

Baby Café® Questions and Answers

September 7, 2017

1. In addition to use of the Baby Café® name and its branding that is synonymous with breastfeeding, excellence, quality, style and an informal, relaxed atmosphere, what other benefits are conferred with the Baby Café® license?
 - A consistent model of care that has been proven to work successfully in a variety of settings and is flexible enough to accommodate different community profiles
 - Audit materials to support you in collecting statistics and evaluating the effectiveness of your Baby Café site
 - Targeted support for facilitators based on information collected annually through statistics and evaluation process
 - Facebook forum for facilitators to network with staff from other Baby Cafés
 - Individual support from the Baby Café USA (BCUSA) team by telephone, email, or Facebook forum
 - Your own page on the BCUSA website to publicize your site locally
 - An online password- accessed Resource Bank of artwork, invitations and publicity templates, including the attractive and modern logo, which is an integral part of how people recognize a Baby Café. The Bank also has PDFs of all the policies and required forms, as well as items developed by other Baby Cafés such as translated materials.
 - E-mail notices/newsletters with notifications of changes and updates, organizations developments, ideas and innovative projects (in the interest of saving paper the Facebook Forum has replaced regular newsletters- bulletins and notifications are still sent via direct emails)
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2. What are the primary objectives for the Baby Café® training?
 - The Baby Café training is for all staff, including administrators as well as community members who support the Baby Café. The primary objective is to ensure that all those involved in delivering the service are aware of the key objectives and delivery style that are central to the Baby Café model. It includes the Baby Café mission and model details, a description of the best environment, information on how to keep records and insight regarding what issues may arise and how to handle them.
3. Is it a problem if a Baby Café® start date is later than originally anticipated?
 - Not at all. It is understood that sometimes issues arise that delay openings. The original licensing is good for the first calendar year from approval date.
4. Is there a minimum space requirement for a Baby Café®?
 - Baby Cafes can be held in a wide variety of sites. However, the average attendance is 7-8 mothers, so it is recommended that the space comfortably accommodate at least this many mothers. Each Baby Café should determine the space needed based on the number of mothers, staff and volunteers in attendance. If they outgrow the space, they sometimes add a second day of Café.

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5. Do you have any specific furniture recommendations?
 - Choose furniture that will be comfortable and welcoming to nursing mothers. Comfortable couches and wider, comfortable chairs with arms are preferable. Avoid straight backed chairs with no arms. Some Baby Cafés with limited space utilize Back Jack floor chairs on carpeted floor and floor pillows.
6. Could you share some strategies for recruiting moms, especially in rural areas?
 - Work hard at becoming visible. Go out in your communities and meet with mothers. Offer Baby Café public events like picnics and invite mothers to come and learn more about Baby Cafés. Set up a Baby Café table at a health fair, a Babies R Us store, etc. Meet with all who have contacts with mothers like WIC programs, regional perinatal groups, pediatrician groups, etc. BCUSA has a power point presentation that may be used for this type of outreach. Start a Facebook group for the café moms
7. Could you share some strategies for retaining moms?
 - Enthusiastic, warm welcoming leaders keep moms coming back. Familiarize yourself with the mothers in your community, and be sensitive and responsive to their needs. For example, if the moms speak Spanish, they might be most comfortable with Baby Café staff who also speak Spanish. A casually dressed IBCLC may be more appropriate for this informal setting than one wearing a lab coat. The mothers should determine what to talk about – they may wish to talk about their feelings of inadequacy or how their partner was not prepared to help them. The leader should be nonjudgmental, comfortable with all mothers, and skilled at breaking down barriers.
8. Is there an ideal number of moms for each Baby Café® meeting? If so, what is it and how was it determined?
 - The average attendance at a Baby Café is 7-8 mothers per meeting. There may be meetings where only one mother shows up- she will be grateful for the one-on-one help, but depending on her needs, may feel uncomfortable being the center of focus. Experience has shown that a minimum of three makes for a comfortable group with lively discussion. It is also important that the group isn't so large that everyone who wishes to talk doesn't get an opportunity to do so. A facilitator skilled at running groups can handle a group of 8-9 mothers easily. If the group is larger, it is wise to utilize volunteers and students to assist the facilitator. (The students referred to are Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselor mentees who are accruing their hours for the IBCLC examination.)
9. Have you experienced any logistical concerns when a Baby Café® is in a WIC clinic?
 - Concern was initially raised whether USDA WIC money could support a Baby Café that served non-WIC mothers as well as WIC mothers. USDA was contacted and determined that it was fine to continue the Baby Café in the WIC clinic if there was at least a small amount of money from another source helping to support the Baby Café.
10. How is the data collected at Baby Café® meetings compiled, compared, utilized by BCUSA and reported back to individual cafes?

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- Hard data is collected by Baby Café staff at the meeting and later entered into Excel spreadsheets which contain self-generating graphs. These graphs enable Baby Café staff to track attendance and exclusivity rates at their café. (BCUSA is a small board consisting of six individuals, and while it doesn't currently employ a full-time statistician, future plans are for a web-based site data entry site with full evaluation.)
 - Each Baby Café has access to its final data - BCUSA can prepare a PDF report of this data if needed and requested. BCUSA is currently working on a paper for publication.
11. Utilizing the Tier 3 alternate staffing model, may two WIC Peer Counselors who have completed Baby Café® and Loving Support trainings but are not CLCs staff the Baby Café® if they are supervised by an off-site IBCLC?
- **The Baby Café training delivers supervised, hands-on skill training, with professional level required reading, and assures CLC level knowledge with added skills experience. A BCBC (Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselor) is therefore considered to have a much greater knowledge base than a counselor with Loving Support training.**
 - **One WIC PC needs to be paired with a CLC, BCBC, or equivalent certified trained counselor to staff a Baby Café.**
 - *Lucia, the BCUSA website states. “2 Peer Counselors without CLC training is not adequate staffing to handle emergent issues with babies/mothers unless there is an IBCLC/MD/Midwife on the premises.” The question asked by our grantee stipulates that the IBCLC is off-site – is it okay to have two PCs who are not CLCs run the Café if the IBCLC is not on the premises?
12. How do other Baby Cafés handle referrals to specialists such as cranial sacral therapists?
- Making referrals is not in the scope of a CLC, BCBC, or Peer Counselor. The CLC should contact the IBCLC to explain their concern. If in agreement, the IBCLC would complete a recommendation form for an evaluation with a specific professional.
13. How do other Baby Cafés stay in touch and follow up with moms who have been issued a nipple shield or a supplemental nursing system kit?
- This is totally up to the mother. It is the mother's decision whether she wishes to be contacted by Baby Café staff or even whether she wishes to return to the Baby Café. Receiving follow-up is always the mother's responsibility.
14. Do you have any idea how many hours Baby Café® facilitators dedicate, on average, to making specialist referrals and following up with moms?
- The Baby Café is a drop-in support group, so most Baby Café staff do not do follow up individually with moms outside of café hours. Baby Café staff usually arrive ½ hour early to set up and stay ½ hour late to shut down. In addition, they may spend 1-2 hours/month entering data. If the facilitator thinks that the pediatrician should be alerted, (she is a mandated reporter), she asks the mother for permission to contact the

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- baby's pediatrician. This should be documented in writing. Staff will learn the BCUSA incident and complaint process at their initial Baby Café training.
15. Could you please define what a cluster model is and how this differs from individual Baby Cafés?
 - A Baby Café Cluster is a group of 2-5 Cafés in a general area within commuting distance that share the same licensed name and pool of staff. The lead Café submits one set of combined data; one training is done for all staff together; and the lead facilitator is the contact person for BCUSA communications. The fees associated with a cluster of Cafés are less expensive than the fees for the same number of individual Cafés.

 16. Can the multiple sites for a cluster model be licensed and trained at the same time but started up on a staggered basis?
 - Yes- see #18 below

 17. In the cluster model, must all sites be added during the same program year, or may cluster Cafés be added anytime?
 - Cluster Cafés may be added at any time. see #18 below

 18. In the cluster model, if new staff are hired after the initial Baby Café® training is conducted, may these new staff receive their Baby Café® training from the previously trained lead facilitator?
 - This is possible; however, the answer to this question depends on factors such as how much time has elapsed since the original training and the confidence of staff. Usually staff request a refresher training which is available for a fee of \$75.

 19. In the cluster model, if there is appropriate staffing at each satellite site, can the IBCLC provide remote oversight, or does she have to be physically present at each site?
 - Cluster sites are most often run as Tier II, and III Cafes, with the lead as a Tier I. All sites must be staffed according to the guidelines outlined in #11, above. Remote IBCLC oversight of cluster cafes is acceptable. Alternate staff scenarios must include: weekly verbal reports given to the IBCLC by the alternate staff or monthly face-to-face meetings between the IBCLC and the alternate staff to discuss case studies/issues.

 20. I know that café facilitators can exchange ideas via the existing Facebook page. Are there any plans to increase the opportunities for café facilitators to collaborate, interact and share best practices?
 - There are no immediate plans for additional opportunities; however, mini-conferences may be considered in the future. Ie: New York State Baby Cafés could collaborate to do mini-conferences if they wish.

 21. Could you explain the new Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselor (BCBC) program?

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- This is a mentoring program for individuals to become trained as breastfeeding counselors in licensed Baby Café locations. BCUSA was designated as a Recognized Mother Support Counsellor Organization by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners and this low-cost training is a great opportunity for individuals planning to work toward board-certification as IBCLCs. Women interested in completing this program apply to BCUSA. A background check is completed, and if approved the applicant receives information on the training requirements, a copy of the curriculum, etc. The facilitator who will mentor the applicant also receives all necessary information. Upon completing the training and demonstrating proficiency in basic clinical skills and counseling to the Café facilitator with oversight by the BCUSA Curriculum coordinator, applicants are certified as Baby Café Breastfeeding Counselors. This true train-the-trainer program enables Baby Cafés to continuously educate, mentor and empower individuals from their communities.
22. The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) allows lactation consultants who have recertified at least once to sign off on volunteer/clinical hours required in their pathways. Given this information, in what instances would you recommend that individuals complete the Baby Café® Breastfeeding Counselor curriculum?
- The BCBC mentoring program was accepted by IBLCE as qualified hours. There was no stipulation that the IBCLC be recertified x 1 to sign off on the hours. I would guess that the substance of the program is extensive and detailed enough to assure the quality of the hours.
 - Though not mandatory for CLCs to use the BCBC program to accrue qualifying hours for the IBCLC exam, it is encouraged if they seek to become IBCLCs. It is inexpensive - \$50 at the beginning and \$50 at the end. The BCBC curriculum is comprehensive, is approved by IBLCE, and is designed to cause no increased workload for the IBCLC mentor.
23. Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Communities (CBFC) is a five-year grant program. Do you have any suggestions for how we can prepare organizations to sustain their Baby Cafés when CBFC grant funding is no longer available?
- There is a lengthy list of funding possibilities on the BCUSA website, but some ideas include:
 - Community Health Grants with money earmarked for obesity prevention. There was a recent article outlining the finding that breastfeeding at 1 month and more than 6 months reduced the risk of childhood obesity.
 - Kellogg Foundation
 - State Breastfeeding Coalitions/Collaborations
 - Pediatrician/OB-GYN Groups
 - Rotary Clubs
 - Insurance Companies
24. May an IBCLC bill for her lactation services if the mom does not incur any cost (no co-pay or deductible)? If not, do you foresee this in the future?

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- No. It would be unethical for the IBCLC to self-refer women. When women come to me privately for IBCLC services I refer them to the Baby Café for free follow-up.
- In rural areas where there is no IBCLC access except for private IBCLCs, BCUSA may consider allowing a contract with the private IBCLC to provide care to Café mothers for free with the ability to request a donation.

25. Do Baby Cafés provide childcare?

- Providing childcare is not mandatory, but it can be helpful for mothers with older children. One of the Cafés where I work is at a church, and we have three rooms – a meeting room, kitchen and toddler room. The church policy allows children to play in the toddler room if there is one adult there with them. One of our volunteers oversees children in this toddler room.

26. What do you think about Babywearing?

- Babywearing involves the utilization of a baby carrier to keep one's baby or toddler close and connected. It can be practiced by a wide variety of caregivers. BCUSA supports and encourages this and many cafes have a sling loan program. Baby Cafés can have celebrations – parties, picnics, events and workshops with guest speakers. There is no rule that leaders may not have their infants with them.

27. Are instructors compensated?

I'm not sure what instructors you are referring to.

Baby Café FACILTATORS (leaders of the group) are always paid. This ensures commitment on the part of the funding organization, as well as the staff.

MENTORS of the BCBC curriculum are not paid for any extra work they may do to mentor an applicant.

Very occasionally there may be a Café completely staffed by volunteers.