

## <Optional exercise>

### Listening Exercise

At the Series Meeting, you and your Leader observe. If possible, ask another Leader to be responsible for the meeting. If there is only one Leader in your Group, you could still do the exercise, or the two of you could attend another Group's meeting. You and the Leader meet within a few days for discussion.

Note what the attendees say during the meeting, questions they ask, concerns they express, and/or some reactions to what others say.

Consider:

- What you "heard" and what the Leader "heard"
- What was the mother saying or asking or worried about?

How was the statement or question or concern received by the other people: Leader(s), experienced LLL members, other mothers? How did you react, both inside and verbally?

Consider:

- The different responses of the Leader "group" and the attending "group"
- Why the Leader reacted in a particular manner
- How this tied in with the meeting goals and with La Leche League's philosophy of helping
- The different responsibilities of the Leader, the Group helper, the Leader Applicant, and other participants at a Series Meeting
- If you are concerned about your inner reaction, this might be a good time to look at those feelings; if you can't come to terms with them, you might place yourself in a stressful position as an LLL Leader; or you might find that at the same time as you explore your feelings, you clear away some misunderstandings about La Leche League or the Leader's role.

Discuss:

- How particular responses or reactions may or may not be helpful to a mother or parent and why
- How some statements or reactions can be modified to become more effective.

Include, if relevant, discussion of vocabulary, body language, how Leaders can set the tone of the responses and reactions of a group.

During your discussions, you may find it helpful to refer to the *Leader's Handbook* and to Communication Skills exercises.