



ICEA CHILDBIRTH EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION PHILOSOPHY

ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program

The International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA) unites people who support family-centered maternity care and believe in freedom of choice based on knowledge of alternatives in childbirth. ICEA emphasizes education and preparation for childbearing and breastfeeding, increases public awareness of the scientific findings relating to childbirth which recognize the rights and responsibilities of all involved, and encourages individualized care with minimal medical intervention. The ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program requires that the ICEA Certified Childbirth Educator also advocate these goals.

ICEA encourages member groups to provide basic teacher preparation and to offer educational programs applicable to the certification program. ICEA encourages education through local member group workshops, self-education, apprentice-type training, or a combination of these methods. ICEA believes that a certification program which verifies the acquisition of knowledge and skill will maintain the autonomy of both the group and the individual instructor, thus ensuring the continuation of effective local parent education programs. The creative and diverse modes through which member groups prepare expectant parents for childbirth lend strength to ICEA's philosophy of "freedom of choice based on knowledge of alternatives."

INTERNATIONAL SCOPE

ICEA offers international participation in its childbirth educator certification program. It invites direct involvement and guidance from its international members in order to make certification relevant within each country.

CONTENT OF PROGRAM

The ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program verifies that childbirth educators have the necessary education and skills to enable them to facilitate expectant parents' mental and physical preparation for pregnancy, labor, birth, and parenthood. The program promotes the concept of the childbirth educator as an advocate of the natural process of childbirth and the right of the expectant parent to make informed choices based on knowledge of alternatives. The childbirth educator is expected to cooperate with parents, the medical and nursing community, and health and welfare agencies. The childbirth educator will promote family-centered maternity care, breastfeeding, and parent-infant bonding. The childbirth educator will advocate parental participation in childbirth and avoidance of medical intervention in uncomplicated labors.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATE

This certification program is available to any person who upholds and practices ICEA's philosophy of family-centered maternity care and freedom of choice based on knowledge of alternatives in childbirth. The program sets a common standard which improves the quality of teaching by individual childbirth educators, protects the consumer by ensuring minimum qualifications, and provides the basis for establishing childbirth education as a recognized profession. This program does not exclude an otherwise qualified person for reason of teaching method or educational or professional background. No qualified, presently certified instructor will be excluded from entering the ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program.

DESIGNATION UPON CERTIFICATION

Upon successful completion of the ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program, an instructor will be entitled to use ICCE and the term “ICEA Certified Childbirth Educator” to designate certification status and to indicate that the instructor is “ICEA Certified.” The ICEA Certified Childbirth Educator is expected to further a wider understanding of ICEA’s mission and philosophy among health professionals and the public.