LADders is a publication by LAD representatives for LAD representatives

Its purpose is to help LAD representatives do their jobs with confidence and pleasure by offering a place to share information and experiences.

LAD COUNCIL
NEW LEADER SURVEY
Part I
Lesley Robinson, LAD Council

The LAD Council has drafted and distributed a survey to gather information on the experiences of recently accredited Leaders. We hope that the results of this survey will give a picture of Leader accreditation around the world and will show us what we are doing well and how we might be able to improve. The survey targets Leaders accredited within the last three years, so that we shall have an up-to-date picture of what is going on in the LAD. The survey has been translated into a number of languages. Responses also need to be translated, so this is a time-consuming project and the responses are still coming in. Nevertheless, the LAD Council would like to share the preliminary results with you.

To date, 121 responses have been received and entered into a single document. These responses represent Affiliates, Area Networks and all Divisions of LLLI. 12% of responses came from Leaders in rural or island communities, 51% from small towns and 37% from big cities. 67% of the Leaders live close (within 20 miles, 30 km or a 30 minute drive) to another Group. All respondents are currently active Leaders.

25% of the Leaders who responded to the survey were accredited in under six months and 40% were accredited in between six and twelve months. This means that 65% were accredited in less than a year. 14% were accredited in 12-18 months, 10% in 18-24 months and 11% in more than 24 months. This perhaps gives a clearer picture of the spread of application times than we usually see in SAR statistics, which use average (or median) application times.

We also asked these new Leaders how they felt about the pace of their applications. 69% expressed satisfaction with the pace of their applications. 29% of respondents applications. 29% of respondents expressed some disappointment with the pace of their application. Of these, ten said that it was they themselves who had worked slowly because of family needs and four felt slowed down by their sponsoring Leader. Of those who expressed disappointment that the application went too slowly for them, five were accredited in 0-6 months, eight were accredited in 6-12 months, five were accredited in 12-18 months, three were accredited in 18-24 months and two in more than 24 months. Incidentally, of the 12 Leaders who took more than 24
months to become accredited, seven expressed satisfaction with this pace, three were slow because of personal circumstances and only two considered the application too long.

We were interested to know how Leaders had completed their personal histories. 97% of respondents had used e-mail for working on their personal histories. 30% of all respondents had chosen to complete their personal histories in installments. 6% of respondents completed part or all of their personal histories orally either on the telephone or in person. (Of those who chose oral personal histories, three completed their applications in less than six months, two in 6-12 months, one in 12-18 months and one in 18-24 months.) Only 4% of the Leaders who responded to our survey used postal mail to send their personal histories. (Of these, one completed her application in less than six months, one in 6-12 months, two in 12-18 months and two in more than 24 months.)

68% of the Leaders who responded to the survey are involved in LLL activities beyond the basic responsibilities of leadership. Some respond to online help forms, some take shifts on phone lines, some hold extra meetings and some are already Area Council members. Some new Leaders are involved in community peer support programmes, have staffed LLL booths at baby fairs, taught breastfeeding classes, published newsletters, spoken at Area conferences and to high school and college classes, participated in online mother-to-mother forums and worked on Area Conference planning teams. We asked these Leaders what inspired them to get involved in these activities. Many of them replied that it was a perceived need in their local community that inspired them. The enthusiasm of co-Leaders and Chapter Leaders is also a big motivator. Six of the Leaders who responded to the survey had been isolated Applicants. Two of these isolated Applicants have taken on activities beyond basic Leader responsibilities, listing as their inspirations perceived need in the community, the Leader's Handbook and the Web site.

13% of the Leaders who responded have started new Groups and 38% of the Leaders have already recommended another mother for leadership. We asked them what experience, knowledge and skills they would value in a future co-Leader. In addition to the Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership here are some of the traits and skills that were mentioned:

- Commitment
- Passion
- Involvement
- Interest in continuous learning
- Tolerance
- Dynamism
- Honesty
- Flexibility
- Dedication
- Determination
- Experience in breastfeeding in special circumstances
- Sense of humour
- Enthusiasm
- Organization
- New ideas
- Problem-solving
- Accountability
- Open-mindedness
- Charisma
- Leadership skills
- Initiative
- Positive attitude
- Integrity
- Experience in marketing/publicity
- Energy
- Creativity
- Maturity
- Kindness

With this extensive list of skills and traits, it is clear that most Leaders are looking for someone special as a new co-Leader. Those who become Leaders have a diverse set of talents and are indeed talented. The new Leaders surveyed appreciate active support from the LAD to make sure women they recommend for leadership are adequately prepared for the responsibilities ahead of them. We asked Leaders how well they thought the application had prepared them for leadership. An overwhelming 89% of respondents made positive comments about how prepared they felt when they were accredited. Some Leaders commented that the application can only prepare them so far and that much learning continues after accreditation. Some would have liked more practice with helping situations or more support from local Leaders. 92% of respondents made positive comments about the support and information they received from the LAD.
Nine Leaders expressed dissatisfaction with LAD support. They mentioned delays in responses, frustration in finding the necessary information, being transferred to several different LAD representatives and an impression of overly drawn out questioning. Suggestions were made about improving consistency of information and materials. We could use these points to improve what we do. To avoid delays, we need to recruit more new LAD representatives in Areas that are under-served.

Waiting lists can cause frustration, although some potential Leader Applicants are able to make good use of the waiting time by reading and drafting their personal histories while they wait, so that once their applications are officially initiated, they can proceed quickly and smoothly. Any Leader Applicant on a waiting list will benefit greatly from the help of a dedicated and knowledgeable sponsoring Leader.

Another possible pitfall which can cause delays is that LAD representatives may be tempted to take on more files than they are able to handle in the event of unforeseen family needs. As fiercely dedicated and independent volunteers, they may be reluctant to ask for help should the need arise. Please remember that one of the LAD’s great strengths is our support structure. Asking for help when you need it will enhance the experience of the Leader Applicants you are working with and will increase our reputation for responsiveness and efficiency.

We can improve the consistency of information and materials by checking regularly that we are sending out the most up-to-date versions of documents and communicating with Leaders regularly, through correspondence with sponsoring Leaders and through Area Leaders’ Letters to inform them of any changes in documentation or requirements. Some Leaders suggested things that are already in existence in some entities. For example, one Leader suggested a clear action plan or checklist of steps towards accreditation. We can share examples of the documents we use, so that all LAD representatives have a wide array of tools available to them in helping Leader Applicants.

We invited new Leaders to share their additional comments and to tell us anything they wanted the LAD to know. We received many positive, heartwarming comments as well as suggestions for the future. Again, some of the suggestions were for things which are already in place and we can work to make them available more widely. One Leader would have liked more information on online resources and suggested a sit-down web site tutorial with a local Leader as part of the application. Another suggestion was for a streamlining of resources. In recent years we have encouraged Leader Applicants to design their own applications, but what has provided an opportunity for personalising the application for some has caused confusion for others. We need to be alert to the diversity of Applicants and their styles of learning and communication. Many noted the great value of the Preview and some would appreciate more practice of counselling skills. It was also suggested that Communication Skills training be a mandatory part of the application. It was requested that the application maintain its thoroughness and flexibility, allowing Applicants to spend more time if necessary.

This survey has given us much to celebrate and much food for thought. Leaders have expressed great appreciation for the wonderful work that is going on in the LAD.
One Leader wrote:

**LAD people are doing such an important job to credit Leaders in the world.** I enjoy my LLL work now thanks to much love I received from the ACLA who worked on my application. I hope that the LAD won’t change and will continue doing what they do forever as a department full of loving care.

Several new Leaders also expressed interest in participating in LAD work in the future:

I was convinced during the application that the reason why LLL is what it is today is because the LAD system has been established so well. It can be challenging to help mothers become Leaders and to make a bridge for future of LLL. However, the LLL world is growing thanks to hard work by LAD people. I am only a new Leader, and it is only my dream, but I would like to help other mothers prepare for leadership one day in the future.

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**RECRUITING LAD REPRESENTATIVES**

Marie Beam,  
EUS Administrator of Leader Accreditation  
Adapted from the article "Help Wanted" in a quarterly publication from LLL Eastern United States,  
*Eastern Union*, Summer 2006

In responding to the New Leader LAD Survey, one of the Leaders who sent her response directly to me included a number of suggestions for improving leadership preparation. I wrote back to share some LAD resources with which she wasn't familiar and to ask more about her ideas for explaining and organizing the application. I found that she was already enthusiastically working with Applicants in her Group, and so I asked whether she might like to consider joining the LAD. We are continuing to dialogue about her ideas, and I am hoping that when her children start school in the fall, she will feel ready to take on the ACLA position.

At an Area Conference that I attended in April, I sat down for lunch opposite a Leader who was having difficulty leading meetings with her three (soon to be four) homeschooled children in tow. She had heard me mention that the Area needed an ACLA, and was interested in exploring whether LAD work might be a way she could continue to be involved in LLL while better fitting her work around her children's needs. We explored what the position involves, and her writing skills and strong organizational abilities made the job responsibilities feel like a good fit. She has agreed to become an ACLA!

Recruiting LAD representatives tends to be an ongoing challenge throughout the LAD. Even if a department is currently well-staffed, it is vital to look ahead to changing needs, such as a move or retirement of a valued LAD representative, which can leave an Area lacking adequate LAD representation.

Here are some ideas for attracting talented and enthusiastic future LAD representatives:

--- Cultivate a relationship with sponsoring Leaders who do a good job helping Applicants prepare for leadership.

--- Keep track of Applicants who quickly respond to dialogue or seem to have insightful perspective on LLL philosophy; contact them about a year after accreditation.

--- Watch chat lists to identify strong writers/communicators.

--- "Help Wanted" ads placed in the Area Leaders' Letter may spark a Leader's interest in LAD work.

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For a full copy of the compiled results of the survey, please contact Lesley Robinson at lesleyrobinson@rogers.com.

Lesley Robinson lives with her husband, Mark in Ottawa, Canada. Their three grown children, Kate (1985), Alex (1987) AND Will (1989) have flown the nest. Lesley was accredited in 1987 and has been a LAD representative since 1991. She is currently ALA for La Leche League Canada and C-DAM for Ligue La Leche (French Canada).

Editor’s note: *LAD Council New Leader Survey Part II* will appear in *LADders* Issue No. 2.
-- At Area Conferences and Workshops, exhibit “positive strokes” for ACLAs to help potential ACLAs see that the work is valued; give Leaders a desire to be part of the department.

Once you have identified a Leader interested in LAD work, take the time to engage in dialogue and determine whether the position is truly a good fit for her. Along with interests and talents the Leader might bring to the position, be sure to explore her willingness to maintain the LAD commitment to respond to all correspondence within two weeks, the time she has available to devote to LAD work, and her receptiveness to accepting suggestions aimed at making her writing effective and respectful.

One last thought: In sales, on average one must ask ten prospects before finding one who responds positively. Don’t be discouraged by the ones who aren’t interested. Keep asking, because it is a delight when you finally ask the one who will say “Yes!”

Marie Beam lives in Kensington, Maryland, just north of Washington, D.C. She and her husband Eric have three children, Alex (24), Emily (21) and Matthew (16). Marie has been a Leader since 1992 and a member of the LAD since 1996. She is currently Administrator of Leader Accreditation for Eastern United States.

CONFUSED ABOUT SEPARATION?

Marie Beam, ALA, Eastern United States
Reprinted from Eastern Union, Fall 2009

How does the Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) determine whether a mother who has experienced separation is eligible for La Leche League (LLL) leadership? There are no hard-and-fast rules, such as age of the baby or number of hours away from the baby. Instead, the LAD looks at each mother’s experience with separation individually, taking into account her individual arrangements and the unique relationship she has with her baby. That means there are no precedents.

When a potential Applicant has experienced separation, the first question to ask is whether she meets the Mothering Experience Prerequisite, which states:

Mother values nursing at her breast as the optimal way to nourish, nurture and comfort her baby. She recognizes, understands and responds to baby’s need for her presence as well as for her milk. She manages any separation from baby with sensitivity and respect for the baby’s needs.

(LLLI Policies and Standing Rules, Appendix 18)

The LAD looks particularly at how the mother’s experience reflects the two concepts, “In the early years, the baby has an intense need to be with his mother which is as basic as his need for food,” and “Mothering through breastfeeding is the most natural and effective way of understanding and satisfying the needs of the baby.”

In order to gather the necessary information to assess a mother’s experience with separation, please be sure that the sponsoring Leader has submitted the current Leader Recommendation Form (March 2007, available online at http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/(8)Leaderrec.doc ). If the Leader has submitted an older form, ask her to complete Page 2 of the current form, which contains helpful questions regarding separation.

If the Leader Recommendation does not provide sufficient information to make a clear decision, dialogue with the sponsoring Leader to learn whether she has additional information to share. You might ask the Leader to initiate additional discussion with the prospective Applicant, using the form “Areas for Leaders to Consider in Exploring the Mothering Experience Prerequisite with a Candidate” (online at http://www.llleus.org/pass/separationAreastoConsider.doc username: usallleader; password: access4ALLL) to guide the conversation.
The LAD aims to form as complete a picture as possible by asking a number of questions: How old was the baby when separation began? Was the baby comfortable with the separation? How many hours per week were mother and baby separated, including what times of the day and which days of the week? What arrangements has the mother made to reduce the separation? How has she demonstrated that she recognizes and understands her baby’s intense need for her presence? Has the mother had sufficient flexibility to be available and responsive to her baby’s needs? (See Appendix 17 and Appendix 18 for further details on the LLLI Board’s guidelines.)

The LAD representative needs to have this information so that she can see what led the Leader to recommend this mother, and so that she can understand how the mother meets the prerequisites. The Leader knows the Applicant personally, and has observed her in the Group. The LAD representative has a broader perspective and is responsible for seeing that the prerequisites are universal. This collaboration between Leader and LAD representative helps identify Applicants who would be able to represent LLLI anywhere in the world. Thus, it may be necessary for the LAD representative to undertake pre-application dialogue with the potential Applicant to address any unanswered questions and ascertain whether the baby’s need for mother’s presence has been met.

If it is clear that the mother does not meet the Mothering Experience Prerequisite, then it is the responsibility of the sponsoring Leader to let the mother know that, at this time, she does not meet the prerequisites. For some, it is possible that their experience with a new baby may meet the prerequisites, so it’s important to keep an open mind for the future. At the time a mother is told that she does not meet the prerequisites, she should be provided with Appendix 38, “LLLI Leader Accreditation Appeals Policies and Process” from the LLLI Policies and Standing Rules, which can be found in Leader’s Handbook, pp. 223-26.

Sometimes a Leader will submit a Leader Recommendation for an employed mother in the belief that a Group with heavy attendance of employed mothers needs a Leader with personal experience with issues such as pumping, milk storage, bottle-feeding and separation. Certainly, a mother with personal experience with these challenges can be a valuable asset during Group discussions, but she need not be a Leader to help support mothers at meetings. La Leche League does not accredit “Specialty Leaders.” LLL provides excellent resources so that all Leaders can help mothers with these and other issues, regardless of personal experience.

After gathering information from the Leader and potential Applicant, if you still feel uncertain whether the mother meets the Mothering Experience Prerequisite, please consult with your LAD support person. She may offer specific guidance on further dialogue that may be helpful and assistance in assessing whether the application should proceed.

In some instances, even experienced LAD representatives may have difficulty assessing whether a mother meets the Mothering Experience Prerequisite. When this occurs, it can be helpful to "refer" the application to LAD representatives with more experience and a broader perspective. In some cases, a referral might also include the LAD Council (made up of representatives from each region of LLLI, worldwide). A referral may involve further questions and discussion of concerns, leading to consensus as to whether or not the application should proceed.

Do remember that once an application has been accepted by LAD and a LAD representative assigned, only the Director of the LAD, or the Applicant herself, have the authority to discontinue the application. If there are doubts, the time to explore them is before the application gets started.

The Leader Accreditation Department DOES accredit mothers who have experienced separation. The challenge is to make sure that these potential Leaders meet the Mothering Experience Prerequisite and demonstrate an example of LLLI philosophy in their lives, just like all other La Leche League Leaders.
今年の夏の合宿で、リーダー歴25年をたくさんのリーダーとアプリケントの方々に祝っていただきました。ありがとうございました。初めてLLLに出会ったのは長女が6ヵ月のとき、リーダーに認定されたのが次女の出産する1ヵ月前でした。それから25年、5人の子どもを育てながらLLLとともに歩んできました。

この間に、サンフランシスコのコンフェランスで初めてお会いしたルース・バントランドさんと1日サンフランシスコ観光をしたことは。残念ながら、ルースさんはご病気で、2006年11月に亡くなられました。サンフランシスコでお会いしたときは、言葉が通じなくても、LLLリーダー同志なら心が通い合えると実感しました。

ルースさんは、新しいACLAの方の中には、ご存知ない方もいらっしゃると思いますが、LLL認定部にとって、なくてはならないほど認定部に貢献された方でした。

私がCLAのとき、ルースさんはRALAとして、英語の話せない私をとても気遣ってくださり、サポートしてくれました。サンフランシスコで初めてあってハグした後は、私たちはもう、何年も前からの親友のようにここに許し合える友達になりました。私のかたことの英語を理解しようと、やさしくほほえみながら一生懸命に聞いてくださいました。全てのことを受け入れ、あなたの包み込むやさしさを持つ彼女に、LLLリーダーのあるべき姿を見たように思いました。もう、あのやさしい笑顔はみられませんが、こうしてルースさんを思いながら目を閉じると、ルースさんがいつもほほえみかけてくれます。慎んで、ルースさんのご冥福をお祈りいたします。

私の返事を読んで、彼女が辛い気持ちを共感してくれたことを嬉しく感じたり、彼女の辛い思い出が、それをのりこえられた勇気と自信になったりしたらこんなにうれしいことはありません。また、とてもうれしかった体験は、ともに喜びあうことで、私への親しみを感じてくれるかもしれません。そのように、アプリケントとの交流で、自分の気持ちに相手が共感してくれる、またそれをポジティブにとらえ直すことで自分の気持ちになっているか、ということを感じてもらうと、きっとリーダーになったときに母さんにどのように接したら、お母さんが安心して自分の素
I am very grateful that LLL Japan Leaders celebrated my 25-year Leader career at the summer Leader retreat this year. Thank you very much! I met LLL when my first baby girl was six months old. I was accredited right before my second daughter was born. Since then, LLL has always been in my life while I was bringing up my five children.

One of my unforgettable experiences was when I participated in the 2003 LLLI International Conference in San Francisco. I served as the CLA for Japan and met my support person, the late Ruth Pantland, in San Francisco. She served as the Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation for Asia Africa and the Middle East at that time. Ruth and I went sightseeing together. Although we had no common language, I realised that LLL Leaders understood each other no matter where they were from. Some LAD representatives never met Ruth. I would like to emphasise that she was a precious treasure to LAD.

Ruth cared for me and supported me gently because I did not speak English. After our big hugs in San Francisco, we quickly became good friends, as if we had known each other for a long time. Ruth tried to listen carefully to some English words and phrases which I tried to use. She accepted things as they were and welcomed me warmly. Ruth touched my heart, and I learned from her how LLL Leaders should treat each other. I was devastated when she passed away from cancer in November 2005. Although we can no longer work with Ruth, her gentle smile will always stay in my memories. I offer my sincere condolences to Ruth’s family.

I have been involved in LAD during most of these 25 years. I have found LAD work deeply rooted in my life. It gives me opportunities to acquire and develop my own skills. What is important to me in the LAD is to write as warm and kind a response as possible to the Applicant. Of course, there are some things which we have to help the Applicant learn. However, I would like to give my attention to what she tells me about her experience and how she feels about it. If it was a painful experience, I would like to accept her feelings and acknowledg-
edge her endurance by saying, “That must have been painful.” I would also like to praise her effort by saying “You have done a wonderful job.”

I feel honoured if my response helps the Applicant to feel that she has been heard and to become confident that she has overcome difficulties. Also, if I empathise with the Applicant’s joy and happiness, she may feel some special connection to me. If the Applicant finds my empathetic approach comforting, she may emulate it in the future when she dialogues with a breastfeeding mother. It is my joy to know that my attitude might help the Applicant learn approaches expected of a Leader. I shall keep making efforts to write a response which touches the Applicant’s heart.

Yukari served as the CLA for Japan from 2000 until 2005. She lives in Kyoto, the famous ancient capital of Japan. Yukari loves weekend dinners with her husband and five children around the table.

(Translated by Toshi Jolliffe)

Editor’s note:

The above article “Touching the heart,” which was originally published in Four Corners, newsletter for LAD for Africa Asia and the Middle East was sent to Ruth’s husband, Andrew Pantland. With Andrew’s permission we include his acknowledgement letter below.

**Acknowledgement letter from Andrew Pantland**

Thank you for the copies of the LLL Newsletter which you publish with its mention of Ruth. It is comforting to know that she is not forgotten and that her involvement in LLL was not in vain and that her legacy lives on as does the work of LLL. I wish you much strength in your work for LLL. I am sure it brings you a lot of fulfilment as it did Ruth as well as the pleasure of meeting so many people from all over the world. As the African people in South Africa would say:

“Don’t get tired tomorrow!”

**HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?**

Here is an extract from a letter from a Leader Applicant, written to her A/CLA during her application. There is no single right way to respond. Sharing our own possible approaches can help us to consider a variety of ways to respond.

*I would like to ask you if LLL is a feminist organization. This is something that I feel conflicted by in my LLL journey. Every time I hear a LLL Leader speak, I feel that my feminist values are absolutely supported. However, some of the reading material makes me a little uncomfortable, including a reference (I can’t remember from where) from one of the Founders saying that the women’s movement has done a disservice to mothers. A second example is the reference in WAB in the introduction section stating that a household consisting of a husband, wife and child/children provides the best environment for breastfeeding and mothering. While this is the situation that describes my family, in no way do I feel that this is necessarily the “best” situation for everyone. Isn’t it most important for mother and baby to be together and to receive love in any form that the mother finds supportive (perhaps in a common-law, lesbian, intergenerational family)? I believe that the mother is in the best position to define the most appropriate family life to support her and her nursling.*
 Leaders are prepared to help mothers in varied circumstances and communicate information in a respectful, supportive way no matter what the mother decides. Only Leaders are expected to provide a practical example of living LLL philosophy. Of course, there are Applicants and Leaders who do not have a resident father for their child; there are alternative ways (as you suggest) that mothers can show their experience reflects this philosophical value of father’s relationship with their child.

This is an interesting discussion and I hope that this has been helpful. Let me know what you think about it and perhaps the following reading will give you more points for discussion and questions. I look forward to hearing from you about these details.

Further reading which may enhance understanding of these issues and how Leaders manage them in their basic responsibilities:
“Leader’s Handbook”;
Pages 40 – 47, acceptance and respect for each mother, keeping LLL’s purpose clear
Pages 139 – 41, pre-application discussion questions for mothers interested in leadership

http://www.llli.org/NB/NBMarApr97p36.html
This article is interesting about how the concepts were developed

Nina Robertson, Scotland

Your question about whether or not LLL is a feminist organization definitely gave me some food for thought. My first reaction would be to say that it is neither. The mission of LLL is to provide mothers and families with breastfeeding support. In fact LLL does not take a stand on any other issues or endorse other organizations for the very reason that we don’t want to detract in any way from that mission and sole focus. We want to be able to be welcoming and supportive of any mother who comes to us for help regardless of her feelings about this topic.

I can certainly understand that a mother would feel empowered by the information and support she finds at an LLL Series Meeting. LLL encourages mothers to follow their instincts. We also implicitly and explicitly send the message that every mother is the authority on her family. We provide well-researched information, encourage mothers to take what they like and leave the rest, and support all mothers, no matter where they are in their mothering journey.

Some view certain aspects of feminism, particularly those that could be seen as sending the message to mothers that they should choose work and career over family, negatively. That may be what one of the Founders was reacting to in the statement you read (with more time I
I'm interested to hear if what I've shared helps you as you think about this issue. I'd be happy to discuss it further with you, if you would like.

Sally Allison, New York, USA

I think it depends entirely on which definition of feminism you consider.

In counselling and learning theory, feminism is an approach which encourages acceptance of all people. It recognizes that women are different from men, just as there are differences across cultures and religions, and that you and I are different from one another. It recognizes and celebrates these differences, encouraging us to value the different qualities each brings to a relationship. This is not the same as the social feminism prevalent in the United States during the late 1970s and early 1980s that encouraged women to deny some aspects of themselves in order to be assimilated into a predominately male work force. By encouraging this assimilation, social feminism may have been a disservice to some women. In some ways this social movement failed to recognize and celebrate the differences between individuals and instead felt, to some of us who lived through it, to be an attack. Suddenly being a mother was no longer enough. Society expected all women to be mothers, homemakers and corporate employees. However, were it not for these women, many of us would still be frustrated by the limited opportunities available to us. These social feminists did indeed open some long closed and padlocked doors for all women. However, it may also be one of the reasons we continue to see such vast discrepancies between the earning potentials of women depending upon their marital and motherhood status.

In many ways, I believe La Leche League has remained true to feminist theory, encouraging and empowering women to investigate, research, listen to their own instincts, form their own opinions, and make their own decisions while maintaining respectful communication.

This organization truly recognizes that each is an individual and all have something to contribute.

The one area where La Leche League may still have some room to grow, is that of the family concept. Having been conceived and birthed during a time when homosexuality was not widely recognized, when few couples divorced, and when the nuclear family was at its apex, it is easy to see how this concept came to be. I am confident that as more and more research is conducted and published about the long term effects of stable families (regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of their members) on infants, we will see this concept expanded to include alternatives.

Laura Goodwin-Wright, Mississippi, USA

Your comments and concerns regarding feminism are important. You will have seen at Series Meetings that each mother is unique. Your personal feminist identification has been validated at your Group meetings. This is a good moment to examine what those personal values are and how your Group Leaders have supported you in them.

What is a feminist to you? How do you express your own feminism? How are those values congruent with La Leche League philosophy?

This is a great opportunity to move into the Bias Exercise. You might want to consider the topic of feminism as one to examine. The Bias Exercise is also interesting as together we examine the comment from one of the Founders saying that the women’s movement has done a disservice to mothers.” How does this choice reflect or contrast your own choice, beliefs and values. Identify just what it is about this choice that bothers you. What might you learn from this mother so that you could help her or others?

(One version of the Bias (Acceptance) Exercise may be found online at [http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/acceptance.html](http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/acceptance.html). Ed.)

La Leche League is careful to offer support in a nonpolitical, nonsectarian way. Our goal is to support and inform mothers who want to breastfeed their babies regardless of personal expressions of culture and political and social belief. Shall we have a look again at the back of The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding in About La Leche League? How do you see your Leaders doing this?

Now, let's discuss La Leche League philosophy regarding fathers. "...breastfeeding is enhanced and the nursing
couple sustained by the loving support, help and companionship of the baby’s father.” (page 183 WAB). Few of us live the “ideal” life - whatever that might mean to each of us! La Leche League does not exclude families from the circle of support because of different living situations. We do, however, expect our accredited Leaders to believe and try to live by LLL Philosophy as summarised in the 10 Concepts, including the belief that, ideally, mother and baby benefit from the support of the baby’s father. We all know that this is not always possible for a variety of reasons and choices, some of which you mentioned. Can those mothers benefit from the support of La Leche League? Definitely! Can mothers who live in lesbian families, single parent families, extended families become Leaders? Absolutely!

How would you stand by a mother in one of these situations? How would an accredited La Leche League Leader in an alternative family situation represent the philosophy?

Applicant, this is a wonderful opportunity to consider leadership in any shape! Your interest and willingness to explore these questions take your consideration of your role in La Leche League to a deeper level. One of my favorite quotes on leadership is by the great American author Henry Miller. “The real leader has no need to lead - he is content to point the way” Wisdom of the Heart

I will look forward to reading your thoughts.

Patricia Tatlow, Alberta, Canada

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NEW EXTRACT

When my daughter was about four months old I went away on a trip. I had doubts about leaving, but was told I shouldn’t miss an opportunity to “get away”. I left for four days and when I came back, she cried as soon as she saw me. (I think she didn’t recognize me at first and assumed I was a stranger.) While I was gone, I found that I was not enjoying the trip, since I felt so guilty about leaving. It was soon after the trip that I began reading articles that strongly discouraged parents from leaving their babies. It seems obvious to me now, but back then I did not really think leaving would be hard on her.

How would you respond? Send your suggested reply or an extract you would like to share with other LAD representatives for their response to Eleanor Becker at: ellleanorbecker@gmail.com

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A TASTE OF LAD INTERNATIONAL

Each issue of LADders will feature LAD representatives from various geographical parts of LADI, and your contributions will help us all get to know one another better! In this issue, we introduce Europe. In future issues, we will feature other Regions and Areas around the world.

Europe LAD Region is supported by two Regional Administrators of Leader Accreditation (co-RALAs), and they introduce themselves to you here. Because Ineke speaks German and Dutch as well as English, and Laurence speaks Spanish as well as French and English, they both agreed to support European Areas in this way:

Ineke: Netherlands, Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Hungary (when it becomes an Area)
Laurence: France, Greece, Spain and Italy, Future Areas in Europe (FAiE) see next page

My name is Ineke Leiter-Holtslag and I am originally from the Netherlands, but have been living in Bavaria (in the southern part of Germany) for thirty years now. I am married to Hans, who is German, and we have three daughters, Laura (18), Nina (14) and Lisanne (5). I was accredited as an LLL Leader in April 1999, started LAD work in the spring of 2001 and am the Administrator of Leader Accreditation for LLL Germany since January 2003. I will gradually work myself into the role of co-RALA for Europe. I am really excited about the new challenges and LAD contacts lying ahead of me.

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I am Laurence Descourtieux. My husband Eric and myself are French and have 5 children: Nicolas (21), Emeric (18), Géraldine (15) and Alix and Quentin (twins girl/boy) are 11. I joined LAD of LLL France 11 years ago. After 4 years as a Leader I served as the ACL for FAiE and after that the CLA for the same Area. Because of Eric’s work, we have lived in many different places around the world (USA, Gabon, Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia, UK) where I was fortunate to have LLL help me to adapt. It’s so good to be in the baby friendly atmosphere of La Leche League.

*Editor’s note: Some countries with at least one Leader or Applicant compose LLL Future Areas in Europe. Currently, FAiE consists of Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgian Republic, Hungary (nearly ready to be an Area), Iceland, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine.

NOTICIAS DE AMERICA LATINA!
TALLER LATINO AMERICANO
LIGA DE LA LECHE ARGENTINA
Villa Giardino - Córdoba - Argentina
1-2-3 Octubre - 2010

Tenemos un gran placer de invitarlas a compartir el IX Taller Latino Americano, que se realizará en el Hotel de Luz y Fuerza Hotel de Luz y Fuerza ubicado en la bella ciudad de Villa Giardino, rodeado de las atractivas sierras que abundan en la provincia de Córdoba, en el centro de nuestro país.

Situada a 40 km de Córdoba Capital (1 hora de bus), donde cuenta con Aeropuerto Internacional, y a 800 km del Aeropuerto Internacional de Ezeiza, en Buenos Aires.

Estamos preparando un enriquecedor encuentro, con el objetivo de compartir y aprender, no solo de nuestra Región, sino de todas las Areas y Afiliadas que componen LLL. Será un Taller para compartir ideas, empo-
derarnos y motivarnos, teniendo un espacio para que todas podamos expresarnos, Líderes y Aspirantes.

Disfrutaremos de la presencia de una de nuestras Fundadoras Maryan Tompson, quien será la encargada de una de las Conferencias centrales del Taller. Algunos de los temas que abordaremos serán:

- Lactancia y Género
- Lactancia en el siglo XXI
- Las Líderes y los Bancos de Leche
- Más allá de la LM cuánto abarcar en los Galms sin caer en la Mezcla de Causas
- Promoción de LM en las Redes Sociales
- LAD - Sesiones Varias
- Celebración Anual y Grupal de Acreditación de las nuevas Líderes 2010
- El valor del Voluntariado
- IHAMN y LLL

En el próximo número de LADders, estaremos dando más detalles para la inscripción a este magnífico encuentro... Por favor, envíanos tus preguntas a:
taller2010@ligadelaleche.org.ar

1-2-3 Octubre - 2010

No te lo pierdas !!!! Reserve estos días para LLL en Argentina !!!!
FROM LATIN AMERICA: LATIN AMERICAN WORKSHOP

LIGA DE LA LECHE ARGENTINA
Villa Giardino - Córdoba - Argentina
1-2-3 October - 2010

We are very happy to invite you to attend the IX Latin American Workshop, which will take place at the Hotel de Luz y Fuerza, located in beautiful Villa Giardino, surrounded by the wonderful "sierras" landscape, in the province of Cordoba, central Argentina. Villa Giardino is 40km from Cordoba City's international airport (1hr by bus) and 800km from Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires.

We are preparing a meeting that will enrich all of us, that will allow us to share and learn from one another, not only among Leaders within our Region but also with Leaders from all Areas and Affiliates comprising LLL. This Workshop will give us the chance to share ideas and empower and motivate each other, and will provide a space to express ourselves, Leaders and Applicants.

We will share this workshop with Marian Tompson, one of the La Leche League Founders, who will be a keynote speaker. Among the subjects we will share and discuss:

- Advocacy
- Breastfeeding in the 21st century
- Leaders and milk banks
- Beyond breastfeeding: how to include related matters without mixing causes
- Social networks and breastfeeding promotion and support
- LAD sessions
- Annual Group Celebration of Accreditation of new Leaders - 2010
- The value of volunteer work
- Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and the LLL Leader
- Breastfeeding as a gender issue (We have volunteers to translate into English.)

In the next issue of LADders we will be giving more information and details for registration for this great meeting. Please send your questions to: taller2010@ligadelaleche.org.ar

1-2-3 October - 2010

Don’t miss it!!! Mark these dates in your calendar to share with LLL in Argentina!!!

Translator of this article, Veronica Garea, ACL for Argentina, on the left and the author, Silvia Barco, RALA for Latin America

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LAD PROMENADE

Congratulations on your appointment!

Eleanor Becker LAD Council Member-at-Large
Andrea Benz ACLA Switzerland (German-speaking)
Hilary Caldarelli ACLA for Central and Southern Ontario, Canada
Karyn Chabot ACLA for Ligue La Leche Canada
Linda Dockrill ALA for New Zealand
Lindsay Evans CLA for Maryland-Delaware-Washington, D.C, U.S.A.
Mijam Fischer-Burkhard ACLA Switzerland (German-speaking)
Karin Gausman LAD Council Advisor
Sarah Hall CLA for South Island, New Zealand
Rebecca Hay ACLA for Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada
Ineke Leiter-Holtslag Co-RALA for Europe
Catherine Koninckx ACLA Switzerland (French-speaking)
Mary Lissel ACLA for Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada
Kimberley MacKenzie ACLA for Quebec and Eastern Ontario, Canada
Rika Mitani ACLA for Japan
Máire Morrissey ACLA for Ireland
The following LAD representatives are participants in the LAD Development Team:

Silvia Barco, Karin Gausman, Esme Nel, Alison Parkes, Mary Roache, Nina Robertson, Lesley Robinson, Rebecca Sato, Sue Scott, Sharon Vines.

They are joined on the team by Judy Canahauti, Barbara Emanuel, Deirdre Knowles and LaJuana Oswalt.

LADders is the magazine which the LAD Council offers in order to enhance communication among LAD representatives. In the next issue, LAD Promenade will include your comments on LADders #1. It will also be lovely to announce the births of your babies or grandchildren! Please send your submissions to your LAD support person or to Toshi Jolliffe, Contributing Editor for LAD Promenade, at: toshijapan@pt.lu

We look forward to hearing from LAD representatives from all over the globe!