

**FOR
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**2006
IBCLC
Day
March 1**

Lactation Consultants Worldwide Celebrate IBCLC Day

International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) across the world will celebrate the worldwide event, IBCLC Day, on Wednesday, March 1, 2006. This year's theme is "IBCLCs: A Valuable Link in the Circle of Care for Breastfeeding Families."

"Breastfeeding is one way to help assure the best possible health outcomes for mothers and babies," says Sue Cox, president of the International Lactation Consultant Association which sponsors the annual event. According to Cox, some 16,000 IBCLCs are now practicing in 65 countries across the world to provide new families with breastfeeding assistance.

"Everyone wins when a mother breastfeeds," says Cox. "Baby and mom are protected from illnesses and even certain types of cancer. Families don't have to spend a large portion of their monthly income on formula. Employers see a difference in their bottom line when their employees breastfeed since breastfeeding families miss less work due to illness. Across the community, breastfeeding has such a positive impact and lactation consultants are here to assist mothers with the information and support they need to be successful."

IBCLCs are trained health care providers who meet specific education requirements and pass rigorous exams. They possess the specialized skills and knowledge to assist infants and mothers with breastfeeding. These highly skilled providers focus on both prenatal and postnatal care, and provide information for families to make educated decisions.

IBCLCs teach the how-tos of breastfeeding and offer reassurance that breastfeeding is going well. They help mothers and babies overcome difficulties such as nipple or breast pain, latch-on difficulties, flat or inverted nipples, low milk supply, slow weight gain, or a colicky baby. IBCLCs assist mothers with breastfeeding a preterm baby, breastfeeding multiples, relactation and adoptive breastfeeding, breastfeeding and return to employment outside the home, pumping and storing breastmilk, and breastfeeding babies with special needs.

"IBCLCs work with the mother and baby's health care team to ensure that the mother gets timely information and support," says Cox. "Often, this is what makes the difference for helping breastfeeding get off to a good start, and help mothers meet their personal goals for breastfeeding their baby."

IBCLCs are available in many communities in hospitals, physician's offices, healthcare centers, public health, private practice, and governmental organizations. The International Lactation Consultant Association's "Find a Lactation Consultant Directory" at www.ilca.org provides information about accessing IBCLCs. The directory lists IBCLCs by postal code, and provides a U.S. map for identifying IBCLCs in American cities or regions.

The International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA) is the professional association for current and aspiring International Board Certified Lactation Consultants. The mission of ILCA is to advance the profession of lactation consultancy worldwide. ILCA provides members with numerous resources and professional development opportunities that enhance their ability to provide optimal care to breastfeeding families. For more information about ILCA, visit the website at www.ilca.org, or contact the ILCA Office at (919) 861-5577.