

Philadelphia Alliance for Labor Support Training Preparation Information Sheet

Learning the Basics: Preparing for your doula training weekend

One way PALS fulfills our mission to improve birth experiences and outcomes in the Philadelphia area is by providing subsidized DONA International-certified training, twice a year, to those interested in becoming doulas. This intensive, two-day training workshop is taught by one of the most experienced doula trainers in the world: Debra Pascali-Bonaro, CD(DONA). All the basics of doula care before, during, and immediately after childbirth are covered in these two days. In an effort to keep the cost and time burden of the training weekend to a minimum, preliminary information on reproduction and clinical practices are not covered. Therefore, it is expected that participants will arrive at the training with basic knowledge of reproductive anatomy & physiology as well as “evidence based” health care practices related to pregnancy, birth, post partum and breastfeeding. The collective knowledge and experience of the training group as a whole will set the stage for cooperative learning throughout the weekend.

One way of gaining this knowledge (and required for DONA certification. Be sure to confirm the certification requirements at www.DONA.org before choosing a class!) is to audit a childbirth education series lasting 12 hours or more. Another way is to study the suggested reading material independently or in small groups. Knowing that many of you may not have a chance to attend a full childbirth series prior to the training, or that you may have already begun learning this information through your own experiences and education, we have compiled a list of topics and resources to guide your study.

Don't be overwhelmed! Pick one or two books and some web resources to begin with and you will be fine.

Many thanks to Debra for her generosity in sharing her Birth Basics workshop syllabus and resources.

Learning Objectives

Throughout your reading, pay specific attention to the following:

- Anatomy of reproduction
 - Terminology relating to reproduction
 - Overview of fetal development
- Normal labor, birth and postpartum
 - Physical process
 - Stages of labor
 - Common clinical procedures:
(vaginal exams, vital signs, fetal assessment in labor, positions, and emotional signposts)
- Evidence Based Practices in Childbirth: the concept of medically indicated vs elective or routine (nonindicated) intervention. Indications, Descriptions, Risks and Benefits of common interventions:
(IV's, Fetal Monitors, AROM, Induction, Augmentation, Epidurals, Narcotics, Episiotomy, Forceps/Vacuum, Cesarean Birth, Postdates)
- The Newborn, Post Partum, and Breastfeeding (the first hours and weeks), Breast-Feeding Hospital Initiative
- Labor Pain, Gate Pain Theory, and Non-medical approaches to its relief
- Basic relaxation: breathing, and visualization as a vehicle for relaxation

Local Childbirth Education Connections

(Please email palsdoulatraining@gmail.com if you find more resources to share.)

- **HUP** allows one PALS doula to audit per class free of charge. (Note: The Saturday class is only 8 hrs of instruction. To get your full 12 hrs required for certification, you can attend 2 of the “guest speaker” nights from the Tues/Wed series, or find another birth related class that interests you.) Contact Sue Stubene at 215-662-3243 in advance to make arrangements.

- **Kathy Kay** from Ontario Perinatal School offers an online program for a discounted rate of \$50.00 for PALS members.

www.ontarioperinatal.com

Suggested Reading

Before the workshop, please read as much as you can from the DONA required reading list:

<http://www.dona.org/PDF/5RequiredReadingList--8-21-08.pdf>([link](#)).. Many of these books are available from your local library, on-line, bookstore, or may be borrowed by PALS members from the PALS **lending library** ([link](#)). Basic information on most of the above learning objectives can be found by reading either:

Kitzinger's The Complete Book of Pregnancy and Childbirth -or-

Simkin, Whalley, and Keppler's Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn

More information on evidence-based care is available on the CIMS and Cochrane websites below. Also, check

out an article on social support by doulas during labor and the early postpartum period co-authored by Debra (http://www.turner-white.com/pdf/hp_sep01_doulas.pdf).

Web Resources & Related Organizations

Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) Mother- Friendly Childbirth www.motherfriendly.org
Healthy People 2010 goals <http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/Document/HTML/Volume2/16MICH.htm>
Cochrane Pregnancy & Childbirth Group: <http://www.update-software.com/Abstracts/PREGAbstractIndex.htm> Lamaze
Internatl's Six care practices <http://normalbirth.lamaze.org/institute/CarePractices/introduction.asp>
DONA International certification guidelines http://www.dona.org/develop/birth_cert.php
More resources may be found on the PALS website: www.PALSdoulas.com under **"Doula Links"**

Our Beloved Doula Trainer

Debra Pascali-Bonaro is the mother of five children, Fundraising Chairperson and Member of the Leadership Council of the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services, a doula, past member of the Board of Directors of DONA, DONA's Public Relations Chair from 1992-1998, and a DONA-approved Birth Doula Trainer. She has worked as a doula since 1986. She has been a certified childbirth educator since 1986 and has been training and speaking about doulas internationally since 1987. "My work has honored me with designing programs, training and speaking in diverse communities, from the South Bronx, NY to the White House and the UN. I provide doula training to nursing, midwifery, and medical students, and provide in-services to nurses, midwives, residents and physicians. I feel it is a privilege and an honor to work with pregnant women, their families, and doulas." <http://www.midwiferytoday.com/friends/motherlove>

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