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Helping an Isolated Applicant Prepare to Lead a Meeting
Rachel Concitis, Columbus, Ohio, USA

Have you ever wondered, “How do I help isolated Applicants prepare to lead a meeting, when they have never attended a meeting themselves?” This question has come up often when I have had conversations with other LAD representatives as we discuss LAD work and how to best support isolated Applicants. Typically, Leader Applicants will have attended a La Leche League meeting in person over the course of their pregnancy and months or years breastfeeding. They will observe the natural “flow” of their Group’s meeting structure, often modeled after the Series Meetings described in the Leader’s Handbook and The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding. Observing active Leaders over the course of their application work also helps them become comfortable with leading a meeting themselves and practice their “Leader voice.”

La Leche League continues to expand into new areas of the world. Within existing Areas and Entities there is also expansion. New Groups are forming all the time to serve parents in counties, towns, cities, states, and provinces that previously did not have their own active La Leche League Group. Isolated Applicants have unique needs from their LAD representatives. Not only do they rely on their LAD representatives to help them navigate the application, they also reply on them to learn how to lead a meeting without having experienced it firsthand themselves. Ideally the LAD representative will have recruited someone else to be a supporting Leader for the isolated Applicant. This will give the future Leader two perspectives on LLL work. When there is a supporting Leader, the LAD representative may offer these suggestions to that Leader.

LAD representatives from around the world answered my query to share what has worked for them as they work with isolated Applicants to help them prepare to form a new Group and lead meetings once accredited. If you find yourself working with isolated Applicants, perhaps some of these suggestions will work for you, too.

Allyson Shames, RALA for LAD West in the United States, finds herself working with a rural, isolated Applicant who has never attended a meeting in person before. She notes several things she does differently than with a traditional Applicant. She has found the need to have a “slow, methodical discussion about the prerequisites and the potential Applicant’s experience(s).” She also talks through both Appendices 17 and 18, discussing thoroughly the concepts and the Applicant’s motivations. Allyson also notes the need to have a thorough review of the Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for LLL Leadership. She and the Applicant talk through 2-3 items at a time with a lot of back and forth discussion. She writes, “It has taken a huge amount of time for both of us, but my assumption is that because of how isolated she is, she needs to know everything. We do a lot of cross-referencing with both the older and revised Leader’s Handbook and The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding. I answer every question she has and seek answers for what I don’t have.”

Allyson also relies on her larger Leader network for answers to questions. For example, she asked contacts in her Area Network to find out how to start a new Group, especially with filing the needed tax information required by the government. She was able to put the Leader Applicant in contact with an Area treasurer so the two could discuss Group financials directly. Allyson hopes to “build the Applicant’s network so she feels she knows who to ask about things in the future.”

Allyson also asks lots of questions and poses many scenarios in a “How would you respond?” conversation style. They talk through the why part in depth. Allyson made sure to talk through various topics that an Applicant who has been to meetings wouldn’t need to discuss, like how to select a meeting space, how to post signs and advertise your meeting, etc. A traditional Applicant would have their supporting Leader to discuss those topics with.
Allyson does note the biggest difference is the need to devote a lot of time to do the application well. She also notes the need to continue to be available post-accreditation in case other questions come up in those early months. She does add, though, that working with an isolated Applicant “is very fulfilling when done well, but if a Leader doesn’t have the time to do it, it’s better to find someone that does rather than cut corners.”

Linda Wieser, in Nova Scotia, Canada, also agrees that it can be challenging working with isolated Applicants who have never attended an LLL Series Meeting. She writes, “First, it’s important that the Applicant understand what we mean by an LLL meeting. This was made clear to me when an Applicant mentioned she was planning to hold her meetings in a hotel.” Linda shares six ideas she has found to best describe LLL meetings. They are:

- Informal discussion—not a class
- Peer-to-peer support/Leader as facilitator not teacher
- Focus on participation from attendees
- Babies and children welcome
- Goals of a meeting: answer questions/concerns; give participants the opportunity to share their experiences
- Leader sets the tone for the meeting; limits sharing her personal experience

Linda shares the other consideration is “how to give the isolated Applicant practical experiences that will help when leading that first meeting.” She asks isolated Applicants to do the following exercises:

- Write an introduction to the meeting
- Decide on four topics for a series of meetings
- Prepare questions for each topic
- Review a checklist of what’s needed to start a new Group
- Do a mock meeting with Leaders and Applicants in person, using online video or at a workshop

Linda adds, “The mock meeting is very helpful for the isolated Applicant. I learned this working with three Applicants from the same community. When we did the mock meeting via Skype with another LAD representative, we alternated who played “Leader” while the rest of us played “attendees.” Because these Applicants had not participated in an LLL Series Meeting, as the “Leader” they tended to jump in and respond to a mother’s question, rather than letting the other attendees respond first. It was a learning experience for all of us.”

Vicky Reynell, a LAD representative in South Africa, has utilized video conferencing software to work with isolated Applicants. She has found that “a subscription to the online meeting service Zoom currently offers a practical and affordable way for LAD representative to make face-to-face contact with isolated Applicants. Additionally, when a Leader facilitates online Series Meetings, the isolated Applicant is able to attend from her remote location. We have to remember, however, that Applicants living outside of large cities and especially those in remote areas may have poor internet connections which cannot cope with the bandwidth required by Zoom or other online meeting services.”

Vicky adds that when working with isolated Applicants she puts extra emphasis on the importance of Part 3 of the Leader Applicant Resource Kit (LARK): Leadership Skills and Attitudes, “optional” exercises included. She shares “It is also good to cover more than the suggested number of topics in the Preview, and to focus particularly on Group Management. Vicky is excited about the recently released LAD videos about application work and how they will be especially helpful for isolated Leader Applicants.

Do you have additional suggestions for helping isolated Applicants prepare to lead Series Meetings when
they have not attended meetings in person themselves? Share your thoughts and ideas to be included in future LADders articles about this topic. Email your suggestions to Rachel Concitis, Managing Editor of LADders, at Rachel726@mac.com.

Many thanks to those who responded to my query on this topic, particularly Allyson Shames, LAD West; Linda Wieser, LLL Canada; and, Vicky Reynell, LLL Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Rachel Concitis lives in Columbus, Ohio, in the United States, with her husband Bob, five-year-old Bradley, and three-month-old Bekah Lu. She is currently the Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation (RALA) for LLL Alliance and the Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA) for LLL Ohio. She is in her fifteenth year teaching, and currently teaches third grade (eight- and nine-year-olds) in Columbus City Schools, the largest urban school district in the state. She teaches reading, writing, and history to her students, and is always looking for the next great picture book to spark discussions of diversity, inclusion, and kindness with her class.

Concept Revision:
“Introducing Complementary Foods”
Marie Beam and Heidy Guzmán
co-Chairs, Concept Review Committee
LLLI Board of Directors

The Concept Review Committee was created this year to take a fresh look at the La Leche League concepts. The committee is composed of 19 Leaders from around the world, working to review each of the ten concepts of LLL philosophy and accompanying Concept Explanations in Appendix 17 of the LLLI Policies and Standing Rules to ensure that they are consistent with the most current research available and serving the LLL mission. At the conclusion of its review, the committee makes recommendations to the LLLI Board of Directors.

The Board voted unanimously September 25, 2019, to revise the wording of the “Introducing Solids” Concept and Concept Explanation, changing it to the “Introducing Complementary Foods” Concept below. This was the second of two votes required to change the wording of a concept; a first vote had approved this wording July 24, and Leader comments were requested and considered.

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For the healthy, full-term baby, human milk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of readiness for complementary foods, about the middle of the first year after birth. (Sep 19)

For the full-term, healthy baby, human milk alone provides optimal nutrition for growth and development until about the middle of the first year. Research has shown that exclusive breastfeeding for six months fortifies the baby’s immune system against infection.(1) Every baby is unique, and so when deciding whether to introduce other foods and/or drink, it is important to focus on awareness of the baby’s specific nutritional needs and signs of readiness, rather than upon the baby’s age or outside factors.

Physiological and behavioral signs of readiness for other foods and drink generally include, but are not limited to, the following changes in the baby:

- ability to sit up unsupported, facilitating eating and swallowing
- loss of the tongue-thrust reflex and emergence of chewing patterns
- hand-to-mouth coordination, bringing food to the mouth in conjunction with anticipatory opening of the mouth
- increase in the desire to nurse that does not subside after several days of intensive nursing.
A breastfed baby is accustomed to being in charge of how much to eat and recognizing the body’s signals for hunger and satiety.\(^{(2)}\) By encouraging the baby to be actively involved in self-feeding and paying attention to signs that the baby has had enough, parents can help ensure continued self-regulation of food intake. If all other signs of developmental readiness are present but a baby exhibits gastrointestinal symptoms following the introduction of complementary foods, this may indicate that the baby is not quite ready to advance from exclusive breastfeeding, or may need a greater portion of human milk in the diet. The World Health Organization recommends continued breastfeeding as part of a mixed diet until two years of age or beyond.\(^{(3)}\)


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**Original Concept wording**

_For the healthy, full-term baby, breast milk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth._ (April 93)

**Former Concept Explanation**

_For the full-term, healthy infant, human milk alone provides optimal nutrition for growth and development until about the middle of the first year. When introducing other foods and/or drink, the focus shall be on awareness of the baby’s specific nutritional needs and signs of readiness, rather than upon the baby’s age or outside factors._

_Psychological and behavioral signs of readiness for other foods and drink generally include, but are not limited to, the following changes in the baby:_

- **an increase in appetite that does not subside after several days of intensive nursing**
- **an ability to sit up unsupported, facilitating eating and swallowing**
- **reaching for, tasting, and swallowing foods**
- **an ability to digest other foods and drink, as evidenced by the appearance of the baby’s stool and no signs of food intolerance**
- **other signs of readiness for foods in addition to milk**

(April 93, rev Mar 19)

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**Rationale for revising the Concept wording**

1) Changing “breast milk” to “human milk” makes this concept consistent with the “Human Milk” Concept and emphasizes the importance of babies receiving human milk, not the milk from another species. We recognize that for all other mammalian species, their milk is identified by the name of the species and not the organ that produces it.

2) Changing “needing” to “readiness” puts the emphasis on the baby’s readiness, rather than need, for other foods.

3) Using “complementary foods” instead of “solids” is consistent with global policy and research.

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**Rationale for revising the Concept Explanation**

1) The explanation has been updated to reflect current evidence-based information to prevent premature introduction of complementary foods.
2) The order of the “signs of readiness” was changed to promote the most obvious, ability to sit and loss of tongue-thrust reflex.
3) Additional signs were added to encourage awareness of overfeeding and symptomatic reactions to introduction of foods.

* Editor’s note: This article will appear in Leader Today in the near future.

Marie Beam has been a Leader since 1992 with the Bethesda/Kensington Group in Maryland, USA. She filled many Leader Accreditation Department roles from 1996 until 2019, when she was elected to the Board of Directors of La Leche League International. Marie and her husband Eric live in Kensington, Maryland, and have three grown children and three grandchildren.

Heidy Guzmán lives in Guatemala and is mother of a daughter who was happily breastfed. Heidy has been a Leader since 2011, Area Coordinator of Leaders and a member of the Board of LLL Guatemala. Heidy currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of La Leche League International. She is passionate about communication, social and legal sciences, breastfeeding and mother-to-mother support.

**LAD Council Continues to Update LAD Documents**
Cindy Garrison, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, USA

From time to time in any organization or department, new statements are needed to better define the work they do. La Leche League International has a mission statement to define the purpose, goals and services it provides; the LLLI Board suggested that the LAD Council also develop its own mission statement. The LAD Council Mission Statement confirms the LAD’s status as a department of LLLI, based on LLL policy, and designed to ensure that candidates meet the prerequisites for LLL leadership and become accredited with the confidence that, as accredited Leaders, they can provide support, encouragement and information to anyone seeking breastfeeding assistance.

**LAD Mission Statement**

The Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) is an international department within La Leche League International (LLLI). The LLLI Board of Directors has established the Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership and the Criteria for Leader Accreditation and entrusted that responsibility and oversight to the LAD. As an international organization, La Leche League standards for Leader accreditation are the same regardless of location. The mission of the LAD is to maintain the integrity of La Leche League worldwide by accrediting Leaders according to the universal LLLI accreditation criteria, as found in the *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules* (PSR).

2019 Oct

Likewise, as the next article illustrates, it is also important to keep LAD-specific documents current. As LLLI has changed and grown to new countries and cultures, so have the responsibilities of the LAD representative. This updated document brings those expectations current and relevant to the work of LAD.
representatives around the world. The LAD Council has revised the document titled *Definition of an Active LAD Representative*. The final version, copyright October 2019, is as follows:

**Definition of an Active LAD Representative**

- Regularly pursues LAD work, which may include work with Applicants, publication of LAD newsletters, orientation of LAD representatives, and/or translation of LAD documents
- Keeps up-to-date on LAD information and procedures
- Has read *LAD Manual* and refers to it for questions about LAD work, if available in an accessible language and format
- Reports twice a year to the assigned LAD support person(s) by completing the appropriate Semi-Annual Report form(s); this includes reporting to the relevant CLA regarding any ACLA-at-Large work
- Responds to LAD-related correspondence within two weeks
- Maintains a respectful approach in all communications
- Practices LLLI policies and recommendations

2013 Feb, 2019 Oct rev

Please contact your LAD support person if you have any questions about these two documents.

**Leader Accreditation Resources: NEW and REVISED**

Linda Wieser, Nova Scotia, Canada

The Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) is continually updating resources used for application work. It’s important to have the most current version of all documents when doing a pre-application discussion or working with an Applicant. The revised resources include the newly revised Introducing Complementary Foods concept (see Concept Revision: “Introducing Complementary Foods” in this issue).

This article summarizes the resources that have been revised or created over the past couple of years. It also explains the changes that have been made to the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership and how these are reflected in the Application and Recommendation forms.

**Application Work Videos—NEW LLLI Resources**

These are new resources for Applicants and anyone interested in becoming an LLL Leader. They are available on the LLLI website at: [https://www.llli.org/get-involved/steps-to-accreditation/](https://www.llli.org/get-involved/steps-to-accreditation/). They were created to provide a resource for visual and auditory learners.

There are six short (two and a half to four minute) videos based on the chapters of the *Leader Applicant Resource Kit* or LARK. Along with each video is a written English script:

- **Introduction to Application Work**
  1. Personal History
  2. Breastfeeding Management
  3. Leadership Skills and Attitudes
4. Background Reading and Learning

5. The Preview

Revised Written Leader Accreditation Resources

- *Childbirth and Breastfeeding* (Sept 2018)
- *Preview of Helping Questions and Group Management* (May 2019)
- *Breastfeeding Resources Guide* (July 2019)
- *Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for Leadership* (July 2019)
- *LLLI Website, Breastfeeding Info A to Z* (July 2019)
- *LARK (Leader Applicant’s Resource Kit) Combined* (Oct 2019)

Leader’s Pre-Application Packet

What to share and discuss with the potential Applicant:

- *Thinking about La Leche League Leadership?* (compact version) (Oct 2019)
- *Appendix 17: Concept Explanations* (Oct 2019)
- *Appendix 18: Applying for Leadership*
- *Overview of Application Work for Leader Accreditation* (Oct 2019)

For Leaders:

- *Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders* (Oct 2019)
- *Appendix 38: Leader Accreditation Appeals Policies and Process - revision in process*

Forms:

- Leader Recommendation form (Oct 2019)
- Application form (Oct 2019)

All the documents in this packet, except the Leader Recommendation and Application forms are available on the Leader pages of the LLLI website: If you don’t have the revised forms, please contact your support person. Leaders are welcome to use the Leader Recommendation form as a guide during the pre-application dialogue. However, it is recommended that Leaders share the Application form with a potential Applicant only after they have completed the pre-application dialogue.

Pre-Application Discussions

It’s important to use the most current version of documents for pre-application discussions. *Thinking about La Leche League Leadership?* and *Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders* reflect revisions to Appendix 18, Applying for Leadership, and Appendix 17, Concept Explanations.

Changes to the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for LLL Leadership are shown below in blue with a brief explanation in parentheses.

**Personal Experience Prerequisites**

(*The Personal Breastfeeding Experience and Mother Experience Prerequisites have been combined.*)

A potential Applicant

- has breastfed a child for 12 months or more *(rather than “about a year”),*
did not introduce complementary foods or supplements until the baby demonstrated a nutritional need for other foods, around the middle of the first year for the healthy full-term baby, and

- has chosen breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish, nurture and comfort baby. *(This replaces the Mothering Experience Prerequisites.)*

Organizational Experience Prerequisites

- is a member of LLL or contributes as appropriate for the entity in which the application is being submitted *(This change accommodates Areas/Entities that no longer have LLL memberships.)*
- supports LLL purpose, mission, and philosophy
- has attended at least one series of meetings in person or via the Internet *(This change recognizes that some potential Applicants attend online meetings only.)*
- demonstrates a clear understanding that leadership is volunteer work
- has knowledge of the information contained in the most recent edition of *The Womanly Art*, if available in an accessible language and format *(This change allows potential Applicants to apply for LLL leadership even if *The Womanly Art* is not available to them in an accessible language or format; Applicants do not need to own a copy of *The Womanly Art*.)*
- is willing to create time to fulfill the basic responsibilities of leadership and/or provide other service to LLL *(This prerequisite and the next ensure that the Leader discusses realistically the time involved with Leader work.)*
- is willing to complete the application work, and
- has a recommendation from an LLL Leader.

Personal Skills Prerequisites *(We are now asked to consider a potential Applicant’s communication skills rather than personal traits.)*

- has communication skills in the potential Applicant’s preferred language necessary to begin the application and preparation for accreditation
- demonstrates an accepting and respectful attitude toward others *(“Demonstrates” is used instead of “has”; this indicates that this is a skill that is shown in one’s actions.)*
- provides information and support without judgement *(This is another communication skill we are looking for in potential Applicants.)*, and
- is willing to develop further communication skills as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of leadership.

Application and Recommendation Forms

You’ll want to make sure that Leaders are using the most current Application and Recommendation forms. If you receive older forms, you can send the Leader the new ones for use in the future. Or you may want to ask the candidate for leadership and recommending Leader to fill out the new forms.

Application form

Potential Applicants are asked to respond to the following:

- Please give some examples showing how you value breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish, nurture and comfort the baby.
- What strategies have you used to maintain the breastfeeding relationship for one year or beyond?

Leader Recommendation form

Recommending Leaders are asked to respond to the following questions:

- Please give some examples showing how the candidate values breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish, nurture and comfort the baby.
- What strategies has the candidate used to maintain the breastfeeding relationship for one year or beyond?
• Please give some examples of how the candidate has an accepting and respectful attitude and provides information and support without judgement, for example at LLL Series Meetings.

Share information about these forms with the Leaders in your Area. Consider discussing them at a Leader Day or Area Workshop. A version of this article and the article “Concept Revision: Introducing Complementary Foods” will also be published in the January issue of Leader Today.

Linda Wieser lives in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada, where she and her husband, Jim, have a large garden and several boats for playing around on the water. They have two grown daughters and four grandchildren. Linda has been a Leader since 1984. She is currently Resource Coordinator for LAD Council, Contributing Editor for “Preparing for Leadership” in Leader Today and Contributing Editor for “How Would Your Respond?” in LADders. Linda spent the last year working with her neighbour Reid Campbell on the new LLLI videos about application work.
LAD Travels to Panama!

LAD Council members from around the world recently traveled to Panama to attend the International Management Symposium (IMS) prior to the annual LAD Council meeting. Each country or Area in the International Area Network did a presentation on their country or Area. There were also a number of other presentations given on a wide range of topics. Look for articles in future LADders issues to help bring the Symposium to your inbox without having to renew your passport!
LAD Council at Play. From left to right: Karin Ali, Alison Stanton, Mariana Peterson, Tiziana DeMeo, Juliett Matthee, Roberta Semec, Toshi Jolliffe, Linda Wieser, Lori Bryan, Laurence Kher, and Linda King Gaboriaud

RuthAnna Mather presenting about the International Area Network (IAN)
Listening and Learning at the International Management Symposium (IMS) 2019 in Panama.
A potential supporting Leader struggles with whether she can recommend an interested parent for leadership without having observed her interact with her child at meetings.

Dear Charlotte CLA,

There is a mother in my Group who wants to become a Leader. She meets the prerequisites and communicates well with the other mothers. My only concern is that I have never seen her interact with her 18-month-old breastfed toddler. She attends our evening meetings and leaves her toddler at home with his father. She started attending six months ago when she moved to our city for her new job. Can I write a recommendation for her without seeing her interact with her toddler?

Warmly,
Lilly Leader

Hello Lilly,

How wonderful to hear you have someone interested in leadership! At the same time, I see your concern about writing a recommendation without having seen this mother interacting with her little one. Your support of her is crucial and it sounds like it's premature to start the application formally.

I would suggest you provide her with LLL philosophy and set up one or more meetings, to discuss the ten concepts in depth. I've attached the document Thinking about LLL Leadership? to share with her. I'm also including, Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders for you to look through. It includes some questions to help you with these important discussions. For example, with regard to loving guidance it says:
“From infancy on, children need loving guidance which reflects acceptance of their capabilities and sensitivity to their feelings.

• How do you see loving guidance following naturally from the breastfeeding relationship?
• What is your experience with this concept so far?
• How do you practice loving guidance?
• How has your relationship with your baby developed as your baby has grown?
• If your baby is still under a year, how do you think loving guidance will unfold in the future?”

Last, but not least, have a look at the Leader Recommendation form and the questions it asks you to respond to. For example:

“Please give some examples showing how the candidate values breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish, nurture, and comfort the baby.”

“What strategies has the candidate used to maintain the breastfeeding relationship for one year or beyond?”

You need to feel comfortable providing examples for the recommendation to be complete.

Ideally, you'll have this pre-application dialogue in person and in her child's company. It's so much easier to describe behaviours when seen with your own eyes. If that's not possible, do the best you can via Skype or FaceTime -- or even ask her to write out her answers. Only write a formal recommendation when you feel confident to proceed.

I hope that helps answer your question. I know it's not easy to have these discussions — it can feel confrontational for some Leaders. I'm here to talk this out some more if you'd like.

Charlotte CLA

Linda Boissinot
Ontario, Canada

Dear Lilly Leader,

Thank you for writing. It's possible that the reason this mother leaves her toddler home with the baby's daddy is that the meeting time overlaps the toddler’s bedtime. She may be acting out of kindness to others if she knows that delaying bedtime may lead to an unhappy child who might disrupt the meeting.

Have you considered scheduling a morning or afternoon special "toddler" meeting or playdate at a park for the Group? By inviting *all* the Group attendees, you aren't singling this one mother out. It would allow you to observe how she interacts with her child in an informal setting.

Another possibility would be to arrange to meet with her to discuss what is involved in becoming a Leader, making sure to include her toddler in the invitation. Be honest with her and let her know that to write the recommendation, you need to see how they interact with each other.
I'll be looking forward to hearing which approach you take and how things work out, Lilly.

Warmly,
Charlotte CLA

Cindy Garrison
Pennsylvania, USA

Dear Lilly Leader,

Thank you for sending me a question. It is, indeed, not easy to decide whether or not to recommend a mother without seeing her interacting with her toddler. You have done well to search for tips in order to decide how to proceed.

First of all, you may want to find out the reason that this mother does not take her child to the meetings. It could be environmental concerns, family or child needs, or mother's personal reasons. You can invite and encourage the potential Applicant to bring the toddler (and family member) to Group meetings without sharing your concerns. Secondly, if you think the mother will likely follow your suggestion of bringing her toddler to meetings, you may let her know that it is a good way to let other mothers learn about mothering an active toddler. How she communicates with her nursing toddler at meetings will present mothering naturally to the attendees.

If it is not possible for her to take her toddler along, you may try to video chat with her so you can see her interacting with the toddler. Usually, more video chat might be needed since toddlers may be unpredictable in many situations. If video chat is not possible, you may visit the mother and toddler at home, if it is possible for you to do so.

I think it is important to let the potential Applicant know that in order to write a thorough Leader Recommendation you need specific information about her mothering experiences, which show how she interacts and communicates with her child.

I hope this will help you to make a more confident decision.

Charlotte CLA

Shiuh-Jane Lin
Hualien City, Taiwan
Dear Lilly,

The interested mother finds it works well for her to attend evening meetings and leave her toddler at home with his father. I can understand why she would not want to bring her toddler out at night, and it seems that dad and toddler have a good rapport, which is lovely.

The June 2019 revision of Appendix 18 to the *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules, Part II Guidelines for Leaders* does, however, state in the *Introduction*: “During LLL meetings or other encounters, the Leader shall also observe the potential Applicant’s interactions with the baby to consider how LLL philosophy is reflected and how the person listens to others and begins to share ideas based on personal experiences.”

And in *Section A: LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership, Personal Experience Prerequisites*: “2. A Leader observes the interactions between the potential Applicant and the baby and sees how the behaviors and relationship reflect an understanding of LLL philosophy.”

You can share with the mother that a supporting Leader expects to see mother and baby together before writing a Leader Recommendation. If your Group offers daytime meetings perhaps she could bring her toddler to those. Perhaps she attended daytime meetings in another city when her toddler was a baby? If so, you could ask that Group’s Leader for her impressions of the mother’s interactions with her baby. Or perhaps you, the mother and her toddler could spend a little time together outside of her working hours and your LLL meeting.

I hope one of these suggestions will bring the three of you together.

Warmly
Charlotte, CLA

Vicky Reynell, South Africa

Dear Lilly,

It must be so exciting for you that a mother in your Group is interested in leadership! You apparently have talked to her about the prerequisites and she's excited to go for it. At the same time, you're a little worried because you haven't seen her actually “mother,” since she leaves her toddler at home for the meetings.

I think the short answer would be “yes,” you can recommend her without having seen her with her baby, but it would be important to sit down with her before you write a recommendation and discuss LLL philosophy point-by-point. A conversation of this kind naturally leads to a potential Applicant talking about her own experiences mothering her child. You could ask questions about how she deals with "discipline" situations, for example, “What are some examples of loving guidance?” Having the chance to hear the potential Applicant talking about her mothering provides the opportunity to continue discussing living LLL philosophy in our daily lives.
Many times it's possible to have this kind of conversation in a setting that's different from the meetings. A Leader and potential Applicant might meet at the Applicant's house or in a park with the kids. This would give you both an easy opportunity to talk about and demonstrate mothering.

I hope you really enjoy this time to get to know this mother and her family better, and with any luck you'll have an Applicant to work with pretty soon.

Charlotte CLA

Laura Laubach
Pamplona, Spain

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Dear Leah LAD Representative,

I just learned that Sally, my supporting Leader, has been accepted to a midwifery program. I am very pleased for her since I know this is her dream. Unfortunately, school and her family will take up most of her time until next summer. It looks like my application work will have to be on hold for a while.

I believe what I have left to complete includes: Checklist, Breastfeeding Resource Guide, and Preview. I have already sent you my personal history, comments on The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding and childbirth requirement. I am eager to complete my application. What should I do?

Warmly,
Alex Applicant

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


LLL France est une grande area avec plus de 300 animatrices et 140 groupes. Il y a environ 110 stagiaires.
Au LAD de LLL France, nous travaillons avec le guide de la stagiaire. C'est l'équivalent du LARK.

En dehors de LLL, mes passions : la danse mais aussi le jardinage (nous avons un grand jardin potager), le vélo, la cuisine, la lecture , les voyages.

Mon rêve : aller dans un aéroport et acheter un billet pour la première destination qui se présente !

France GOUY

I live in France, 30 km north of Paris. Behind the house there is the forest. We often see wild boars and deer. I am 46 years old. I have been married to Fabrice for 20 years. We met in a dance class ... a passion that continues!

We have two children: Nicolas who is 16 years old and Laure, 13 years old. Our children don’t go to school. I met LLL 16 years ago when I was pregnant with Nicolas. A friend in the dance class, seeing that I was pregnant, asked me if I was going to breastfeed. My answer was the same: "Yes, if I can." But deep inside me, I really wanted to breastfeed. She asked me to come to her house, because she had lots of documents on breastfeeding. She invited me to an LLL meeting because she was a Leader. I went to this meeting and I enjoyed the atmosphere immediately. A long story began. Then, a second pregnancy followed and the strong desire to become a Leader.

I have been a Leader for 12 years, ACLA for 7 years and CLA for two years.

I like working with Applicants. I like to talk about our philosophy with the Applicants. I like contact with Leaders from other areas. I like teamwork.

LLL France is a large Area with more than 300 Leaders and 140 Groups. There are about 110 Applicants. Within LAD, we work with the Leader Applicant Handbook. It's the equivalent of LARK.

Outside LLL, my passions: dancing but also gardening (we have a big kitchen garden), cycling, cooking, reading, travel.

My dream: to go to an airport and buy a ticket for the first destination!

France GOUY
France, Frabrice, Nicolas and Laure in the kitchen garden in autumn

Coral Weisbrod, CLA LLL Israel

Shalom. Shani Koral and Sabrina are the leaders of the Kenya team.

As usual, we go to school on Sundays and stay until 10 PM. We have classes on Monday and 5 hours of work. On Saturday, we go to the garden and work for 4 hours. We then go to the park for 2 hours.

On Monday, we go to the garden and work for 4 hours. Then we go to the park for 2 hours. We also have classes on Monday.

Berkovitch, who has 3 years of experience, lives in Lebanon. He has 3 years of experience in the field.

The Garden is a wonderful place to work. We have classes there and we also have classes on the field.

The Garden is located in the middle of the city and it is a wonderful place to work.

The Garden has a wonderful atmosphere and it is a wonderful place to work. We have classes there and we also have classes on the field.

Coral Weisbrod, CLA LLL Israel
Hello, my name is Coral Weissbrod and I'm an LLL Leader in Israel. I’m happily married to Elad and we have two lovely children: Lahav is 4 years old and Klil is 5 months.

We live in a small settlement in the Galilee and we have many animals and a breathtaking view of the Galilee Mountains. I am a speech therapist working mainly with children.

I will soon be celebrating three years as a La Leche League Leader. I arrived at the Group with my eldest son when he was two months old and for the first time found a pleasant, hugging and non-judgmental place. I continued to attend meetings and after nine months Carmit, the Leader, suggested I join and become a Leader myself.

After being accredited, I started another two Groups in the northern district of Israel. The Groups are not meeting for the time being, but many mothers came and the Group got two wonderful new Applicants.

I was the coordinator of the Northern District of Israel for two years.

Today, together with Carmit, I lead the La Leche League Group in Carmiel, and I am the CLA of Israel. This is a position that I love very much and with the other administrators in Israel I am working hard on improving and refining the La Leche League Leader applications in Israel.

Elad, Lahav, Klil, and Coral
“Greetings From My Hometown!”

Attached is a photo of me in my hometown! I live in San Francisco, California, USA, so I had to send a photo including the Golden Gate Bridge. This photo was taken in 2014 after I ran a 5K race. My husband, David, and daughters, Charlotte and Katherine, cheered me on as I ran. My girls are now 11 and 8 years old.

If you visited my hometown tomorrow, I would show you Golden Gate Bridge, Golden Gate Park, and our beautiful beaches. I would also take you to a bakery for sourdough bread, a San Francisco specialty. We'd end our day with dinner and shopping in Japantown.

Warmly,
Sarah Quigley
CLA for Northern California/Hawaii
RALA for LAD West, LLL USA
hi
this photo was taken at my yard in Kamon ISRAEL
my home is in a small settlement of the Galilee, it has a lovely view overlooking the Golan and
Galilee mountains and a unique cool breeze, rare in the warm state of Israel.

Coral Weissbrod CLA, LLL ISRAEL
This is a picture of Table Mountain, in Cape Town, South Africa. I didn’t want to spoil its beauty with me in the picture... the other picture is me with a monkey on my lap at World of Birds in Hout Bay, very proudly wearing my Springbok jersey after winning the World Cup this weekend.

If you visited my home town tomorrow, I would drive on Chapmans Peak with its incredible view of the ocean. I would take you up on Table Mountain. I would take you to a wine farm (or 5) to taste our exquisite wines.

_Ek is n trotse Suid-Afrikanse burger. Ons land en die mense hier is ongelooflik._

I am proudly South African. Our country and its people are amazing.

Gerrie McKaig
Associated Coordinator Leader Accreditation Department
Here’s a photo of me with my home town, Dunstable, Bedfordshire in the background. It was taken last week before I took my daughter to pre-school.

Dunstable is a small market town with a rich history dating back to medieval times. I’d take visitors to the Dunstable Downs, which are part of the Chilterns. The views are amazing and equally beautiful which ever season you go in. We’ve held a few LLL summer picnics there.

Afterwards we would go & visit the giraffes at Whipsnade Zoo just around the corner 😊

Hannah Perch, CLA in orientation. LLL Great Britain
Congratulations on your appointment!

Karin Ali  Contributing Editor for “LADI SAR Charts,” LADders
Victoria Brown  ACLA, North Carolina, LLL Alliance
Cynthia Massey  Administrator of Leader Accreditation for LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education
Moni Modjdi  ACLA, Connecting Leaders Across Borders, LLL USA
Colleen Stadlwieser  ACLA, Alberta/Northwest Territories, LLL Canada

2019 Editorial Postscript

As the 2019 publication year draws to a close I would like to thank all who helped contribute to LADders this year. I would especially like to thank Lesley Robinson and Toshi Jolliffe for their guidance as I began my term as Managing Editor this year. Linda Wieser, Cindy Garrison, Karin Ali, Juanita Watt, Helen Lloyd, and Lori Bryan were also invaluable resources as the four issues were compiled and edited. This year we included 11 feature articles, 11 contributions to compilation articles, 21 responses for the “How Would You Respond?” column, 12 introductions in “A Taste of LAD International” and 18 beautiful photo letters. We were delighted to announce a total of 36 new appointments in “LAD Promenade” and 8 dedicated LAD representatives make up the LADders Team, collecting information, gathering contributions, editing and putting this newsletter together. In addition, our published Semi-Annual Reports reveal that LAD representatives worldwide have been working with over 1,100 Applicants during this calendar year and you accredited a total of over 400 new Leaders over the two published reporting periods. Thank you to all of you for your hard work!
LADders Team

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Good Idea! / Reminder!        Vacant
How Would You Respond?        Linda Wieser
LAD Promenade                 Helen Lloyd
A Taste of LAD International  Lori Bryan

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