



eConnect

La Leche League US Western Area Network
Forming Connections Leader-to-Leader
<http://www.llluswd.org>

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SAVE THE DATE!
**US Western Council is excited to invite
all Leaders to Face-to-Face Place
October 8-11, 2009 in Kansas City, Missouri**

Working by Consensus by Deirdre Knowles

There is a strong history of consensus work in LLL. Nearly 40 years ago when I was a brand new Leader, I recall an Area Council meeting at which the discussion was that we were “mandated” by LLLI to use consensus in our work together. LLL groups I’ve been involved with have been using it to one degree or other ever since.



represents a minority view, as can happen with a majority-rules situation. Because each party to a decision has the power to influence the creation and adoption of any proposal, regardless of whether she has majority support, diverse and even unpopular views have the potential of being heard and seriously considered. Then rather than staying a “minority” opinion, they become the responsibility of the whole group to solve, not merely the person who raises them.

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How does consensus decision-making fit with the new directions LLL is going? We can look to the PSR: Appendix 3 Purpose and Principles Reference Set <http://www.llli.org/leaderpagesPSRappend3.html> for some insight. Among other things the Principles state we are to:

- ◆ Deliberate and make decisions in ways that reasonably represent those who are both relevant and affected without any one dominating.
- ◆ Entrust only sufficient authority and power as necessary to accomplish common work.
- ◆ Keep or shift power, authority and resources to the smallest or most local part that includes those affected.

Consensus, when done in an organized way, honors those principles and others. Since the use of consensus requires that we listen closely to the concerns of every party to the decision, it makes space for the reasonable representation of all parties. No one is left out because she belongs to or

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LLLI Strategic Plan Is Local

by Jane Tuttle, Lawrence, Kansas



The La Leche League International (LLLI) Strategic Plan matters to Leaders. As awareness of La Leche League increases across the globe and membership in LLLI grows, the LLLI philosophy of mothering through breastfeeding will spread to more

mothers. In turn, Leaders have a direct impact on whether LLLI meets the measurable outcomes of the Strategic Plan. The five strategic objectives approved by the LLLI Board of Directors at its March 2008 meeting set the direction for the organization.

Simply stated, we wish to reach more mothers as a global organization that is the first referral for health care providers and mothers alike when it comes to breastfeeding. As the outcomes are met, new measurable outcomes can be established to help us continue to meet the strategic objectives.

The LLLI Strategic Plan is implemented mainly by Leaders in the field. Some activities may help us reach/fulfill/meet more than one of the objectives. For example, the objectives to reach more mothers and to reach underserved populations can be met if an Area makes a commitment to support a new Group in a neighborhood previously lacking an LLL presence. There may be a Leader or cadre of Leaders who are willing to travel to a nearby town that does not have an LLL Group. Those Leaders are making a commitment to reach more mothers.

There are a variety of ways for a group of Leaders to establish and then nurture a new Group. They might do a trial series to "test the waters" as they get the word out and attract new mothers. This allows them to use the resources of the existing, "sponsoring" Group initially. An Area or Area Network could invest in the new Group by offering funds to help with such

costs as publicity materials, travel expenses, or books for a small lending library. There may be a potential Leader Applicant in the new town. Helping her become an LLL Leader helps achieve one of the measurable benchmarks which ultimately helps meet another objective of the LLLI strategic plan: build the volunteer network. Meeting key performance outcomes puts us in position to meet strategic objectives.

Establishing a new Group can also aid in introducing LLL to the health care providers in that community. Sharing our resources and publications shows the breadth and depth of our materials. Additionally, meeting with the local health care providers is a way to conduct a Community Health Discussion and learn more about the climate for breastfeeding in the community and how LLL might be help with the initiation and/or duration of breastfeeding rates. The simple act of establishing a new LLL Group in a new location contributes to four of the five objectives in the Strategic Plan.

Leaders can assess their own success at meeting the measurable outcomes. Are there more or fewer Leaders in your community? Are you sponsoring and supporting Leader Applicants? How long is it taking the Applicant in the Group to become a Leader? Is there anything that the sponsoring Leaders can do to help shorten the time to leadership while retaining the quality of the experience? When Leader Applicants receive funding assistance along active Leader involvement, the application time takes an average of six months. This may be all the motivation that's needed to convince Leaders that preparation for leadership need not take years.

The Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) has a very useful four-page document about becoming an LLL Leader. Some Groups print out "Thinking About LLL Leadership" at <http://www.llli.org/LAD/TaLLL/basicdocs.html> at Series Meetings or in the Group Library to share with interested mothers. The mothers can use the document to help them determine for themselves whether or not they meet the criteria for leadership and whether they are interested in learning more. A busy Leader may not see the hidden potential in some Group mothers. The mother herself may recognize her potential

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Strategic Plan
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by reading “LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership” at the meeting. This document is available on the LAD link. Some Leaders have worked with the ACLA or CLA to host a Leader Applicant Workshop where seasoned Leaders join with Applicants to work on various parts of the application. The LAD section of the LLLI web page (<http://www.llli.org/LAD/TaLLL/TaLLL.html>) has lots of ideas on how to help women prepare for leadership.

Reaching more mothers is not just about new Leaders. It is also about retaining Leaders that are already accredited and committed to sharing LLL philosophy. Do you know why a co-Leader retired? The definition of an active Leader allows for Leaders to do tasks that support the LLLI mission. Leaders need not to retire because their time or enthusiasm for traditional Leader roles has waned. Find out why Leaders retire and then work to remove those challenges. Making LLLI global involves the local Leader sharing what works well for her and asking others for help in overcoming local challenges. Some of the characteristics of successful global organizations include communication across formal boundaries as well as valuing a good idea no matter where it was generated. With the use of the Community Network for Leaders to share ideas and challenges, LLLI has increased communication between Leaders.



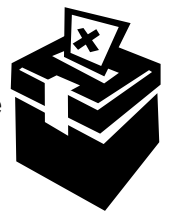
“Think globally and act locally” takes on deeper meaning for Leaders as they use the Measurable Outcomes of the Strategic Plan to assess themselves. The LLLI Strategic Plan is only as useful and helpful as Leaders make it. The LLLI mission is at the heart of all our efforts. The LLLI Strategic Plan provides a guide toward the future.

*Consensus*
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In addition, the PSR, Appendix 6 available at: <http://www.llli.org/leaderpages/PSR.html#ap> gives each Leader and group of Leaders the power to work together as they choose. Leaders need not give up their say in decisions for which they are responsible to work in a group. Working by agreements means that if a particular participant feels excluded from the decision-making process, she is free to remove herself and go elsewhere. That provides added incentive to work together, if we wish to stay together.

Those Principles are best followed using a system that uses consensus at its basis. Consensus is a wonderful tool! It allows everyone to have reasonable representation of their core views, while avoiding dominance of a majority. It avoids “politicking” while encouraging everyone to listen and work together. It allows even those with a minority view to have a voice and participate in the common work and to keep the power to affect decisions that touch them and for which they will be held responsible.

That doesn't mean every decision must be made using a full consensus process! Sometimes it makes sense to vote. But the decision to vote can be made by consensus. For example, a group may have two or three speakers to choose from and need to pick one. After deliberation, it is clear that not everyone prefers the same one, but none of them have any major objections to any of them. (All the speakers are within the budget, approved by LLL and meet any other criteria established by the group.) So the group agrees (consensus) to vote on their preference. Or they might delegate one person to make a particular decision from among a choice of two or three that are acceptable to all. Or they might even flip a coin! Whatever method is chosen to make a particular decision, the choice of that method belongs to each member of the group.



While there is no requirement that all work be done by consensus, its use is clearly in line with LLLI Policy and Principles.

La Leche League Breastfeeding Helpline-US

by Susan Prado, Co-Coordinator

Toll-free and available to mothers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week the LLL Breastfeeding Helpline-US is a wonderful resource for breastfeeding mothers in the United States. Leaders receive calls from pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, fathers and even health care providers on a wide variety of topics.

Have you considered volunteering for the Helpline, perhaps hesitating because you weren't sure if you had the necessary skills or wondering what resources are available to Leaders who volunteer for the Helpline? First and foremost, the best resource is Salesforce, a software call-logging system that provides the Helpline with a wonderful tool that puts all the information a Leader needs right at her fingertips, including links to information on Web sites, the LLLI Web site, as well as a subscription to Dr. Thomas Hale's online lookup for medication questions.

In addition to these wonderful online resources, a variety of human resources are available through the Helpline chat list: LLL Leaders, doctors and lactation consultants. The professionals offer medical information while the experienced Leaders share their personal and helping experiences. If a Leader had a question about something and can't seem to find the information that she needs,



there is also a way to "flag" calls in the Salesforce system. At the click of a button the call information will be whisked away and popped into the email boxes of the Professional Liaison Leaders who assist the Helpline. One of them will contact either the Leader or the mother with additional information. There is quite a lot to learn from each other just by reading the chat!

The Helpline has been approved to do a special project in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) which recognizes the important work of the Helpline. HHS provided "The Business Case for Breastfeeding" toolkit to help employers create a breastfeeding friendly work environment. When employed mothers call the Helpline and receive support, they are then able to explain to their employers why breastfeeding not only benefits babies, but also companies. As a result, breastfeeding duration rates will increase.

Donations to the Helpline are needed on an ongoing basis. Log on to <http://breastfeedinghelpline.com> to donate. If you are interested in volunteering for the Helpline, know any Leaders who can volunteer or have any questions about it, contact: sueprado@gmail.com

Looking for a quick and easy way to keep up with what's happening in the development of LLL USA? Join the LLL USA announce list at:

<http://community.llli.org/group.htm?mode=home&igid=401823>

And be sure to check out the blog at:

<http://community.llli.org/group.htm?mode=gvb&igid=401823> as well!



LLL Alumnae Association

"Dedicated La Leche League Leader" Pins For Years of Service in LLL - Order Form



Number of Pins	Pin Costs	Pin costs	Shipping costs - USA*
1-4 pins	\$5.00 each	\$5-\$19.99	\$3.00
5-10 pins	\$4.00 each	\$20-\$39.99	\$4.50
11-25 pins	\$3.50 each	\$40-\$59.99	\$6.00
26 pins or more	\$3.00 each	\$60-\$79.99	\$7.50
		\$80-\$109.99	\$8.50
		\$110 & up	8%

- ◆ Pin orders can be mixed to save on pin costs. Use this form to order one or more pins.
- ◆ For shipping costs outside USA, contact Karri Rickard.

Please fill in the information below with your order

Pins	Quantity	Print clearly. Ship to:	
5 year		Name:	
10 year		Address:	
15 year		City:	
20 year		State/Country:	Zip/Country Code:
25 year		**Phone:	
30 year		**Email:	
		**In case we need to contact you or have questions about the order	

1. **Send order form** and all checks (US funds) made payable to LLL Alumnae Association to: Susan Geil, Treasurer, 4868 N. Hermitage Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60640 USA.

2. For credit card and payment options, contact Susan Geil at: srgeil@yahoo.com.

When placing an order, please keep a copy for your files.

Introducing United States Western Council's Two Newest Members:



JoLyn Geuy Events

Most importantly, I am mother to Erikka (11); Morgyn (9); Molli (7); and NataleaAnna (4). My wonderfully supportive and loving husband, Nathan and I are legal guardians

to our nephew Channler (7) who has lived with us for 18 months. It is very different raising a boy after having only girls for years! With Molli and Chann being only 3 months apart, I feel like we have twins. Channler also has some developmental delays, so it has been an interesting transition—but we wouldn't have it any other way!

I was accredited in 2003 and was co-Leader of the Hutchinson/Reno County LLL Group for five years. I joined the Kansas Area Council in 2006 and "fell into" Area Coordinator of Events (ACE)/event planning while working as the Area Secretary. The first Kansas LLL Area Conference I planned was in October 2007 when I realized that event planning was something I LOVED!

When I'm not wearing my LLL hat, I could be wearing any number of other hats. I am a certified childbirth educator, birth doula and the coordinator for childbirth educators in the local county. I am the payroll clerk/administrative assistant at my Dad's small family business where I work alongside my father, mother, brother, two uncles, and my husband AND I bring my children to work with me! I've worked as costume mistress for several family theater productions in my hometown. Recently I have enjoyed learning how to knit.

I am so excited to be moving into another realm of LLL work and am especially excited about supporting other event planners. If there is anything I can do for you, please don't hesitate to holler! You can reach me at: doulajo@gmail.com

Nancy March Publications

I love to read...almost as much as I hate to write! And, after I finished my thesis a few years ago, I vowed I wouldn't do any more writing beyond email! That's one reason I volunteered to edit eConnect—I wasn't supposed to have to write! Then, I found out about these introduction articles...

So...I have three wonderful, grown sons, Vince, 34; Eric, 32, married to Amy, and father to my wonderful 4-year-old grandson, Brody, and beautiful 3-month-old granddaughter, Violet; and Doug, who along with his girlfriend, Jolena, is expecting their first baby in November.

Having completed my Leader application just before Eric was born, I usually have very little trouble remembering how long I've been a Leader. During those years I've done a variety of things, including my passion: being a Communications Skills Facilitator.

One thing I did that I really hadn't thought about or planned on doing was to go back to college. However, after I joined the LLL Peer Counselor Program (PCP) in 1991, I realized I didn't even know what I didn't know about the cultures of some of the women I wanted to work with through the PCP, so I signed up for a cultural awareness class. As the saying goes, one thing lead to another, and when I discovered a college that would give me credit for my life experience as a mother and LLL Leader, I felt I just had to go for the degree!

I teach computer applications at a local college and did the newsletter for our professional association for three years, so it seemed like a good fit for me when USW was looking for some assistance in the Publications Department editing eConnect. Working with the ALLEs in USW has been a wonderful bonus!

BTW: I'm always looking for articles for eConnect! Got something you'd like to share? Please send it to me at: nmarch@cox.net

