



# Postpartum Doula Syllabus

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Lori, Hanover, Canada

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"The most enjoyable part of my postpartum training was learning so much information about pregnancy, birth, postpartum and the newborn/baby care. The number of resources available through this course are amazing."

## Introduction

Many families find the initial weeks after the arrival of a baby challenging. They're learning how to care for a new baby, helping siblings adjust, and trying to get some sleep! A Postpartum (Postnatal) Doula can make this transition easier. Your presence can help parents enjoy the early days with their baby and discover the techniques that work for them. Our Postpartum Doula Training and Certification program provides you with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to be there for parents in these early days.

Postpartum doula training programs often focus on physical techniques or skills that you can use during the early postpartum period. Being a Postpartum Doula though, is much more than simply making healthy family meals or caring for an older child. Parents are trying to make decisions about where their baby will sleep, which vaccinations to choose, how to calm a crying baby, and may be learning how to breastfeed. All of these are things that a Postpartum Doula can help with and at CBI we make sure you have a thorough grounding in all these areas and more.

As a student, you'll develop strong communication skills in learning the importance of reflective practice and active and effective listening. You'll learn techniques for helping parents debrief their birth, identify how they want to parent their new baby and support them through any difficult decisions. You'll cover basic first aid measures, healthy meal planning, recognition of home safety, tips on household tasks, and more. In the physiology module you'll look at health of the parent and baby, nutrition, sexuality, and relationships in the postpartum period. You'll also cover all the business aspects – how to build your client base, paperwork, forms and legal issues, advertising, and promoting your business.

# Learning Flexibility



All Childbirth International courses are carried out through online learning. This enables you to study wherever - and whenever - you like! After you register for your course, you will receive an emailed invoice and an important separate email with a link to complete your registration as a student. Once you click on that link and confirm your registration as a student, you will have immediate access to your course materials and can get started right away.

Your course materials are available through our student website ([www.cbistudents.com](http://www.cbistudents.com)). Here you will find all the course modules, assignments, online tests, and reflective evaluations that are needed for certification. There are no time limits on your course. You can work through the materials and graduate within a few months, take your time, or take a break as other priorities come up! We place no restrictions on your studies and can move through your course in a way that works best for you.

If you chose the “printed manuals” option, your printed course materials will be ordered within a few days of your final payment. Depending on where you are, they’ll arrive via FedEx between 5-15 business days. The printed manuals are a copy of the online material and offer you another way to study the course curriculum.

A trainer is assigned to you within a couple of days of your registration and you’ll receive a welcome and introductory email from them to begin the journey of getting to know each other. Your trainer follows you through your course, providing feedback for your assignments and evaluations and they are there to encourage, motivate, and support you.

After you graduate, a certificate and ID badge will be made available for download through the student website. As a graduate, you will continue to have access to the course content and any updates through the student portal.

# Childbirth International Curriculum Framework

Childbirth International courses are designed using a Curriculum Framework. The Curriculum Framework provides the foundation of our courses determining what should be included (the content or topics) together with what our students are expected to know, understand, and do.

We design all our courses by first looking at what you need to be able to know, understand, or do in order to be successful in your work. Once we have done that, we then look at how we can teach that knowledge or skill to you and how we can measure whether or not you have become competent in that area. This approach means that everything you learn has a clear purpose and ensures you will finish your training without any gaps in your knowledge or understanding.

This syllabus document outlines the content in our course, offering more details on the essential knowledge and skills you will learn in each topic. It also includes general information about the course including pricing options and frequently asked questions.



## *Advantages of competency-based learning*

Competency-based learning has been shown to be more engaging for students, with students developing skills they can use for a lifetime.

### *Provides a clear understanding of what is expected*

1

A competency-based syllabus identifies the knowledge you will build, how that knowledge can be applied to your work (understanding), and the skills you will develop as a result. It also identifies how you will recognize when you have acquired these competences and how you will be assessed.

### *Enables you to track your progress*

2

Throughout your course you will be able to see the assessments you have completed and what is left to complete. By monitoring the competencies that you develop you can track your progress. You can clearly see the skills you are developing and how your competency as a birth professional is growing.

### *Links what you are learning to the work you are doing*

3

Developing competency happens as a result of acquiring knowledge, understanding the relevance of that knowledge, and the knowing how to apply that knowledge with a client. By linking your developing knowledge with the experience you gain, you will understand how you can apply it to your work.

### *Includes continuous and ongoing assessment*

4

Becoming a skilled birth professional takes time. Knowledge and understanding are important, but it is the ongoing learning that really matters. You'll complete self-assessment activities and receive continuous and ongoing feedback from your trainer.

### *Is individualized and student-centered*

5

Each activity you complete will be relevant to you and the clients you work with. If there are competencies that you already gained from your previous learning and experience you will mark these as complete and move on. The only required parts of the program are the formal assessments that your trainer will review.

## CBI Competency Framework

The CBI Competency Framework is based on six domains. During your course you will develop skills relevant to each of these domains.

Birth professionals trained through CBI have a complex understanding of pregnancy, birth, parenting, and lactation. They apply this knowledge and their unique skills when working with clients, and are committed to serving and supporting them in their needs. They have an obligation to act according to their professional Code of Conduct, to demonstrate cultural competency, and to practice within their own limits.

CBI uses competency standards to demonstrate what you will learn through your training and what you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate.

### CBI Competency Framework



## *Knowledge - what you know*

Knowledge is the information you will learn when you are training. For example, you can describe what kangaroo care is or list the main symptoms of mastitis. You either know it or you don't.

## *Understanding - making connections*

Understanding is when you can make connections between pieces of knowledge and real-life context. For example, you understand the importance of family support during the postpartum period and how that support can impact breastfeeding rates.

## *Skills - what you can do with your knowledge and understanding*

Skills are the ways that you apply your knowledge and understanding, or the things you can do. For example, you can use appropriate strokes or oils when massaging a baby or you can use active listening or conflict resolution when there is a disagreement with a colleague.

## *Competencies - providing context*

The competencies provide context. They indicate the circumstances where you might apply your knowledge, understanding, and skills. For example, in order for you to be able to use research to guide practice you would need to:

- Recognize the general structure of research and how to interpret it
- Analyze the quality of the research and recognize any biases
- Comprehend the research in relation to clients you are working with and communicate that research effectively to clients

We focus on six domains of competency: People, Practical, Leadership, Wellness, Ethics and Professionalism, and Cultural Competency.

### *Domain 1: Ethics and Professionalism*

This domain covers the competencies that relate to professional practice. It includes your legal responsibilities, ethical behavior, safety, and client-centered care.

### *Domain 2: People*

These are the skills related to communication with clients, their families, caregivers, and peers. This domain includes communication skills, collaboration, conflict resolution, and reflective practice.

### *Domain 3: Practical*

These are the skills related to carrying out your job. They include the knowledge, understanding, and skills related to working with and supporting clients.

### *Domain 4: Leadership*

These are the skills related to effecting change within the industry. They include recognition of the challenges that affect the ability for system change, the student's own role in being an agent of change, their capacity to mentor and guide new birth professionals, and their ability to pass on knowledge and skills.

### *Domain 5: Wellbeing*

This domain includes the importance of self-care and developing a sustainable business. It covers how a birth professional manages stress and seeks out support and mentorship within their own community of professionals. Developing a sustainable business means it has to be financially sustainable as well as meeting the needs and respecting the values and beliefs of the business owner.

### *Domain 6: Cultural Competency*

This domain relates to working with diverse groups, without judgement, and how to provide appropriate resources that meet their needs and recognizing the role that culture plays in the choices available to clients.

## **Course Content**

Your course is divided into a series of modules. The modules are made up of units of related topics. The modules in the Postpartum Doula course are:

- Communication
- Postpartum Physiology
- Being a Postpartum Doula
- Business of Birth

As you work through each unit you will find the knowledge, understanding, and skills laid out at the beginning. Within the unit there are activities and online readings to develop further perspective.

At the end of each unit is a summary task that draws together your learning and helps you to relate this to your own work.

In the next section we will go through each of the modules within your course.



## Assessments

There are a number of formal assessments that you will submit to your trainer. Your trainer will review your work, evaluate and provide feedback.

### ***Communication Assignment***

The communication assignment is a written essay using the Childbirth International reflective practice model. You will submit this as a draft first. Your trainer then provides you with feedback and suggestions on how you might develop your essay. You then submit your final which is graded by your trainer.

### ***Physiology Tests***

There are four open book physiology tests for you to complete. You can use any resources to locate the answers. The purpose of the tests is to evaluate your knowledge on the physiology of the postpartum period as well as to develop your research skills.

### ***Module Evaluation***

At the end of the physiology module you will write a reflection on what you learned and identify areas that you feel you still need to work on.

### ***Postpartum Evaluations***

You will support two clients within the first six weeks postpartum. After you have completed your hours with them, you submit a reflective evaluation of your experience and what you learned. We do not require evaluations from your clients or caregivers.

### ***Postpartum Services Survey***

You will do a survey of postpartum services available for new parents in your community and surrounding area. This will include reflections on marketing and ease of accessibility for parents.

### ***Book Reviews***

You will read 2 books, each from a different category of our extensive reading list. You will write a reflection for each book and submit it to your trainer.

# Communication



Enhancing your communication skills enables you to build strong relationships with clients and caregivers. Many of you will work in challenging environments and during this course you'll explore these challenges and develop skills in building relationships with other caregivers without compromising your professionalism or your client's wishes.

At the heart of every CBI training and certification program is reflective practice. But what exactly is "reflective practice"?

At its simplest, reflective practice is looking at what you've done, or didn't do, and reflecting on it. In relation to CBI training though, it's so much more. Reflective practice is about examining choices and decisions, considering them from different perspectives, thinking about alternatives, learning from them, and then applying that learning to your work. It demonstrates best practice in continuing education and increases confidence and professionalism. It's an incredibly valuable skill that you can pass on to your clients and help them to assimilate their own experiences.

All CBI training programs have an ongoing reflective practice focus. In every assignment you submit this will be evaluated by your trainer, who will then provide you with feedback to help you see your own growth in this area. You'll be encouraged to reflect on your language, your participation in discussions, and how you approach every aspect of your work.

At the end of this module you'll write a reflective essay that will be reviewed by your trainer who'll provide feedback and assessment.

## Communication Knowledge, Skills and Topics

<i>Essential Knowledge</i>	<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>Topics</i>
Effective communication components	Active listening skills	Effective Communication
Active listening techniques	Using empathy	Language and Communication
Factors that inhibit effective communication	Self-awareness	Active Listening
Nonverbal and verbal communication	Reflective practice	Reflective Practice and Debriefing
Open and closed questions	Conflict resolution	Diversity and Cultural Humility
Reflective practice and reflective practice models	Communication without bias	Evidence-Based Care and Informed Choice
Recount and reflection	Critical thinking	Grief and Loss
Decision making tools	Research and analysis	Professional Practice
Informed choice and informed consent	Identification and communication of personal boundaries	Perspective and Recognition
Evidence-based care	Assertiveness	
Cultural factors affecting communication	Collaboration	
Standard precautions and infection control procedures		
Scope of practice		
Local and regional regulations		

# Postpartum Physiology



In this module, you will gain a thorough understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the postpartum period. All student materials are focused on evidence-based care. Evidence-based means that the care of families and babies is based on practises built on sound research. The opinions and thoughts of experts on pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period are referred to throughout your student manuals – it’s important to hear the views of others in the field to build your own knowledge base.

At the end of this module you’ll complete the online, open-book tests to assess your learning. You’ll also submit a reflective evaluation of this module which will be reviewed and assessed by your trainer.

The physiology module begins with the the postpartum physiology and health of the client and baby. Once you have a solid knowledge base in normal physiology, you can then dig deeper into understanding health problems in the postpartum period and routine postpartum procedures.

This module will also cover the importance of nutrition and exercise and the risks of nutrition-related illnesses.

Finally, you will develop an introduction to lactation and discover tips and suggestions on helping clients with some of the more common breastfeeding problems.

## Postpartum Physiology Knowledge, Skills and Topics

<i>Essential Knowledge</i>	<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>Topics</i>
Physiological changes in early postpartum period	Strategies for aiding recovery after a vaginal birth and a cesarean birth	Physiology and Health of the Mother
Normal emotional responses	Communication of complex concepts	Physiology and Health of the Baby
Symptoms of postpartum mood disorders	Reflective practice	Routine Postpartum Procedures
Options for contraception	Critical thinking	Health Problems in Infants and Older Children
Newborn assessments	Research and Analysis	Health, Diet, and Exercise
Causes and treatment options for jaundice	Resource development	Diet-Related Issues
Physical and behavioural characteristics of the newborn		Introduction to Lactation
First aid measures		
Nutrition		
Special dietary needs		

# Being a Postpartum Doula



Throughout this section you will develop your hands-on skills as a Postpartum Doula which will enable you to provide the best care possible to the clients in your community. You'll learn how to support a new family in the early weeks of parenting and feel confident in taking care of them and their new baby. You'll learn how to provide information that helps parents to overcome any problems and make those first few weeks joyful. During this module you'll submit reviews of two books, a survey, and a reflection on your experience as a postpartum doula. These will all be reviewed and assessed by your trainer.

In this module you'll explore the roles and responsibilities of postpartum doulas and discuss the benefits to the family of support at this time. You will also explore the stresses you may experience and how these can be best managed.

You'll also look at your role at the different stages of working with a client. This module will help you to determine how to manage your first client interviews and establish a working relationship with a client.

You will cover meal planning and household support to help your client in those early weeks. You will also look at home safety and first aid skills. You will explore ways to support different parenting styles and cultural practices, as well as supporting a client who is returning to work. Finally you will cover different techniques for providing baby care including soothing a baby, hygiene, and feeding.

## Being a Postpartum Doula Knowledge, Skills and Topics

<i>Essential Knowledge</i>	<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>Topics</i>
Roles and responsibilities of the postpartum doula	Active listening	Getting Started as a Doula
Menu planning	Reflective practice	Working with a Client
Preparing healthy foods	Problem solving	Adapting Your Role
Special dietary needs	Networking and peer community building	Meal Planning and Preparation
Cleaning and laundry	Conflict resolution	First Aid
Home safety	Planning and time management	Postpartum Education
First aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation	Debriefing effectively	Infant Care
Helpful documentation for the doula	Carrying out the client interview	Supporting Clients in Crisis
	Preparing healthy meals	Equipment, Supplies, and Documentation
	Using basic first aid techniques	Alternative Ways of Working Making Change

# Business of Birth



Running your own business is an exciting challenge. As well as being financially rewarding, it can also boost your self esteem. Learning how to successfully manage your own enterprise, however large or small, is liberating! This module will take you through the steps of establishing a business and how to get it up and running.

While many people would love to run a business they often do not feel prepared and may be anxious about leaping into something that has unknown risks. Some are passionate about an interest and would like to make it profitable but do not know how to start turning their interest into an income. They often discover they are not getting paid a fair amount for the hours they work, their business is poorly structured, the products or services are more complicated than they anticipated or they are not finding clients as easily as they imagined they would.

If you are worried about the business side of being a birth professional, or have had a business for a while but not reaping the rewards you had hoped for, this module is for you! It will challenge the way you think about your business by exploring the various aspects of self-employment and identify how being business savvy can affect your success. You will learn how to take control of your finances and achieve your own personal goals.

Once you learn how to manage your business more effectively you can keep coming back to check how you are doing and see if there are changes that can benefit your business. With the knowledge and the experience of CBI to support and guide you every step of the way, together we can make the difference needed to ensure that your confidence and business will flourish and grow.

## Business of Birth Knowledge, Skills and Topics

<i>Essential Knowledge</i>	<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>Topics</i>
Financial measures for a business	Personal and business goal setting	All About You
Legal and tax obligations	Active listening	Clients and Competitors
Basic marketing techniques	Reflective practice	Products and Services
Basic documentation for a business	Problem solving	Designing the Look and Feel
	Networking and peer community building	Promoting Your Business
	Budgeting and managing cash-flow	Finances and Legal Issues
	Analyzing competitors	Looking to the Future
	Profiling customers	
	Brand development	
	Developing a pricing strategy	
	Carrying out a SWOT analysis	
	Time management	
	Negotiation and networking	
	Self-awareness	
	Decision making	

# Paying for your course

## One payment

You can pay for your course in a single payment of US\$660. You will have immediate access to your course materials online and receive a printed copy of your course materials in the mail via FedEx.

## Five payments

We also offer a flexible five month payment plan option. The first monthly installment will be charged when you enroll, and subsequent payments will automatically be charged once a month on the same day each month for the next 4 months. Once your final payment has been made your printed course materials will be ordered and shipped out to you. If you start on an installment plan but want to pay your balance early, just send us an email and we can give you the information on the balance. Once this is received we will ship your printed materials straight away. An administration fee of \$10 (per course) is added to your installments each month.

## Green Option

Some of our students prefer to work from the student website or our mobile app using the online materials and save on printing and shipping. You can choose this option when you are enrolling through the shopping cart.

## No Hidden Costs

There are no recertification fees, and membership is free for life! You will not have the additional costs associated with attending a workshop and we will not charge you extra for applying or receiving your certification.

Five Payments	One Payment	Green Option
US\$142	US\$660	US\$620
per month for 5 months	single payment	single payment
Pay over five months with online access immediately and printed manuals sent to you after your final payment	Pay one single payment and receive your printed manuals as well as online access through the student website	Be kind to the environment! Complete your course online - save money and trees. Also available in monthly installments.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *How do I do learn hands-on skills without a workshop?*

This is probably one of the most common questions we are asked! During your course you will explore the different techniques that a doula can use to support a client during the early postpartum period. Helping a parent navigate information and decisions, meal planning, soothing a new baby, sleep concerns, household tasks ... all of these will be addressed and more!

Just like workshop based training though, the real practice comes when you start working with clients. The hands-on skills, however, are not the most important part of being a Postpartum Doula. Helping a client to recognize their options, guiding them through the decision-making process, reflecting and debriefing their previous experiences, building their confidence and supporting them in finding their own voice ... these are the things where a doula can really make a difference. And these skills take time to learn and develop. This is why we provide our training online - to give you the chance to really learn the important skills that a doula can use to help clients have the births that they want.

## *Can you help me find my two clients for the support requirement?*

While we would love to be able to provide this service, with students in over a 120 countries worldwide we're just not able to provide a matching service on that large of a scope! However, know you will not be left alone to find those first few clients. Firstly, you will have access to other students through our vibrant Facebook community where you can connect with other CBI students and ask how they found their first few clients. We also have the incredibly comprehensive Business of Birth module which will walk you through the steps to identifying your ideal client and how to effectively market your service. Your trainer will also be there to answer questions and to provide you with guidance and support. They are practicing birth professionals themselves and can give you suggestions based on their own experience.

## *Are you accredited?*

Childbirth International is accredited with distinction as a provider of continuing nurse education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (ANCC) – which is the highest recognition awarded by the ANCC. CBI is the only organization offering Postpartum Doula training with accreditation with distinction!

## *How long do I have to complete the certification requirements?*

As long as you need! We do not have any time restrictions as we know that each student's life looks different and has different amounts of time available for studying. Learning all the knowledge and skills necessary to be a competent doula takes time and we support you in taking however long (or little!) you need.

## *Once I have finished all the work for the course, how much will it cost to apply for certification and how often do I need to recertify?*

We do not have any additional costs to training. Once you have paid for your course and completed the certification requirements your certificate will be made available to you through the student website. We do not require annual membership or recertification fees. The skills you have learned are for life! If you need to show evidence of recertification in order to be a member of a local organization you can apply for your certificate to be reissued after providing evidence of professional development. We offer this service at cost.

## *If I do more than one course do I have to repeat the certification requirements?*

Several assignments are common to multiple courses. For example, the communication assignment is required for all our courses and once you have completed it for one course it does not have to be done again for the other courses you are enrolled in.

## *What is the fastest possible time I can complete the course in?*

It really depends on how much time you have available and how quickly you find your two certifying births. As a general guideline, it will take 4-6 months if you study for 10-15 hours a week and find your two postpartum clients quickly. However, finishing your course quickly may not be optimal. The skills of reflective practice take time to develop and taking your time to really absorb everything you are learning might be of great benefit to you and your clients.

## *Will my certification be recognized where I live?*

Certification as a Postpartum Doula is not required anywhere in the world in order for you to work as a doula. Certification is recognition of the hard work you have done in completing training. Some families or agencies prefer evidence of certification before they will allow a doula to work there but generally they do not have restrictions on the certification program you chose.

If you do experience any problems we are more than happy to write to your agency to outline our training program and provide them with documentation showing the competencies you have developed. To date, this has been accepted in all places where it has been required.

## *Are you pro natural birth?*

We are pro choices! As a doula you will support clients who have had a natural birth, a cesarean, an epidural, a home birth, or a hospital birth. In all cases we support the right of a birthing person to determine their own experience and their right to make informed decisions that are right for them. We do recognize that in most cases a vaginal and drug-free birth carries the least risk for both the birthing person and their baby and for many this type of experience is profoundly moving. However, it may not be right for everyone - either because it is not what they desire, or because unexpected challenges arise.

## *Are you pro breastfeeding?*

As a Postpartum Doula you will be supporting clients who are exclusively breastfeeding, supplementing, using formula milk, using or providing donor breast milk, relactating, weaning, and tandem feeding. In all cases we support parents in their right to make informed decisions that are best for them. We recognize that breastfeeding is the optimum way for a baby to be fed, but this is not the right choice for everyone. We do support the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (WHO) and require that all students and graduates follow this code by not promoting or profiting from formula milk or bottle-feeding products.

## *How do I know if this is the right course for me?*

We offer a 48-hour money back guarantee. This gives you the opportunity to review the course materials and determine whether or not this is the right fit for you. Once you enroll you will have immediate access to your course materials through the student website. If you look at them and feel this is not the right format for you, just email to us within 48 hours of registration and we will fully refund your payment, less the \$50 administration fee.

## *I am not sure if online learning is right for me. I struggle with reading a lot and find it hard to keep motivated. How can you help me?*

Online learning can be difficult. It is worth bearing in mind that even if you choose an in-person workshop for your training, only the initial learning will take place face-to-face and is usually done within a weekend. All the certification requirements are still done by distance and your trainer will only be present for you during the actual workshop. With CBI, your trainer will join you on your journey to certification every step of the way. They will review every assignment and evaluation you submit, providing you with comprehensive feedback and suggestions. They will be able to help you with developing your own study plan and ideas on how to stay motivated. When you log in to your student account you will also see a list of the assignments required with progress bars so you can monitor how you are progressing.

## *What if I need more support?*

Some of our students prefer more support - a mentor to guide them through the different stages of the course, check in with them regularly and help walk them through the business section. We offer the Doula + mentoring package to provide this support. You can also seek support in our exclusive Childbirth International Students and Graduates group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cbistudents/>)

## *Where can I get more information?*

Take a look through our website for details of all our courses and more about CBI. If you would like to speak to someone our team is always ready for your call or email.

<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.childbirthinternational.com">www.childbirthinternational.com</a>	<b>Telephone:</b> USA West (415) 992 5602
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:support@childbirthinternational.com">support@childbirthinternational.com</a>	USA East (603) 676 7818
<b>Facebook:</b> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/childbirthinternational">www.facebook.com/childbirthinternational</a>	UK (020) 7193 0647
<b>Instagram:</b> <a href="http://www.instagram.com/childbirthinternational">www.instagram.com/childbirthinternational</a>	Australia (02) 8011 4177