

USWD Agreements for Implementing LLLI Policies

Leaders Providing Mother-to-Mother Support

All Leaders in the USWD are expected to:

- a. Sign a LLLI Statement of Commitment annually, agreeing to abide by LLLI policies for its Leader volunteers or resign from that role.*
 - * We'd like to develop an interactive online SOC that USWD Leaders will agree to annually as a way for each of us as Leaders to be mindful of our responsibilities and accountability to each other and LLLI.
- b. Maintain good standing as a member of at least one Area recognized by the USWD.
- c. Communicate with the other Leaders directly impacted by her work, coordinating when necessary, irrespective of the Area, Division or Affiliate to which she or the other Leaders belong.
- d. Stay current on breastfeeding information relevant to their work as LLLI volunteers.
- e. Work to ensure that the mothers with whom they work make their own decisions concerning their children and their lives. Provide breastfeeding information and options, not specific advice.
- f. Take care not to use one's trusted position with mothers to promote their personal viewpoints (breastfeeding or otherwise), gain financially, create a prejudicial or judgmental environment, or allow anyone else to do so.
- g. Ensure that their activities as LLLI volunteers are consistent with the LLLI Philosophy.
- h. Keep confidential the personal and medical information of the mothers and children with whom they work, unless otherwise required by law.
- i. Help maintain the perception among mothers and the public that:
 - o LLLI focuses on matters relating to breastfeeding, as defined by its Philosophy, and does not endorse other causes.
 - o the primary role of an LLLI Leader is to provide mothers information and options on matters relating to breastfeeding, as defined by LLLI Philosophy, and that working in cooperation with any other organization does not imply LLLI or the Leader's endorsement of the viewpoints of that organization.

All Leaders conforming to the above guidelines and procedures may:

- a. Form and lead LLLI mother-to-mother support groups.
- b. Work with mothers in cooperation with any organization that does not directly contradict LLLI philosophy.
- c. Protect and use the LLLI logo and name in accordance with LLLI policies for accredited Leaders and Areas.
- d. Speak for LLLI only on matters on which international consensus has been reached.
- e. Choose the Area through which to demonstrate their accountability to LLLI policies, or organize a new area with a group of Leaders and seek USWD recognition as such.

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Areas

To be recognized as a USWD area, a group of Leaders must have

- a. The participation of at least 20 LLLI Leaders.
- b. A decision-making body (or method) to establish and refine agreements among those Leaders.
- c. An explicit system of mutual accountability among those Leaders to LLLI policies and other agreements made by those Leaders.
- d. An adequate system for handling and reporting monetary transactions.
- e. A means for Leaders and Leader Applicants to connect to the LLLI accreditation processes.
- f. A means to provide its Leaders access to the technical breastfeeding knowledge present within the PL support network.
- g. A means for admitting and removing Leaders from the area.

Once recognized, a USWD area must:

- a. Recognize LLLI as the sole source for accreditation of LLLI Leaders, and that such accreditation is valid worldwide.
- b. Ensure the transparency of and access to its financial records by LLLI and its Leaders.
- c. Ensure the transparency of and access to its programmatic reporting by LLLI, other areas in the Division, and its Leaders.
- d. Regularly provide an outline of its system of accountability and other Leader agreements for review by the Executive Director, and the USWD accountability network.
- e. Ensure that the essential elements of its Leader agreements are simple enough to be understood by all participating Leaders.
- f. Participate in the USWD accountability network.
- g. Provide LLLI with a roster of its Leaders, and report any changes in a timely manner.

Once recognized, a USWD area may:

- a. Establish procedures for forming, operating and reporting from LLLI Groups.
- b. Use the LLLI name and logo, consistent with LLLI policies.
- c. Participate in any specialized support networks (aka, departments, workgroups) facilitated by the USWD.
- d. Collect and process LLLI dues and fees, as needed, and donations to support the LLLI activities of its Leaders.
- e. Have its recognition removed by the USWD if it fails to abide by the above policies.

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US Western Division

The USWD is defined:

- a. Geographically, as all US States lying west of the Mississippi, as well as Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana.
- b. Organizationally, as all LLLI Areas that seek and receive recognition as USWD Areas.

The USWD works to ensure that:

- a. All LLLI Leaders active within its geographic boundaries maintain good standing as a member of at least one Area recognized by LLLI.
- b. LLLI Board policies and strategies are observed by all Leaders and other LLLI volunteers active within its Areas.
- c. The transparency of and access to its financial and programmatic reporting by LLLI and the Areas within the Division.
- d. The essential elements of Leader agreements, Area agreements and its own policies are simple enough to be understood by all those participating, and compact enough to be reviewed and discussed in a single meeting.

The USWD must:

- a. Organize a network of Area designates to establish and coordinate a system of mutual accountability to LLLI Board policy among the Areas.
- b. Organize a network of the PLs in the Division to establish and coordinate a system of technical breastfeeding information for Leaders.
- c. Organize a network of those working with Finances from the Areas to facilitate the development and maintenance of adequate financial systems.
- d. Regularly provide an outline of its system of accountability, and other Area agreements (i.e. contracts), for review by the Executive Director or her designate.
- e. Recognize the right of the Executive Director to determine a Division Director to observe the accountability system, and be available for questions of interpreting LLLI policy.
- f. Have a means for admitting and removing Areas from the Division.

In support of Leaders, the USWD will:

- a. Organize other networks of specialized support (aka, departments, workgroups) to which the Areas *must* name at least one participant before engaging in LLLI activities other than direct mother-to-mother support. Examples include conducting events to which the public is invited, Leader accreditation, and the publication or distribution of material that suggests an LLLI review of the content. Each network shall establish its own guidelines for participation, and must conform to all relevant LLLI policies.

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- b. Support the development of other networks to facilitate interaction and learning among Leaders and Areas, especially where they relate to an expectation of Leaders or Areas, such as continuing education or various approaches of working effectively with mothers. Each network shall establish its own guidelines for participation.

The USWD shall establish a coordinating council:

- a. The coordinating council will be open to participation from every USWD network.
- b. The coordinating council has no executive authority over the networks.

The USWD shall establish a USWD agreements council:

- a. The USWD agreements council shall be open to participation from every USWD Area, and the Division Director.
- b. The USWD agreements council does not have the authority to add, remove or change any LLLI policy.
- c. The council has the authority to add, remove or change any USWD agreement that does not require ED approval, if there is consensus among its members. If a vote is needed, an 80 percent vote of the Council will be considered consensus.
- d. All USWD agreements passed by the council shall, in the council's view, be consistent with LLLI Philosophy, LLLI purpose, as stated in its bylaws, and the Reference Set of Organizational Principles adopted by the LLLI Board.
- e. Any Area that is not comfortable with the consensus reached by the council, may seek recognition from another LLLI Division or area network, without penalty.
- f. The Executive Director may reverse any decision of the council deemed in her view to violate LLLI policies.

Relations to other Divisions, etc.:

- a. If an Area wishes to demonstrate its accountability to LLLI through another Division, and that Division agrees to take on the responsibility, the USWD will work to ensure a smooth transition.
- b. If an Area or group of Leaders from another Division wishes to become a USWD Area, and meets the requirements to be recognized as such, the USWD will work to ensure a smooth transition.
- c. If an Area wishes to adopt the LLLI Board's Reference Set of Organizational Principles into its own governing agreements, it may wish to seek membership in a LLLI-recognized area network (such as the AAN), and exercise a higher degree of self-governance. A USWD Area can be a member of such a network and a member of the USWD at the same time.

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Finances:

- a. To be in good standing, Leaders, Groups and Areas must be up-to-date in paying their dues and fees to LLLI, USWD and the respective Area(s) to which they connect.
- b. LLLI and USWD due and fee schedule can be found in Appendix C.
- c. Areas may establish their own dues and fees, as long as they do not otherwise conflict with LLLI policies or USWD agreements.

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APPENDIX A

LLLI Philosophy (*Sep 72; rev Oct 79, Oct 84, Feb 92, Feb 98*)

LLLI believes that breastfeeding with its many important physical and psychological advantages is best for baby and mother and is the ideal way to initiate good parent-child relationships. The loving help and support of the father enables the mother to focus on mothering so that together the parents develop close family relationships which strengthen the family and thus the whole fabric of society.

LLLI further believes that mothering through breastfeeding deepens a mother's understanding and acceptance of the responsibilities and rewards of her special role in the family. As a woman grows in mothering she grows as a human being and every other role she may fill in her lifetime is enriched by the insights and humanity she brings to it from her experiences as a mother.

The purpose of LLLI is distinct. The purpose as stated in the Bylaws does not prevent interaction with other organizations with compatible purposes but La Leche League will carefully guard against allying itself with another cause, however worthwhile that cause might be.

The basic philosophy of LLLI as expressed in *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* is summarized in the following concepts:

- Mothering through breastfeeding is the most natural and effective way of understanding and satisfying the needs of the baby. *Sep 72*
- Mother and baby need to be together early and often to establish a satisfying relationship and an adequate milk supply. *Sep 72*
- In the early years, the baby has an intense need to be with his mother which is as basic as his need for food. *Oct 79*
- Breast milk is the superior infant food. *Sep 72*
- For the healthy, full-term baby, breast milk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth. *Sep 72*
- Ideally the breastfeeding relationship will continue until the baby outgrows the need. *Sep 72*
- Alert and active participation by the mother in childbirth is a help in getting breastfeeding off to a good start. *Sep 72*
- 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. *Feb 92*
- Good nutrition means eating a well-balanced and varied diet of foods in as close to their natural state as possible. *Sep 72*
- From infancy on, children need loving guidance which reflects acceptance of their capabilities and sensitivity to their feelings. *Oct 84*

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APPENDIX B

LLLI Reference Set of Organizational Principles (November 2004)

In pursuit of purpose, participants will:

Honor each others':

Right and responsibility to:

- Determine their own identity and needs, and follow their own judgment and instincts.
- Protect what belongs to them, what is important to them and their privacy.
- Inform their choices considering scientific knowledge, experience and intuition.
- Voluntarily connect with others to pursue their goals.

Right to:

- Create new parts of the system.

When working with others:

- Make room for family.
- Honor obligations
- Encourage/educate, not compel.
- Be open to look for opportunities for generosity and joy.
- Work through and resolve conflict without threats, coercion or intimidation.
- Freely and fully exchange information.
- Are explicit about values.
- Are mutually affirming, supporting and accountable.
- 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.

Work as a system to:

- Remain open and welcoming to new participants and parts.
- Ensure diversity and health.
- Create conditions which foster learning, development and growth.
- Keep or shift power, authority and resources to the smallest or most local part that includes those affected.
- Create no built-in advantage or disadvantage for any part or participant.
- Remain coherent and disciplined as a whole.
- Protect, not undermine, breastfeeding, mothering and family.

These Principles are interpreted and considered as a whole. No Principle will be applied to the exclusion of others. They are intended to balance and inform each other.