

## Why Licensing IBCLCs is Good For Mothers and Families

Breastfeeding is a game changer for public health. It is inexpensive, easy to do, and equally beneficial for Florida's babies whether they are sick or healthy, wealthy or poor, a girl or a boy, premature or full term. Research also shows that breastfed babies are healthier than formula fed babies. (American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 2012).

**Breastfed babies have less illness and this means Florida saves tax dollars because their babies are healthier!** Breastfed babies have a reduced incidence of:

- Otitis Media (ear Infections)
- Less Respiratory infections
- Less Obesity
- Less RSV Bronchiolitis
- Less Asthma
- Less Dermatitis and Eczema
- Less Celiac Disease (Gluten Intolerance)
- Less Type 1 and 2 Diabetes (AAP, 2012)

Mothers who breastfeed also benefit from having:

- Less risk of Diabetes
- Less risk of Breast Cancer
- Less risk of Ovarian Cancer
- Less risk of Cardiovascular Disease (Heart Disease)
- Less risk of Hypertension (National Institute of Health (NIH), 2009)

### **Breastfeeding in Florida**

Mothers in Florida want to breastfeed. Over 77% of Florida mothers leave the hospital breastfeeding their babies, but only 18.3% of those mothers make it to the 6 month mark of exclusively providing their babies with mother's milk as recommended by the AAP. Research shows that mothers who have access to IBCLCs have higher initiation and duration rates of breastfeeding their babies.

## **Why License Florida IBCLCs?**

Past U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Benjamin was so convinced of the evidence, that she made the recommendation of approximately 8.6 IBCLCs per 1,000 live births" throughout the U.S. (NIH, 2011). To help mothers in the U.S. get the help they need from IBCLCs the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding step 11 asks for these provisions:

- Ensure access to services provided by IBCLCs
- Provide reimbursement for IBCLC care
- Alternately develop state licensure for lactation consultants
- Make lactation support an essential medical service for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and babies
- Increase ethnic and racial mirroring of IBCLCs to U.S.

## **Florida Needs More IBCLCs!**

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, Florida needs close to 2000 IBCLCs to correctly cover the state's needs for breastfeeding mothers and babies.

We have approximately 500 IBCLCs in the entire state of Florida.

A lack of insurance coverage and inconsistent insurance coverage for IBCLCs has put some IBCLCs out of business, kept potential others from becoming IBCLCs and has drastically cut the number of IBCLCs from recertifying. Licensure would address insurance issues and provide reimbursement for their services. This in turn would grow the IBCLC profession by encouraging others to become IBCLCs.

## **Over 50% of all babies born in Florida are born under Medicaid each year.**

Each year the U.S. Women Infant and Children Program (WIC) spends hundreds of millions of dollars per year for formula (in 2010 \$ 864 million).

Medicaid only covers services provided by licensed healthcare providers.

IBCLCs must be licensed by the state of Florida before their impact of saving our great state can be fully felt. So without reimbursement, the majority of Florida's babies miss out on the benefit of breastfeeding because there is zero coverage for services they clearly need from an IBCLC.

## **You Can Help Florida's Mothers Breastfeed!**

Let's work together and make this happen for Florida! You can help make this happen by and signing our petition to support Florida's breastfeeding mothers and babies by licensing IBCLCs to ensure insurance and Medicaid reimbursement:

### **Our petition takes less than a minute to sign:**

<http://www.change.org/p/florida-s-legislators-support-licensure-of-ibclcs-in-florida>

Supporting Florida's breastfeeding mothers with breastfeeding makes Florida better place now and for the next generation. Working together with the Florida Legislature, we can help breastfeeding mothers and babies get the help they need to be successful.

**THANK YOU!**

The Florida Lactation Consultants Association