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

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LAD History

The 2018 LAD Council meeting was held after the European Management Symposium (EMS) in Berlin, Germany, in March. We welcomed Cecily Harkins, LAD contact for the LLLI Board of Directors (Board) and currently Chairman of the Board. Cecily first joined the LAD shortly after she had been accredited in 1966 and she was later appointed Associate LAD Director by a Founder, Mary Ann Cahill. Cecily brought hard copies of various fascinating resources from the old days and explained the LAD history. To emphasize the importance of the LAD, one of LLL’s Founders, Mary Ann Cahill, was made LAD’s first Director.

Cecily left on the first day. On the second day each LAD Council member offered a session. At the end of the third day LLLI helped us organise a conference call with the LAD Council members who were absent and also with Lee Claassen, LLLI Executive Director, who had just come home from the EMS. Cecily also joined us from Belgium. This was part of our bimonthly conference calls which help the LAD and LLLI management to work together.
The Trend of the Ten-Year LADI Statistics

At my session during the LAD Council meeting, I explained the trend of the LAD International (LADI) statistics. The information was compiled from the LAD representatives’ Semi-Annual-Reports (SARs) from 2007 to 2017. *LADders* regularly reports the same information for the previous four reporting periods. I extended the period to ten years and put the information in several graphs so that we could see the current trend.

When we look at the statistics data, it is important to keep in mind that the organisational structure changed around 2010:

The geographically large entity “International Division” split into European Area Network (EAN) and International Area Network (IAN). Shortly after that, LLL Germany and LLL Switzerland changed their status from Affiliate to Area and joined the EAN. This is why there is a sudden change in the statistics information about “Affiliates” and “EAN and IAN” around that time (2010-2011).

The numbers of Leaders are increasing either steadily or rapidly in EAN and IAN. They are stable in Affiliates and decreasing in the USA.
Compared with the Leader numbers, the Group numbers are generally stable.

The numbers of Applicants are increasing rapidly in EAN and IAN; decreasing in the USA and are stable in the recent years in Affiliates.
There has been an increase of new applications in EAN and IAN, especially in three Future Areas: Asia and the Middle East, Europe, Latin America.

This is the only category where it is better if the numbers go down. It is encouraging to see fewer Applicants withdrawing their applications.
In many categories in these slides, the numbers drop around 2010, when there was an organisational structure change.

This is an example showing how the same information can appear differently. Two small charts at the top are narrower (from 2012 to 2017). They show the identical information which is indicated in the red rectangular box. However, the vertical y-axis of the one on the right starts from 5,400 instead of zero. That makes the chart look as
though the organisation is facing a crisis. It is true that the Leader numbers are decreasing, but it may give a different impression if you look at the graph at the top left, where the y-axis starts from zero. It is important to see the whole picture of the statistics.

I owe special thanks to all the LAD representatives for compiling and submitting the SAR every six months. Your reports made it possible to compile these slides. Thank you.

See you in 2020!

LLL Leaders and administrators from the following 38 countries/territories gathered at the 2018 EMS in Berlin. Many participants commented that the EMS was becoming more like an LLLI conference. I hope to see you at the next EMS in 2020!

Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, USA, Zimbabwe.

The 2018 European Management Symposium (EMS) was held in Berlin, Germany in March. The event was an opportunity for LLL administrators from Europe and from farther afield to meet, share and learn together. Participants found the event enjoyable, useful and inspiring.

Delighted to network with old friends, Leaders from around the world also had the opportunity to see new faces and make connections with coLLLeagues they had previously known only by correspondence. Lori Bryan of California, USA, attending the EMS to represent LAD West, was happy to meet Misha Vejvodova from Italy for the first time in person. Lori had accredited Misha in 2015. Karin Ali, ALA for LLL Alliance from Texas, USA was so excited to be able to meet over 30 LAD representatives when she attended the EMS. Karin would otherwise only have the chance to meet just a few at one time. Elena Gvozdeyko, ACLA from Bulgaria, LLLI new Executive Director Lee Claassen for the first time at the EMS and Juliet Matthee, ALA for Africa, Asia and the Middle East, who came all the way from South Africa to attend the EMS, met LLLI Board Chair Cecily Harkins for the first time.
Many aspects of the EMS were enjoyable. Lori noted that “all the LADies who were there!” were her favourite thing about the event. Karin was astounded to realise that around 40 countries were represented at the opening session. The diversity of the participants was also a favourite aspect for Elena. She said that she enjoyed the opportunity to communicate with Leaders from so many countries. It was amazing! For Juliet it was the LAD sessions that were her absolute favourite part of the EMS. She said that it was lovely to connect with other LAD representatives from all over the world. They all had so much to ask each other and to share. She hopes that next time we’ll make even better use of the time available.

The sessions at the EMS were informative and useful for many aspects of LLL work. Lori noted that it was not only the LAD sessions that were helpful. There were also sessions on social media. Lori learnt about “WhatsApp”, an app that many are finding helpful. She was also glad to receive information on the new LLLI website and appreciated how it has been designed to be modern and professional, with diverse messages. Karin loved the LAD sessions, especially the mock meeting. She found it interesting to see what types of things each Leader incorporated into a meeting and also how many similarities there were. Elena found all the LAD sessions useful for her LAD work. She very much liked the session entitled "The Application – how much work does a Leader in your country do with an Applicant? What is required?" She also appreciated the session "Helping Applicants Prepare for Leading LLL Meetings, Even When Isolated" She said that it was so great—useful and funny. Elena also enjoyed the discussion about a Leader reactivating. It was useful and clarified different points about the topic. Juliet found all the sessions informative, but the informal time spent together was even more valuable.

Participants shared new things they had learnt at the EMS. Lori had fun with other LAD representatives at the mock meeting. Sometimes going back to review the basics is very helpful for Leaders. The biggest news that Elena learned was about what's happening with the Breastfeeding Friendly Hospital Initiative and LLLI's involvement in it. Juliet learned that we can all have fun together! She learned how very hard and challenging it is to be an LLLI Board member. She wishes all the best to the Board and wishes them well with all the work they have to cope with.

This was the first time the EMS had been held in Berlin. Juliet found Berlin to be a beautiful city and thought that the hostel was an excellent venue for the EMS. It was easy to find, since the travel information shared beforehand was great. Lori did not stay at the hostel because there weren’t enough rooms. She stayed off site at a nearby hotel with some other LAD Council members. The hotel was great but it was difficult for them to get the total feel for the venue. Karin found the city of Berlin very friendly and the food was delicious. She had a chance to try Vietnamese food, and never thought that she would do that in Germany! Elena noted that there is so much history in Berlin. The monument to the Berlin Wall is a reminder of some of that history. The museums and beautiful architecture deserve to be seen.

All in all, the EMS was an excellent experience for the participants. Karin said that it was wonderful to hear perspectives from around the world. Leaders mentioned things that she had never considered and the experience was very eye-opening. Elena summed it up with a wink, saying that “What happens in Berlin, stays in Berlin”—you should all come and see for yourselves if you have the opportunity! She could only say that there was so much useful information, so many discussions and everyone really enjoyed being together.
Creating a LAD Session
Lesley Robinson, CLA, Ottawa, Canada

Getting started
Our job description as LAD representatives includes attending and representing the LAD at conferences and workshops and presenting sessions on LAD topics. It may seem daunting to find a topic, then to plan and present a session, but remember that the LAD has an extensive support network and many sessions have been created and presented over the years. It is possible that you will find exactly what you need with help from a LAD support person. There may be no need to create material from scratch. Perhaps the same topic or a similar one has been presented by LAD representatives in different locations. Although you may need to adapt or translate material for your audience or to update something that was created in the past, it is well worth looking at what might already be available before beginning.

Choosing a topic
You may be asked to present a particular topic or you may need to suggest a LAD topic that would be of interest. The best source of suggestions is those who will be attending sessions. Many workshops include requests for suggestions for future events on evaluation forms, so the evaluations from previous workshops would be a good place to start in deciding on a subject. If you are asked to present a LAD session at an Area Conference, the audience will be parents who may want to know about what a Leader does, what the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership are and how to go about becoming a Leader. When the session is for Leaders and Leader Applicants the needs of the audience will be different. Leaders need to know how to determine whether someone meets the prerequisites, how to conduct a pre-application dialogue and how to work with Applicants, so sessions on these topics are always useful. If there are Leader Applicants present, you can use the opportunity to accomplish some actual application work. You might cover Checklist topics or sections of the Breastfeeding Resource Guide. Role play of helping and group dynamics situations can be useful and can serve as Preview work if Leaders and Applicants follow up with evaluations. Work on optional LAD exercises such as the bias/acceptance exercise, philosophy or listening exercises can be valuable for Leaders as well as Applicants. LAD representatives’ work with Applicants on the concepts of LLL philosophy gives us insights to share and sessions on philosophy can be among the most uplifting for Leaders and presenters alike. Choose an upbeat title for your session or use a catchy subtitle to spark interest.

Working with a co-presenter
Working with a co-presenter makes life easier. One or the other of you may have presented something similar before, which will give you ideas about what works well. A co-presenter may suggest alternative, refreshing approaches to familiar material. You can share all the tasks of preparing for and presenting the session or you can divide them, so that each of you does what you enjoy and do well.

Planning material to be covered
Use all the resources you have available, first and foremost people resources. If you know someone who has relevant information to share, make contact and ask for input. Your LAD support person can be particularly helpful. Search your own resources and look at the LLLI and your own entity’s websites. You can refer to back issues of LADders and Leader Today. Choose a format for your presentation. Will it be a question and answer session? Will you ask for audience participation? Will you divide into small groups to work on aspects of the material, then come back together to share?

Creating a PowerPoint presentation
A PowerPoint presentation serves as an aid to your session in a number of ways. The slides give the presentation structure, presenting your information in a clear sequence. They serve as a reminder for you of the points you want to make and help keep your session moving along. You know how many slides you have to cover and this can help you to pace the session without overly dwelling on individual points. A PowerPoint presentation provides a visual focus, which is helpful for many in retaining information.
You can begin with a template that is visually pleasing to you. Sharp contrasts between background and text make the slides easy to read.

- Keep your text as minimal as possible. Participants will not be able to read large portions of text and it detracts from visual impact.
- Brief bullet points are an effective way of stating ideas clearly.
- You can begin and/or end with an overview of what you plan to talk about/the points you have made.
- Keep the details in your notes and share them along with the slides.
- Use illustrations and graphs as much as possible. Seek out diverse illustrations that your audience will relate to. Be sure to obtain permission to use photographs and illustrations that are not your own.

Creating a handout

A handout can serve as a reminder of what was covered in the session and as a reference for further information. You may choose to share an overview of your presentation as a review of what was covered. You can share sources, giving links to websites and videos which enhance the information you have shared. Share your contact details so that participants can follow-up with questions they have and can connect with you to request any further resources they may want to check out. Send a copy of your planned handout in advance to the organiser of the event who may print it for you or include it in a package of information for participants.

Sharing with your support person

Please share your plans, outlines and materials with your LAD support person who can make suggestions for improvements to your session. An extra pair of eyes is always useful in creating materials and your support person’s experience will be valuable to you.

Presenting the session

Arrive early for your session so that you can check that all equipment is working and make sure that the arrangement of chairs will work for your presentation. This will help you to start on time which shows respect for your audience and helps to ensure that you’ll get through your material. Introduce yourself and your co-presenter. Giving participants the opportunity to introduce themselves will help you to understand your audience and meet their needs. Your session may be a discussion or you may choose to take questions as they come up. You can set aside time at the end of the session for questions. Be prepared for the session to take on the character of the group of participants, just as a Series Meeting takes on the character of the Group. In the same way as you do at Series Meetings, be flexible and meet the needs of those present.

You are invited to share your LAD session outlines, handouts and PowerPoint presentations for the benefit of your co-LAD representatives. I hope that our bank of LAD sessions will quickly grow. Please visit https://www.dropbox.com/sh/a72eci2y8tqmnhfgj/AADPw-dFJGL7w57m5DYmlo0xWaA?dl=0 to see what is currently available. Please share new contributions with Lesley at mummypiggy@gmail.com. Thank you.
Sessions Presented at the EMS

Helping Applicants Prepare for Leading LLL Meetings, Even When Isolated

This session was presented by Linda Wieser and Laurence Kher Descourtieux. They presented a hugely popular mock meeting at the end of the session. It is available in our bank of sessions at:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/a72eciy8tqmhfg/AADpw-dFJGL7sgM5DYmlo0xWa?dl=0

It’s important for the Leader to set the tone for the meeting. The Leader does this during the introduction and by limiting how much personal experience she shares. The focus of the meeting needs to be on those attending.

What is an LLL Series Meeting?
- informal discussion—not a class
- peer-to-peer support/Leader as facilitator not teacher
- safe, non-judgemental space
- sharing, connecting with others, making friends
- opportunity to observe babies breastfeeding
- participation from attendees
- welcoming to babies and children
- respectful of everyone’s contribution

What are the goals of the meeting?
- answer questions/concerns
- give participants the opportunity to share their experiences
- model LLL philosophy
- empower mothers/parents to advocate for their babies/children

Ways to learn about LLL meetings
- watching the LLHC video “Mothering Through Breastfeeding” on the About page of the LLL Canada website (https://www.llhc.ca/about-la-leche-league-canada)
- regularly participating in Series Meetings
- attending at least one meeting even if it’s too far away to attend regularly
- participating in a meeting via online video—ask permission from those present
- going to another Group’s meeting
- comparing an LLL Series Meeting with something similar in the Applicant’s experience, i.e., sharing information peer to peer; empowering others and their experiences
- explaining the four topics for Series Meetings

Exercises to prepare for leading an LLL Meeting
- write an introduction to the meeting
- decide on four topics for a series of meetings
- prepare questions for each topic
- review a checklist of what’s needed to start a new Group
- do the listening exercise by attending in person, observing via online video or discussing a drawing of a meeting
- do a mock meeting with Leaders and Applicants—in person, using online video or at a workshop

Adults retain
- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see and hear
- 80% of what they say
- 90% of what they say and do

From Leaders’ Handbook, Chapter 2
The Needs of the Baby – what the research shows and how to get this across at Series Meetings

This session was presented by Mary Bird and Juliet Matthee. The topic focused on the latest research showing the importance of mother and baby togetherness. The presenters shared research from Nils Bergman, showing the importance of baby and mother being together for the optimal development of the baby in all aspects. They used a PowerPoint presentation which is available in our bank of Sessions at:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/a72eciy8tqmhfgj/AADpw-dFJGL7sgM5DYmlo0xWa?dl=0

How Would You Respond?

Here is an extract from a Leader Applicant who worries about setting up a Group in an isolated area. There is no single right answer. Sharing possible approaches can help us consider how we might choose to respond.

Dear Anita ACLA,

I am getting close to accreditation and I have been worrying about all the things I’ll have to do to set up LLL in my country. Since there is no other Group in the country where I live, I don’t have anyone to ask and I’m a bit daunted because I know it is very expensive to set up non-profit organizations or even a bank account here. Can you give me some help?

Love from,

Alia Applicant
Dear Alia

I am so excited for you (and for myself and for your country) that you are nearing accreditation!

It certainly is a daunting prospect and not one that I envy you. Nevertheless, LLL has many years of experience supporting Leaders in new-to-LLL countries. If you haven’t already, do contact the Area Coordinator of Leaders (ACL) who will be able to offer support, information and contact with other Leaders who have followed this route before you.

It may not be necessary in the first instance to set up a non-profit association. It depends what the rules are in your country for holding meetings without a legal status. Most countries wait until there is a small group of Leaders before taking this step. In general, we have found it better that all voting members and all organisational officers are Leaders so you would need enough to fill those positions.

It may also not be necessary to open a bank account immediately. The Future Areas Treasurer can often help out with setting aside money from a country so that payments can be made, etc. If you keep careful accounts, you can reclaim any expenses.

Starting discussions now with the ACL will help set your mind at rest about these practical details. Online Leader groups and forums can also be a source of useful ideas and approaches.

How wonderful for the families in your town and in your country to be able to access LLLI information and support, thanks to your presence. I will look forward to seeing LLL grow further there. I wish you much joy in your role as a La Leche League Leader.

LLLove
Anita

Eileen Harrison, France

Dear Alia,

Almost all Leader Applicants are a little bit anxious when reaching the end of their application. When setting up a new Group it can be even more true! Your plans are to start a Group in your country where LLL isn’t present yet, so you will be part of Future Areas. You are a pioneer and others around you are very lucky to have your support.

It’s usually good to have an “unofficial” Group for a while before a Leader—with the help of active mothers in her Group—starts thinking of officially registering LLL as a legal organisation/charity in her country. It helps to have already run meetings and developed an interest in the community. More mothers have attended, some memberships/funds have been collected and the Leader is no longer alone to take this step further. When she is ready, the best person for her to contact is the ACL of her Area and talk about the process. At this point, she might need to write status and bylaws, which must be consistent with LLLI Bylaws and policies. The ACL can help with this.
To start a Group, there is usually no need to go through all this immediately, unless there are specific requirements to do so in your country. As a Leader you will be covered by LLL liability insurance.

Opening a bank account can be very easy or rather daunting depending on local regulations. In some places the organisation must be officially registered first so it may not be a priority.

While you are getting organised it might be sensible to use a “shoe box” to keep cash money and at the same time, to use a notebook, spreadsheet or any system to keep track of the money.

Many Leaders open their new Group in a new place with very few things and almost no money. When they have young children they usually have friends, family members or acquaintances pregnant or with babies.

It’s possible to add a link from the LLLI website to direct them to you (you may need to think of an email for your Group or even a blog or Facebook page) so mothers around you will find and contact you. It’s sometimes a surprise to realise how many mothers are looking for LLL around us!

A good idea is to invite them all to an informal meeting to explain what LLL is about. I call it “Meeting Zero.” It’s between a planning meeting and a Series Meeting. No material is needed to start. Mothers may not know that LLL doesn’t give classes about breastfeeding, but is more focused on mother-to-mother support, so it’s a good idea to let them know. Introducing LLL, giving more information about the kind of support you can provide and what benefits they may get, is already a lot to talk about. It’s good to let mothers talk too, and share their thoughts about breastfeeding. An opening question may be “How do you enjoy breastfeeding?” or “How would you like others to enjoy breastfeeding?” (or a combination of both questions). And later “How do you think a breastfeeding support group would thrive in our community?” or something similar.

As with any new Group, perhaps only a few mothers may attend and the word may spread slowly. Eventually the Group will have more regular members. It is also possible that you might have a very large attendance if parents in your location are desperate to get some breastfeeding information and support. In that case, establishing an active group of mothers and finding funds could be easy.

The library: a large Group Library would be a great service to offer to mothers in your community. However almost all Groups have started with a very basic library of the Leader’s own books, which can be replaced when the Group has enough funds.

You could also announce your new Group in Leader Today or on a Facebook group for Leaders and ask for donations of books if you think they would be useful (depending on language). If a Leader (or a friend or a partner) travels to your country, she/he could bring you some materials either for sale or for your library.

We often say at LLL that we are never alone because our network is so big. However, you may feel alone sometimes, dealing with many aspects of leadership on your own. Feel free to contact your District Coordinator whenever you need to; she will be happy to read how you and your Group are doing. It’s good to remember that there is always a warm person, ready to listen to us. Writing down our ups and downs is a good way to realise how far we have already come.

Warm wishes,
Anita ACLA

Laurence Kher Descourtieux, Great Britain
Dear Caroline CLA,

Thank you so much for the information you sent about the application. I have been working on my personal history, and I am running into some issues. The birth of my baby was very traumatic, and whenever I try to write about it, I get very upset. I’m not sure that I will be able to finish my writing because of this, and don’t know what to do. Does this mean I can’t become a Leader?

Thanks,

Amelia Applicant

How would you respond? Send your ideas for a reply or an extract you would like to share with other LAD representatives to Contributing Editor for this column, Karin Ali, at karinali0407@gmail.com

Laura Brown Laubach
Navarra, Spain

Spanish translation follows

I am an American, but I have been living in Pamplona, Navarra, Spain for more than 30 years. It was here I met my wonderful Basque husband, Ramon, and we raised our family, a daughter and two sons.
When my daughter was born in 1992, way back in the analog days, there was no breastfeeding information or support in my area. By the time my son was born, I had managed to discover an LLL Leader in a city two hours away. That made such difference for breastfeeding both my sons! Eventually, another local mother and I became accredited and started LLL in our province. It’s been wonderful over the years to participate in the growth of LLL in Spain, and I’ve been lucky enough to wear several different hats within LLL administration. I feel that LLL has been a very positive influence in my mothering choices and in my personal growth. I hope I have learned from everyone I’ve met in these years: mothers and babies, of course, but also fathers and other family members, health professionals, members of the media, LLL Leaders and administrators… the list goes on.

I’ve been part of LAD since 2001, and have really appreciated the opportunity to get to know so many women, thanks to the framework for dialogue given by the LLL philosophy. I look forward to continuing to learn, as I work with many dedicated women in this new challenge as ALA. It’s a privilege, and I hope I can contribute my part to help LLLI move forward in the 21st century.

Soy de los estados unidos, pero vivo en Pamplona, Navarra, España desde hace más de 30 años. Fue aquí donde conocí a mi maravilloso esposo vasco, Ramón, y criamos a nuestra familia, una hija y dos hijos.

Cuando mi hija nació en 1992, allí en los años análogos, no había información ni apoyo para amamantar en mi área. Para cuando nació mi hijo, había logrado descubrir una Líder de LLL en una ciudad a dos horas de distancia. ¡Ella marcó una gran diferencia en la lactancia y crianza de mis dos hijos! Eventualmente, otra madre local y yo obtuvimos la acreditación e fundamos LLL en nuestra provincia.

Ha sido maravilloso a lo largo de los años participar en el crecimiento de LLL en España, y he tenido la suerte de llevar varios “sombreros” diferentes dentro de la administración de LLL. Siento que LLL ha sido una influencia muy positiva en mis decisiones de maternidad y en mi crecimiento personal. Espero haber aprendido de todos los que conoci en estos años: madres y bebés, por supuesto, pero también padres y otros miembros de la familia, profesionales sanitarios, miembros de los medios de comunicación, líderes y administradoras de LLL … la lista continúa.

He sido parte de LAD desde 2001, y realmente he apreciado la oportunidad de conocer a tantas mujeres gracias al marco de diálogo que ofrece la filosofía LLL. Espero continuar aprendiendo mientras trabajo con muchas mujeres dedicadas en este nuevo desafío como ALA. Es un privilegio, y espero poder contribuir con mi grano de arena para ayudar a LLLI a avanzar en el siglo XXI.

Kergi Leitgeb
Austria


Vor 16 Jahren wurde ich erstmals Mama, und hatte das Glück, dass bereits meine Schwester, die in Australien lebt, ihre Kinder erfolgreich gestillt hatte und auch meine Mutter mir sehr viel Unterstützung gab und mich beim Stillen bestärkt hat. Von ihr bekam ich auch die Nummer von der La Leche Liga. Damals gab es in meinem Bundesland nur
Teil von LAD zu sein, ist für mich nochmals ein Weitertragen der Werte der LLL und für mich persönlich eine sehr ehrenvolle Aufgabe.

Hi, I’m Kergi from Austria. Actually this is my nickname that was given to me by elder sisters before I was even born. I was born as the third of three girls in 1973 and, as was common in the 1970s, I was not breastfed.

16 years ago I became a mother for the first time and was fortunate enough having my older sister, who lives in Australia, as a role-model. She was successfully breastfeeding both her children. My mother was very supportive as well and discovered that she was a great breastfeeding advocate. She gave me the number of a local La Leche League Leader. Back then there was only one Group in my province so I went there with my six week-old baby to meet other mothers. And I got stuck until today.

I live with my three children, Kaja, Felix and Ina, my husband Klemens and our pets in a red wooden house with a garden. Both my husband and I work as doctors in private general practice. I specialized in breastfeeding medicine and I went for the IBCLC exam six years ago.

My youngest child is 12 years old and this is how long I have been serving as a Leader. I started working as an ACLA five years ago and two years ago I took the position of CLA for Austria. LLL is a very important network for me and a wonderful extended family. In the meantime we have six Groups in my province with 11 Leaders.

Being part of LAD is carrying the values of LLL and passing them on to the next generation of Leaders and it is very honourable work.

Jenny Pérez Genge
Chile

Spanish translation follows

Hola! My name is Jenny Pérez G. I was born and raised in Colombia. I am a psychologist and the mother of two teenaged boys. Sebi is 16 and Nico is 13. I am currently the ACLA for Chile.

It is hard to believe that my breastfeeding boys have become adolescents already. It feels like it was yesterday when I attended my first La Leche League meeting in Amherst, Massachusetts in the United States, while expecting my
first baby. I had finished my master’s degree in adult education and development studies and was getting ready to embark on a journey of parenting through breastfeeding. Such a journey also implied parenting in different countries. After living in the US for six years, we moved to Bolivia where our second boy was born and I became a Leader. I treasure many memories of breastfeeding Nico while hiking and camping in the Bolivian Andes or wearing him with an aguayo* while walking in the steep streets of La Paz. I also remember when my co-Leaders welcomed me to the LLLI family with white candles and poetry.

The journey continued and it was time for us to move again. We lived in Bangkok, Thailand for four years. At that time, I was not breastfeeding anymore and I was the only LLL Leader in the country when I started a Group. Later on, a Leader from the United States moved to a city in the north of the country, and it was just the two of us helping many mothers, both Thai (who spoke English) and expats. Our email boxes were full all the time.

There was a group of pretty active midwives and doulas in Bangkok who invited me to join efforts to raise awareness about breastfeeding among Thai as well as expat mothers. Only about 12% of mothers were exclusively breastfeeding for the first six months, one of the lowest rates in Asia, according to UNICEF Thailand. We created a space called Breastfeeding Cafe where we met with mothers every Tuesday. Little by little, the doulas moved and I continued running the meetings alone until it was time for me to leave as well. I passed it on to another active mother of the group. I learned that the group still continues and a lactation consultant runs it today. Unfortunately, I could not find a local mother to become a Leader, however, I met Toshi Jolliffe who invited me to be an ACLA. Our dear Karin Gausman trained me and I served as an ACLA-at-Large, and supported applications in English and Spanish.

* Aguayo is a rectangular piece of patterned cloth, used in traditional South American communities to carry children. It is also commonly used to carry goods, both in the rural as well as the urban areas.

Nowadays, I continue in my role as an ACLA in Chile where we have lived for the last six years. In mid-March, I was able to attend the EMS in Berlin and had the joy of connecting and reconnecting with many Leaders and administrators from all over the world. I learned about many initiatives taking place, such as the use of social media for enriching the Group meetings and helping more Applicants to become Leaders. It is my hope to continue supporting more mothers who fall in love with LLLI and its vision, wherever I move to.


Es difícil creer que mis hijos que amamantaron un día ya son adolescentes. Parece que fue ayer cuando asistí a mi primera reunión de La Liga de la Leche en Amherst, MA en los Estados Unidos mientras esperaba mi primer bebé. Había terminado la maestría en Educación para Adultos y Estudios de Desarrollo mientras me preparaba para emprender la experiencia más importante de mi vida, la crianza de mis hijos a través de la lactancia. Este viaje de vida también implicó crianza en diferentes países. Después de vivir en los Estados Unidos durante seis años, nos mudamos a Bolivia, donde nació nuestro segundo hijo y me convertí en Líder. Atesoro muchos recuerdos de la lactancia materna de Nico mientras caminaba y acampábamos en los Andes bolivianos o lo llevaba con un aguayo* mientras caminaba por las empinadas calles de La Paz. También recuerdo cuando mis co-líderes me dieron la bienvenida a la familia de LLLI con velas blancas y poesía.

El viaje continuó y era hora de que nos mudáramos de nuevo. Vivimos en Bangkok, Tailandia durante cuatro años. En ese momento, ya no amamantaba y era la única líder de LLL en el país, cuando comenzé un grupo de apoyo. Más
tarde, una líder de los Estados Unidos se mudó a una ciudad en el norte del país, y éramos solo nosotras dos que apoyábamos a muchas mamás tailandesas (que hablaban inglés) y expatriadas. Nuestros buzones de correo electrónico estaban llenos todo el tiempo.

Conoci un grupo de matronas y doulas muy comprometidas con la lactancia en Bangkok quienes me invitaron a unir esfuerzos para charlar sobre la lactancia materna con nuevas madres, ya que solo el 12% de las madres amamantan exclusivamente durante los primeros seis meses, una de las tasas más bajas en Asia, según UNICEF Tailandia. Creamos un espacio llamado Breastfeeding Café donde nos reuníamos con las madres todos los martes. Poco a poco, las doulas se mudaron y quedé encargada de las reuniones hasta que llegó el momento de mi partida. Se Una mamá del grupo con experiencia en lactancia quedó encargada. He sabido que el grupo continúa y hoy en día está en manos de una consultora de lactancia. Desafortunadamente no pude encontrar una madre local para que se volviera Líder, sin embargo, conoci a Toshi Jolliffe quien me invitó a ser ACLA. Nuestra querida Karin Gausman me entrenó y me desempeñé como ACLA-at-Large, y apoyé varias aplicaciones en inglés y español.

Hoy en día, continúo en mi rol de ACLA en Chile, donde hemos vivido los últimos seis años. A mediados de marzo, pude asistir al EMS en Berlín y tuve la alegría de re-conectarme con muchas líderes y administradoras de todo el mundo. Conoci muchas iniciativas que se están dando actualmente, como el uso de las redes sociales para enriquecer las reuniones de grupo y ayudar a más aspirantes a convertirse en líderes. Tengo la esperanza de seguir apoyando a más madres que se enamoran de LLLI y su visión a donde quiera que vaya.

*Aguayo, es una pieza rectangular de tela estampada, utilizada en comunidades tradicionales sudamericanas para cargar a los bebés y niños pequeños. También se usa para transportar.

**Pre-application Dialogue**

When working with a potential Leader Applicant in a community or country that has no LLL presence, you will want to have a thorough pre-application discussion. This may be done by email, phone or online video. After your discussion, it’s important to ask the person to write a personal history. Usually this is done after the application has been initiated. However, with potential isolated Applicants, it’s helpful for them to express their thoughts in writing and for a LAD representative to have the opportunity to dialogue with them. After the pre-application discussion and personal history dialogue, then you and the potential isolated Applicant will decide whether to proceed. If you both agree, you, as the LAD representative, will write the Leader recommendation.
Congratulations on your appointment!

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Meghan Urlacher, CLA, Western Pennsylvania, LLL Alliance, USA
What I Learned at the 2018 EMS in Berlin

Másodszor voltam az EMS-en. Számnőrre fontos, hogy itt valóban érzem az LLL összetartó közösségének erejét, ahol nagyon különböző háttérrel, de egy célért dolgozunk: minél több anya tudja szoptatni örömmel a babáját!

I attended EMS for the second time. To me it is important that here I really feel the converging power of LLL - we have all different backgrounds, but we have one common goal: support mothers so that they can breastfeed their babies with love and pleasure!

Krisztina Wouters, ACLA, Hungary
Aprendí en el EMS que no es relevante de donde vengas, las líderes de LLL somos muy parecidas en todo el mundo. Aprendí que la unión de personas que vienen de todas partes del globo nos inspiran a continuar con nuestro trabajo voluntario para apoyar el amamantamiento. Los tópicos que más disfruté fueron las sesiones del departamento de acreditaciones. En particular aquella sesión en la que se trataron temas sobre cómo dar apoyo tanto a aplicantes como a madres en nuestro papel de líderes, otorgándome una perspectiva universal y herramientas importantes para enseñar y orientar desde el principio, especialmente a candidatas.

I learned at the EMS that it is not significant where you come from. LLL Leaders are the same all over the world. I learned that the union of leaders from every part of the globe inspires us to continue with the voluntary work we do to support breastfeeding. The topics I enjoyed the most were the LAD sessions. The one with the multiple situations in a supporting group and how to manage them as Leaders gave me a universal perspective and also important skills to teach from the beginning, especially with candidates.

Valeria Calderon, ACLA Colombia

At the Resource Fair selling dolls made from recycled fabrics by single women
COSA HO IMPARATO ALL'EMS...

Ho imparato che la mia famiglia è la cosa più importante per me...
Ho imparato che La Leche League ha tanti cuori che le danno vita, energia, calore...
Ho imparato che io sono la goccia indispensabile in questo meraviglioso oceano...
...grazie a tutte!!

I learned that my family is the most important thing to me...
I learned that La Leche League has so many hearts that give it life, energy, warmth...
I learned that I am the essential drop in this wonderful ocean...
... thanks to LLL!!
Michela Brustenga, co-CLA, Italy

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