



La Leche League Canada



ANNUAL REPORT

2014/15



Our Mission

To encourage, promote and provide mother-to-mother breastfeeding support and educational opportunities as an important contribution to the health of children, families and society.

Our Vision

LLLC is a national charitable organization whose trained volunteer Leaders provide experienced mother-to-mother breastfeeding support through a variety of programs.

An acknowledged expert in breastfeeding, LLLC is a complementary adjunct to the health care system, valued by the health care system and society. The organization is an integral part of Canadian families' health care, connecting with every expectant mother and accessible in every community. LLLC collaborates with communities to provide a variety of services to meet their needs and wants.

It is a financially secure organization supported by a variety of sources including corporate partners, donors, sponsors, users, members, alumni and volunteers.

LLLC is an evolving, dynamic, efficient e-enabled learning organization with a variety of innovative programs and services. It is an organization committed to continuous growth and dynamic change to meet the needs of all constituents. The LLLC Board reflects the variety and interests of all constituents.

Message From the Board of Directors

The fiscal year of 2014 – 2015 saw huge changes at the governance level of La Leche League Canada (LLLLC). This began with the search for an Executive Director (ED), and after months of hiring process involving going through over 135 applications and many interviews, the Board was pleased to hire Suzanne Gorman in August, 2014.

Since last having an ED in 2006, the Board had been working as an administrative management Board running the day-to-day operations in addition to its organizational oversight role. Day to day management consumed the lion's share of the Board's attention, reducing our ability to focus on setting the direction for the future. In 2014 we began the process to change that reality.

In the fall of 2014, we made the decision to move LLLC from an Administrative Board to a Policy Governance Board. We are confident this change will ensure the Board focuses on the long-term health of LLLC; focusing on the broader picture to ensure LLLC continues to provide incredible value to Canadian families and communities. By setting a clear vision for the future, supported by governance policies to guide both the ED and the Board's work, we are confident LLLC will be able to grow and support even more breastfeeding families in the years to come. Our ED, along with an incredible team of volunteer Administrators, staff, contractors and project teams, is now empowered to manage our operations in pursuit of the broader direction we have established.



Under this new Policy Governance structure (<http://www.carvergovernance.com/pg-np.htm>) the Board's role has been clarified. We are now responsible for:

- 1) linking with the moral ownership – make sure that LLLC is accountable to those that we are here to serve
- 2) setting policies – in 4 critical areas to establish direction and ensure organizational protection. The 4 areas are:
 - Ends – vision of what is different as a result of LLLC's existence
 - Executive Limitations – values about practices that govern operations
 - Board Governance – values stating how the Board governs itself
 - Board/Staff Relationship – values about passing of power and assessing its use
- 3) monitoring organizational performance – ensure that there is a fair trade between the efforts and the outcomes.

After our initial development work, we prepared an orientation session to ensure all new Board members would be comfortable in this exciting, effective model. We are confident that this model will serve LLLC well and increase our ability to better serve Canadians. Other national charities such as the Canadian Red Cross Society and the United Way are among many who have been successful in applying this structure. Since finalizing the transition, the Board has been having quarterly meetings and working on a plan to gather more ownership input.

There are many people to thank for their tremendous support to our organization. First we would

like to thank our donors, supporters, and especially volunteer Leaders, without whom there would be no LLLC. Numerous Leaders volunteer for LLLC in addition to their basic responsibilities – although there are too many of you to list please know that your time and efforts are appreciated by many, including the Board. Below are some of these Leaders who are volunteering at the national level:

Leader Department: Michelle Sanche
Leader Accreditation: Linda Wieser
Professional Liaison: Nicola Aquino
Webmaster: Joan Little

We would also like to thank our staff and contractors:

Executive Director: Suzanne Gorman
Administrations and Donations Coordinator: Sheila Munro
Bookkeeper: Samantha Gove
Web Developer: Karin Gerritsen

We also extend a thank you to our LLLC Advisory Council Members for their expertise and assistance: Michel F. Audy, Keith A. Sinclair, Alora Sinclair, Krista McKenzie-Cox, John Dipple, Dr. Janette A. Hurley, and Leslie Ayre-Jaschke.

Thank you! Please know that each one of you, in supporting our organization, helped us to be there for families when they reached out to LLLC for breastfeeding information and support.

LLLC Board of Directors

Miyoko Rasmussen - Chairperson
Linda Mellway McIntyre – Vice Chairperson
Paige Mortensen – Treasurer
Cherie Nicholas – Secretary
Patricia Vanier - Director

*“For helping when everyone else dismissed the pain I was experiencing.
The knowledge and experience LLLC provides is invaluable to all mothers and their babies.”
Thank You! Justyna*



[LLLC Annual Stats at a Glance](#)

LLLC is actively supported at the community level thanks to our 413 internationally accredited, volunteer Leaders who contributed their time to lead in-person meetings in almost 150 Groups across Canada. More than 12,700 women attended meetings from April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015 with almost 4,000 attending for the first time. LLLC Leaders spent one-on-one time by phone or in-person supporting over 18,000 mothers in the past year. Our Leaders also provided direct and indirect outreach and support to 2,200 health professionals and connected with 5,000 Canadians at community events, seminars and fundraisers.

“Couldn't have done it without LLLC Leader Karen. So happy there are resources like LLLC for women where we are not judged and not treated like a nuisance. The nurses and lactation consultants at the hospital encouraged me to keep going. But no one answered the question "how". That's when LLLC came in. These women who volunteer at LLLC are heroes in the true sense.” Loulwa Elali

[Education and Outreach](#)

From coast to coast LLLC has been actively working to increase the variety and availability of the evidence based breastfeeding education and support for which we are known.

Atlantic Canada received two unique Nova Scotia Department of Health & Wellness THRIVE! grants, to support special initiatives and increase LLLC reach. The LLLC Windsor Group partnered with the Nova Scotia Provincial Library, purchasing 264 books, ebooks, dvds on breastfeeding. The resources were provided to libraries around the province.

The second THRIVE! Grant was given to the Atlantic Canada Area to support the establishment of 4 new LLLC Groups – Berwick, Sydney, Digby and Wolfville. The funding was also used to support a pilot project dedicated to removing transportation barriers for mothers wishing to attend meetings, delivery of two Communication Skills Development workshops and attendance of Leader Applicants at the Area professional development workshop.

Our Alberta/NWT Area hosted a very successful Family Conference with over 100 parents receiving valuable tips and tools from parenting expert Dr. Laura Markham and author Teresa Pitman. Participant feedback included statements such as: *“Amazing info! So right on for every family in every stage”* and *“Really rang true with my current parenting style, yet I am able to take new info home to put into practice.”*

With funding support from Ontario Best Start, the LLLC Central & Southern Ontario Area hosted a one day workshop in the Toronto area. The workshop focused on how to engage more mothers in peer breastfeeding support as a key element of the Baby Friendly Initiatives' critical 10th Step. The event had 76 participants in total, including 23 community health professionals. Thanks to the additional funding support, two new Groups were established, pre-natal LLLC Best for Babies sessions were offered and we were able produce a number of new resources for use in Ontario and across Canada. In just 10 short months the new Groups, focused on supporting new Canadians and young mothers, provided assistance to over 250 participants.

LLLC also hosted its well respected Health Professional Seminars from May to June 2014. Diana West, co-author of the 8th edition of the Womanly Art of Breastfeeding and many other valuable resources, was our 2014 featured presenter. Diana shared her expertise in Moncton, St. Catharines, Calgary, Saskatoon, Brandon, Halifax and Kingston. The overall seminars provided valuable education to just shy of 400 health professionals, including doctors, registered and public health nurses, doulas, midwives, lactation consultants, registered dieticians and LLLC Leaders.

In addition to the Health Professional Seminars, LLLC Leaders connected with over 8,000 Health Professionals through direct interactions, educational talks and collaboration on Baby-Friendly Initiative working groups and other local breastfeeding committees.

“La Leche League has been a great support to me through the meetings I have attended with my first son. I am now expecting a second child in July. I am positive that I will continue to benefit from La Leche League support! Thanks!” from Emilee Boisvert

[Special Projects and Highlights](#)

[Information Sheets and Health Professional Resources](#)

The Ontario Best Start funding supported the development of new resources to help both breastfeeding families and health professionals. Not only was an entirely new Information Sheet - *Why Does My Baby Cry* – developed, with 9,000 printed copies - 4,000 distributed via Ontario

LLLC Leaders for immediate use with mother to mother groups; we were also able to translate this new resource to better support new Canadians in their breastfeeding efforts. *Why Does My Baby Cry* is available for download from our national website by Leaders, health professionals or families in English, Chinese, Spanish and Arabic. To profile this new resource and to provide free access to professional development videos, a new Toolkit page was established.

宝宝出生的头两个月:
许多宝宝在生长过程中会出现“生长痛”或“胸部胀痛”，一般是因出生后的肿胀和酸痛。你会注意到平时能承受的宝宝突然啼哭增多，希望喂奶的次数也更多了——有时甚至整天都停不下来！这是正常现象。

通常在两三天后，宝宝便会恢复以前的哺乳规律，并且看起来更满足了。几天的高强度哺乳，增加了你的母乳分泌，从而满足了宝宝的需求。

啼哭是宝宝与他人沟通的一种最明确的方式。宝宝并不想让你抓狂，也不想因此来责备你。他只是让你知道“有什么地方不对劲！”

你怎么才能知道问题出在哪里？有些时候，宝宝啼哭是因为他想靠近你，听听你的声音，感受你身上的温暖——就像他出生前那样。随着时间的推移，你会慢慢了解宝宝，并且理解他独特的哭声，以及他发出的特殊信号。

援助之手
有些时候，当宝宝啼哭时，你唯一能做的就是陪在他身边，即使宝宝继续哭闹，你的触摸和靠近也都会使他感到安心。

如果宝宝经常啼哭，你也因此生气，请寻求他人的帮助。也许你的伴侣、朋友或家人可以在你休息的时候帮你看孩子。

还有哪些可能会发生的情况?
大多数时候，宝宝的哭喊与哺乳并无关联。

每个宝宝都是不同的。有些宝宝更敏感，情绪也更紧张，比如在有预兆时，一个宝宝也许压根不会醒过来，而另一个宝宝则会前仰后翻并且哭个不停。



In addition, work was also completed on the development of another Information Sheet – *Amazing Milk*. This new resource was also translated and has been made available for download in English and Chinese.

“Thank you for reaching out to the medical profession. We certainly need your help and experience.” Dr. Mireille St-Jean

Unique Promotion Opportunity

In the fall, LLLC participated in a special ONtheGO Magazine promotion. An editorial article with artwork was prepared for inclusion in a special November issue. The magazine produces 80,000 copies each month and is read by 216,000 individuals each month.

In addition we also created short LLLC promotion video clips that ran on PATH Network and elevator display screens in downtown Toronto. The videos on the PATH Network were estimated to have 2,700,000 views while the elevator locations provided an additional 1,400,000 views.



Communications

Good communication is a cornerstone for every successful organization. As a national charity with a limited operating budget, LLLC uses its various online services and communication systems to make the most of its reach.

Our website, www.LLLC.ca, is the anchor to our information system, providing resources and access to local support for parents as well as a virtual home where all our Leaders can remain connected and engaged. We are proud to have a dynamic website that provides parents and health professionals with free access to the breastfeeding information they need.

From April 2014 – March 2015, our website had over **135,000** users, an increase of **16%** from the previous year, and **62%** of those visiting were coming to the site for the first time. We are also pleased that our site continues to be a strong international resource with visitors from countries such as Australia, India, France and Germany to name just a few. Our website helps us keep administrative costs lower by providing an on-line access point for transactions such as: donations, seminar registrations and Leader renewals. In addition, individuals can use the website to update their personal information in our database, sign up for regular LLLC News and view a wide variety of information geared to their needs whether as a parent or a health professional.

In addition to our website, LLLC continues to grow its use of social media including: Facebook - www.facebook.com/LaLecheLeagueCanada; Twitter - @LaLecheLeagueCanada and with our Blogs: **LLLCBlog** found on our website with great Thursday Tips - and **Supporting Breastfeeding** located at supportingbreastfeeding.wordpress.com. LLLC has 2,337 followers on Twitter and had 2,487 Facebook likes in the past year, an increase of 86% over last year. In fact, with visitors from 125 countries, our Supporting Breastfeeding Blog alone has had 230,375 views. The top post was *Breastfeeding and Dirt* with 48,200 views!

Our Leaders continue to provide incredible one-to-one support in addition to Group meetings. Leaders respond to requests from breastfeeding families and health professionals for help and information. These requests come by telephone and e-mail, at community outreach events and when participating in community health related meetings. In fact, our Leaders provided health professional and outreach support to over **18,300** individuals and our National Breastfeeding Helpline 1-800-665-4324 received **2,884** calls this year alone.

La Leche League Canada also reaches the public through national press releases in response to articles in the print, web-based, radio and television news and by responding to requests for media interviews. Our media team is responsive and provides fact based information about breastfeeding and La Leche League Canada to media outlets as well as supporting Leaders in their interactions with local media outlets. Thank you to our incredible media team volunteers: Anne Kirkham, Teresa Pitman and Fiona Audy for ensuring LLLC has a positive, professional media presence. Over the past year, in addition to countless interviews given by our Leaders in their local communities, the LLLC media team was contacted by the CBC, Toronto Star, CTV, Today's Parent Magazine and ParentsCanada. Our messages reached over **6 million** Canadians thanks to our media engagement.

Leaders – The Foundation of our Success

Our programs and services are provided solely by highly-committed internationally accredited volunteers. La Leche League Canada volunteers contribute over **35,000** volunteer hours each year in direct service to breastfeeding families and support to over **100,000** pregnant women and new mothers each year. This peer support system is an incredible value to families, estimated to



be worth approximately **\$875,000** to the Canadian economy as it moves the support of normal breastfeeding out of the medical system and into the community.

Maintaining this incredible volunteer Leader support system requires dedication, commitment, ongoing recruitment and regular professional development opportunities. In addition to our *Collage* newsletter for Leaders, our Leader Applicants and their supporting

Leaders began receiving *Butterfly* and *Chrysalis* support publications this year. Also in 2014, LLLC launched Leader Support Teams as an additional level of assistance for our Leaders. To complement this support, our Areas hosted Leader Days, bringing Leaders and Leader Applicants together for information updates, networking and general encouragement.

Leader Statistics	2015	2014	% Change
Total # of Leaders	413	400	3.25%
New Leader Accreditations	42	60	-30%
New Leader Applicants	87	64	35%
Total # of Leader Applicants	115	103	12%

Our dedicated Leaders support almost 150 Groups across Canada. They are the foundation of LLLC and we thank them for their ongoing support of breastfeeding families!

“I found La Leche League very helpful. The ladies answered all my questions and helped me and my daughter make it through our breastfeeding challenges. I would recommend La Leche League to any mother facing a breast feeding challenge.” Ruth Linley

Donor Contributions & Support

La Leche League Canada places a high value on our relationship with our donors. Without their support, we would not be able to achieve our mission, provide information and support to breastfeeding mothers, their babies and their families. We believe that transparency and accountability are essential to our success. We comply with accepted practices of ethical fundraising and managing donor contributions. All of our donors are entitled to our pledge that their investment will have the greatest impact possible in support of breastfeeding families.

LLLC raises its annual budget of approximately \$200,000 largely through individual donations, memberships and events. In 2014, due to new federal government regulations regarding non-profits, LLLC restructured its membership system. As a result, membership revenue has significantly decreased, placing even greater importance on individual donor contributions.

We are registered with several on-line cause-marketing programs through which participating corporations donate a percentage of our supporters’ purchases back to LLLC: Chapters.Indigo.ca, Login Canada, Green Vehicle and iGive.com. We also appreciate the companies and individuals donate goods which are used as prizes for our Breastfeeding Benefits national fundraiser.

In 2014-15 we were incredibly grateful for the additional funding support provided by the Province of Nova Scotia's THRIVE! Grant and the Ontario Government's funding via Ontario Best Start. Without the additional support many of our special successes would simply not have been possible.

best start
meilleur départ

by/par health **nexus** santé



“The work of LLLC builds a better society for all. How lucky we are to have such dedicated volunteers. Continue this amazing work.” Pauline Mesher



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