



June 2022

KEEPING RECORDS

La Leche League Canada (LLLC) Leaders regularly help individuals to find solutions to their breastfeeding concerns. These helping connections can occur in person at meetings, in person at one-on-one visits, via telephone, email, video call or social media platform. LLLC Leaders are not required to provide anything other than personal breastfeeding support and information. If Leaders are asked medical and legal questions that are beyond their capacity, Leaders can contact their Area Professional Liaisons (APLs) for support. Requests for help with research and requests from the media should be directed to the LLLC Board of Directors.

In order to protect the email addresses of LLLC meeting attendees, paper Sign-In Sheets should not be left unattended at meetings. Paper sign-in sheets should be kept for a minimum of three years. After that they should be destroyed. If the Leader would prefer to use a Google form Sign-In Sheet, the Leader must use their llc.ca email address. This will ensure that the Google form is stored safely in LLLC's Google cloud storage.

LLLC requires Leaders to keep accurate, detailed records of all helping connections: including the information gathered about the parent and the information and suggestions the Leader has shared. Accurate records can help the Leader to recall details if/when a mother contacts them again.

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) requires organizations like LLLC to be accountable for the personal information that we collect from the people we support. Records of helping connections contain personal health information, therefore they should be kept in a secure location (either digitally or physically) for a minimum of three years and then should be destroyed. Near the beginning of the conversation the Leader should say, "I am just going to take some notes of our conversation. They will be kept confidential. Is that okay with you?". Leaders should only collect information that is useful to the situation. If the Leader requires the help of other Leaders in order to support the parent, identifying information such as their name should be kept confidential. (See *PIPEDA fair information principles*

https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/p_principle/)

LLLC Leaders are covered by LLLC's general liability insurance when they are working as representatives of LLLC anywhere in the world. In the unlikely event that a parent makes a

complaint against LLLC and/or the Leader, accurate records can provide vital evidence about what was said and the information that was given to the parent.

Leaders are permitted to use a variety of record-keeping methods. They may use the LLLC Leader's Log, notes on paper, notes on computer, or email (Leaders are asked to use their LLLC.ca email address), text or social media communications. It is essential that the records of helping connections be kept strictly confidential and safe whether they are stored digitally or in actual files. When communicating in writing, remember that your communication may not be private. Recipients of email communications can print out and/or forward what you have written to others.

The checklist along the left side of the Leader Log is a guide to questions you may want to ask. Not all items are relevant to each helping situation.

A Few Suggestions

1. Remember to ask how mom or parent is doing. If appropriate say, "Congratulations!"
2. Take the time to establish a rapport with the parent.
3. Ask specific, detailed questions such as the baby's name, birthdate, type of birth, birth weight (if appropriate), record of weights following birth, why mom is contacting you, etc.
4. When responding to an email request, you may need to ask for more information before answering the question.
5. If the mother provides vague information, like "lots of diapers" or "good feedings", ask for more specific details, if required.
6. As with all other helping situations, you may consult with your ACL or APL before responding to an email asking for information or support. If you are answering an "Ask a Leader" question you may also ask the other members of the Ask a Leader Team for support.
7. Be especially careful to avoid using phrases that may be construed as giving advice. If you refer to or quote from a medical reference, cite the source accurately and do not interpret the information for the mother. If an interpretation is needed, they can take the reference to her health care provider.
8. Please refrain from typing major passages from copyrighted material into email responses.
9. Parents who contact LLLC are often feeling vulnerable. Take the time to point out what is going well and encourage them to be hopeful about the future of their breastfeeding relationship.
10. Consider asking if the parent would like to be added to LLLC's email database by asking,

"La Leche League Canada is a non-profit organization. If you have found this conversation helpful, may I send your name and address to our National Office to keep you informed of LLLC services, special events and occasional appeals? LLLC does not lend, rent, sell or trade our mailing lists."

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