

# Human Milk Insights

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*The Human Milk Insights newsletter presents the latest breastfeeding topics and clinical practice solutions, addresses coding issues challenging the lactation community, features a lactation service, and announces upcoming webinars and conferences.*

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## FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Human Milk and Legislation
- Human Milk and the Community
- Human Milk and the NICU

### HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

- Webinar November 14
- Education Tools
- New resource for moms

### CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

- Breastfeeding Support as Part of Obstetric Practice

### TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- Breastfeeding Resource for Obstetric Providers

### SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

- Portia L. Williams, RN, BSN, IBCLC, RLC

## SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

*This column is for lactation practitioners and facilities who wish to acknowledge the work of others. We invite you to submit suggested practitioners or facilities you would like to spotlight. If you have a suggestion, [submit it here](#).*

*This month we are spotlighting Portia L. Williams, RN, BSN, IBCLC, RLC from New Orleans, Louisiana*

Portia L. Williams is well known in the New Orleans community for her integral role in promoting quality breastfeeding. Her tireless efforts to educate the community about breastfeeding and preventative healthcare have earned her the respect of her fellow professionals and so many families. A self-described strong woman, she has worked diligently to build a robust breastfeeding outreach program for all families.

A native of New Orleans, Portia grew up in a blended family with 4 siblings. Family unity and caring for one another were values she quickly learned and embraced. Interested in becoming a nurse, she stayed close to home to attend the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. Her first professional role was as a bedside clinician in a NICU, transferring to a position as a post-partum clinician after one year. As part of her orientation to the birthing unit, she shadowed a lactation consultant. It was her first encounter with breastfeeding mothers and she was fascinated by this new feeding experience. Portia continued to work in the birthing unit, to learn as much as she could about lactation and then became certified as an IBCLC in 2008.

Portia's first personal breastfeeding experience began with pumping; her first son was born at 33 weeks. Educated about the value of her own breast milk, she ardently pumped until her son could exclusively breastfeed. Nineteen months later, Portia delivered her second child while still breastfeeding her older son. Thus, a 3.5-year experience of tandem nursing began that she described as a "wonderful and unique experience."

Portia continued to work part-time while her children were young, when she was employed as a school nurse and as a post-partum nurse at area schools and hospitals. Since 2015, Portia has worked as a Lactation Consultant at Touro Infirmary. In this role, she provides inpatient breastfeeding assistance, prenatal breastfeeding education, outpatient follow-up assistance and serves as an expert resource to nursing and medical departments. She recently assisted in helping the facility achieve its Baby-Friendly status and has contributed to the facility's 'Living Well' blog by writing articles about returning to work while breastfeeding and techniques to improve milk volumes. In January 2016, Portia was nominated as CHAMPion of the week by CHEER (Center for Health Equity, Education and Research) for her enthusiastic support and valuable contributions at two CHAMPS (Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices) conferences.

Challenged by the direction of CHAMPS, and through the support provided by Healthy Start's Best Babies Zone Project, ROSE (Reaching Out Sisters Everywhere) and the National Birth

Equity Collaboration, Portia opened New Orleans's and Louisiana's 1<sup>st</sup> Baby Café in 2016. Her vision was to create a supportive and educational place for pregnant and breastfeeding women. A second New Orleans's Baby Café West Bank location opened in 2017. Portia also heads the Lactation Services for H.E.R. (Health Education Research), a non-profit New Orleans organization that inspires, educates and supports healthy life choices for families.

Portia has gained recognition as a valuable contributor to professional conferences in Mississippi and Louisiana. She recently presented a lecture entitled, 'Breastfeeding Challenges: Decreasing Disparities in Care' at the 21<sup>st</sup> National Mother Baby Conference (ANNC) in New Orleans.

Portia is a very proud mother of two breastfed sons, now 10 and 12. She says they are both 'gifted' and are never sick which she attributes to the amount of human milk they received. They appeared with Portia in the film, *Chocolate Milk: The Documentary* as she described her own breastfeeding experiences. Portia claims she was always a Tom-boy and now enjoys watching the Transformer Movie Series with her sons. She loves to work-out and read when she's not caring for her sons, attending their sporting events and working full-time. Portia is passionate about educating women about breastfeeding. "I can't image myself doing anything else – I so much love helping mothers make the decision to breastfeed." Her professional career goal of increasing the number of minority Lactation Consultants and increasing breastfeeding rates by providing culturally relevant, supportive care guides her in the work she does.

Portia is much admired among her circle of fellow nurse, physician and breastfeeding support colleagues for her knowledge, strength and passion. Her work within the New Orleans community supporting breastfeeding is well known; her professional colleagues and multitudes of breastfeeding families are grateful for the work she has accomplished. Keep your eyes on Portia L. Williams; she is destined to make a powerful impact on breastfeeding support and empowerment for all families.