Your Breastfeeding Resource Person…

…will be the person you depend on for breastfeeding help. Breastfeeding resource persons receive their breastfeeding education from a variety of sources and have different titles and levels of experience. The following description of some of those titles will help you feel confident that your resource person has the special education and experience needed to guide you.

**Lactation professionals include:**

**IBCLC (International Board Certified Lactation Consultant).** Often called “Lactation Consultant,” this person must:
- Have a college degree or its equivalent.
- Pass an extensive written breastfeeding exam.
- Complete an accepted breastfeeding course of study before taking the exam.
- Show proof of thousands of hours of experience working with breastfeeding mothers and babies before taking the exam.
- To maintain certification, IBCLCs must complete required hours of continuing education in breastfeeding and in working with breastfeeding mothers and babies every five years. Reexamination must be done at least every ten years. Use of the credential “IBCLC” is legally restricted.

**CLC (Certified Lactation Consultant).** Also called “Lactation Consultant,” this person usually has:
- Completed a recognized breastfeeding consultant’s course and received a certificate.
- Shown evidence of hours of experience helping breastfeeding mothers and babies.

**CLE (Certified Lactation Educator).** Also called “Lactation Educator,” this person’s education is similar to the CLC but focuses more on how to teach mothers about breastfeeding.

In addition to lactation professionals are:

**Peer Counselors:** These are health care professionals, like a WIC counselor, who have some additional education in breastfeeding support. Each organization providing Peer Counselors may have their own requirements to be a breastfeeding counselor.

**La Leche League (LLL) Leaders and support groups** offer mother-to-mother breastfeeding support. LLL began breastfeeding education, support, and counseling over forty years ago as the one world-wide organization devoted to helping the children of the world breastfeed. LLL Leaders must meet specific requirements. These women are experienced in breastfeeding their own children and are now reaching out to help other mothers breastfeed. Some LLL Leaders are also health care professionals and/or lactation consultants.

The titles **Certified Lactation Specialist (CLS), Certified Breastfeeding Specialist (CBS),** and others are now appearing. Whatever the title of your resource person, she or he should be comfortable answering your questions about previous education and experience in helping breastfeeding families.