



*La Leche League Canada*



*ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016*

### **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 2015-2016 was full of many accomplishments for La Leche League Canada (LLLC), as we worked hard in our mission to support current and future breastfeeding families, health professionals, and breastfeeding supporters. Our Policy Governance Board structure enabled us to focus on the long-term health of LLLC and on the broader picture to ensure LLLC continues to provide incredible value to Canadian families and communities. This model will serve LLLC well and increase our ability to better serve Canadian families in the years to come.

We worked to connect with other organizations in the breastfeeding field and rekindled our relationship with the La Leche League International (LLLI) Board of Directors, representatives from various LLLI Area Networks and other LLLI Affiliates, especially our sisters in French Canada, Ligue La Leche.

Our Annual General Meeting took place in Regina, SK on October 24th, 2015 and was attended by a lively group of Leaders, Leader Applicants, and the public. During the in-person Board meetings that were held on that weekend, we had decided to let go of making fear based decisions, and to embrace changes that are needed to bring this organization forward.

LLLC secured the services of a professional auditor to conduct our 2015 – 2016 financial audit which included, for the very first time, financial information from all levels of LLLC, from the Group, Chapter, Area, to the National level. This was a monumental task and we thank all Leaders for their cooperation in providing the financial documentation, and especially to our key volunteers and staff for supporting the Leaders to enable them to do this.

There are many people we'd like to thank for their tremendous support to our organization. First we would like to thank our donors, supporters, and especially our volunteer Leaders, without whom there would be no LLLC. Numerous Leaders volunteer for LLLC, in the Leader Department, Leader Applicant Department, and Professional Liaison Department, 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 volunteer at the national level:

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

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  
Special Event Coordinator - Shannon Spink

We also extend a thank you to our LLLC Advisory Council Members for their expertise and for their willingness to assist us as needed: John Dipple, Keith A. Sinclair, Alora Sinclair, Krista McKenzie-Cox, Michel F. Audy, 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



### [LLLC Annual Stats at a Glance](#)

LLLC is actively supported at the community level thanks to our 440 internationally accredited, volunteer Leaders who contributed their time to lead in-person meetings in 160 Groups across Canada. More than 13,000 people attended meetings from April 1, 2015—March 31, 2016 with about 3000 attending for the first time. LLLC Leaders spent one-one one time by phone or in-person supporting over 20,000 mothers in the past year. Our Leaders also provided direct and indirect outreach and support to 3,200 health professionals and connected with 10,000 Canadians at community events, seminars and fundraisers.

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

## Education and Outreach

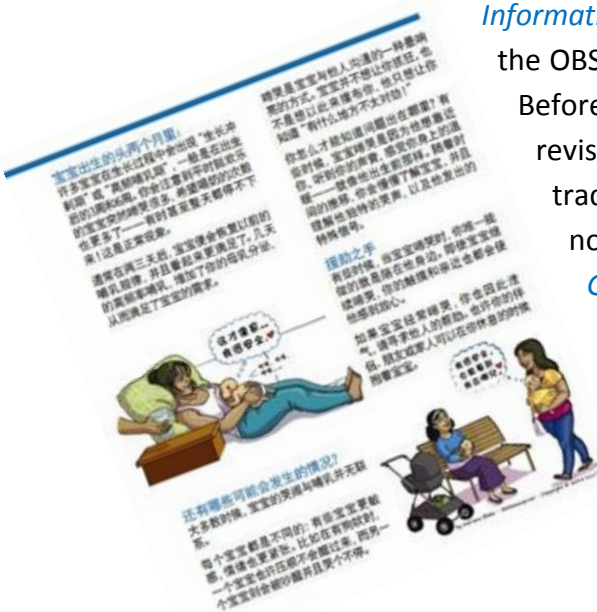
From coast to coast LLLC has been actively working to increase the variety and availability of the evidence-based breastfeeding education and support for which we are known. The second round of the Ontario Best Start (OBS) Grant surpassed the targets they set for new groups starting and information sheets revised. Four new Groups were established in Curve Lake, Stouffville, Keswick and at Georgina Island (First Nation Reserve). Eight Best for Babies sessions were presented in 5 different locations in four languages. 100 percent of participants stated that they felt more confident about breastfeeding after attending and 47% said they hoped to Breastfeed longer than originally planned as a result of what they had learned.

**Health Professional Seminars.** LLLC also hosted its well respected Health Professional Seminars with funding support from the OBS Grant. Seminars were held in Toronto, Ottawa and Halifax with presenter, Cynthia Good Mojab delivering sessions on: *Ethics, Culture & Breastfeeding, Depression during Pregnancy & after Birth, Context of Infant Feeding Issues* and *Sunlight Deficiency & Vitamin D*. Over 80% of the participants rated all of the sessions to be of Very Good or Excellent value to their profession—even more on the *Depression* topic. The Seminar was also video-taped and made available online where an additional 32 health professionals subscribed to the entire series.

LLLCC Leaders participated in all kinds of events at the community, regional and provincial level, making connections with families and their communities. The Ontario Baby Time Event and the BFI Symposium in Edmonton were two of these functions.

## Special Projects

**Information Sheets.** A special project, which continued this year under the OBS Grant, was the revision and translation of Information Sheets. Before the Sheets can be translated they must be reviewed and revised. *Breastfeeding Tips* was revised and translated into traditional and simple Chinese as well as Arabic. *Amazing Milk* has now been translated into Pashto. *How to Know your Baby is Getting Enough Milk* and *Twins* were both fully updated and available in English, Chinese and Arabic. Where in the past, Sheets were translated in response to Leaders needing specific information translated, we now have a language/translation priority system in place to guide future work and ensure consistency. Recently Arabic has



been highlighted to help Syrian refugees. One bonus from this amazing work is that Leaders from other areas in the world have been sharing the newly translated Information Sheets as well.

*Communication Skills for Breastfeeding Support.* LLLC's *Communication Skills for Breastfeeding Support* is a one-day workshop to assist health professionals and community workers to develop a set of communication skills which will be relevant and effective in their work with breastfeeding families. The program, produced under the OBS Grant, was tested at a Train the Trainer and pilot workshop in Toronto attended by eight health professionals and eight Leaders. The designed approach is interactive and experiential, is based on principles of adult education and has demonstrated measurable knowledge transfer for participants. A Participant Handbook and Facilitator resources have been produced, making it available for use by Leaders across Canada.



## 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.

*Leader News E-Blasts.* During this year we launched the brand new Leaders news system. *Leader News* is sent out in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> week of each month and is distributed to all Leaders and Leader applicants, reaching 535 recipients each issue. Similarly, with our new *HP Bulletins* we have re-vamped how we communicate with 2000 health professional contacts. The shorter, once per month format allows for LLLC to regularly communicate key information and resources which has resulted in greater uptake among health care workers. Most clicked on article: FAQ re: Zika Virus.

*“Congratulations on the new newsletter. Lovely! Much more suited to today’s fast paced news world”*

*“I absolutely LOVE these new leader newsletters! On point, engaging..keep up the good work”*

Our website, [www.LLCC.ca](http://www.LLCC.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. Work is ongoing to improve our website to provide the public, including parents and health care providers with free access to the breastfeeding information they need. Our website continues to attract visitors from outside of Canada as well.

From April 2015-March 2016, our website registered just short of 170,000 users, an increase of 24% from the previous year. LLLC has 2,677 followers on Twitter and 2,487 Facebook likes in the past year. Our Supporting Breastfeeding Blog reached 107,321 readers this year alone. Our National Breastfeeding Helpline received 2,256 Calls.

LLLC 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 LLLC 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 interviews given by our Leaders in their local communities, the LLLC media team was contacted by the CBC, Toronto Star, Global TV, Today's Parent Magazine, Yahoo Canada, and 1130 Radio/Rogers Media out of Vancouver reaching a possible three million Canadians.

### [Leaders—the Foundation of our Success](#)

Our programs and services are provided solely by highly-committed, internationally accredited volunteers. These volunteer Leaders hosted over 13,000 women at LLLC meetings and responded one-on-one by phone, email or in-person to over 20,000 mothers. They provided 3,200 Health professionals with support and information and connected with 10,000 Canadians at community events. All of these numbers are up over the previous years. Maintaining this incredible volunteer Leader support system requires dedication, commitment, ongoing recruitment and regular professional development by Leaders, themselves and the Leader Department that supports them. Leader and Leader Applicant Days were held in all Areas.

*“Thank-you so much for helping me as a new mom in need. I am eternally grateful”*

*“Excellent organization: I feel it is doing an excellent job in preparing me for breastfeeding”*



*Leader Applicant Developments.* Leader Applicant numbers grew in 2015/16: there were 111 applications made and 60 new Leaders were accredited. Issues of *Butterfly* and *Chrysalis* were sent to supporting Leaders and LA's during the year. LAD Administrator, Linda Weiser, attended LAD Council meetings and the EMS in Frankfurt, Germany. Two new LAD resources were created this year. *LLC Leadership and You* is for use with isolated persons interested in LLC Leadership. *Thoughts on Becoming a LLL Leader & IBCLC* was also produced and shared with the LAD Council, where it was well-received.

*"Very useful document, Linda" (Associate ALA, Asia, Africa & Middle East"*

*"I could just hug you for coming up with this..." (Co-Associate ALA, Europe)*

### *Donor Contributions and 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 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.



In this fiscal period our fundraising targets were challenged. Joining “LLLC Friends” makes it easy for those who are helped by our Leaders to support LLLC by donating financially or simply subscribing to keep in touch and up-to-date. LLLC needs donations to help us support breastfeeding families in Canada. Everyone we are in touch with receives two emails a year asking to support our Spring or Fall appeal. Some Leaders hold a local, annual fundraiser called Breastfeeding Benefits. The hard work of our Leaders and the generosity of our donors does not guarantee us a consistent income stream because we are at the mercy of many things that effect our donors: the economy or the occurrence of disasters.



LLLC issues tax receipts for donations over \$10.00 and we are grateful for the financial support from individuals who are helped by LLLC and want to show their appreciation by giving back with a one-time donation or becoming a monthly donor. Of course, our breastfeeding support and information is free but we would love it if anyone able to donate would support LLLC to enable more groups to form in underserved areas of Canada.

LLLC participates in several Shopping Rewards Programs including “Pay the Gift Card Way” through Community Charity Services, Air Miles, Chapters-Indigo, Login Canada, iGive and Green Vehicle Disposal. We also appreciate the companies and individuals who donate goods which are used as prizes for our Breastfeeding Benefits national fundraiser.