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Diversity and LLL Philosophy
Lesley Robinson, CLA, Ottawa, Canada

La Leche League International is committed to serving everyone, irrespective of background and seeks the equitable accreditation of a diverse body of Leaders. It is within the framework of LLL philosophy that our diversity is apparent. As LAD representatives, we are aware that the concepts are not statements of ideals, but descriptions of a whole range of breastfeeding and mothering experiences. This accounts for diversity in our body of Leaders.

For more than 20 years I have included in my welcome letter to Leader Applicants the observation of how much the diverse group of Leader Applicants I have worked with have in common. This first became apparent to me when I moved from the Area where I was accredited to a new country and with subsequent international moves, it became increasingly clear. Now, the fastest growing parts of the LLL world are Future Areas. Our philosophy appeals to families the world over. The needs of babies do not change with geography or with social conditions. In seeking a diverse body of Leaders we are looking for potential Applicants, whoever and wherever they are, who meet our prerequisites to applying for leadership and whose experience reflects the concepts of LLL philosophy.

With the passage of time we have seen an increase in the numbers of those who of American mothers even attempted breastfeeding. How times have changed. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publishes a regular Breastfeeding Report Card for the United States. According to the 2018 report, 83.2% of all US mothers now initiate breastfeeding, with 57.6% breastfeeding at six months (25% exclusively) and 35.9% still nursing at one year. These statistics alone reveal that the numbers of mothers who meet the Personal Breastfeeding Experience Prerequisite have significantly increased over the years. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reports that worldwide 41% of babies are exclusively breastfed up to five months of age. The highest rates occur in some parts of the world that constitute Future Areas of LLL. Increased breastfeeding rates increase the diversity of our Leaders.

Worldwide, 20,000 facilities in over 150 countries have been designated as baby-friendly according to the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF designation. The Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative promotes alert, active participation by mothers in childbirth and encourages mothers and babies to be together early and often to establish a satisfying relationship and an adequate milk supply as is stated by LLL philosophy. This is another factor in the increase in those who can meet the prerequisites to applying for LLL leadership.

In at least 178 countries around the world, paid maternity leave is guaranteed. More than 50 countries also provide wage benefits for fathers. (The United States, along with Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, Liberia and Lesotho are some of the only countries in the world that provide no type of financial support for new families.) According to Save the Children, in countries with longer periods of parental leave, children were found to be breastfed for longer and their life expectancy was longer. Provisions for maternity leave can promote mother-baby togetherness, assist in the establishment of a solid breastfeeding relationship and broaden diversity among those who can apply for leadership.

WHO along with many national and local health authorities around the world have been working to improve breastfeeding rates and duration. They stress the importance of human milk for human babies. The WHO states: “Review of evidence has shown that, on a population basis, exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months is the optimal way of feeding infants. Thereafter infants should receive complementary foods with continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond.” This aligns with LLL’s concepts on human milk, starting solids and weaning. In addition, the development of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes has enhanced the protection and promotion of breastfeeding throughout the world.

The 1963 edition of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* includes a chapter on “The Father’s Role” which is described as a “Chapter for the man of the house.” The word “husband” is used repeatedly.
In the 1981 edition of *The Womanly Art* there is a chapter entitled “The Manly Art of Fathering.” In the introduction, the authors (the Founders) explain that they have written the book “from the perspective of a household consisting of husband, wife, and child or children,” yet they acknowledge that this picture “does not always hold true in real life.” The chapter and the explanation in the introduction are repeated in the next four editions (1987, 1991, 1997 and 2004). The current edition (2010) has a new approach. The chapter on fathers has been omitted. It is acknowledged that “Most new mothers have a life partner: a husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, significant other, or whatever name you give your relationship.” The latest edition is skilfully written, using the word “partner” to discuss the role of second parent (although this term addresses the relationship with the mother, but not with the baby). LLL acknowledges the diversity of breastfeeding families and we accredit Leaders from all kinds of families.

Some of the ten concepts of LLL philosophy may seem on the surface to have little to do with breastfeeding, but they follow naturally from the breastfeeding relationship.

Breastfed babies have always been in charge of how much they eat and when. They learn to trust the signals their bodies are giving them and given healthy choices, they learn to eat healthily, whether the family diet is vegan, vegetarian, organic, halal, kosher, home-grown or other. Such is the diversity of Leaders’ families’ diets. Loving guidance can also take many forms. It too follows naturally from the breastfeeding relationship.

Breastfed babies, whose needs are always met, learn to trust and to love. They know that they are important and are equipped to learn the importance of compassion. Many breastfeeding families find themselves learning about loving guidance from their children, learning as they go. Each family is unique, yet they all recognise the value of the approach of loving guidance.

What can we do to diversify our body of Leaders further? This can happen naturally as we reach out to new communities. When we hold meetings at different times and locations and consider diverse needs, we can serve a variety of populations. When participants feel welcome and at home with our philosophy, they will want to become part of LLL and
eventually to become Leaders. It is within the context of our philosophy that we seek diversity. We know that the fastest growth happens in places where LLL as yet has no footprint. We need to be visible to those in isolated communities, so that potential isolated Applicants can connect with us. Information about leadership needs to be easy to find on websites and online meetings can provide a welcoming introduction to LLL. Above all we need to be open to those who approach us and look for the positive ways in which they can meet the prerequisites.

References:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Breastfeeding Report Card, United States 2018 https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/reportcard.htm
World Health Organization
   BFHI Programme https://www.who.int/nutrition/bfhi/en/
   Nutrition, Breastfeeding https://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive_breastfeeding/en/
   International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes
      https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/code_english.pdf

\textbf{When the Leader’s Answer Is ’No’}

\textbf{Cindy Garrison, Pennsylvania, USA}
\textbf{Toshi Jolliffe, Heisdorf, Luxembourg}

* Adapted from “When the Answer Is ‘No’” by Nancy Spahr and Trudy Hartt \textit{Leaven}, April-May 2000

Someone in your Area wants to apply for LLL leadership. A Leader has observed and listened to what this mother says at meetings—and she has some concerns.

Following the steps in the \textit{Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders} from the \textbf{Leader’s Pre-Application Packet},* the Leader discusses LLL philosophy, a Leader’s role, and how a Leader’s experience needs to reflect the philosophy. She refers to the LLLI Prerequisites for Leadership – Guidelines for Leaders from Appendix 18 of the LLLI Policies and Standing Rules to help structure the discussion. In the end, she explains to you that she just cannot picture this person as a Leader. How can you support this Leader as she shares her conclusion with the mother in a way that could result in a positive outcome for both the mother and the Leader?

* Editor’s note: Contact the CLA to receive the Leader’s Pre-Application Packet.

\textbf{Preparing for the Discussion:}

This kind of meeting is not easy. Suggest that the Leader prepare her approach and consider what she will say. For example:

- Ask herself:
  - Am I sure that I can’t support the application?
  - What information do I have? Is there still some information I should get from the mother?

If the Leader is not sure, she needs to gather more information from the mother. Let her know that you are happy to offer your suggestions before this meeting. Being certain about what to say can help her speak with confidence.

- Set a time to meet with the mother as soon as possible.
  - Waiting can increase anxiety both for the Leader and the mother.
  - Look at this meeting as a bridge from the discussions about LLL leadership to a renewed working relationship.
One-to-One, When the Leader Needs to Say “No”:

Let’s consider what you can suggest to the Leader.

- Make sure that the discussion is a dialogue, rather than a “verdict.”
  - Give the mother time to react to what the Leader says and respect silence.
  - Ask for the mother’s assessment. For example, “Do you see the difference between your personal experience and LLL philosophy?”
  - Use frequent empathic responses to assure her that the Leader is listening.

- Explain aspects of LLLI philosophy and refer to *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*.

- Remind the mother that an LLL Group provides a wide range of experiences. Knowing there are many ways to deal with a problem can be the most reassuring part of the discussion.

- Talk about the likely consequences when words and actions differ.
  - The action can give a stronger message and the Leader will lose credibility.
  - When actions and words match, the message is more credible.

- Identify the mother’s feelings with her help. They may include disappointment, sadness, anger, indignation, or a combination of emotions. Acknowledge those feelings and respond with empathy.

- Avoid getting sidetracked to other issues. Anything involving personality, what others have said or done, or what the role of LLL “should be” in the breastfeeding community is irrelevant.
  - Use LLL resources such as Appendices 17 and 18 of the *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules*, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, and the *Leader’s Handbook*.
  - Focus on facts and the expectations of LLLI for Leaders.

- Have the notes from the earlier discussion(s) handy. They provide an objective measure, as well as something both Leader and mother can look at. Starting by reviewing the previous discussion can be a helpful way to open the discussion. Suggest to the Leader:
  - Check the summary together. Is it accurate? Is it fair?
  - Say what the assessment is and why.
  - Be ready to repeat the earlier discussion if there is any misunderstanding.
  - Take a break if the Leader needs time to think.
  - Stop periodically to check emotions. Some of these phrases might be helpful: “How do you feel about that?” “It looks like that caught you by surprise. Were you expecting something else? Tell me what you were expecting.” “Does that sound accurate?” “Did I hear you right?” “Is that a fair assessment?”

- Be straightforward:
  - “I” messages keep the emphasis on the assessment rather than laying blame: *I don’t believe your experience meets the prerequisites.*

- Acknowledge the mother’s desire to help others with breastfeeding and identify this as her goal.
  - Express willingness to help the mother achieve that goal. This acknowledges that the Leader and the mother have a common interest.
  - Review the different ways to help breastfeeding mothers and describe the differences in requirements, training, and time commitment.
  - The Leader can ask herself: *How can I help this mother achieve her goal?*

- Tell the mother about the appeals process by sharing Appendix 38, *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules*.

Conclusion:
Each situation is different. You can help the Leader discover what could be helpful. Offer specific suggestions. A Communication Skills Instructor may be able to help. Suggest that the Leader practice role-play with co-Leader(s)
or a LAD representative. It may help to set up a plan and to be open to modifying it as the dialogue progresses. The LAD’s conscientious support will encourage the Leader to learn how to support someone who is facing a challenge.

The vast majority of mothers who are interested in becoming LLL Leaders easily meet the prerequisites. We proceed immediately and happily with an application for leadership. Leaders and LAD representatives therefore may not have had to say “no” so often. If you have experienced a positive outcome after supporting a Leader who had to say “no,” please let your LAD support person or LADders know what you found most helpful. We can learn from each other.

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**Application Correspondence Made Easier**

Marie Beam, ACLA, Maryland/Delaware/Washington, D.C, USA

Every leadership application is unique—but there are many common elements and steps that each Applicant needs to follow. A LAD representative can simplify and streamline her work with Applicants by identifying those common elements and putting them into an easily accessible format.

When I begin work with a new Applicant, I create an electronic file with her name and contact information, and then paste into the file my “template” of common elements. I use the color blue to distinguish template elements; once I use or revise each element, I switch them to black.

I add to the file any correspondence received from the Applicant and supporting Leader, keeping everything in chronological order.

Each time I write to the Applicant and/or supporting Leader, I use my template materials as a starting point, revising as I go to provide customized responses. The template helps me avoid writer’s block, and reminds me of various details I need to remember to include.

Here is a list of what’s in my 12-page template:

- The elements each Applicant needs to complete, and space to note the date when each is completed (personal history, *Breastfeeding Resource Guide, Checklist, reading, and Preview*).
- Website address to record the new Applicant in LLLI’s database.
- Introductory letters to the Applicant and supporting Leader.
- Sample response to the personal history.
- Instructions on studying the *Breastfeeding Resource Guide*.
- Letters to Applicant and Leader, encouraging them to get together to discuss the *Checklist*, information on where to find the Area Agreement.
- Explanation of “required reading,” including how to access Leader’s *Handbook* online and the URL for the *Childbirth and Breastfeeding* booklet.
- Suggestions to Applicant and Leader for working on the *Preview* together.
- Statement of Commitment information and payment instructions.
- Congratulations to new Leader and supporting Leader on accreditation; a list of contact information for the new Leader, including Area Administrators, websites and passwords.
• Notification to Area Administrators of the new Leader
• Website address to record the new Leader on LLLI’s database
• Invitation to the new Leader to join the Area’s online chatlist.

Since I started using a template, I have been pleased at how it facilitates greater efficiency in my work with Applicants. Whenever I receive a fresh communication from an Applicant—even if I have not heard from her for months—I can easily locate the “next steps” for her in the remaining blue portion of the template and promptly send her a customized reply.

Once the last task is completed, I note the accreditation date at the beginning of the file, and transfer the file to my “Accreditations” electronic folder. It’s always very satisfying to complete an accreditation, and know that I’ve helped someone become a new Leader.

Compilation Article

Working With Applicants in Future Areas

Future Areas are the fastest growing parts of the LLL world. There is a tremendous need for LLL’s services in places where there are, as yet, few Leaders and there is remarkable enthusiasm among those who apply for leadership in order to bring LLL to their communities. The LAD representatives who work with these pioneering Leader Applicants are also extraordinarily excited about this important work. As Future Areas gradually become established, they rely on LAD representatives who work at-large in order to manage large numbers of Applicants.

LAD representatives find it tremendously enriching to work with Applicants in Future Areas. Linda Wieser in Nova Scotia, Canada has found that working with Applicants from Future Areas has helped her to be aware of the significance of universal criteria for accreditation. She shares the following:

For several years I have been working as an ACLA-at-Large for Future Areas in Europe (FAiE) and Future Areas in Asia and the Middle East (FAiAsiaME). Working with these Applicants has helped me experience the international part of LLLI and the importance of universal accreditation. I highly recommend it as an option for any LAD representative who has some extra time. So far, I have accredited Leaders in China, Indonesia and Russia and am now working with an Applicant in India. All the Applicants I’ve worked with so far had supporting Leaders and were able to correspond in English. It was not always perfect English, but I could easily understand what the Applicant was saying. Accreditation of any new Leader is a joyous event, but it’s especially exciting when it’s in a Future Area.

Linda talks about the similarities and differences in working with Applicants in different LLL entities:

Working with Applicants in Future Areas is basically the same as working with Applicants here in Canada. Some forms may be different; however, the CLA for each Future Area has always been helpful in making sure I had the information I needed. One challenge I had working with a Russian Applicant was when I realized that she and her supporting Leader were using the Leader Applicant Handbook, (LAH) a resource created by LLL Great Britain and I had sent her the Leader Applicant’s Resource Kit (LARK). Once I became familiar with the LAH, it made it easy for me to determine when she had completed all the criteria for accreditation.

Lori Bryan from California, USA has relished the opportunity to learn about life in different parts of the world:

I was asked if I could help with English speaking Applicants in Future Areas and I jumped at the chance to expand my LAD work outside of the USA. What an enriching experience it has been to work with fantastic Applicants and
supporting Leaders! While working through the application, I’ve also learned about different cultures, customs and places in the world. I have a new appreciation for families who live in a country with their relatives far away.

Of course there are now additional countries and cities on my list of places to visit. And imagine my excitement when I was able to meet Misha, the first Future Areas Applicant I accredited, in person at the EMS!

Karin Ali in Texas, USA hopes to encourage others to benefit from working with Applicants in Future Areas:

What an amazing experience it has been to be able to work with Leader Applicants from Future Areas! I did not know when I joined the LAD, that there would be a possibility of working with Applicants outside of my own Area. However, when I found out that I could, I volunteered right away. Over the last four years, I’ve been able to work with Applicants in India, Lebanon, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Singapore, China, Russia, and Croatia. Words cannot even express how wonderful it has been to meet and work with these Applicants, and to correspond with them as they moved closer to being accredited as LLL Leaders. The things that I have learned by working with them and learning about their cultures and countries has broadened my own understanding by so much. I hope to be able to continue this work for many years to come, and to encourage others in the LAD to do so as well.

Sarah Quigley, who lives in the USA, is using her language skills in her work with Applicants in FAiE. She tells us:

“Do you know any other languages?” This was a question that my LAD mentor, Lori Bryan, asked me during ACLA orientation. I shared that I had majored in Russian in college and spent a semester in Moscow. My language skills were weak, but I said I’d be willing to dust off my English-Russian dictionary if there was ever a need to work with Russian-speaking Applicants.

Two years ago, I learned that LLL Russia had formed and was rapidly growing, with a waiting list of Leader Applicants. I spoke up about my knowledge of the language and culture, and Margaret McGuigan, CLA for Future Areas in Europe, responded with enthusiasm. She also said that there was no pressure to take on more LAD responsibilities, but how could I say no? I was one of a handful of people on the planet with these intersecting skill sets of LAD work and Russian.

To date, I have helped accredit three new Russian Leaders and am working with three more Applicants. Some of them write to me in English, and others are comfortable reading English and responding in Russian. I am most proud of my work with a very special Applicant in Moscow, to whom I write entirely in Russian. It’s been over 20 years since I regularly used Russian, and I have been surprised at how much I remember! It’s also a great joy knowing that I can help LLL Russia grow.

«Вы знаете другие языки?» Это был вопрос что моя наставница в LAD, Лори Брайан, спросила меня во время ориентации ACLA. Я поделилась тем, что специализировался на русском языке в колледже и провел семестр в Москве. Мои языковые навыки были слабыми, но я сказала, что буду готовы вычистить свой англо-русский словарь, если когда-нибудь возникнет необходимость работать с русскоязычными кандидатами.

Два года назад я узнал, что LLL Russia сформировалась и быстро росла, с листом ожидания кандидатов-лидеров. Я рассказал о своих знаниях языка и культуры, и Маргарет Макгиган, CLA для будущих регионов Европы, ответила с энтузиазмом. Она также сказала, что не было никакого давления, чтобы взять на себя больше обязанностей LAD, но как я могла сказать нет? Я был одним из немногих людей на планете с этими пересекающимися
наборами навыков работы с LAD и русским языком.

На сегодняшний день я помог аккредитовать трех новых российских лидеров и работаю еще с тремя соискателями. Некоторые из них пишут мне по-английски, а другие могут спокойно читать по-английски и отвечать по-русски. Я больше всего горжусь своей работой с очень специальным заявителем в Москве, которому я пишу полностью на русском языке. Прошло более 20 лет с тех пор, как я регулярно использовала русский язык, и я была удивлен, насколько я помню! Также очень приятно знать, что я могу помочь росту ЛЛЛ Россия.

If you would like to work with Applicants from Future Areas, please contact your LAD support person for more information or watch LADialogue for requests for ACLAs-at-large.
Semi-Annual Report: Compilation
October 2018
LAD Council

The information from the previous SAR is indicated in parentheses. Italicics include/indicate estimated figures. “Length of applications” shows the median length in months; subtotals and LLLI total are averages of the medians.

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<tr>
<th>Affiliates</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Applicants</th>
<th>New Applications</th>
<th>Discontinued Applications</th>
<th>Accreditations</th>
<th>Length of Applications (Months)</th>
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<td>316 (317)</td>
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<td>80 (56)</td>
<td>39 (19)</td>
<td>54 (28)</td>
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<th>Leaders</th>
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<td>390 (434)</td>
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<td>849 (912)</td>
<td>586 (654)</td>
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<td>72 (63)</td>
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<th>Length of Applications (Months)</th>
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<td>25 (20)</td>
<td>9 (14)</td>
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<td>1,046 (1,085)</td>
<td>290 (320)</td>
<td>114 (121)</td>
<td>40 (60)</td>
<td>89 (92)</td>
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</table>

| LLLI Total            | 5,577 (5,807) | 2,211 (2,314) | 1,102 (1,229) | 305 (333) | 151 (142) | 213 (205) | 14.0 (14.0) |
# Semi-Annual Report

## October 2018

### Comparison of Four Reporting Periods

LAD Council

- Affiliates: Canada English, Canada French, Great Britain, New Zealand
- Non-USA ANs: European AN (Area Network), International AN
- USA ANs: Alliance AN, Garden State AN, Mosaic AN, Southern California/Nevada AN, Texas AN, US West AN
- The numbers with an asterisk (*) have been corrected from the original
- Italics indicate estimated figures

#### Leaders

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#### Groups

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#### Discontinued Applications

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#### Accreditations

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Here is an extract from a Leader Applicant who is overwhelmed by the Breastfeeding Resource Guide. There is no single right answer. Sharing possible approaches can help us consider how we might choose to respond.

Dear LAD representative,

Thank you so much for your support so far in my application. I have been working on the Breastfeeding Resource Guide (BRG), and I'm not sure whether I can actually get through it all. Every time I start to work on it, I feel so overwhelmed by all of the technical information that I have to learn. How am I ever supposed to remember everything? I had mastitis once and have dealt with thrush, but what about all of the information about hospitalization, jaundice, and allergies? I know that I don't have to memorize everything, but I feel like I need to know all of this to be an effective Leader.

Thanks for any help you can provide because I am feeling really stressed about this.

Warmly,
Aline

Dear Aline,

It certainly can be overwhelming to think you need to know everything when you are just beginning your journey. The beauty of the Breastfeeding Resource Guide is that it is a guide. It is a handy tool to keep near your helping station and to which you can refer when you come across a difficult situation. Just relax and become familiar with the types of topics it includes and the type of information provided on those topics. Much like motherhood, leadership is learned. We all start right where we are and move forward from that place.

Best wishes for your application. I hope you find it a time of personal reflection and growth.
Laura Goodwin-Wright
Mississippi, USA

Dear Aline,

Thank you for sharing with me your concerns about the Breastfeeding Resource Guide. I hope you will be reassured to learn that, like you, I was also alarmed by it when I first received a copy. (I actually threw it in the bin!)

The good news is that we don't have to learn everything. My own view is that it can be counterproductive to work from memory. I much prefer to look things up, checking that my information is complete and up-to-date. Also the questions are only examples of the kinds of thing we might need to find out, not an exhaustive list.

The BRG, therefore, is (as its name implies) a guide to the resources available to Leaders, an opportunity to become familiar with them all (not only printed materials, but how we access the experience of other Leaders and LLL support systems). Working with the BRG gives an insight to all the background available though LLL—a reminder that we are not alone.

As you read through the guide, you may recall seeing a chapter in The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding or another recommended book, an article in a Leaders' publication or something from the LLLI or your local LLL website which addresses this issue. Perhaps, after accreditation, you will read something new that can be added to your list (mental or written) of resources on a given topic. It is a document you can continue to use throughout your Leader career, adding and removing information as necessary.

Of course, information that we use often probably settles into our memory (although I still like to double-check.)

It is also important to remember that our role is to provide the tools and information parents need to make their own decisions, those most appropriate to the needs of the parents, the baby and the family. Your knowledge of consumer-friendly resources will enable you to share appropriately with parents as well as to know when something more specialised and technical might be required, something that the family might want to share with healthcare providers.

I hope you can return to the BRG with confidence that it is intended to help you know and appreciate the level of support available to Leaders, not to test your ability to learn and remember. Relax and enjoy!

LLLove,
Eileen Harrison
France

Dear Aline,

I can hear that you're worried when you say that there's so much to learn and you don't know if you're going to be able to do it. It seems to me that you're very concerned about doing it right and that mother-to-mother support is very important for you. That's exactly the personal characteristic a Leader demonstrates every day. And the mothers you talk to will hear the caring in your voice and respond to that. The empathy you show via all the listening techniques you learn to help you communicate with them, and offering support is even more important then the exact information about breastfeeding.
Sometimes it's useful to realize that just by listening you are helping a mother. And yes you don't know everything. No one knows everything, but you do know how to respond to an anguished mother.

The point of the Breastfeeding Resource Guide is to become familiar with basic sources for information. That way when a mother calls with questions about an area you don't feel you know very well, after listening actively and supporting her emotionally, you can always tell her that you will investigate it more and call her back or send her an email with the specific information.

Sometimes it's useful to practice a sentence or two to say in these situations with your supporting Leader—no doubt it is a situation she has experienced personally. And we all learn every time we investigate a situation for a mother.

That's one thing that's great about being a Leader: you're always learning. No doubt working with the Breastfeeding Resource Guide will help you begin to be familiar with basic information about many situations. And that's enough to get your start as a Leader.

Many Applicants find it useful to practice the information they're learning by role-playing helping calls with their supporting Leader and choosing a situation that uses the part of the BRG that they've just completed. The best way to internalize theory is to use it!

I look forward to hearing about your experiences using the BRG. LLL is lucky to have such a conscientious and dedicated Applicant.

Laura Laubach
Pamplona, Spain

Dear Aline,

The Breastfeeding Resource Guide (BRG) can seem overwhelming with all those pages and all that information, can't it? The good news is that you don't have to know or have experienced all that it includes, just where to find it in your resources, the primary one being The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding.

Here are some ideas others have used:
* tab your personal copy of The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding for the most commonly asked questions so that you can go to the section quickly in a meeting or on a phone call.
* create a physical or computer version of a file box where you can have the information easily at hand.
* ask other Leaders how they handle phone calls about situations they've never experienced.

The even better news is that it's OK to tell the mother some basic information and then let her know you will check with your co-Leader or Professional Liaison Department (PLD) for additional information. Members of the PLD usually have extra resources that a Leader typically wouldn't have that they can turn to for additional information. They also have PLD support people within their Area Network that have additional resources and more years of experience to refer to in order to offer support to the local Area Professional Liaison (APL).

Susie Supporting Leader may have other ideas she's found helpful to share with you. Perhaps this can be the topic of your next discussion about your application. You might even work through some "sample" situations from the BRG where you play the role of the mother to get a better idea of how Leaders respond to helping questions.

I'll be eager to hear all about it when you write next.

Warmly,

Cindy Garrison
Pennsylvania, USA

Dear Aline,

I want it to be very clear that the Guide is not a test; you do not need to write out or send me the answers to the questions. Here is how the guidelines that I have received from the Leader Accreditation Department explain it:

“Some people enjoy testing their knowledge. They would consider it fun to write answers and check them against what they find in the suggested resources. Other people might prefer to use the list as a checklist of topics they will ‘research’ and/or discuss with an experienced Leader. Still others prefer a ‘human’ context to their learning. They might want to look at and discuss or role play one or two situations at a time, looking up only what they do not feel confident about. A list that’s a ‘game’ to some people might be unnecessarily daunting to others…Since the completion of the BRG (or something similar) is now a requirement for leadership, ask each Applicant to write back to you with a ‘report’ of her work with it, but remember that this report can have different forms, depending on how the Applicant uses it. It would be good to have Applicant evaluations of the Breastfeeding Resource Guide, just as it is important for us to have evaluations of any handouts or checklists we send to Applicants (how else can we know whether they do what they are intended to do or need to be modified?)…”

In short, there is no prescribed way to use the BRG. I welcome your questions and suggestions. I think it will be a good idea for you to look through the topics and see which ones you are comfortable with and which ones will require more investigation. As you read through the required reading, keep in mind which information might be helpful for particular situations covered in the BRG.

Diane Beckman
North Carolina, USA

Dear Aline,

It’s so lovely to hear from you. How distressing to hear that you are feeling stressed and finding it hard to work on the BRG. Like you, some Applicants initially find the BRG intimidating. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by this exercise, especially if you are not familiar with many of the topics. And yes, it contains a lot of information to cover. When I was accredited there was no BRG, so I really appreciate this exercise which gives Applicants the opportunity to research most of the breastfeeding management topics we encounter as Leaders.

Let me reassure you that you do not need to memorize all the information about every topic. That’s not the goal of the BRG. This exercise was created to give Applicants the opportunity to learn about the variety of topics Leaders are asked about and to familiarize them with the resources available to parents and Leaders. If, in the future, you get a helping question you don’t know the answer to, you’ll know where to start looking for information.

Let me reassure you that you do not need to work on the BRG alone. You may find it helpful to work with other Applicants and/or your supporting Leader. When working together, Applicants often divide up the topics and then present them to each other. The supporting Leader(s) can act as an additional resource. Talk with Janice, your supporting Leader, about working on this together.

Perhaps you could take one part of the BRG at a time. Review the topics and use the study questions if they are helpful. They are not required. Some Applicants respond to them orally; others write out the answers. You can make notes of anything you have questions about and then discuss them with Janice.
Let me know how you decide to proceed with work on the BRG.

Warmly,
Linda Wieser
Nova Scotia, Canada

How would you respond? Send your ideas for a reply or an extract you would like to share with other LAD representatives to Lesley at mummypiggy@gmail.com.

Thank you to Karin Ali who has been a dedicated Contributing Editor for “How Would You Respond?” We greatly appreciate her thoughtful work on LADders.
I am very pleased to begin my appointment as Administrator for Leader Accreditation for La Leche League Canada. I have been a Leader since 2012 with the Toronto West Jane Group. I became ACLA for Central and Southern Ontario (CSO) of LLL Canada a few years back, and then CLA for CSO at the beginning of 2018. Professionally speaking, I am co-owner of a commissioned sales agency that sells books to retailers, librarians, and gift stores in the Canadian marketplace. The company celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2018 and coincidentally, so did I!

I have two daughters, Isabella (9) and Roxanna (6). As they move away from breastfeeding (anytime now, Roxanna . . .) I have felt myself more drawn to the idea of working with the concepts to help build the future of LLL Canada, which is why the Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) seemed the obvious place for me to go next. I hope to continue moving forward with the concepts to broaden the reach of LLL in general, and help to improve any LAD documents and exercises that require revision as deemed necessary. The idea of working with Leaders internationally is also intriguing to me. I have enjoyed working with other LAD members and Linda Wieser, my predecessor, so when the position became available, it seemed the next logical step. I look forward to working with you all to move La Leche League forward and broaden our reach of Leaders to the benefit of all breastfeeding mothers and babies.

Hello! My name is Rachel Concitis and I recently became a new Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation (RALA) for the Great Lakes Region in LLL Alliance. I support LAD representatives in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Western Pennsylvania (some of the states that border the five “Great Lakes” that are in the United States and Canada). I am also the CLA for LLL Ohio in the United States. I became a Leader in June 2017 and joined the LAD in February 2018.

I’ve always been drawn to becoming a Leader and it seems I have known about La Leche League my entire life. My mother breastfed me until I was three years old and while she didn’t go to La Leche League meetings in the 1970s and 1980s, she did rely heavily on her peer-to-peer support network of fellow breastfeeding mothers when nursing my older brother and me. Knowing how important this support network was, I searched out my area La Leche League meetings when I was pregnant with my first child, Bradley. I quickly found some lifelong friends and decided that becoming a Leader was the right choice for me.

Outside of La Leche League I teach third grade in Columbus City Schools, Columbus, Ohio, USA. I have taught for 14 years.
Through the years I have taught both special education students and regular education students, and a variety of grades in the elementary school. Reading and social studies are my favorite subjects to teach, and I love using children’s literature to spark discussions about diversity, inclusion, as well as history. I have also been able to put my knowledge and tips about working and breastfeeding to use with other teachers that have had children after me and wished to continue to nurse after returning to work post-maternity leave. Most teachers in the United States are only able to have six weeks of maternity leave, so support is vital when returning to work and managing pumping.

My husband and I met nine years ago when we were both camping with mutual friends. Very romantically, it was the weekend we were all digging a new hole in the ground for the outhouse! It was love at first shovel. We continue to go camping there with our friends as often as we can. It has enabled us to pass our love of the outdoors on to our four-year-old, Bradley.

I’m grateful for the opportunities I have been given through my involvement with La Leche League to help other nursing parents, as well as the many working parents who attend my Group’s evening meeting. There are so many parents out there who wish to continue breastfeeding after they return to work, and it is vital that we have Leaders who share those experiences.

Eva Donat  
Spain

Dear friends,

My name is Eva Donat. I’m 51, and I have three children who are already 20, 17 and 16. I’m a journalist with a degree in audiovisual communication, and some masters in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP): NLP trainer, master-practitioner in NLP, and NLP coach. I’m also a yoga teacher, and a mindfulness and meditation teacher. I work a lot, I love working and helping people, especially women.

I first came to LLL when my first son, Eloi, was one month old and too demanding, I thought. I could do nothing else but be with him! I was taught that women should have “a career” outside the home. When I was pregnant with Eloi I told my boss I would return to work in two months and I was so wrong because I had a three-year leave. La Leche League completely changed my mind, my manners, my being. I started to believe in myself, to trust in myself, and now I always have in mind the word “respect” for myself, as well as for others.

My ACLA was Eileen Harrison, who helped me a lot. With her nice and challenging questions, she showed me that being kind can be mixed with firmness. Kind and strong can be two faces of the same coin. She set a very good pattern for me to try to follow in my life since then.

I became a Leader when Eloi was one, so I have been a Leader in Barcelona for almost 20 years. In the beginning I had so many phone calls, I think I’ve answered more or less 12,000 calls, plus I’ve met 3,000 mothers in person over the years. I love speaking to mothers and helping them to follow their own paths, connecting their actions with their hearts.

I’ve been a District Coordinator for three years, I’ve been an ACLA for three years as well, and now I’m going to be CLA for Spain. And my 30 years of experience in public administration (City Hall of Barcelona) can also help me organize the bureaucracy. I dedicate most of my day to writing for politicians at City Hall, with different points of view, but always adding perspective with an open heart, which has always been well appreciated. I’m also an NLP
coach, a master practitioner in NLP and a trainer for NLP. I believe that my experience and my training as a communicator and NLP coach and trainer can help me a lot to be the best CLA I can, because this work includes reconciling many points of view and clarifying many doubts at all levels and with people. I hope this will help me establish good fluid dialogues in the LAD and with supporting Leaders as well.

I hope I will be able to help to identify the talents and the potential of Leaders, which will make them feel effective, and I hope I can help to reach agreements and resolve questions. I am trained in seeking out talent ... I hope I can apply my training!

I have great confidence in Laura Laubach, who helps me whenever I have any doubts. I don’t know where I would be if it wasn’t for her!

I am delighted to be in this house, our home: LLLI.

Sincerely yours,
Eva Donat
Barcelona, January 2019

Queridas amigas,

Mi nombre es Eva Donat. Vivo en Barcelona, Catalunya, España. Tengo 51 años, y tengo 3 hijos: Eloi, que tiene 20 años, Ernest que tiene 17, y Emma, 16. Soy periodista, licenciada en Comunicación Audiovisual y algunos másters en PNL: Formadora en PNL, Master-Practitioner en PNL, y Coach con PNL. También soy profesora de yoga, profesora de mindfulness y meditación. Trabajo mucho, me encanta trabajar y ayudar a las personas, especialmente a las mujeres.

La primera vez que vine a LLL fue cuando mi primer hijo, Eloi, tenía un mes de edad. Yo pensaba que era demasiado exigente. ¡No podía hacer nada más que estar con él! Me han enseñado que las mujeres deben tener “una carrera” fuera de casa. Cuando estaba embarazada de Eloi le dije a mi jefe que volvería a trabajar en 2 meses, y me equivoqué porque me tomé una excedencia de 3 años. La Liga de la Leche cambió completamente mi mente, mis modales, mi ser. Comencé a creer en mí misma, a confiar en mí misma, y ahora siempre tengo en mente la palabra “respeto”, tanto para mí como para los demás.

Mi CAMA fue Eileen Harrison, que me ayudó mucho, con sus preguntas dulces y desafiantes a la vez, me mostró que ser amable se puede mezclar con ser firme. Agradable y fuerte. Dos caras de la misma moneda, pero totalmente entremezcladas. Ella fue, para mí, un buen ejemplo que he tratado de seguir en mi vida desde entonces. Comencé a ser una Monitora cuando Eloi tenía 1 años, así que han pasado casi 20 años desde que me acredité como Monitora en Barcelona. Al principio recibí un montón de llamadas telefónicas, creo que desde entonces he respondido más o menos a 12.000 llamadas, además de que he estado con unas 3,000 madres en persona durante estos años. Me encanta hablar con las madres y ayudarlas a seguir sus propios caminos que conectan sus actos con sus corazones.

He sido DC durante 3 años, también he sido CAMA durante por 3 años, y ahora voy a ser un CAM para España. Empecé a trabajar muy joven en el Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, y mis 30 años de experiencia en la administración pública también pueden ayudarme a organizan la burocracia. Me dedico la mayor parte del día a escribir discursos y artículos para políticos en el Ayuntamiento, que tienen diferentes puntos de vista según el partido al que pertenecen, y siempre intento agregar una perspectiva de corazón abierto, que casi siempre les ha gustado. También me gusta trabajar como coach con programación neurolingüística. Creo que la experiencia y la capacitación como comunicadora pueden ayudarme mucho para ser la mejor LAD que puedo ser, porque este trabajo incluye conciliar...
muchos puntos de vista y aclarar muchas dudas a todos los niveles y con personas. Espero poder contribuir a establecer, asimismo, buenos diálogos fluidos con el departamento de acreditación de monitoras y las madrinas.

Espero poder ayudar a detectar talentos y potencialidades de las monitoras del departamento, ayudando a que se sientan útiles y aporten el máximo de sus cualidades. Espero poder ayudar a alcanzar buenos acuerdos y a resolver muchas preguntas. Me formé también en detección de talentos ... ¡Espero aplicarlo bien!

Tengo mucha confianza en Laura Laubach, quien me ayuda cuando tengo alguna duda. ¡No sé dónde estaría si no fuera por ella!

Estoy encantada de estar en esta casa, nuestra casa: LLLI.

Amistosamente vuestra,

Eva Donat
Barcelona, Enero de 2019

LAD Promenade

Congratulations on your appointment!

Christine Arneitz  ACLA, LLL Austria
Kristen Carlson     CLA, Massachusetts/Rhode Island/Vermont
Clémence Carraud-joste   ACLA, LLL France
Sarah Cereghini    co-CLA, LLL Italy
Marielle Creteur-Narcy ACLA, LLL France
Pauline Desnous  ACLA, LLL France
Eva Donat  CLA, LLL Spain
Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes  ACLA, Atlantic Canada, LLL Canada
Melissa Fuller-Killgore,  RALA, LLL Alliance, Southern Region
Mathilde Garbay  ACLA, LLL France
Ingrid Krumrei  ACLA, LLL Austria
Misha Laudicina  co-CLA, LLL Italy
Rhegan Patrick  ACLA, British Columbia/Yukon, LLL Canada
Roberta Samec  ALA, LLL Canada
Kylla Serben  LAD Secretary, Alberta/Northwest Territories, LLL Canada
Janette Taylor  CLA, Quebec/Eastern Ontario, LLL Canada
Maud Verdez  ACLA, LLL France

Support for My LAD Work
In this photo is my son (19), 2 daughters (13, 17), my husband and also Ouma Sannie.

I cannot do the LAD work without the support of my family. When I am away to attend meetings Ouma takes over the kitchen. She cleans and helps to organize dinner and makes sure someone is hanging up the washing. There is always a lot to do, when the mother is absent from the house. Ouma Sannie, at 82, is always happy when I return.

I also cannot do the LAD work without the support of the LAD Council and most importantly, Toshi, my DLAD.

Juliet Matthee

ALA Asia, Africa, Middle East

Cape Town, South Africa
LAOders Needs You!

The LAOders team needs some new members.

The following roles need to be filled:

Managing Editor:
- Plan issues
- Collect articles
- Edit for clarity and correctness
- Set and meet deadlines for publication

Contributing Editor for “How Would You Respond?”:
- Select situations
- Collect and edit responses

Layout Coordinator:
- Let your creative juices flow
- Put each issue of LAOders together

Contributing Editor for “Good Ideas” and “Reminders”:
- Collect and edit ideas and reminder items

To volunteer for one of these roles or for more information, please contact your LAO support person.

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Article Coordinators

Contributing Editors

Good Idea! / Reminder!
How Would You Respond?
LAOders Promenade
A Taste of LAO International

Proofreader
Managing Editor/Layout
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Karin Ali
Linda Wieser
Lori Bryan
Juanita Watt
Lesley Robinson
Toshi Jolliffe
Cindy Garrison
Juanita Watt

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