

LLL philosophy

Leaders understand that breastfeeding is the normal way to feed a baby, and that, with information, support and encouragement, most mothers are able to breastfeed. Our philosophy is summarized in the following ten concepts and explained in our book, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*.

- Mothering through breastfeeding is the most natural and effective way of understanding and satisfying the needs of the baby.
- Mother and baby need to be together early and often to establish a satisfying relationship and an adequate milk supply.
- In the early years, the baby has an intense need to be with his mother which is as basic as his need for food.
- Breastmilk is the superior infant food.
- For the healthy, full-term baby, breastmilk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth.
- Ideally the breastfeeding relationship will continue until the baby outgrows the need.
- Alert and active participation by the mother in childbirth is a help in getting breastfeeding off to a good start.
- 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.
- Good nutrition means eating a well-balanced and varied diet of foods in as close to their natural state as possible.
- From infancy on, children need loving guidance which reflects acceptance of their capabilities and sensitivity to their feelings.

Further information

Contact an LLL Leader in your area to discuss applying for leadership. If there is no LLL Leader locally then contact the Leader Accreditation Department directly.

Email: LAD@laleche.org.uk
Write to: LLLGB LAD, PO Box 29,
West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NP



We require applicants for LLL leadership to own and be familiar with our key book, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*. Reading it will help you learn more about our organisation, our philosophy and our approach to breastfeeding and mothering. You can order your own copy from your local group or Leader, or from our shop at www.laleche.org.uk

Photographs courtesy of Jonathan Tamnam & Philippa Pearson-Glaze



La Leche League GB

mother-to-mother support for breastfeeding

LLLGB is a voluntary organisation providing breastfeeding information & support.

Breastfeeding help & local groups Helpline 0845 120 2918

Membership & general information

LLLGB, PO Box 29, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NP;
0845 456 1855, (+44 115 981 5108) enquiries@laleche.org.uk

Applying for leadership LLLGB LAD, PO Box 29, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NP;
LAD@laleche.org.uk

Catalogue & orders LLLGB SHOP, PO Box 29, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NP;
0845 456 1866, (+44 115 981 5599) books@laleche.org.uk

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www.laleche.org.uk

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 **La Leche League GB**
Leader Accreditation Department



Thinking about La Leche League leadership?

Could you help mothers breastfeed?

- Have you valued breastfeeding your child?
- Do you have time to volunteer?
- Are you interested in becoming an LLL Leader and helping other breastfeeding mums?

Becoming an LLL Leader can be a fun and satisfying way to help other mothers and babies enjoy the rewards of mothering through breastfeeding.



About La Leche League

LLL provides information and support to mothers who want to breastfeed. LLL breastfeeding counsellors, known as 'Leaders', are experienced breastfeeding mothers who know the value of mother-to-mother support for breastfeeding and mothering. They offer information and support to enable each mother to make the decisions that are best for her own family and situation.

LLLGB is a registered charity, affiliated to La Leche League International (LLLI). We offer breastfeeding help to all mothers, no matter what their personal beliefs, and have a strict policy of not mixing causes.

What does an LLL Leader do?

Most Leaders fulfil the basic responsibilities of leadership:

- Helping mothers one-to-one by telephone, email or in person.
- Planning and leading regular meetings for expectant and breastfeeding mothers.
- Managing an LLL group.
- Keeping up-to-date with breastfeeding information.
- Supporting mothers who are preparing to become LLL Leaders.

Leaders are usually part of a local group. In groups with more than one Leader some responsibilities may be shared. Many Leaders also choose to take on a role in LLLGB beyond their basic responsibilities, such as publications work, Leader training or support, or becoming a trustee. However, to start with Leaders are encouraged to concentrate on just the basic responsibilities.

To become an LLL Leader you need to meet the LLLI Criteria for Leader Accreditation.

Before applying for leadership you need to have

- Breastfed your baby for at least nine months.
- Breastfed until there was a nutritional need for other foods (around six months for a healthy, full term baby).
- Nursed for about a year if your baby is no longer nursing, and weaned gradually, respecting his needs.

Note: Special consideration may be given if your personal breastfeeding experience is different from the normal course of breastfeeding.

Your mothering experience

- You value breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish, nurture and comfort your baby.
- You recognise, understand and respond to your baby's need for your presence as well as for your milk.
- You manage any separation from your baby with sensitivity and respect for his needs.

Organisational experience

- You are a member of LLL.
- You support LLL purpose and philosophy.
- You have attended at least one series of meetings (where available) and have demonstrated a commitment to LLL.
- You own and are familiar with the contents of the most recent edition of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, the primary resource for LLL Leaders.
- You have a recommendation from an LLL Leader.

Personal traits

- You have the language skills needed to complete the application and to fulfil the responsibilities of LLL leadership.
- You have an accepting and respectful attitude toward others.
- You exhibit warmth and empathy towards others.
- You demonstrate, or are willing to develop, effective communication skills.

Not sure you meet the requirements?

You can discuss with your local LLL group Leader how your own experiences and philosophy relate to the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership. She can also answer any questions you have about leadership, explain what work the leadership application involves and share details of current fees. Mothers applying for leadership need a recommendation from an active LLL Leader.

If there is no group in your area, contact the Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) at LAD@laleche.org.uk to be referred to a LAD representative who can help you.

Other ways to help breastfeeding mothers

LLL groups thrive when they have active members as well as Leaders. As a mother you can offer valuable support and encouragement to other mothers in group meetings simply by sharing your own breastfeeding and mothering experiences. You might take on a group responsibility, such as librarian, treasurer, fundraiser or organise refreshments at meetings. The commitment of active members makes a crucial difference to the success of an LLL group.

You may also be interested in the LLLGB Peer Counsellor Programme. Peer Counsellors help other mothers breastfeed but they are not required to have experienced all aspects of LLL philosophy. For more information visit www.laleche.org.uk



During the application

Once an application is accepted, applicants:

- Discuss their personal experience of breastfeeding and mothering and how it relates to LLL philosophy. Applicants dialogue with a LAD representative in writing, by email, or otherwise.
- Learn how to support the normal course of breastfeeding and to help mothers cope with common concerns.
- Learn about relevant resources to support mothers facing specific breastfeeding challenges.
- Complete required reading.
- Acquire leadership skills and attitudes such as active listening and meeting facilitation.
- Learn about LLL as an organisation at local, national and international levels.
- Attend workshops and conferences where available.

How long does it take?

This will depend upon the age of your children and the time you have available to spend on your application. Many applications take between six months and a year to complete, but the time it takes varies for each mother. Each applicant proceeds at the pace that enables her to effectively prepare for leadership.

Balancing responsibilities

As a mother, you have already learned how to juggle the different responsibilities in your life. Leaders put the needs of their families first, while still prioritising LLL work and finding a way to balance all their commitments and responsibilities. The application work relates closely to the time needed to fulfil leadership responsibilities. So, your application can provide real experience in finding ways to weave LLL work into your life. Or, you might decide to apply for leadership in the future, when the timing is better for you. Talking with a Leader can help you decide.