LLL Philosophy in Our Hearts
Sample Explanations to Applicants

LAD Council

“At its best, the personal history offers Leader Applicants a golden opportunity to affirm their profound experiences of breastfeeding and mothering and to commit to La Leche League, the organization that gives voice to a philosophy they share. The personal history is an unfolding, revealing, voyage of discovery as an Applicant reflects on her experience, interweaving her understanding of LLL philosophy with the strands of her own deeply felt knowledge. The personal history strengthens the bonds with LLL as Applicants learn how closely their experience and their values reflect LLL philosophy, thus deepening their commitment to the organization they will represent.”

Alison Parkes, LAD Council Advisor, LLL Great Britain 
Leaven 2008-4, “Fresh Approaches to the Personal History”

When we write to Applicants, we affirm what we see in their experiences of mothering through breastfeeding, the practical example of LLL philosophy that their choices demonstrate. As LAD representatives we may also share ways that we have learned to articulate LLL philosophy for others in Group meetings or one-to-one helping. Our purpose is to help each Applicant feel empowered that her experience and learning has been “heard,” that it is valuable and a basis for her work as a Leader. Next, of course, LLL asks us to put aside sharing our own experiences/feelings so that we may actively listen to the mothers’ situations and feelings and offer information that is specific to an individual mother and baby.

This article provides responses by LAD representatives to various Applicants’ personal history discussion of LLL philosophy in their own lives. Our intention is to focus on three or four concepts per issue until we have included the whole of LLL philosophy in this column.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LLL Philosophy in our Hearts:
“Father” “Loving Guidance” “Weaning” 1

LAD Council Report to the LLL Board of Directors, October 2010
2010 April SAR Statistics Compilation 7

How to Dump That Filing Cabinet and Keep Secure and Organised Electronic Records 8

LAD Online Resources 9

LAD Orientation
Finding Time for Orientation 11

LAD Session
Creative LAD Session: Series Meeting Lookalike 12

How Would You Respond? 13

A Taste of LAD International:
Penny Piercy, CLA Texas, United States 15
Ilana Sobel, CLA Israel

LAD Promenade
Appointment Notices 17
Comments about LADders

We hope this sharing demonstrates a useful variety of approaches to dialogue (in more than one language) and inspires LAD representatives to find their own confident replies. Since we all benefit by building on the work of others in the LAD, please feel free to use or adapt any of these responses for your own work.
Breastfeeding is enhanced and the nursing couple sustained by the loving support, help, and companionship of the baby’s father. A father’s unique relationship with his baby is an important element in the child’s development from early infancy.

You write with much wisdom about the father’s role in the breastfeeding relationship. You know first-hand what a difference a supportive father can make to a mother who wants to breastfeed. The whole family can benefit when father bonds with his baby and appreciates the priceless gift the mother is giving through breastfeeding. Both mother and baby do better when they have strong support at home -- someone to lend a hand to help with cooking or cleaning or laundry, someone to affirm the mother in breastfeeding and her role as mother, someone to love both the mother and baby.

At the same time, we’re aware that not every family has a supportive father. Leaders will be sensitive to individual situations at meetings and help mothers look at other sources of support besides the father. Just as with the childbirth concept, the emphasis here is on the father’s role in relation to breastfeeding.

I think that fathers and mothers are equal, but different. Their roles are different and although a father is very important, fathers and mothers are in no way interchangeable.

It can be hard for fathers to know what their role is in parenting in those first few months, when all the baby wants is to nurse. I think that fathers tend to “grow into” their role as the baby grows. Nevertheless, the father has a very important role at the beginning. He is the supporter and protector of the nursing couple. It’s his job to take care of the mother so she can take care of the baby, and to fend off criticism if necessary. The support of a father can do a lot for family life in society as a whole. My husband used to talk to his colleagues at work about how great it was that I was breastfeeding – it helped him to sleep through the night!

What would you say as a Leader to help a mother whose partner was either unsupportive or absent?

* English translation follows.

Where I see shortcomings is that these days men are so involved in their workplaces that they hardly see their children. Our social networks are not as comprehensive as they used to be and the husband is often the only adult company for a mother of young children. When he comes home tired in the evening and the mother has been waiting all day to have a reasonable conversation with him, I see a situation where conflict is inevitable. What do you think?

Ich stelle es mir ganz schwierig vor, im Sinnen der LLL zu stillen und zu leben mit einem Partner, der dies nicht unterstützt. Diese Unterstützung ist auch wichtig bei der Tätigkeit als LLL-Stillberaterin, da z.B. gerade eine Frau anruft, wenn Essenszeit ist oder der Vater die Kinder hütet, wenn irgend ein LLL-Anlass stattfindet.

Wie kann für dich liebevolle Fürsorge und Hilfe auch noch aussehen, damit die Mutter erfolgreich stillen kann? Was ist dir in eurer Familie wichtig?

I think it is very difficult to live and breastfeed in the spirit of LLL philosophy with a partner who is not supportive. This support is also important for an LLL Leader because situations arise such as a mother calling at dinner time or the father is expected to look after the children during LLL activities.

Do you have other examples of loving care and help which allow a mother to successfully breastfeed? What is important to you for your family?

I think that fathers and mothers are equal, but different. Their roles are different and although a father is very important, fathers and mothers are in no way interchangeable.

It can be hard for fathers to know what their role is in parenting in those first few months, when all the baby wants is to nurse. I think that fathers tend to “grow into” their role as the baby grows. Nevertheless, the father has a very important role at the beginning. He is the supporter and protector of the nursing couple. It’s his job to take care of the mother so she can take care of the baby, and to fend off criticism if necessary. The support of a father can do a lot for family life in society as a whole. My husband used to talk to his colleagues at work about how great it was that I was breastfeeding – it helped him to sleep through the night!

What would you say as a Leader to help a mother whose partner was either unsupportive or absent?

* English translation follows.

Les bébés ont besoin à la fois de leur mère et de leur père. Depuis les débuts, LLL a mis l’accent sur le rôle du père parce que le fait que la mère allaite n’implique pas que le père soit exclu. Il y a bien de manières de s’impliquer dans la vie du bébé autrement qu’en le nourrissant ; en jouant, en lui donnant le bain, en le changeant, en le câlinant, en le promenant, en chantant pour lui etc..
Quand l'enfant naît, il passe beaucoup de temps proche de sa mère, mais à mesure qu’il grandit, il apprécie la compagnie de son papa de plus en plus. On dit souvent qu’un bébé allaité a de la chance : il sait rapidement faire la différence entre sa maman et son papa parce que seule sa maman lui donne le sein ! Bien sûr, le soutien du père est très important pour la mère. La mère qui allaita a besoin de soutien et celle qu'elle a du père est essentiel. Quand le papa est heureux de voir son enfant allaité, l’amour, l’aide, le soutien et la patience qu’il donne à la maman sont tellement précieux ! Cela peut faire toute la différence ! Cela vous paraît idéal ? Certaines mères se sentent coupables en lisant ce concept car le père ne les soutient pas – que ce soit pour leur allaitement ou dans leur vie en général. Elles se demandent si elles « vivent » ce concept du père. Je leur explique que LLL a souhaité insister sur le fait que l’allaitement n’implique pas seulement une mère et un bébé, mais que l’allaitement est l’affaire de toute la famille. Comme le disent certaines couples : « NOUS allaitons notre bébé ! »

Babies need both mothers and fathers. Right from the beginning, LLL has emphasised the role of the father because the fact that the mother is breastfeeding doesn’t mean that the father can’t be involved. There are many ways for him to be involved in the life of a baby other than feeding: he can play with him, give him a bath, change him, cuddle him, take him for walks, sing to him, etc. When a child is born he spends a lot of time close to his mother, but as he grows, he enjoys his father’s company more and more. People often say that a breastfed baby is lucky. He quickly learns to tell the difference between his mother and his father, since it’s only his mother who nurses him! Of course the father’s support is very important for the mother. A breastfeeding mother needs support, and the support of the father is essential. When a father happily watches his breastfed baby, the love, the help, the support and the patience he gives to the mother are invaluable. This can make all the difference! Does this seem ideal to you? Some mothers feel guilty when they read about this concept because the father is not supportive, either of breastfeeding or in their life in general. They wonder if they are really living the concept on fathers. I explain to them that LLL stresses that breastfeeding doesn’t involve only a mother and baby, but the whole family. Some couples say, “WE are breastfeeding our baby.”

This describes the experience you have had in your family – the practical help that YY gave you was essential to your well-being as well as to your twin babies – from the food for you in hospital after the birth, cuddling his newborn sons, to dealing with weaning pressures. You acknowledge that mothers without such an involved father who “owns” parenting in a hands-on way may get her practical and emotional support from other important people in her life. A father has the opportunity to deepen his relationship with his woman and children by supporting breastfeeding. You also observe that a father may take a more negative choice and draw away from breastfeeding mother and baby. With twin babies, YY had little time to dither and he was involved all the time, giving him ample opportunities to bond with his sons! His unconditional love and trust is integral to your relationship as a couple and as a family.

From infancy on, children need loving guidance, which reflects acceptance of their capabilities and sensitivity to their feelings.

I've known fathers who took the lead in starting solids. They researched, decided what to do, and were the ones who handled that. That's another way for a father to be closely involved with the baby. In some families, bath time is daddy-time. There is also the special hold for a fussy baby that Dr. Sears talks about--holding the baby so his head feels the vibrations from the father’s throat as he sings/talks in a voice that is deeper and lower than mother’s. Mothers at meetings can probably bring up many ideas for ways a father can get involved.

Loving Guidance

1. Establish a close connection with the child from infancy. Breastfeeding, mother-baby togetherness, and trusting the child are things that help build this connection.
2. Arrange things in advance for good behavior. This includes child-proofing and making sure the child is well rested, well-fed, and free from excess stimulation.
3. Understand developmental stages so you know what behaviors are normal and common for a child of any given age. When a parent knows about child development, she won’t expect behaviors that are
normal and common for a child of any given age. When a parent knows about child development, she won’t expect behaviors that are impossible for the child to live up to.

4. Have well-thought-out techniques for dealing with misbehavior when it occurs. This is where things like time-outs, distraction, and removing a child from the situation can be used.

Watching the way you interact with and treat your child will powerfully influence mothers at Series Meetings. They may not hear every word said, but they are watching and learning parenting from those around them. It’s apparent from reading how you handle loving guidance with your child that you are tuned into his developmental age abilities and what might be causing the problem. When nothing seems to work, you hold him until the problem is over. This is a valid point to share with mothers – sometimes you just can’t fix the problem and can only be there to offer comfort.

Meeting a child’s needs does not spoil him. On the contrary: it fosters his sense of himself as lovable and capable and fosters his independence. This concept is part of the continuum of interaction with our children. When a mother responds to the expressed needs of her baby, the baby learns that he is loved and that he is important. In this way he is equipped to learn the power of compassion. I think that it also gives us tools as mothers for the sometimes bumpy road ahead. We know the effectiveness of listening to our children. We know the importance of responding quickly and we know how meeting the needs they are expressing with their behaviour is the way to eliminate those needs.

It works so much better to tell children what you want them to do rather than what you don’t want them to do. This leads to a positive and harmonious atmosphere. I think it also important that you acknowledge mistakes and apologise to your children when necessary. This is a good example to set them – we all make mistakes, but in considering the feelings of others, we can set things right and learn from the experience.

I love Mary Sheedy Kurcinka’s book *Raising Your Spirited Child*. I particularly like the idea that all the qualities which we find so challenging in our children are the same ones we admire in adults and I love the way she turns these around and looks at them as positive qualities. Rather than thinking of children as stubborn, belligerent or argumentative, we can think of them as tenacious, assertive or forthright. This really helped me to understand my children better and to encourage their qualities.

Reading your experience and learning on this concept gave me an “aha” moment – your tenacious determination to offer LLL support to other mothers now makes a lot of sense when considering how deprived of support you felt when in another country. At that time you were not feeling well, and the challenge to act optimally in guiding your children was too much on occasion. With YY’s support and your acceptance of your own learning and responsibility, you came through this time with more compassion and understanding of capabilities, yours and others’. You learned when someone is not acting right, it’s time to focus on the feelings and what’s going on behind that behaviour – to put this right, to fill up our emotional tanks or whatever works (meeting basic needs for rest, fun/friendship, nutrition, sleep and fresh air/exercise) to boost our coping capabilities again.

What you say about modeling for our children is helpful, and this includes how we confront our mistakes, talk them through as a family, and take responsibility for a more positive future path. This is LLL philosophy – the concepts are what we believe to be important, the ideas that we use to guide our choices (and to bring us back to where we want to be). These concepts are not rules or ideals, but practical statements that come from our experiences and learning within our very real families.

As you say, your learning has enabled you to set aside judgment of others and to really listen with compassion to what is going on with them. You have so much to offer others!
Weaning

Ideally the breastfeeding relationship will continue until the baby outgrows the need.

Katherine Dettwyler, an anthropologist, has written about the natural age of weaning. You can read her paper on this at: http://www.kathydettwyler.org/detwean.html. It is interesting that if you compare humans to other primates, the natural weaning age tends to be around the time of the eruption of the first permanent molars, which in humans is around the age of six. Obviously this is much later than the weaning age for many children, but it goes to show that there is a large range of what can be considered “normal.”

* English translation follows.


I have experienced a counselling situation in which a mother, after our conversation, decided to completely wean her child and that child self-weaned within a week. I think that part of breastfeeding is that it is influenced by both the mother and the rest of the family. How was it for you when you first saw a mother breastfeeding an older child? What are your thoughts on breastfeeding an older child in public? Would you like to tell me about your current breastfeeding relationship with your child?


I am happy that you can experience extended nursing in this way. Are you also aware of moments when the breastfeeding of an older child bothers you and you feel that it is enough now? What do you think are reasons for a mother, after say six months, to completely wean her baby? Or for a mother to say that her child self-weaned after nine months?

Weaning questions are something almost all Leaders have dealt with. Mothers often times find that just talking to someone about weaning is quite helpful, especially if it’s a toddler who’s nursing. Sometimes referring them to one of the books about nursing toddlers such as Mothering Your Nursing Toddler or How Weaning Happens can be helpful too. Since you haven’t yet weaned your child, you might want to do one of the weaning topics on the Preview. You’ll find it helpful to practice talking with a mother who chooses to wean her baby.

James Hymes, a pediatrician, wrote a book that used to be in most LLL Libraries (but is now out of print). The book is The Child Under Six. In that book, he talked about the difference between a habit and a need. He said a habit can be changed relatively easily. He says if a child strongly resists your best efforts to change a behavior, you are probably dealing with a need. A need will go away once it is satisfied. Using that understanding, a mother might try night weaning and remain prepared to change her plans if the baby seems to still need to nurse at night.

You are clear that the breastfeeding relationship looks after the baby’s physical and emotional needs as well as helping the mother benefit from this physiological connection in meeting those needs as fully as she can in her particular circumstances. This relationship is two-way, and you had to factor in your own needs as well as be sensitive to the individual needs and wants of each twin. You felt disappointed that managing demand feeding as you envisaged was overwhelming and had to be adjusted – you were relieved that both boys were happy to take a cup during the day.
You have a broad understanding of how the balance is affected by social/cultural influences as well as the needs of each individual in the family. You are lucky to have had the information from your mother about the facts of your early experiences, which help you to put your learning in balance with what you have personally experienced as a child and now as a mother. Having sorted through these challenging perspectives will be valuable when you help other mothers, accepting where they are in their unique set of circumstances – learning, family experience or support, pressures and lifestyle expectations.

Talking with your recommending Leader helped you learn more about how the breasts can operate independently later on in lactation – this offered you a way to manage weaning each twin according to his own timetable – without risk of mastitis! It’s truly amazing how the changing needs of developing babies keep mothers on their toes adjusting routines and expectations.

We hope that these examples have been enriching and thought-provoking. Thanks to the many dedicated LAD representatives who have shared extracts from their letters and provided translations for us. The next instalment of “LLL Philosophy in Our Hearts” will be in the first LADders in 2011. We welcome more discussion of LLL philosophy from your own inspiring replies to Applicants. Please send by 5 February 2011 your favourite dialogue extracts with reference to one or more of the following three concepts to the LADders staff at: LADdersmail@gmail.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superior Infant Food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast milk is the superior infant food.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the healthy, full-term baby breast milk is the only food necessary until baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Nutrition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good nutrition means eating a well-balanced and varied diet of foods in as close to their natural state as possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**LAD Council Report to the LLLI Board of Directors, October 2010**

**Publications and Resources**

A new multilingual publication for LAD representatives worldwide has been created, LADders. Two issues have been produced so far. These can be viewed at: http://www.llleus.org/LAD/ladders/LADders_2010_1.pdf http://www.llleus.org/LAD/ladders/LADders_2010_2.pdf (Username: LAD Password: LADis#1).

The Breastfeeding Resource Guide was updated to incorporate references to the new edition of The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding. A new “LLL World Directory” was created.

**Survey of Effectiveness of Current LAD Practices**

A survey of recently accredited Leaders was conducted to assess effectiveness of current leadership preparation methods. Results were published in LADders (see urls above). Complete results of the survey are available from <lesleyrobinson@rogers.com>.

**Our Ongoing LAD Work**

Supporting LAD representatives worldwide and accrediting LLL Leaders

Accepting applications internationally to assure timely support for all Applicants

Appointing A/CLAs and helping them with their LAD orientation
Providing ongoing education to A/CLAs

Apprising A/CLAs of pertinent LLLI/LAD information and directives

Maintaining the LAD communication channel and frequent individual correspondence with local LAD representatives

Reporting directory updates to the LADI Directory Coordinator and LLLI

Responding to LAD inquiries from local LAD

Making sure that LAD articles for Area Leaders’ Letters and other Area materials receive appropriate review

Attending and/or organizing Area Leader conferences/meetings

Attending and/or organizing LAD meetings/seminars, and Regional conferences and seminars, as requested

Receiving Semi-Annual Reports and maintaining accurate LAD records

Submitting Semi-Annual Reports to the LDT

Communicating with entity administrators as appropriate and requested.

**Support**

In the absence of a LAD Director, LAD Council has been providing one another mutual support and encouragement. LAD Council has been expanded to include at-large members to share their experience because of this need.

---

**LAD International Semi-Annual Report**

*Statistics Compilation, 15 Oct 2009 – 15 April 2010*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USW</th>
<th>EUS</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Africa Asia &amp; Middle East</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>GB</th>
<th>Canada French</th>
<th>Canada English</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>2393</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td>227</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>2491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Applications</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinued on their own</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditations</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

7
How to Dump that Filing Cabinet and Keep Secure and Organised Electronic Records
Lesley Robinson, ALA, La Leche League Canada

I was delighted when 20 years ago my husband gave me the most unromantic gift I had ever received: my filing cabinet! It helped me to organise all my files and papers and I could easily find what I needed.

More recently I have found myself frustrated by all those piles of paper. I was printing out innumerable letters and documents that I already had saved on my computer and if I wanted to send a file to another LAD representative, it would be quite a weighty package to mail. I began to see the contents of my filing cabinet in a different light. Every time I printed something, I was aware of the wastefulness of generating so many paper documents. I decided to find a way to save the environment, to save money and to save space in my office (which is also my kitchen).

I decided to abandon paper records altogether. We renovated our kitchen without allowing space for the filing cabinet. When I tell people that I no longer keep paper files, they react with concern: What if your computer gets a virus? What if you lose everything? Things get lost in cyberspace.

How do I keep my files electronically and back things up so that they are more secure than printed documents in a filing cabinet? Here are some of my tips:

Whenever I receive a document or write a letter, I save it in a folder with the Applicant's name. Documents are numbered chronologically and then named, so that they will appear in order when I open the folder. Number 1 is always a LAD application checklist – the equivalent of the coversheet in the file. Anything that I receive by postal mail, I scan and save as a pdf, also numbered. Whenever I send or receive anything, I also email it to myself at a web-based email address (gmail) which is not dependent on my current server, so that if I move or change service provider for any other reason, I will still have access to all those records and if my computer crashes, I can access it from anywhere. I currently have anything sent to that address also forwarded to my inbox, so I actually have it stored in two web-based email accounts. (I always use web-based email, so that I don't lose anything if I need to get a new computer and can work from anywhere when I'm travelling.) The emails I send to myself have the Applicant's name in the subject box, so they are easy to find, all in order by date, should the need ever arise. If necessary, for example if someone isn't able to open the files on her computer, I can print out an entire file to send, but in fact I have never needed to do this. I can also copy files to CDs to send. It costs less than $2 (Canadian dollars) to send a CD in the mail to anywhere in Canada, whereas the equivalent pile of paper would cost a lot more. Another benefit is that I don't have wasteful piles of outdated paperwork lying around.

On my computer I have a lot of folders within folders. Within my LAD folder I have a folder for my Administrator of Leader Accreditation (ALA) work, a resources folder and a folder for each Area in which I work with Applicants. Then within the Area folders are folders for individual Applicants, a folder for pre-application files and another for completed files. As an additional back-up, I regularly copy my LAD folder onto a flash drive, a small storage device that can be used to transport files from one computer to another, so that I can transfer the folder onto my laptop computer, which I use when I travel. In my resources folder I keep updated copies of all forms, exercises, handouts, sample letters and PowerPoint presentations that I use in my LAD work. Every time I click on “Replace existing file” I am glad that I do not need to recycle any outdated paper copies from my filing cabinet. New ACLAs in orientation receive a CD with all the up-to-date forms they will need and a selection of completed files to read. A special benefit of this is that one completed file can be used by any number of ACLAs, so I no longer need to worry about having enough files to share for orientation.
This system took me a while to set up, but it has been well worth it to me. I know where everything is and can find it easily. It’s important for each LAD representative to do what works for her, and perhaps you are shaking your head thinking that Lesley is completely nuts, but it works for me!

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

LAD Online Resources
Marie Beam, ALA, Alliance for Breastfeeding Education

Online resources can ease a LAD representative’s work -- if you know where to find what you need!

There are a number of LLL Web sites containing Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) materials, but I will focus here on the one that has the most extensive collection: <www.llleus.org/LAD.html>

LAD materials on these Web pages are organized into three categories: for Applicants, for Sponsoring Leaders, and for LAD Representatives. You may be able to find some documents in more than one place, since they may be useful to more than one category of users.

Resources for Applicants
<http://www.llleus.org/Applicants.html>
(no password needed)

To help an interested mother explore leadership, you can refer her to the Leader’s Pre-Application Packet that is in this section. Once her application has been accepted, you can let her know that she will also find here most of the LAD documents that she will be using for leadership preparation:
• Personal History of Breastfeeding and Mothering
• Leader’s Handbook checklists
• Childbirth and Breastfeeding booklet
• Breastfeeding Resource Guide
• A Preview of Mothers’ Questions/Problems and Group Dynamics/Management

There are also optional Exercises for Applicants; back issues of *Horizons* newsletter for Applicants; plus a number of LAD documents that have been translated into French and/or Spanish can be accessed at the bottom of this Web page.

Resources for Sponsoring Leaders
<http://www.LLLEUS.org/spLeaders.html>
(username: usallleader password: Access4ALLL)

When a Leader is interested in helping a potential Applicant explore LLL leadership, just as with the Applicant, the first place to refer her is the Leader’s Pre-Application Packet. If there are concerns with a potential Applicant’s experience with separation, there is a helpful resource to help guide the Leader’s discussion on this topic with the potential Applicant.

Many of the same materials from the Applicants’ Web page are included here for the Leader’s reference as she helps the Applicant through the different steps of leadership preparation. The Leader’s Guide to the Preview is also accessible here.

An important advantage of using the documents that are online is that it helps assure you are using the most up-to-date version to share with an Applicant or sponsoring Leader. It may be helpful to cite the url or download the document and attach it to your correspondence.

As we increasingly make use of online resources, please keep in mind that not all Applicants have access to current technology, and some may still be more comfortable with print resources. It is always respectful to ask whether the Applicant is comfortable accessing resources online, or would prefer to receive them in print form via postal mail.

Resources for LAD Representatives
<http://www.llleus.org/LAD/ACLA.html>
(username: LAD; password: LADis#1)

A variety of documents that have been developed to help LAD representatives with their work have been assembled. Back issues of *LADders* (2010) can be accessed, as well as *LAD Lifeline* issues (1998-2010).

Editor’s note: Forms and fees may differ, depending on each LLL entity.

**Exercises for Applicants:**
- Acceptance
- Community and Group Awareness
- Helping Mothers
- Listening
- Mixing Causes
- Telephone Helping

**LAD-related Resources and Documents**
- Alphabet Soup
- Appendix 17
- Appendix 18
- Application checklist
- Application Overview Flowchart
- Application Timeline
- Article Topics for the LAD
- Breastfeeding Answer Book Corrections
- Breastfeeding Resource Guide (BRG)
- HARK! form
- Horizons
- Job Descriptions:
  - ACLA
  - CLA
- LADders
  - 2010: Number 1
  - 2010: Number 2
- LAD Lifeline
- LAD Stylesheet
- Leader’s Handbook Checklist Options
  - Basic Leader’s Handbook checklist
  - References
  - Basic Responsibilities
  - Leader Applicant Meeting Outline
- Leader’s Pre-Application Packet
  - Introductory Letter to Leader
  - Thinking About La Leche League Leadership?
  - Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders
  - Appendix 17
  - Appendix 18
  - Overview of Application Work for Leader Accreditation
  - Purpose and Principles Reference Set
  - Leader Recommendation
  - Application for Leadership
  - TALLLL’s Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Finding Time for Orientation
Jennifer Reid, CLA, La Leche League Canada-Central and Southern Ontario

A once healthy LAD finds itself suddenly in crisis due to unexpected retirements. Regrouping and recruiting can take a lot out of the remaining LAD members. Finding the time just to keep up with current and new applications alone seems overwhelming; the task of intense recruiting is an added challenge. It takes a long time and a lot of knocking on doors, but just when LAD growth seems an unattainable goal, the hard work pays off and four new ACLAs appear within a matter of months. At first, relief sets in with the knowledge that help is on its way! Next comes the realization that along with the exceptional number of Applicant files that need attention, there is an orientation period to go through with not one new ACLA, but with four.

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

Growing an Area LAD can be a challenge. Recruitment is an ongoing process to maintain a healthy LAD. Keeping the workload of LAD representatives realistic is crucial to avoiding burn out. After all, we are all mothers. The hope for new ACLAs need not turn into another stressor on top of an overfilled plate of LAD work. When an Area LAD finds itself with the joyous opportunity of orientation of a new ACLA, but little extra time to spend on communicating via email, think about holding a LAD orientation day. Along with concentrating orientation into one pre-planned day, it can meet the important need of LAD connection with current and new ACLAs and offer the necessary recharge that comes from spending time with other Leaders.

Setting up a time and location when the members of an Area LAD team are far apart may take some creative thinking, but it is well worth the extra time gained by dedicating one day to completing a good amount of work toward breathing life into a new and healthy LAD. The preparation for the day is relatively minimal and requires a simple agenda. It can start with either electronically gathering the documents the ACLA will need in her work to put on CD or printing copies to hand out and keep in a file.

After the fun LLL welcomes and introductions, the day may start out with an overview of what an application looks like. It might be helpful to print off all forms which an ACLA would send to an Applicant during the application. If she keeps the forms in her LAD file, she can refer to them in the future. She might also appreciate a list of the names and contact information of those she will need to communicate with when initiating or accrediting an Applicant.
Walking the group through each part of the application leads to questions that may not be asked if an orientation was done via email. It can be a great reminder session for experienced ACLAs as well. This time can also be used to discuss how ACLAs can keep track of LAD files and communications, submitting SARs and what LAD organization structure looks like. Be sure to respect each ACLA’s level of comfort and ability with electronic storage.

A lot of ACLA orientation can surround getting comfortable with letter writing. Before a break for a potluck lunch, the group could take some time to prepare for an afternoon of drafting responses by talking about some sample paragraphs. The paragraphs can be fun to write. If the CLA does not find it an easy task to jot down some mock paragraphs, she could reach out to other LAD representatives she knows who may suggest a few sample paragraphs. Keep them in your files for use in sharing with other Areas or in future orientations.

In the afternoon it may be helpful to begin a discussion on finding your own style in letter writing. To do some preparation work, it would be a good idea in the weeks leading up to the LAD orientation day to ask the new ACLAs to read over some files from at least two different ACLAs to get a feel for how each LAD representative brings her own style to communications. The discussion may also include confidentiality, recognizing our own biases and representing LLL philosophy. The paragraphs discussed before lunch will most likely have opened some doors to questions about these topics.

Practice is one way to become an effective letter writer. A great afternoon exercise might be drafting responses. These can either be with the paragraphs discussed previously or with new ones. Experienced ACLAs can get as much from the practice as new ACLAs. The presence of a variety of participants may ease some of the anxiety that a new ACLA would feel in sharing her response with the group. This is an exercise that can take a considerable chunk of time, as each person writes and possibly rewrites mock responses.

To end the day, the group may want to discuss what goes into a “first letter” to an Applicant or sponsoring Leader, and if time allows, even begin a draft of their own letters. Prepare examples to share of first communications from other ACLAs to help get new ACLAs started. Before saying goodbye, make a plan to mark a date on the calendar for the next LAD enrichment day!

There may be some more work toward orientations to help ACLAs feel confident about working independently with an Applicant. Taking the time to set aside a LAD orientation day helps to begin and for some may even complete the orientation process, moving your LAD forward.

Jennifer Reid is relatively new to rural living in Southern Ontario on Lake Huron, Canada. She shares her time and home with her husband, Chris, and their three boys, Seamus (born 1999), Liam (2001) and Eoin (2003). She became a Leader in 2001 and has been a LAD representative since 2004. Currently Jennifer is the Coordinator of Leader Accreditation for LLL Canada Central and Southern Ontario.

Editor’s note: Jennifer would be delighted to share sample paragraphs and the agenda that were used for her Area LAD orientation day. You can reach her at: seliei@hotmail.com

Creative LAD Session:
Series Meeting Lookalike
Toshi Jolliffe, Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation, Asia, Africa and the Middle East

Let’s say it is a few days before a conference. Your suitcase is open beside your desk. An urgent message arrives. You have been asked to organise a LAD session for Applicants and mothers interested in leadership. You are not certain how many people will come to your session.

Does this situation sound somewhat familiar? Many of us lead Series Meetings every month. We try to be flexible with meeting topics so that we can meet the need of the participants. Why don’t we use the same idea for LAD sessions? Here are two compact outlines based on the four themes of Series Meetings.
LAD Session

(For Applicants)
Topic 1: Advantages of LLL leadership
Topic 2: “Birth”: Accreditation and the start of leadership
Topic 3: Common concerns and avoiding difficulties during leadership
Topic 4: “Nutritious” resources for Leaders, leadership with confidence and pleasure.

(For Applicants and mothers interested in LLL leadership)
Topic 1: Advantages of the leadership application
Topic 2: “Birth”: The start of the application
Topic 3: Common concerns during the application
Topic 4: “Nutritious” resources for Applicants, making the transition to leadership.

* Special thanks to Marie Beam for the session ideas.

Toshi Jolliffe and her husband, Michael, live in Luxembourg, Europe, with their daughter (Kaori, 18) and son (Seiji, 15). Their older son (Hikaru, 21) is studying in Edinburgh, Scotland. Toshi joined the LAD in 2001 and she is currently on the LAD Council, supporting Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Photo: Leaders’ Day in Hong Kong
30th September 2010

How Would You Respond?

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

The last meeting I had with my Leader, Claire, ended with us both feeling less than harmonious, and her words to me were that I should’ve used an “I” statement in a situation where she felt – to the point of insistance – that I had been too judgemental.

At the LLL meeting last month there was a boy of about four who punched Jamie, Claire’s son, in the face. Her response was to say to Jamie, “Oh, that really hurts.” A little later, this same boy pushed over a baby who was sitting on the floor in front of his mother. She picked up her screaming baby, throwing a less than friendly look at the boy. A little later, the same boy punched a third child, my daughter, Katy, in the face. Holding a screaming Katy, I said to the boy, “That behaviour is unacceptable.” I do not feel an “I” statement would’ve been appropriate, nor do I feel that the statement about the boy’s behaviour was judgemental beyond what was appropriate for that moment. I am not saying “You are an unforgivable brat” – I’m saying, “That behaviour is not acceptable; find another way to deal with your anger and frustration that does not involve harming others.” Neither his mother nor a Leader acted to aver or remedy the situation. I do not believe, however hard we find dealing with the more negative aspects of emotions such as anger, frustration, fear, injustice, that it is to anybody’s advantage to sweep them under the carpet or ignore them – and in this situation, it was not just the boy’s negative emotions, but also those of the children he hit. A true resolution takes into account everybody’s feelings, including the injustice felt by the others and their fear of returning to the play area.
What an awful time you had at your last Series Meeting! I hope Katy wasn’t hurt. In the moment that your own baby was hit, it would have been difficult for you to consider the best way to express your emotions about the situation. There may not have been a best way. You may find that the other attendees did not consider how you communicated your feelings but understood your need to protect your baby. Your experience as a mother at the meeting is different than the role you will play as a Leader of the meeting.

This type of situation is not unusual at Series Meetings because “LLL Meetings may be the only place where a mother with a disruptive toddler feels welcome.” (Leader's Handbook, p. 50). Since you have now experienced first-hand one of the potential problems of including toddlers at our meetings, you will want to be prepared just in case it happens at a meeting that you are leading. Please read “Older Babies At Meetings”, (Leader’s Handbook, pp. 49-52). I think you may find comfort in the number of effective solutions described. When you are leading a meeting and observe a disruptive toddler, or notice that two or three mothers are having a private conversation, or that an attendee recommends a pediatrician, it is good that you have the reliable resource of the Leader’s Handbook to guide you through managing group dynamics.

An enrichment workshop is a fantastic idea! We’ve addressed the difficulty you experienced at Area Conference workshops and at District Workshops in the past; and in case you don’t have the opportunity to suggest it, I’ll put in a request for its inclusion this year. When you receive the Leader Development Seminar registration in the spring, you may find a relevant workshop offered there. A common title for such a workshop would be “Difficult Meeting Situations.”

Carol Delaney, Connecticut, United States

You were attending to the needs of your child and felt that you responded genuinely with an appropriate expression of your feelings to a four-year-old child whose behaviour was aggressive towards other children as well as your daughter. You felt let down by this child’s mother who set no limits nor took responsibility for how her son’s behaviour affected other children and their mothers. To top it off, you felt chastised by your Group Leader who experienced the situation differently and suggested an alternative response. You went away from that exchange feeling that you remained in disagreement with your Leader. Afterwards thinking it through, you are convinced that there must be better ways to handle or even prevent a child’s aggressive behaviour in a group situation. You wonder whether it would be a good idea to suggest an enrichment meeting to discuss some ways to handle these challenging situations.

It might also be important to you to feel heard by your Leader, to clear the air and get your supportive relationship back on track. The following Leaven article (see the link below to LLLI Web pages) may offer some ideas to consider ways that may work for taking your plan forward. If humour is something that works in your relationship with your Leader, you might ask for an opportunity to practice making effective ‘I’ statements because you sure didn’t understand what she meant by that suggestion at the time.

Alternatively, the options included in the following article may help you to determine what you would like to see happen. Please let me know if you would find it helpful to discuss more details of your situation.

http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/LV/LVJunJul04p57.html

“The Benefits of Confrontation”

ACLA from Great Britain

The situation you describe at the last meeting sounds unpleasant for all and I am sorry that it left you feeling distressed. The comfort and safety of all present at meetings is of paramount importance and it is essential for Leaders to talk about this in the introduction to the meeting, especially if it is a large meeting with a number of children of varying ages present. Although there may be a play area designated at the meeting, there will not be a “babysitter” to watch the children and each mother remains responsible for her own child at all times. At the beginning of every meeting I tell mothers that the most important thing they can do at the meeting is to take care of the needs of their children, whether that means nursing, changing, cuddling, playing, or just watching over them to make sure everyone is safe.

During the meeting the Leader has the opportunity to model loving guidance with her own children. “I” statements can be helpful in diffusing unpleasant situations because they don’t accuse or judge. More importantly, vigilance and timely intervention can prevent incidents from occurring in the first place.

My own daughter, now a charming and gentle young woman, went through a phase as a toddler when she
would hit smaller babies on the head. My response to this situation would be not to put her in situations she could not handle. Sometimes she would have a special playdate with a friend instead of coming to a meeting. If she was there, I would always sit on the floor with her, so that I could distract her if necessary to prevent incidents. This was a stressful time and thank goodness I had a co-Leader because sometimes modelling loving guidance would be as much as I could do in a meeting situation; leading the meeting at the same time would be next to impossible. This was one of my biggest challenges as a mother. I felt the judging eyes of others upon me and was frequently aware of their expectations. This is where "I" statements were really useful. It seemed to me as the mother of the "perpetrator" that others expected me to make her apologise, but I didn't want her to say sorry, I wanted her to be sorry. What I could do was to say that I was sorry.

You talked about enrichment workshops. I think that what might be helpful to the Group would be an enrichment meeting on loving guidance for all the mothers, rather than a workshop for Leaders, so that all could share their feelings and talk about techniques that work for them.

Lesley Robinson, Canada

♥New Extract ♥

I have learnt a lot about meeting my baby’s needs at LLL meetings and how important it is to meet them immediately because a need that is met goes away. Most of our Group mothers wear their babies and toddlers in slings. A friend invited me to an Attachment Parenting meeting and I really enjoyed it. I felt that it was such a good fit with what we are doing and learning about in LLL meetings that I wanted to advertise them at the next series meeting. My Leader told me that I can’t do this because it is mixing causes. I don’t understand that because everything that is discussed at Attachment Parenting meetings is in line with LLL philosophy. Surely we can work together.

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

A Taste of LAD International

Each issue of LADders will feature LAD representatives from various geographical parts of LADI, and your contributions will help us all to know one another better! In our third issue we introduce LAD representatives from Texas and Israel. As you can see from our first three issues, these personal introductions also give us an interesting picture of how LAD works in different places around the world. When you write your personal introduction, you may wish to share how LAD work is important to you and the Leaders where you live, how your family supports your LAD and LLL work, and of course a photo of yourself and/or family members. We look forward to hearing from YOU!

Penny Piercy, CLA, Texas

I have been the CLA for LLL of Texas, USA, since September 2008. Texas was previously an Area in the US Western Division, but has recently become an Area Network, composed of five smaller geographical Areas. This transition has been quite the distraction from the usual work of Leader accreditation over the past year, and will continue to involve adjustments into the future. For now we are happy to take things slowly, and our LAD still functions mostly as it did before the change. I am fortunate to work with three very experienced ACLAs, as well as a vibrant Area Network Council Team.

I’ve been an LLL Leader since 1995 and have worked in the Leader Accreditation Department since 1997. I’ve been an ACA and a CLA for LLL of Indiana, a RALA for the USWD, an ACA for Texas, and was even the Contributing Editor for the Preparing for Leadership column in Leaven for a couple of years. You could say that I have a passion for LAD work!

My husband Van and I have four children, Patrick (17), Sarah (13), Eric (10), and Mark (3). We live in a semi-rural area outside of Houston; I co-lead Series Meetings each month with my local LLL Group. I am an adjunct professor of English with a local small college, teaching writing classes. I am lucky to be able to teach largely
online, from home, so I weave that work around my volunteer work with LLL and my church, homeschooling my children, and my hobbies (reading, writing, and wasting time on my computer).

What I love most about LAD work is getting to know all the mothers with whom I am corresponding. I am honored that these mothers share their most personal stories with me and humbled by their dedication to good mothering through breastfeeding. Whenever I feel discouraged, immersing myself in written correspondence with these wonderful, generous women lifts my spirits. I also enjoy getting to know other Leaders and Groups through correspondence, and working with many wonderful LAD representatives near and far. LAD is the heart of LLL, which I suppose is why it is so close to my own heart.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
Haha’anaka Sheh’bih Hanaka
(Giving Through Breastfeeding)
Ilana Sobel, CLA, Israel

Tonight I helped a first-time mother who was experiencing pain while nursing. I gave her affirmation and respect. I also provided information and a few suggestions. When I correspond with Applicants, I also try to give them affirmation and respect, while providing information and suggestions for what to work on. Similarly, when I orient ACLAs they need affirmation, respect, information and suggestions. We all do!

This emphasis on empowering the mother makes La Leche League special. LAD ensures that multiple generations of Leaders put this into practice, and that the Leaders represent and promote the ten Concepts. It is a privilege to be part of this important work.

When I started working with Applicants as a sponsoring Leader, I found the work fun and interesting. I asked my CLA, Hannah Katsman, lots of questions! Hannah patiently discussed them with me and recruited me for LAD about five years ago. I enjoy the challenge of helping Applicants understand what they need to work on, in ways that make them feel motivated and capable rather than criticized. I like helping Applicants to recognize their strengths and how their experience will help them as Leaders.

I grew up in the United States and immigrated to Israel nineteen years ago around the same time as my husband, though we weren’t married yet. I started going to LLL meetings sixteen years ago when my oldest was a baby, and continued attending as she was joined by four younger brothers, ages 8-13. Many different Leaders demonstrated empathy and respect, and I especially appreciated when they would go an extra step to show interest in my life and help me with my problems. Ten years ago I became a Leader. English is my mother tongue, but I speak Hebrew fluently and am working on touch typing in Hebrew as well.

Over half of Israel’s 80 Leaders are native Hebrew speakers. The rest speak English and other languages, plus Hebrew as a second language. Currently, most Applicants prefer to work on their applications in Hebrew. Providing enough resources and application files in Hebrew is crucial – and not always simple.

LLL Israel is both active and intimate. We have excellent Leader retention, and Leaders commonly stay with LLL for ten years and more. Many Leaders staff shifts on our national support phone line or publish their phone numbers on the Area website. We also have an active email group for Leaders. In November 2010 we held our annual conference, which generates revenue for LLL Israel and provides continuing education to nurses, lactation consultants, and Leaders. Most years we also have a two-day Leader retreat which helps strengthen bonds among Leaders and helps us stay up-to-date in our work. Leader events and our email group are conducted in both Hebrew and English, as each Leader prefers.

Many Leaders are also IBCLCs, as the profession is well developed in Israel. We get many inquiries about leadership from mothers in lactation consultancy courses who had not attended LLL meetings when they were nursing their babies. Since we do not see them mothering at Group meetings, we need to take extra care to be sure they meet the pre-requisites and fully support LLL philosophy.

When I was an ACLA, I appreciated the support I got from my CLA. Now that I am CLA for Israel, Toshi Jolliffe, RALA for Africa, Asia and the Middle East, supports me as well. I value the opportunity to consult with and learn from someone with more experience. It helps me do my job more effectively and helps LAD run smoothly.

When I was an ACLA, I appreciated the support I got from my CLA. Now that I am CLA for Israel, Toshi Jolliffe, RALA for Africa, Asia and the Middle East, supports me as well. I value the opportunity to consult with and learn from someone with more experience. It helps me do my job more effectively and helps LAD run smoothly.
LAD Promenade

Congratulations on your appointment!

Sally Allison  Interim CLA for New York-West, USA
Michelle Burgroff  ACLA for Sunshine State, USA
Elizabeth Campion  CLA for Michigan, USA
Cecilia Carregall  ACLA for Argentina
Alejandra Galvan  CLA for Future Areas Sud América
Molly Gustafson  CLA for Colorado/Wyoming, USA
Kimberli Hartwisk  ACLA for California North/Hawaii, USA
Heather Johnson  CLA for Idaho, USA
Toshi Jolliffe  Interim CLA for Future Areas in Asia and the Middle East
Carolyn Keith  ACLA Area 2, New Zealand
Connor Kelly  ACLA Area 3, New Zealand
Jennifer Kelly  LAD Secretary for Michigan, USA
Lana Lonseth  ACLA for Alberta and North West Territories, Canada
Amie Norris  ACLA for California South/Nevada, USA
Darlene Utzinger  CLA for Massachusetts/Rhode Island/Vermont, USA
Tammy Veatch  CLA for Sunshine State, Florida, USA
Nancy Vega  ACLA for Future Areas Sud América

Comments about LADders Issue 2010 No. 2

It’s absolutely beautiful! What a lot of work! You must feel so proud of the layout, the translation, the photos. I love that the “thank you” article is in multiple languages. LADders is a work of art.

Leader, USA

This is a great magazine. I can’t wait to print it out and read more intently from the printed copy. I appreciate all the work that went into it and especially the pages that were translated.

Fran Dereszynski, USA

Thank you to everyone involved in creating the second issue of LADders - what a fantastic read! There is so much to savour and enjoy in this issue. It is truly inspiring to see the international melting-pot of the LAD represented in its many and varied articles. I felt humbled by the work that went into each of the translations. I know how much it takes to create a publication and I am in awe of those who translate for LLL, with their sensitivity to more than one language as well as to the language and tone of LLL. Thank you for giving your time and expertise in order to share the work of the LAD with others around the world. My congratulations to each of you and especially to the editing team for producing such an excellent issue.

Alison Parkes, Great Britain

Everyone who worked on LADders, it looks fabulous! I love the visuals. I love the How Would You Respond articles too. It seems to be very well-rounded and full of info. And I love how many people worked on this issue - looks to be lots of fruitful collaboration. I have only had time to skim it so far but look forward to perusing it more carefully. Please pass my congratulations on to everyone who worked on this issue.

Sue Scott, USA

I appreciate LADders a lot. The LAD Council is sharing such interesting subjects with us.

Rita Schroeder, Luxembourg

LADders is a publication by LAD representatives for LAD representatives, designed to offer LAD representatives a place to share information and experiences. © LAD Council