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Editorial postscript
Update: Appendix 17

Toshi Jolliffe, LAD Director

New wording of Appendix 17 to *LLL I Policies and Standing Rules Notebook* became official early in June 2016. Some Leaders welcomed it and they were excited. It was also true that the LLLI Board of Directors (Board) received many requests to reconsider the changes in favour of wording more consistent with other LLLI policies. The Board therefore set up a workgroup in August 2016 to review the wording. I was assigned as the coordinator.

The workgroup had the following three objectives:

- Review how well the new wording is working or not working
- Get a better idea of how it is affecting the way LAD operates
- Make a recommendation that will include everyone for a broader review

In order to gather information about the first two topics, the participants of the workgroup responded to the following questions.

**Question 1**: How was the new wording of Appendix 17 received in your entity and department? Is it working well or not? Please share any question about the new wording which you were not sure how to answer.

**Question 2**: If there is any positive or negative influence of the new wording to the way LAD operates (e.g., dialogue with interested mothers, responding to the supporting Leader), please explain the situations.

At the same time the Leader Accreditation Department Council members collected responses from each entity they represent. Two entities, LLL Great Britain and LLL Future Areas in Asia and the Middle East, conducted surveys and offered concrete data. Because the LAD Council covers the whole LLL world, many insightful comments arrived from all over the globe. The compilation was called “International Comments.”

After the workgroup reviewed the “International Comments” in September 2016, the participants agreed that revision of Appendix 17 would be beneficial. The LAD Council offered an initial draft which was discussed among the workgroup members. At this point we invited someone from the previous workgroup in order to make sure that the revised version would be welcomed by a majority of Leaders worldwide.

At the beginning of November 2016 the workgroup submitted the draft to the Chairman of the Board who forwarded it to the administrators of Direct Connect Area Networks (DCAN) for review. The Board will take everything into consideration and will take a final vote before it becomes official.

It was an invaluable experience to see many Leaders and administrators cooperating with one another in order to find a workable solution. I am deeply grateful to those who contributed to “International Comments,” conducted or responded to the surveys, participated in the workgroup, or worked on review. Special thanks also to the Board for its trust in the LAD and the opportunity for us to offer our input. We all look forward to the outcome of the Board’s discussion.

Using Template Letters: Introductory

*Letters to Applicants -*

A Compilation Article from LAD Representatives Around the World

Using template letters helps LAD representatives to save time and to be sure that they have included
all the necessary elements in their correspondence with Leader Applicants. This is particularly useful for the introductory letter, in which the LAD representative welcomes the Applicant, presents the work of the application and establishes a rapport by introducing herself and her family. It may take the accumulated experience of a number of years to create a template letter and fortunately, we don’t have to do it all on our own. We have the many years of combined knowledge and skills of LAD representatives past and present at our disposal to help us to create our own template letters to use in the future. Orientation partners can share the template letters that they use themselves. It is important for each of us to take the templates at our disposal and make them our own. Make sure that the language feels comfortable and reflects your own style and your own location.

Elements of an introductory letter

Letterhead
Think about creating your own letterhead for your LAD correspondence. You can use your Area’s LLL logo, the international LAD logo and/or your own graphics. Include your name and contact details. A consistent letterhead keeps information that the Applicant will need available with each letter you send.

Welcome
Your opening paragraph can be a welcome to the application. Show your enthusiasm to be working with the new Applicant and your excitement at the prospect of accrediting a new Leader. Invite the new Applicant to share your enthusiasm. You can let the Applicant know that you have received a recommendation from the supporting Leader and share the warmth and the confidence expressed in that recommendation.

Here is an example (Substitute names as appropriate):

Dear Applicant,

Greetings from my town! I am writing to introduce myself as your Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) representative who will be working with you and Lucy Leader on your application for Leadership. CLA sent me your application form and a recommendation form from Lucy Leader. She really values your presence at meetings and mentions what a great help you are to LLL Group. I think you may also attend the coffee mornings in nearby LLL Group also.

Review the experience the Applicant already has
It can help an Applicant to think about the special experience already gained towards leadership, particularly personal experience of breastfeeding and mothering.

Here is an example in French:

Ta demande de formation indique que tu as déjà fait un travail important. D’abord, et c’est le plus important, tu allaites Caroline. Tu as donc la meilleure base possible de connaissances sur l’allaitement : ton expérience...
personnelle. D’autre part tu as participé aux réunions du groupe de ta région et tu as vu les animatrices animer les discussions et faire vivre le groupe. Et tu as apporté du soutiens par tes interventions, en t’occupant de l’accueil et du rangement nettoyage. Tu es à jour de cotisation. En cotisant tu démontres ton soutien à LLL. Tu as lu « l’Art de l’Allaitement Maternel » de ce fait tu es déjà informée de certaines ressources disponibles.

Your application form states that you have already accomplished some important work. Firstly, and most importantly, you are nursing Caroline. That gives you the best possible knowledge base on breastfeeding: your personal experience. In addition you have attended Group meetings in your area and you have watched the Leaders lead discussions and run the Group. You have helped at meetings by serving as greeter and cleaning up afterwards. Your membership is up-to-date which demonstrates your commitment to LLL. You have read The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding, so you are already familiar with some of the available resources.

The work of the application

Set out clearly the elements of the application, so that the Applicant will know exactly what the work will entail. Talk about the parts that will be done through correspondence with you, what will be done with the supporting Leader and what the Applicant can do alone.

Here is an example in Dutch:

Een LLL opleiding bestaat uit drie zuilen: De eerste is het praktijkwerk, dat je doet in de groep samen met je sponsoring leader(s). Je kunt haar helpen met de organisatie, eerste kleine opgaves overnemen zoals bijv. nieuwe moeders begroeten en iets te drinken geven, de bibliothek verzorgen, de ruimte van te voren voorbereiden en erna weer opruimen .... Vraag het beste Ruth en Caroline, waarmee je kunt beginnen en waarmee ze graag hulp zouden willen hebben. Dat zal zich steeds meer uitbreiden, zodat je langzaam maar zeker je zekerder zal beginnen te voelen de rol als leidster ook in de praktijk te overnemen. Op het laatst zal je dan misschien zelf een series meeting leiden, terwijl jouw sponsoring leader(s) er als hulp nog even naast zitten.

De tweede zuil is het zelfstandige engagement. Daarmee is bedoeld, dat je bereid bent, je over het thema borstvoeding op de hoogte te houden door het regelmatige bezoeken van series meetings, chapter meetings, conferenties, scholingsdagen etc. en het lezen van literatuur.

De derde zuil is je correspondentie met een ACLA, in dit geval met mij. We zullen samen je eigen ervaringen bespreken, zodat je er later een beetje meer afstand van gewonnen hebt, en niet jezelf gelijk voor ogen ziet als een moeder je om raad vraagt. Bovendien zullen we bepaalde literatuur bespreken, onze philosophie, en misschien een paar schriftelijke oefeningen doen.

The LLL application consists of three pillars: The first is the practical work that you will do with your supporting Group Leader(s). You can help her to run the Group, first by taking small jobs, e.g. greeting new mothers and getting them something to drink, taking care of the library, setting up before meetings and cleaning up afterwards.... Ask Ruth and Caroline where
they would like you to start and what they would like you to do to help. Your role will gradually expand, so that slowly, but surely you will begin to feel more confident and you will begin to practice some of the roles of a Leader. When you are accredited you will be ready to lead an actual Series Meeting, with your co-Leaders by your side to help.

The second pillar is your own commitment. This means your willingness to keep informed about breastfeeding by regularly attending Series Meetings, Chapter Meetings, conferences, training days, etc. and through your reading.

The third pillar is correspondence with the ACLA, in this case with me. Together we shall discuss your own experiences, so that you can take a step back and see situations with fresh eyes when mothers ask you for help. In addition, we will discuss some literature, our philosophy, and maybe do some application exercises.

Share resources

Talk about the resources you are sharing (for example LARK) and explain clearly what is included, so that the Applicant can see clearly how the resources relate to application work and how they will be useful. Be careful to spell out everything (rather than use abbreviations) – you are very familiar with these resources, but they are completely new to each starting Applicant.

Here’s an example:

I am attaching with this letter a Leader Applicant Resource Kit that contains everything you will need to get you started on your application. It contains the following:

- Information about making a plan for your application.
- Request for Personal History
- Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for LLL Leadership for you to work on with supporting Leader.
- Breastfeeding Resource Guide. This is a very useful tool in finding information on breastfeeding topics and can be helpful in letting you know the kind of questions you might be asked as a Leader.
- A Preview of Mothers’ Questions/Problems and Group Dynamics. This is a valuable tool for you to use with supporting Leader. It provides a way of practising (by role play and discussion) the skills that you will need in fulfilling your responsibilities as a Leader once you are accredited.
- Material about the childbirth information requirement of your application.
- In addition you will find a checklist and a flowchart for your own use, so you can keep track of the work you need to cover for your application.

Setting expectations

Let the Applicant know that anything written during the course of the application will be treated with confidentiality and will not be shared with anyone for any reason without the permission of the Applicant. Encourage the Applicant to put family first and also mention that it is the expectation of the LAD that correspondence will be answered within two weeks.

Here are some examples:

It is very important that we exchange openly and honestly in this correspondence. It is not necessary that we always share the same opinion, although LLL’s protocol should always be followed when helping mothers. If there are differing opinions, we will work together. I would like to assure you that this correspondence will be treated confidentially.

You should expect to receive a response from me to every piece of work you send me. The Leader Accreditation Department expects that you should receive a response within two weeks. If ever you do not hear from me when you expect to, please contact me – it means that something has gone astray and I’d like to know that as soon as possible.

In LLL we have the motto "Family First," which does not mean "LLL last". In such a case it would be fine to take a break, if you let me know for how long and give a date when you expect to continue.

Introducing yourself
Take the time to include a personal introduction of yourself and your family. You could share a family photo and invite the Applicant to do the same. It is helpful for your correspondence to establish a personal connection with the Applicant. Be careful not to include too much detail. Remember that the focus should always be on the Applicant. If you include too much detail about how busy you are with your Group, with LLL and with other activities, an Applicant might find herself comparing herself to you and might think that she could never do all that.

Next steps
You can conclude your letter with some suggestions for where to start work, so that the Applicant can see some practical ways to begin the work of the application without getting overwhelmed by how much there is to do. A brief concluding paragraph with some suggestions or some brief bullet points would work well. Some LAD representatives use bold type to indicate where a response is expected.

Here are some examples:

Just to recap:

• Start thinking about some part of your personal history and try to get a chance to write something down and send it to me.
• Have another look through your copy of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, refreshing yourself with any parts you may not have read in depth before.

• Get in touch with Lucy about setting up a regular time to meet and do application work.

Translation from the German follows


Would you like to write something more about yourself and your everyday life in your next letter? I would have liked to know where you are right now, so that I can pick a first topic for the beginning of our correspondence. *Tell me about your everyday life. How are things going for you as a mama? Is XXX still nursing?*

It may take you some time to create your own template letters, although you certainly will find that it is well worth your time. This will in fact be an ongoing project for you as you gain experience in the LAD and you constantly update and improve your letters. Your own experience will tell you what works best in your Area.

Happy writing!

*Thanks to Margaret McGuigan, ALA, Ireland, Agnès Chevalley, CLA, France and Ineke Holtslag, ALA, Netherlands for their contributions to this article.*

**Supporting the Supporting Leader**
Sue Hoffman, CLA, British Columbia, Canada

The supporting Leader plays an important role in an Applicant’s preparations for leadership, but all too often, the supporting Leader is not as involved or active as the LAD would like. As LAD representatives, how can we encourage each supporting Leader to take an active role in the application? What can we do to make the supporting Leader’s job easier? Here are a few strategies that might help supporting Leaders stay involved and engaged with the application work.

**Inform**

In our work as LAD representatives, we become very familiar with the Leader accreditation materials. It is easy to forget that it is foreign territory for many Leaders. Don’t assume the supporting Leader knows what to do or how to do it. When you write to a Leader, mention the specific task that the Applicant is currently working on and offer some ideas about how the Leader might get involved. For example, you might mention a few different ways the Applicant and Leader might work on the *Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for Leadership* together. Try not to overwhelm the Leader with a long article, or an abundance of ideas—choose a few ideas that seem appropriate to the circumstances and share them. In your next letter you might share a few different ideas in response to a comment or question.

The LLL Canada (LLLC) LAD newsletter *Butterfly* is written specifically for Leaders who are working with Applicants, and is one way that LAD representatives in Canada share information and remind Leaders that they have an important role to play in the application (see following article).

**Communicate**
It is important to keep the supporting Leader informed about the Applicant’s progress. Every time you write to a Leader Applicant, send an email to the supporting Leader. Your email might be just a sentence or two, e.g., *Lucy sent her thoughts on another concept statement today. When I wrote back I sent a link to this Leader Today article *<link>*. Please let me know if you have any comments, questions or concerns about Lucy’s application work. You will find that Leaders frequently respond to these short “touch base” emails. If they don’t, make a note to check in with that Applicant/Leader in the near future to make sure both are actively engaged and working together.

Whenever possible, write to all of the Group’s Leaders, even if the Applicant is primarily working with just one Leader. This not only keeps all of the Group Leaders informed of the Applicant’s progress, but also encourages different Leaders to get involved with the Applicant’s preparations for leadership.

It can be helpful to send regular “status updates” to the supporting Leader. A clear, easy to understand list of what work remains before the Applicant will be accredited is helpful and motivating. These status updates help the Leader see that the remaining tasks are manageable and approachable.

If the Applicant hasn’t written lately, check in with both the Applicant and the supporting Leader. Has the Applicant been attending Series Meetings? Have the two of them been getting together for Leader Applicant meetings? If not, ask the Leader to phone the Applicant to see how things are going. This request reminds Leaders that they have an important role to play in keeping Applicants on track towards accreditation.

Answer
Whenever possible, answer the supporting Leader’s questions quickly and in a nonjudgmental manner. If the Leader doesn’t know some information that seems obvious to you (or that you have recently shared), try not to imply that this information should already be known. Make it easy for Leaders to ask for help or clarification. If Leaders don’t know what to do, it is better for them to ask the LAD than for them to feel embarrassed and do nothing.

Some Leaders have repeatedly stated that they dislike LLL’s “alphabet soup” of abbreviations. The “BRG,” “ACL” or “PLD” might roll off your tongue, but Leaders often find these abbreviations confusing. Spell it out, e.g., the *Breastfeeding Resource Guide* and give page references to documents, so that Leaders can find them easily.

If you are referring to a document on the website, provide the Leader with the direct link. Don’t assume that finding the document will be easy, or expect Leaders to “learn something” by locating things themselves. Help out—supply the link or attach the document to your email.

Acknowledge
When communicating with the supporting Leader, it is important to acknowledge the work that the Leader is doing. Thank the Leader for keeping you informed and for inspiring the Applicant. Acknowledge the frustration that might be felt about working with an inactive Applicant. When new Leaders are accredited, thank supporting Leaders for the work that they have put into the application.

In the LLLC British Columbia/Yukon Area, a *Hark! New Leader* is sent out to all Area Leaders. In this announcement we not only share news about the newly accredited Leader, but also mention the names of the supporting Leaders who worked with the Applicant and thank those Leaders publicly. Not only does the new Leader get notes of congratulations and welcome on our Area email list, but the supporting Leaders also receive congratulations and thanks from Area Leaders.

By taking the time to inform, communicate, answer questions, and acknowledge the important work that supporting Leaders are doing, we can help make the role of supporting Leader easier and more enjoyable. The steps listed above don’t take a lot of time, but can make a big difference. And let’s face it, when there is an active, involved supporting Leader working with the Applicant, our LAD work becomes easier!
**Butterfly and Chrysalis**
Sue Hoffman, CLA, British Columbia, Canada

The LLL Canada (LLLC) LAD publishes two newsletters, *Chrysalis* and *Butterfly*. Both of these newsletters are sent out quarterly (February, May, August, November). *Chrysalis* is a newsletter for Leader Applicants and *Butterfly* is a newsletter for LLLC Leaders working with Leader Applicants.

In order to keep this publishing task manageable, we have put together eight issues of both *Chrysalis* and *Butterfly*. We rotate through these eight issues on a two-year cycle. Each quarter, prior to publication, we go through the issues and update information, delete articles that are no longer relevant or interesting, and add articles about current topics in LLLC. Although each issue of *Butterfly* and *Chrysalis* is republished on a two-year cycle, the information is always current, up-to-date, and relevant. Because we plan to republish each issue, we only keep the current quarter’s newsletters available on the LLLC website.

The articles in *Chrysalis* and *Butterfly* are specifically relevant to Leader Applicants, their supporting Leaders, and the work they are doing together. Our goal is for the articles to provide fresh ideas, share important “how-to” information, and furnish a burst of motivation.

Each LAD representative individually sends these newsletters to the Applicants and the supporting Leaders they are working with. Generally we send a personal note along with the newsletter, allowing these publications to serve as another vehicle for connecting and communicating with the people we support. This personal touch is important and most LAD representatives find that there is a surge in activity following distribution. A note plus a newsletter is inspiring!

*Sue Hoffman is CLA for La Leche League Canada-British Columbia/Yukon. She co-edits both Butterfly and Chrysalis.*

**Pre-Application Discussions: Peeking In on Practical Examples**
Linda Boissinot, Ontario, Canada

The Area of Canada where I live and LLLead has a special day of sessions and socializing twice a year for Leaders and Leader Applicants. The pre-application dialogue is a vital component on the road to leadership. This autumn at our Leader Day I led a session of scripted scenarios, so the audience could listen in on some of these discussions.

Applicants have many opportunities to observe Leaders leading meetings and answering questions. They also practice with the *Breastfeeding Resource Guide* and the *Preview*. But there’s a good chance the only pre-application dialogue Leaders have experienced before conducting one was their own. This was a chance to “listen and learn.”

I began with two email responses to women interested in becoming Leaders. One had never attended Series Meetings, while the other had. The goal was to highlight the importance of getting to know potential Applicants while encouraging them to help out in other ways than leadership. One of the emails included LLL reference materials to emphasize some of the excellent resources we have at our fingertips.

Next we listened in on two scripted role-plays using templates from Communication Skills Development. The first was straightforward, as the mother had not breastfed more than six months. The second used the empathetic confrontation template. The potential Leader in this (non-Oscar winning) performance met the prerequisites but the Leader was concerned about the prospective Applicant’s involvement in many other causes.

After a few questions and comments from audience members, we ended the session with a rather long dialogue between a Leader and a mother who has experienced regular separation from her breastfed baby due to a return to work. The Leader asked many open-ended questions, clarified LLL philosophy, and kept an open mind about whether this mother was an appropriate candidate for leadership.
When writing this script, I used questions from various LAD resources—as I would if I were preparing a real interview with a potential Applicant. The answers came from my experience with several Applicants I’d worked with at the Group level in recent years. I challenged the audience ahead of time to ask themselves if they would feel comfortable writing a recommendation for this imaginary mother.

In hindsight, I should have made this final example shorter and not an appropriate candidate for leadership. It would have left more time for questions and deliberations. Instead, this potential Applicant demonstrated her commitment to her baby’s need for her presence by making numerous adjustments to her work schedule, home life and even missing evening LLL meetings to be with her baby. In the end, all agreed she’d make a fine Applicant (assuming of course that she met all the other prerequisites).

While it was time-consuming to prepare skits, I think it was a novel way to present these topics: the importance of being familiar with the prerequisites, how to gather questions from various LLL resources, anticipating replies a mother might give us and how we can respond—including if leadership is not a good fit for the candidate.

Reference

Linda Boissinot, new to the LAD, has been a Leader in Ottawa, Canada since 1989. She has two adult sons and a six-year-old grandson.

New Resource - LAD Manual
Linda Wieser, ALA La Leche League Canada

Hopefully, you have had the opportunity to check out this wonderful new LAD resource. It is designed to be an easy-to-use manual for our department and is required reading for all new LAD representatives. If you have a question about LAD work, look here first. If you can’t find the answer, consult your LAD support person. Since we are an international department the information is applicable to all entities within LLL.

LAD Manual replaces LAD Resources. There are some interesting features:
• It is concise (47 pages).
• It can be used as hard copy or electronically. There are internal links to each section and external links to relevant LAD documents.
• The chapter titles have been changed and reformatted.
• Chapter 1 provides an overview of the department and how we function.
• Chapter 2 discusses in detail all stages of an application (pre-application discussion, application work, accreditation) and has information on appeals.
• Chapter 3 is primarily for CLAs in orientation. It discusses the role of the CLA within the Area and gives guidelines for orientating new LAD representatives.
• Chapter 4 focuses on the LAD administrators at the Affiliate or Area Network level—the RALAs and ALAs.
• And finally in Chapter 5 we look at the big picture—LAD work at the International level—discussing the role of the LAD Council and Director of Leader Accreditation Department (DLAD).
• Use of bullet points makes it easier to read.
• Boxes summarize information for easy reference. They can be accessed from “Quick Reference to BOXES” right after the “Table of Contents.”
• A chart of LAD International was added.

Growing the Network of Mother-to-Mother Support Through LAD
Valuing motherhood is what drew me to LLL in the first place and then it was realizing how profoundly important it is to support motherhood that inspired me to become more involved. I was approached to join the LAD as an ACLA soon after I moved to Maryland as a move-in-Leader from New Mexico, USA. Looking to form connections, I was eager to accept and have been a proud LAD representative since 2004.

LAD work is essential to keeping LLL running and thriving in communities all around the world. Group level support is where the magic of LLL happens, but becoming involved with the LAD is “supporting the support” network and has a more profound effect. Giving back to LLL, a wonderful and unique organization, is extraordinarily rewarding. There isn’t another support network that provides as much warmth, guidance, information, and support all focused on the important job of mothering through breastfeeding! While the foundational principles of LLL resonate with me more than any other mothering philosophy I’ve ever studied, the LLL magic really comes from the interpersonal web woven by Leaders. What could be better than helping to reinforce that web by encouraging mothers on their path toward leadership? What a wonderful way to contribute to LLL!

In the LAD, we attract and encourage the mothers who are inspired to “pay forward” the amazing support LLL provides. We help Leaders prepare to lead their Groups – from their breastfeeding management information, to their warm and open communication, to the acceptance and encouragement they exude in “meeting every mother where she is.” We help a potential Leader to examine her own understanding of breastfeeding mechanics, and help her to build her courage as a community LLL representative. We make sure she has the tools she will need in helping situations. Ultimately, we help her find her own confidence to keep the network of LLL support alive and thriving.

LAD work is what ensures that LLL will continue to stay a thriving part of mothers’ lives all over the world. Just as mothers are supported mother-to-mother in Groups, we support this thriving network Leader-to-Leader. We carry a lot of love and support on our shoulders, and gladly, we keep it flowing, just like the milk at our meetings!

Mariana Peterson, Administrator of Leader Accreditation, Latin America

Noticias de LAD América Latina:

Es muy emocionante ver el crecimiento de Liga aún en países donde nuestra querida organización aún no existe. Por ejemplo es muy reciente que se abrió un capítulo de Liga en Panamá y Nicaragua.

En los países de América del Sur la noticia es que las nuevas líderes ya no sólo están en las ciudades principales sino también en los pueblos lejanos donde han iniciado sus grupos.

En noviembre, México será la sede del próximo IMS, entonces podremos escuchar directamente de las compañeras que trabajan en el departamento de acreditaciones noticias frescas no sólo de sus retos sino también de sus logros y avances para ayudar a que Liga crezca. Le daremos la bienvenida a las nuevas líderes de México con una emotiva ceremonia con candela blanca y listón verde!

Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia y Uruguay han reportado nuevas líderes.
Nuevamente la tecnología ha abierto una ventana al favorecernos la comunicación a través del chat de WhatsApp. De esa manera nos hemos podido comunicar más ágilmente y así acompañar y animar a las coordinadoras de aspirantes de cada país.

Recibir sus solicitudes realmente nos motiva a continuar moviendo la rueda de la comunicación y la amistad, las dos herramientas que en este caso han hecho posible que tengamos en nuestras manos estos documentos!!

GRACIAS a todas mis compañeras de LAD POR CONTINUAR IMPULSANDO EL CRECIMIENTO DE LLL, las quiero mucho y valoro inmensamente su trabajo !!!

Mariana de Petersen
ALA-Administradora de Acreditacion de nuevas Líderes para América Latina

LAD news from Latin America:

It is very exciting to see the growth of our dear organization even in countries where it did not exist before. For example, a Chapter started very recently in Panamá and in Nicaragua.

The news in South America is that new Leaders are opening new Groups, not only in the main cities, but also in the surrounding towns.

In November, Mexico hosted the next IMS, so we heard directly from Leaders, not only about the challenges, but also about their joys as they help La Leche League grow. We held a welcome ceremony for new Leaders with white candles and green ribbons!

Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia and Uruguay have reported new Leaders.

Again technology has opened a new window for communication through WhatsApp chat. This way we have been able to communicate and encourage the LAD Coordinators from each country.

Thanks to everyone for continuing to increase the growth of LLL. I love you and I greatly appreciate your work.

Mariana de Petersen
Administrator of Leader Accreditation for Latin America
Here is an extract from a Leader Applicant who has decided right at the end of her application not to be accredited.

Dear Denise,

This decision must have been a hard one for you to take. I know from your former enthusiasm about becoming a Leader that this had been a very dear project of yours. I am happy to hear that working on your application has helped you deepen your philosophy of mothering and that my comments may have been useful to you. This way we all learn.

Now you notice that your family needs you even more. LLL keeps saying: Family first! Homeschooling is a very big commitment indeed and also a very useful one. Our life may change and our interests and needs as well. Sometimes this means that a page has to be turned and that there is no time left for LLL. There is no obligation to become a Leader. Thank you for your fair and trustful explanations and for your being concerned about my work and feelings.

Let's not consider working on applications, whether completed or not, as a waste of time!

Isn't it nice to see that we learn from each other–even if the application does not lead to an accreditation?

I wish you and your family the very best for the future.

Warm regards,

Angela ACLA

From Rita Schroeder, Luxembourg
Dear Denise

Thank you very much for your email. I appreciate that your decision to withdraw as a Leader Applicant was not taken lightly and I hope you will retain a connection with La Leche League, as a breastfeeding mum if not as a Leader.

La Leche League’s accreditation procedure offers Leader Applicants the opportunity to consider not only LLL philosophy, but also whether they can incorporate the responsibilities of being a Leader into their own lives, which may already be very busy. Remember how La Leche League encourages us always to put family first? That is what you are doing right now, and that is exactly how it should be.

Having said that, please know, Denise, that you may always reopen the door to La Leche League leadership if ever you wish to do so.

With my best wishes and warmest regards

Angela
ACLA

Vicky Reynell, South Africa

Hi Denise,

I'm so sorry to hear that you're having a difficult time in your personal life. Separating from your husband is sure to bring about huge changes in your day-to-day life, not to mention the emotional toll it must be taking on you and your children. Of course they need your time and attention more than ever right now! Between that and homeschooling, it's no wonder you feel you have no energy left over to devote to being a La Leche League Leader. Family always needs to come first, and I would never want you to feel badly about giving your children that honored position in your life.

It makes me so happy to hear that our conversations as you worked on your application helped you clarify your philosophy about mothering. That's exactly what a LAD representative hopes will happen. By exploring LLL philosophies together with her ACLA, an Applicant learns what she feels is really important to her as a mother and makes sure she is comfortable presenting LLL philosophy to other mothers. Another very important part of the application time is discovering if you have the time and energy a Leader needs to devote to La Leche League. I commend you for recognizing that you wouldn't be able to give your Group the attention it deserves and not putting yourself in a situation that's not in the best interests of you and your family, your Group, and those who would be your co-Leaders.

Please don't feel as if you've let me down by deciding not to complete your application. I've enjoyed corresponding with you and don't regret any of the time we've spent together. Working with you has not been a means to an end, but a chance to get to know a wonderful woman and help her learn if becoming a La Leche League Leader is the next step in her life journey. Thank you for letting me be part of that adventure. Mother-to-mother support is a cornerstone of this wonderful organization, and not only as it relates to breastfeeding. That I was able to give that to you at a time when you needed it is so gratifying to me.

I do want you to know that you have the option of putting your application on hold for a time. If you feel having a chance to let life settle down and think about your decision would be helpful, this would keep your file open without your having to work on it. I would also know not to expect to hear from you. If that option sounds attractive just drop me a note letting me know. Unless I hear from you in the next two weeks I'll assume you've decided to go ahead and withdraw your application. If that is your decision, but you decide in the next year, as your life calms down and rearranges itself yet again, that you are once more interested in LLL leadership, please contact me. All files are kept for a year and your application can be reactivated without your needing to repeat the application process.

I wish you well in whatever path your life takes next.

WarmLLLly,
Angela ACLA

From Cynthia Massey, New York, USA

Dear Denise,

Thank you for your honesty. I know this must have been a difficult decision to make. ‘Family first’ is what LLL is all about and from what you’ve written it’s clear that you are honoring that statement. Although I am disappointed, I know that a seed has been planted. LLL philosophy is reflected in all you do and my hope is that in the future you will have the time to commit to the duties of leadership.

Keep your children close during this challenging time and know that there is always a place for you in LLL. As an experienced member you still have so much to give.

Stay in touch!
Angela ACLA

From Patty Varelas, Athens, Greece

Dear D


Die Situation mit deinem Mann tut mir leid. Ich hoffe fest für euch und für eure Kinder, dass ihr gangbare Wege finden könnt. Solche Situationen brauchen viel Zeit und vorallem viel Kraft.


Nun erwarte ich von dir nochmals eine Antwort und wünsche dir viel Kraft.

Liebe Grüsse,
Angela ACLA

Dear D

Thank you for your email. I can easily imagine that it was not easy for you to write this letter and you have put a lot thought into making the decision. I noticed how committed and highly motivated you were during your application and I appreciate your honesty.

I'm sorry about the situation with your husband. I sincerely hope for you and for your children that you can find a good way forward. Such situations require a lot of time and, above all, a lot of strength.

Yes, both you and I have spent a lot of time on our correspondence and it always hurts a bit, to see someone like you step away. However, knowing you as I do, I can imagine that you will spread LLL philosophy in your environment
and you will encourage the mothers you meet in their breastfeeding and mothering, not as a Leader, but simply as a mother.

Before I say good-bye to you, I would like to draw your attention to the possibility of taking a break. If you would like to put your LLL application on hold for half a year, to take time for your family, do not worry. Perhaps you will find that your situation stabilizes in the future so that you again have time for LLL work. I ask you to consider this possibility once again.

I’ll expect to hear from you again and wish you much strength.

Kind regards,
Angela ACLA

From Rahel Oberholzer, Switzerland

Here is an extract from an isolated candidate for leadership in a remote rural community. The extract is part of what she says about her motivation to pursue leadership in a pre-application dialogue:

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

Currently I am working as a massage therapist at an area health centre. I reduced my hours, so that I can complete more of my lactation work more quickly. For the centre, I have been providing the breastfeeding portion of a pre-natal class with our nurse practitioner through our program for mothers and babies. I had been urging the program’s coordinator to do breastfeeding education for the community, seeing that nothing had been done. She gave me the opportunity to do an hour of the class, which actually turned into an hour and a half because of the interest from the women in attendance. The nurse practitioner invited me to do more sessions with her and the program coordinator invited me to do more breastfeeding programs later this spring. So, my encouragement is working!

Isabelle Isolated
I attended my first LLL meeting in Danbury, Connecticut, USA in 2004 when I was pregnant with my daughter. A year and a half later, I was a Leader in that same Group, which was close to my home in southeastern New York. After a few years of leading, I met another Leader who lived only a few miles from me, but led with a Group in New York. After becoming fast friends with her, I began leading with her Group as well. I was very lucky in that the Groups I led with were very active, and we frequently welcomed new Leaders. It was that aspect of welcoming new Leaders, by working with them first as Leader Applicants, that I found myself interested in becoming more involved in the LAD. However, with newborn twin sons and a three-year-old toddler at the time, it took some additional years until I felt ready.

In 2012, I joined the LAD as an ACLA-at-Large, working with mothers in different states in the USA, mostly Kentucky and Virginia. Not too long afterwards, I had the opportunity to be appointed as the Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA) of LLL of New York, a position I held for two and a half years. It was a wonderful experience for me, and I learned so much, especially from my LAD support team, and the Leaders and Leader Applicants in New York.

In 2015, my family and I moved from New York to Texas, and it was at that time that I took on the position of Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation (RALA). I have been a RALA for a year and a half, and I am very excited to now take a step up and be the new Administrator of Leader Accreditation (ALA) for LLL Alliance. Since moving to Austin, Texas, I have started leading with two Groups locally, and during the past two years, I have also had the pleasure of working with Applicants in many parts of the world, including six states in the US, and countries like India, Japan, Lebanon, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, and China.

I surely would not have gotten to where I am today without the never-ending support of countless Leaders and LAD representatives whom I now call friends. And, of course I cannot forget my dear family. My husband, Naveed, and I have three children. Nora is 12, and my twin boys, Ahsan and Zayn, are nine. I would also be remiss if I did not mention my mother, Carol, who has been the most fantastic cheerleader and supporter anyone could ask for. It is because of her that I have been able to become the mother I am today. In my free time, I love to read, learn about nutrition, parenting, homeschooling, and breastfeeding, and of course, do my LAD work.

**Donna Cookson Martin, Alberta, Canada**

As a young mother living in a tiny town (population 900) in the wheat fields of Alberta, Canada, I had already been a paid member of La Leche League and had nursed five babies into toddlerhood before I met an LLL Leader in person for the first time. But I was not alone. I had the constant and reassuring support of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, 1963 edition. I also held the firm belief that for me, as a person legally blind from birth, breastfeeding would be the easiest and most sensible solution to the challenge of baby feeding without seeing. My firstborn, Margaret, proved to be in total agreement. To my surprise and delight, she and the three brothers, James, Philip and
Andrew, and one sister, Elizabeth, who followed her into our family, taught me that breastfeeding and mothering through breastfeeding would become much more than simply a practical system for milk delivery.

Within months of attending my first LLL Area Conference, I made the transition from isolated member to isolated Applicant, and then to isolated Leader. Even as an Applicant I knew that, with my background in teaching and counseling, and my love for writing, the LAD would be the place for me. And, indeed, except for various terms of service on the LLL Canada and LLLI Boards of Directors, the LAD has remained my LLL “home” for all of the 26 years that I have been a Leader. I was fortunate to arrive in LAD just at the point where handwritten applications were being replaced by computers and email. I could never have handled the reading and filing of handwriting that marked the earlier years of LLL.

Shortly after I was accredited, my husband, Greg, who was fond of introducing me as “the dairy queen,” passed away when Margaret was 16 and our youngest son, Andrew, was just four years old. With the support of the wonderful people in our tiny town and of my LLL Leader friends farther away, I took on the unexpected role of single mother.

My five babies are now all grown up. They have finished university, have added five spouses to the family, and are settled into their own homes. They have made me “Grammie” to five of the world’s most intriguing and totally wonderful (and wonderfully breastfed) grandchildren—granddaughters Abbey, Oaklyn, Brielle and Bryer, and grandson Austin, just turned 1. When they need me they can find me in my large, book-filled apartment in downtown Edmonton (population almost one million). The tea kettle is always plugged in, the computer is always ready for action, and the radio is playing the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, our version of public radio) in the background. When I’m not engaged in LLL work, I spend my time researching family histories (and history of any kind), reading talking books, listening to old-time radio programs or following the turbulent adventures of the family’s favourite hockey team, the Edmonton Oilers.

Sarah Quigley, California, USA

I grew up in the small town of Litchfield, Minnesota, the oldest of four children. My mother has been an LLL Leader since 1981, and I have vivid memories of eavesdropping on her phone conversations with mothers. I didn’t really consider the possibility of being a Leader myself until I started regularly attending meetings with my first baby and found that I loved talking about breastfeeding, too!

I live in San Francisco with my husband David and two daughters, Charlotte (8) and Katherine (5). David is an assistant professor in cancer research at the University of California, San Francisco. Charlotte is in third grade, and Katherine is a kindergartner. I have been a stay-at-home mother since Charlotte was born, having taught English as a Second Language in college before that. My years as an LLL Leader led me to make a career change and I just sat for the IBCLC exam! I will start teaching breastfeeding classes at a local hospital soon and also plan to work in private practice with another IBCLC.

I started as an ACLA in Northern California/Hawaii in early 2013 and became CLA a year later. I continue to lead
monthly meetings in San Francisco and also take calls with the LLL USA Breastfeeding Helpline when I can. In the last year, I have also started doing at-large work with Applicants in several different states and Italy!

One of my favorite aspects of LAD work is the writing. When I was teaching, writing courses were my specialty. I also published a young adult novel called TMI (Penguin, 2009) and have tried my hand at a few more fiction projects. Ultimately, I don't think fiction is my true passion, although I am open to writing more novels in the future if inspiration strikes. For now, writing as a LAD rep is very fulfilling and enjoyable for me. I am also a yoga and cooking enthusiast!

Exciting news! The Karin Gausman Fund, which will provide financial assistance to Applicants and LAD representatives, will begin to take applications in early 2017. For Applicants, funding requests can cover application and accreditation fees. LAD representatives can apply for assistance with LLL events and conference fees, and those from financially challenged entities will receive priority. Look for the application forms to be sent out early in January. If you have questions about the Fund or would like to make a donation, please contact Sally Allison at RNLSMOM247@gmail.com.

One of the new topics added to the Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for LLL Leadership is Appendix 33 which deals with the WHO Code. Leaders and Applicants are likely to contact you and ask where they can find information about the WHO Code, so now is the perfect time to check out the appendix for yourself and keep a link to it handy to share with others. Appendix 33 can be found on the LLLI website here <http://www.llli.org/leaderpages/psrappend33.html>. The complete Policies and Standing Rules Notebook which includes all of the appendices can be found here <http://www.llli.org/leaderpages/psr.html>. Both links require your LLLID and password.
Congratulations on your appointment!

Karin Ali       ALA, Alliance for Breastfeeding Education AN, USA
Sally Allison   Contributing Editor, “Good Ideas/Reminders,” LADders
                Coordinator of Karin Gausman Fund
Juanita Benz    CLA, Kentucky/Tennessee, USA
Mary Bird       Interim CLA for Future Areas in Europe
Lori Bryan      ALA, LAD West, USA

Melissa Fuller-Killgore ACLA, Alabama/Mississippi/Louisiana and Arkansas, USA
Suzy Landreth   RALA, Mountain East Region, LLL Alliance, USA
Marilyn Sears Lindsey ACLA, Kansas/Oklahoma, USA
Rebecca McCormick CLA, Old Dominion, USA
Jennifer McHam   ACLA, Texas Area Network, USA
Hannah McKenzie  CLA, North Carolina, USA
Renée McLeod    CLA, Alberta/Northwest Territories, Canada
Máire Morrissy  CLA, Ireland
Sarah Quigley   RALA, LAD West, USA
Lesley Robinson

Olivia Weatherwax Managing Editor of LADders
CLA, Michigan, USA
Meagan Wells
ACLA, Washington, USA
Fun on the Beach in South Africa

I’m with my sons, Alex (towel round neck) and Donald and our Staffordshire bull terrier Pinto, on Keurbooms beach, about 40 minutes drive from where we live. It’s a beautiful beach to walk on, but the sea has dangerous rip currents so not good for swimming. The beach is crossed by a river mouth, and in the cliffs above there is an important Middle Stone Age shell midden.

Vicki Reynell, CLA
LLL South Africa

We are away camping for a week in Natures Valley, about 600km from Cape Town on the East Coast.

My family: Giliomee, Anja 14, Me (Juliet), Sané 11, Karl-Otto 17

Juliet Mathee, ACLA
LLL South Africa

Editorial postscript
As 2016 ends, the LAD Council sends a big THANK YOU to all LAD representatives. You play an essential role in growing La Leche League. You work with supporting Leaders to help Applicants prepare for their new Leader roles. And many of you work with isolated Applicants, helping LLL grow into new areas and new parts of the world. Each newly accredited LLL Leader means that our organization will be there for future generations of mothers and babies.

In March the LAD Council met in Frankfurt, Germany, in conjunction with the European Management Symposium (EMS). We welcomed Toshi Jolliffe as the new DLAD and had thoughtful discussions about LLL philosophy and the prerequisites and about LAD consistency in how Leaders are accredited. We again performed LAD “L” “A” “D” to the tune of “New York, New York” for those attending the EMS. With each performance our dance movements improve! Another highlight of the year was publication of the LAD Manual, a revision of LAD Resources, which was coordinated by Linda Wieser.
As the year ends, we hope each of you will reflect on the work you do as a LAD representative. It takes time and patience and thoughtful correspondence. It also brings a lot of joy. Think about the Leaders you have accredited this year; the discussions you’ve had with Applicants exploring LLL philosophy and their parenting choices; the creative approaches you’ve come up with to meet an individual Applicant's need. La Leche League is lucky to have each of you a part of the LAD. Thank you for choosing to devote hours of volunteer time to accrediting new Leaders.

_LADders_ Team and LAD Council

**_LADders_ Team**

**Article Coordinators**

- Contributing Editors
  - *A Taste of LAD International*
  - *LAD Promenade*
  - *Good Idea! / Reminder!*

**LAD Council members**

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- Linda Wieser
- Sally Allison
- Juanita Watt
- Lesley Robinson
- Toshi Jolliffe, LAD Director
- Cindy Garrison

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