



## The CAPPA Lactation Educator Difference Roles, Scope of Practice, Benefits

CAPPA Lactation Educators fill an important role in educating and supporting families interested in learning about feeding and parenting methods. This education may take place in the public, hospital, clinical, or private setting.

Lactation Educators provide informational, emotional, and practical support of breastfeeding. They may provide this service exclusively as Lactation Educators, or may use their training to augment their support in other professions, such as in the cases of doulas, childbirth educators, nurses, dieticians, and postnatal or parenting educators. In addition to providing breastfeeding information, Lactation Educators offer encouragement, companionship, an experienced point of view, and foster confidence and a commitment to breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding education is not restricted to new families, but applies to the general public and medical staff as well. Due to the limited breastfeeding information given in standard medical and nursing training, and the rampant misinformation about breastfeeding that is so prevalent today, the CAPPA Certified Lactation Educator serves as a resource for accurate, evidence-based information to the public and health care providers, as well as to childbearing families. The CAPPA CLE can be found working in a variety of settings - such as public health educators, WIC peer counselors, hospital/community educators, pediatric support professionals and in private practice as educators.

CAPPA does not issue Certified Lactation Consultant status, nor does the Lactation Educator Program qualify a member to dispense medical advice, diagnose, or prescribe medication. CAPPA Lactation Educator trainings do not serve as training to become a lactation consultant. **The only international standard to become a lactation consultant is completing the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners Pathways and passing the exam ([www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org)).**

Why choose to CAPPA for lactation professional training?

- The CAPPA CLE program allows for both in class practicum, as well as distance learning which enables the learner to create a unique depth of knowledge about breastfeeding issues that is specific to her community.

- Our scope of practice is clearly defined and does not violate the IBCLC scope of practice.
- Our certification program provides comprehensive training to become a well-rounded educator in your community. This program provides education that is didactic, practical, and tailored to adult learners.
- Our program has an emphasis on how to teach to adult learners.
- Our certification gives you access to CAPPAs membership benefits, such as a free yearly conference, iCAPPA networking site, CAPPA monthly e-newsletters, access to thousands of other birth and breastfeeding professionals on social networking sites, and so much more.
- CAPPA lactation educators serve as a vital source of referral for the IBCLC and thus are seen as a complementary practitioner to the IBCLC.

The CAPPA 20 Hour Lactation Educator Course meets the following criteria:

\*The Core Competencies in Breastfeeding Care and Services for All Health Professionals as outlined by the United States Breastfeeding Committee (no endorsement by the USBC is implied).

<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Portals/0/Publications/Core-Competencies-2010-rev.pdf>

\*The 20 Hour World Health Organization Curriculum to support the baby Friendly Hospital Initiative.

<http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/bfhi/en/index.html>

\*The CAPPA Lactation Educator certification step for workshop attendance.

<http://www.cappa.net/get-certified.php?lactation-educator>

What Certified Lactation Educators do:

- Offer encouragement, reassurance, education, and support to families during the perinatal period and beyond.
- Offer non-biased breastfeeding education to families and professionals.
- Provide anticipatory guidance regarding breastfeeding initiation.
- Offer education that focuses on the following:
  - Risks of feeding non-species specific milk to the healthy, term baby vs. “advantages” of breastfeeding
  - The impact of the prenatal experience, birth experience, and support relationships on breastfeeding success
  - Defining personal success

- How to facilitate a comfortable latch using techniques and positioning that work for the individual mother
- How to maintain milk supply when separated from a baby (i.e. a separation due to illness, stay in the NICU, return to work or school, or brief separation)
- Where to access resources locally
- Encourage personal advocacy for families to maintain the breastfeeding as long it feels comfortable for their families
- Provide appropriate and culturally sensitive breastfeeding referrals and resources. This includes, but is not limited to, referrals to healthcare providers, IBCLCs, WIC offices, and support groups. The CLE ALWAYS refers to an IBCLC or appropriate healthcare provider when breastfeeding supports requires clinical assessment, support or diagnosis.
- Provide education on common, basic breastfeeding challenges that do not commonly precede adverse outcomes. Make referrals appropriately when necessary.
- Offer information on the quality, assembly, usage, cleaning, and maintenance of breastfeeding apparatus including manual and electric breast pumps.
- Offer compassionate support for mothers who are advised by healthcare providers to supplement, disrupt, or discontinue breastfeeding or who make a personal and private decision to discontinue breastfeeding.

(The above segment is adapted with permission courtesy of Michelle Kinne.)

The CLE DOES NOT perform clinical evaluations such as:

- Taking a clinical history
- Performing a breast or infant oral assessment
- Using pre and post lacteal weight checks for assessment

*(The above practices fall under the scope of practice of an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant.)*

*For more information on any questions regarding the lactation programs offered by CAPPA, please contact the Executive Director at [cldirector@cappa.net](mailto:cldirector@cappa.net) .*