



## LA LECHE LEAGUE PURPOSE, MISSION, and PHILOSOPHY

**General Purpose:** To help the mother learn to breastfeed her baby.  
To encourage good mothering through breastfeeding.  
To promote a better understanding of breastfeeding and related subjects.

**Vision Purpose:** To realize, deepen, and share the love and wisdom found in the breastfeeding relationship.

*November 2004*

*Adapted from LLLI publication No. 300-17, "La Leche League Purpose and Philosophy":*

La Leche League was founded to give information and encouragement, mainly through personal help, to all mothers who want to breastfeed their babies. While complementing the care of health professionals, LLL recognizes the unique importance of one mother helping another to perceive the needs of her child and to learn the best means of fulfilling those needs.

LLL believes that breastfeeding, with its many important physical and psychological advantages, is best for baby and mother and is the ideal way to initiate good parent-child relationships. The loving help and support of the father enable the mother to focus on mothering so that together the parents develop close relationships which strengthen the family and thus the whole fabric of society.

LLL further believes that mothering through breastfeeding deepens a mother's understanding and acceptance of the responsibilities and rewards of her special role in the family. As a woman gains more experience in mothering she develops as a human being. Every other role she may fill in her lifetime is enriched by the insights and humanity she gains from her experiences as a mother.

La Leche League's purpose is distinct. This purpose is open to interaction with other organizations with compatible purposes. At the same time, La Leche League will carefully guard against allying itself with another cause, however worthwhile that cause may be.

---

### **LLL MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to help mothers worldwide to breastfeed through mother-to-mother support, encouragement, information, and education, and to promote a better understanding of breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the baby and mother.

*(May 1989; rev Apr 1993)*

---



## PHILOSOPHY

The ideals and principles of mothering which are the foundation of LLL beliefs are developed in *THE WOMANLY ART OF BREASTFEEDING*. This book has provided answers and inspiration for the rewarding and challenging job of parenting to several generations of mothers. LLL philosophy is summarized in the following ten concepts:

- *Mothering through breastfeeding is the most natural and effective way of understanding and satisfying the needs of the baby.*
- *Mother and baby need to be together early and often to establish a satisfying relationship and an adequate milk supply.*
- *In the early years, the baby has an intense need to be with his mother which is as basic as his need for food.*
- *Breast milk is the superior infant food.*
- *For the healthy, full-term baby, breast milk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth.*
- *Ideally the breastfeeding relationship will continue until the baby outgrows the need.*
- *Alert and active participation by the mother in childbirth is a help in getting breastfeeding off to a good start.*
- *Breastfeeding is enhanced and the nursing couple sustained by the loving support, help, and companionship of the baby's father. A father's unique relationship with his baby is an important element in the child's development from early infancy.*
- *Good nutrition means eating a well-balanced and varied diet of foods in as close to their natural state as possible.*
- *From infancy on, children need loving guidance which reflects acceptance of their capabilities and sensitivity to their feelings.*

Leader Applicants are required to own and be familiar with the most recent edition of *THE WOMANLY ART OF BREASTFEEDING*, if available in their language. On accreditation, each new Leader signs the Statement of Commitment in which she agrees to represent La Leche League as presented in *THE WOMANLY ART OF BREASTFEEDING*. You may find it helpful to read it (or read it again) from the perspective of a Leader. If you are interested in finding out more about leadership and have questions about LLL philosophy, please talk to your supporting Leader.