/">http://ibclce.org/certify/eligibility-criteria/</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Certified Lactation Specialist/ Breastfeeding Specialist</b>	45 hours	<p>Designed for the aspiring lactation consultant or nurses, physicians, midwives, dietitians, breastfeeding assistants or others desirous of improving their knowledge base and skills in working with the breastfeeding dyad. This certification is a stepping stone to the IBCLC credential.</p> <p><a href="http://www.lactationeducationconsultants.com/course_clsc.shtml">http://www.lactationeducationconsultants.com/course_clsc.shtml</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Certificated Lactation Educator Counselor</b>	45 hours	<p>This university based program trains participants to be Lactation Educator Counselors. Lactation Educator Counselors are typically entry level practitioners and deal primarily with the normal process of lactation. This course is the required prerequisite to the Lactation Consultant course.</p> <p><a href="http://breastfeeding-education.com/home/clec-2/">http://breastfeeding-education.com/home/clec-2/</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Breastfeeding Counselor</b>	10-14 months, Provide 30 hours of support	<p>2-3 day workshop, self-evaluation, one written paper &amp; case studies, read and review 5 books, submit one survey on breastfeeding support available in your community, open book online tests (multiple choice) to cover physiology &amp; anatomy. <a href="http://www.childbirthinternational.com/information/pack.html">http://www.childbirthinternational.com/information/pack.html</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Lactation Educator</b>	120 hours online training, includes 50 hours health science 75 hours self-directed study/mentorship	<p>Qualified to teach, support, and educate the public on breastfeeding and related issues and policies. Workbook activities, required reading materials, attend 8 breastfeeding meetings, research paper, submit a class presentation, work for clients in their community. Prepares for the IBCLC exam.</p> <p><a href="http://www.birtharts.com/lactation-educator-certification.htm">www.birtharts.com/lactation-educator-certification.htm</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Community Breastfeeding Educator</b>	20 hours	<p>“Does not issue Lactation Consultant status. For community workers in maternal child health, focuses on providing services to pregnant women to encourage the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding.”</p> <p>From <a href="http://www.healthychildren.cc/maternalInfant.htm#maternal">http://www.healthychildren.cc/maternalInfant.htm#maternal</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>-Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC)</b>	45 hours	<p>“This comprehensive, evidence-based, breastfeeding management course includes practical skills, theoretical foundations and competency verification.” Certification is accredited by the American National Standards Institute. Some, but not all, certificate holders may have college level academic coursework. Some, but not all, certificate holders may demonstrate 150 hours of supervised clinical experience and a nursing or bachelor’s degree.</p> <p>ANLC are licensed nurses as a pre-requisite to the examination.</p> <p>From <a href="http://www.talpp.org/">http://www.talpp.org/</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>-Advanced Lactation Consultant (ALC)</b>	90 hours	
<b>-Advanced Nurse Lactation Consultant (ANLC)</b>	90 hours	
<b>Baby Friendly Curriculum</b>	Approximately 20 hours	<p>Used by facilities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of their staff towards successful implementation of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>WIC Peer Counselor</b>	30-50 hours, Varies by state, some states have quarterly training	<p>Peer counselors are mothers who have personal experience with breastfeeding and are trained to provide basic breastfeeding information and support to other mothers with whom they share various characteristics, such as language, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. In WIC, peer counselors are recruited and hired from WIC’s target population of low-income women and undergo training to provide mother-to-mother support in group settings and one-to-one counseling through telephone calls or visits in the home, clinic, or hospital. Refer mothers to IBCLCs who have challenging questions and concerns.</p> <p><a href="https://lovingsupport.fns.usda.gov/content/about-wic-breastfeeding-peer-counseling">https://lovingsupport.fns.usda.gov/content/about-wic-breastfeeding-peer-counseling</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Certified Lactation Educator</b>	20 hours total, some have 8 hours clinical	<p>Qualified to teach, support, and educate the public on breastfeeding and related issues. Complete course training, attend support group meetings, observe consultation or videos, review research studies and other requirements, including a test. <a href="http://www.icappa.net/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=638578&amp;hhSearchTerms=%22lactation+and+educator%22">http://www.icappa.net/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=638578&amp;hhSearchTerms=%22lactation+and+educator%22</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>La Leche League Peer Counselor (volunteer)</b>	18-20 hours	<p>Have successfully breastfed their infants for at least 6 months. Program developed to provide support systems within targeted communities that will provide ongoing access to breastfeeding information and support.</p> <p><a href="http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvaugsep99p92.html">http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvaugsep99p92.html</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>La Leche League Leader (volunteer)</b>	About 1 year of self-study training	<p>An experienced breastfeeding mother, familiar with research and current findings dealing with breastfeeding, who offers practical information and encouragement to nursing mothers through monthly meetings and one-to-one help.</p> <p><a href="http://www.lalecheleague.org/lad/tall/faq.html#howlong">http://www.lalecheleague.org/lad/tall/faq.html#howlong</a> Accessed May 2016</p>
<b>Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselor</b>	About 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prescribed mentored curriculum while volunteering at weekly Baby Café meetings for approx 100 meetings, with 30-60 hrs required self-study</li> <li>Usually an experienced breastfeeding mother with strong profession-oriented interest and links to the community</li> <li>Has an understanding of national health-related impacts of breastfeeding and challenges mothers face in achieving breastfeeding goals</li> <li>Demonstrates ability to offer routine lactation support; trouble shoots a wide variety of breastfeeding issues from newborn to weaning</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.babycafeusa.org/">http://www.babycafeusa.org/</a> Accessed May 2016</p>