Leading Lactation Groups Hold Inaugural Strategic Planning Meeting

*Defined Strategic Goals Include Increased Awareness, Standardization and Enhancement of Education & Training*

Charting the future of the profession, three of the largest and most influential lactation groups in the world participated in a joint inaugural strategic planning meeting on March 22, 2011 in the Greater Washington, D.C. area. The participating groups included the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners, the International Lactation Consultant Association and the Accreditation and Approval Review Committee on Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding.

The full-day strategy session identified priorities for the advancement and strengthening of the lactation consultant profession. In anticipation of the meeting, over twenty-two thousand (22,000) International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) in eighty-one (81) countries received surveys soliciting their input on strategic issues facing the profession.

As a result of the meeting, the groups identified two key areas of focus: increasing awareness of the profession with the public, the health care system and governments; and standardizing and enhancing the education and training to become a lactation consultant. Another strategic goal is continued global leadership on a number of topics related to breastfeeding care.

The meeting with the three separate and distinct organizations involved with IBCLCs, included representatives from Europe, the Americas and the Asia Pacific region, reflecting the international nature of the organizations and the IBCLC credential. Countries represented
included Australia, Austria, Canada, India, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

IBCLCs provide skilled lactation and breastfeeding care to mothers and children worldwide. Breastfeeding is a major public health preventative and access to care provided by IBCLCs is critical in increasing and maintaining breastfeeding rates.

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- **IBLCE** is the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners, responsible for development and administration of the IBCLC international credential. [www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org)

- **ILCA** is the International Lactation Consultant Association, responsible for advocacy, professional development, leadership and research for IBCLCs and others providing lactation and breastfeeding care. [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org)

- **AARC** is the Accreditation and Approval Review Committee on Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding, responsible for accreditation of academic programs and approval of educational courses. [www.aarclactation.org](http://www.aarclactation.org)

If you would like more information on this topic, or would like to interview representatives from the participating groups, please contact Sara Blair Lake at 703.560.7330 or sara@iblce.org, Natalie Sroka at 919.459.6102 or natalie@ilca.org, or Judith Lauwers at 919.459.6106 or info@aarclactation.org.