



IBLCE

*International Board of
Lactation Consultant Examiners*

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PRESS RELEASE

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A record number of 2163 lactation professionals successfully completed the rigorous requirements to become International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC). The final step in the process was passing a test administered by the IBLCE to demonstrate knowledge required to provide skilled assistance to nursing mothers.

The IBLCE Certification is the professional standard of competency in the lactation field. It is the only official, international credential for those offering breastfeeding and lactation care. A combination of basic training, continuing education, practice and successful completion of the examination assures that the designation "IBCLC" identifies a member of the health care team who possesses specialized skills and knowledge. There are now approximately 16,500 IBCLCs world-wide.

IBLCE-certified nurses, physicians, dietitians, educators, midwives, social workers, lay counselors, and therapists work with mothers to help them excel in the breastfeeding experience. A mother who breastfeeds can save \$1400 per year on formula, is more likely to bond closely with her child, passes on immunities to her child and recovers more quickly from the weight normally gained during pregnancy. Her likelihood of contracting premenopausal breast cancer or osteoporosis over her lifetime is reduced. Studies have shown that babies who are breastfed have fewer visits to health care providers through age 17. The incidence of otitis media, juvenile diabetes, and other illnesses is reduced, not just during the breastfeeding period but throughout childhood. Assistance by an IBLCE-certified professional in the critical first hour after birth improves probability of long term maintenance of breastfeeding.

IBCLCs are ideally skilled to help provide quality breastfeeding care; develop and implement breastfeeding protocols; improve lactation knowledge and skills of other staff; and to help their facilities become accredited under the UNICEF "Baby Friendly" Hospital Initiative.

Candidates for the international exam meet stringent eligibility requirements that demonstrate proficiency and understanding of practical skills, clinical judgment, current research knowledge and attainment of a number of continuing education credits. The IBLCE maintains a National/International Registry for all Registered Lactation Consultants. The Registry is a service to the public, employers and supervisors to determine if a provider is a current IBCLC. The Registry can be accessed through the IBLCE website at www.iblce.org and will be updated with the new IBCLCs on January 2nd, 2005. For more information, contact the IBLCE at 703-560-7330.