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# Annual Report

*2021 - 2022*





## Message from the Board

Cecily Heslett, Natalie Gohl, Pamela Mitchel, Jennifer Walker, Brandi Cranston, Claudine Smith

La Leche League Canada Leaders are at the heart of what we do as an organization. It is our devoted volunteers who provide the breastfeeding information and support that parents seek. Hosting in-person, peer-to-peer support meetings has been the primary means of delivering that information and support since La Leche League Canada's inception.

In April of 2020, the Board of Directors made the decision to suspend all in-person meetings, in response to the Covid-19 global pandemic. Since then Leaders have sought new ways to connect with mothers, parents, health professionals and each other. They have taken on the challenge of learning new skills, like how to provide virtual meetings and conduct one-on-one video visits with parents who need support. They have also signed up to teach our virtual LLLC Prenatal Breastfeeding Course.

We have had a significant increase in the number of parents submitting questions to our website and Leaders have generously volunteered many hours answering their questions, providing much needed support.

They have also explored new ways of fundraising in a virtual world. And through it all, they have continued to support Canadian parents who want to breastfeed, chestfeed or otherwise provide human milk for their children. In July 2021, the Board of Directors established the Covid Committee to develop a plan for returning to in-person meetings in 2022.

We are very excited about the future of La Leche League Canada. Our goals for the next fiscal year are to increase Leader engagement, improve communication within the organization, continue to host successful virtual conferences and expand our capacity to provide support to Canadian families.

LLLC will be working on several exciting projects this year. These include updating the breastfeeding resources for parents on our website and translating our core articles into languages other than English, updating our successful LLLC Prenatal Breastfeeding Course, and creating a Canadian Leaders Guidebook.

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# Who We Are



The purpose of La Leche League Canada is to encourage, promote and provide peer-based breastfeeding support and educational opportunities, for pregnant women, new parents and others, as an important contribution to the health of children, families and society. As La Leche League Canada Leaders we have nourished our children from our own bodies and now we volunteer to support others to reach their own feeding goals.

Leaders are accredited by La Leche League International after an extensive mentoring and training program which provides our volunteers with current scientific lactation specific information.

Connection and respect are at the heart of what we do and we strive to ensure that all families are welcomed and reflected in every aspect of La Leche League Canada, including in our volunteer Leaders. We believe that nobody knows your baby or family better than you and that everyone deserves the right circle of support in which to raise their children.

La Leche League Canada is a national registered Canadian charity and part of the global organization, La Leche League International (LLLI).

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## What We Do

La Leche League Leaders live and parent in the communities we serve. We provide evidence-based information and personalized support at organized meetings, usually in-person but also online and at present, exclusively online. We also communicate with families via phone and email, answering questions and offering encouragement.

In addition, La Leche League Canada provides regular educational opportunities for healthcare providers at our annual Healthcare Provider Conference and through our Communication Skills Development course for Healthcare Providers. The intention is to continue to offer these conferences and courses virtually which allows for maximum participation from people across Canada.

In addition to this, the social media team has been busy sharing content on our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages. La Leche League continues to explore new ways of meeting mothers and parents where they are at. By increasing the visibility of LLLC on social media, we increase the number of people who go to our website for breastfeeding and meeting information.





## Where We Come From

Our Leaders are located across Canada from sea to sea to sea, in six large distinct areas. We lead Groups in urban areas, rural areas, alone or with co-Leaders. We lead groups as far north as Iqaluit, as far south as Windsor, as far east as St John's and as far west as Haida Gwaii.



## LLC's Volunteers

Our Leaders are at the heart of what we do and it is vitally important that they feel connected to each other and to our national organization. The Board is always aiming to improve the ways in which it communicates and connects with Leaders and expresses its appreciation of our volunteers.

The five basic responsibilities of a Leader are:

1. Lead series meetings with interested parents,
2. Help others over the phone, in person, or via online platforms,
3. Stay up to date with the latest lactation information,
4. Manage their group activities,
5. Work with Leader Applicants and those considering LLL leadership.



# Statistics



**284 volunteer  
Leaders**



**150 Groups across  
Canada**



**65,00 Average  
Weekly  
Website views**



**781 Questions  
submitted online**



**11,655  
Facebook  
followers**



**3,868 Instagram  
Followers**





## Fundraising

Fundraising at LLLC is an activity shared by all. At the Group and Area level, Leaders historically have come together for spaghetti dinners, garage sales and walk-a-thons to raise money to sustain their Group and Area activities. Leaders work hard to identify and organize events that will be profitable, appealing to young families and feasible to deliver with their volunteer teams.

This year, Groups and Areas have been required to make adjustments in how they fundraise. This has led to some very creative solutions such as Facebook fundraisers and group sales fundraisers with online businesses.

At the national level, our campaigns focus on raising funds to ensure that every Group receives basic funding, regardless of their own fundraising, and to provide shared services and programs that facilitate the work of Leaders across Canada.

Recognizing that in the early years of parenthood it can be challenging to budget for charitable giving, we are grateful for every donation we receive. We also greatly appreciate the ongoing financial support of those who no longer require the services of La Leche League but who value the work our organization does. One-time givers, monthly contributors and committed regular and annual donors are all essential to the work we do and we are very thankful for their financial support.





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## Leader Accreditation Department

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The Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) accredited 15 New Leaders.

The LAD published four issues each of Chrysalis, the LLLC newsletter for Leader Applicants and Butterfly, the LLLC newsletter for the applicants' supporting Leaders.

The LAD is looking forward to increasing accessibility for Applicants with online applications.



# Year in Review

This was a busy year. In April 2021, the Board invited Leaders to join the seven new committees that were created to advise the Board in its decision-making. The Board is very thankful to the Leaders who have provided valuable feedback by participating in these committees.

In May 2021, LLLC hosted a successful virtual Healthcare Provider Conference.

In July 2021, LLLC completely revamped the LLLC website improving the organization, accessibility and function of this vital platform.

From April to August 2021, the By-law Committee worked very hard to update the LLLC By-laws to ensure that they comply fully with the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (CNCA). These completely revised by-laws were passed at the Annual Meeting of Members on September 25, 2021. In addition, the Members voted to update La Leche League Canada's Articles of Continuance with the Government of Canada, including a new definition of a member and allowing for an increase in the number of Directors, when needed.

In October 2021, in honour of Canadian Breastfeeding Week, LLLC hosted another very successful virtual conference for parents.

