

## LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education Social Media Guidelines

La Leche League is a single-focus organization. When Leaders use any social media to support mothers, it is important to keep in mind our mission statement. Because the Internet is a public forum, Leaders need to be careful to protect the image of La Leche League and to present and represent only what reflects La Leche League philosophy. Above all, remember that when posting on any social media as a representative of La Leche League, you are wearing your Leader hat, and remember to “type” accordingly. Avoid posting about controversial topics—issues related to religious and political beliefs such as abortion, birth control, immunization, and circumcision are not only mixing causes, but may make mothers feel unwelcome.

Additional information about mixing causes may be found in these articles:

### Mixing Causes or Not?

By Joan Peloso, Plantation, Florida, USA

From: *Leaven*, Vol. 35 No. 3, June-July 1999, p. 69-70

<http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvjunjul99p69.html>

### Mixing Causes

By Rosemary Gordon, Taupo, New Zealand

From: *Leaven* Vol. 39 No. 1, February-March 2003, pp. 18-19

<http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvfebmar03p18.html>

LLLI Policy and Standing Rules

<https://www.llli.org/leaderpages/psr.html> (requires LLLID sign-on)

Because most Leaders use Facebook, Facebook is used here as an example; however the guidelines apply to all forms of social media.

Consider a Facebook Page the same as a meeting notice, a flyer, or news bulletin. A Facebook Group is similar to a Series Meeting where mothers and Leaders converse online. Leaders should keep in mind that social media cannot replace in-person mother-to-mother support or telephone helping.

### **Appropriate information for a Facebook Page could include:**

- LLLI logo
- LLLI Mission Statement
- Meeting date and time
- Special events in the Area
- Quotes from *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*
- Links to breastfeeding studies or surveys in consultation with or recommended by a Professional Liaison Department Leader
- Links to the LLLI store and LLLI, LLL Alliance, or Area websites
- Links to LLLI and LLLUSA social media pages
- Personally created photos and/or videos used with permission of those pictured and the photographer/videographer. Media release forms for adults and children are available in the “Publications” and “Forms” section of the LLL Alliance website or from the Area Publications Coordinator.

### **It would not be appropriate to include:**

- Anything outside the scope of breastfeeding
- Links to any outside organizations
- Links to your personal Facebook Page
- Links to or information about your business (even if you are a lactation consultant)
- Anything of a medical nature
- Either side of controversial topics, such as politics or religion, including links, images, or personal views

When posting as an individual or on your personal page, pay attention to whom you send each post and use the appropriate audience (can be found in the Facebook drop-down menu).

The appropriateness of information to be shared on a Facebook Group is the same as a Facebook Page. Following are templates Leaders can use for Facebook Group member information. Leaders are encouraged to personalize and share the “ground rules” with new members and to post them and the *Mixing Causes Policy Statement* in the “Files” section of the Facebook Group.

## Sample I: Information for Facebook Group Members

### WELCOME TO THE LA LECHE LEAGUE OF [GROUP NAME] FACEBOOK GROUP

**If you have a breastfeeding concern or question that needs a Leader's immediate attention, please call.** Our contact information can be found here: [Group website address or Leaders' names and phone numbers]

Thanks for joining our Group – we hope you find the breastfeeding support and encouragement you need and pass it on to others!

Since 1956, La Leche League (LLL) has helped mothers to breastfeed their children through mother-to-mother support. This support is the purpose of La Leche League and this LLL Facebook Group.

#### FACEBOOK GROUP GROUND RULES

- La Leche League makes a conscious effort to ensure privacy and confidentiality within the Group. However, any statements posted on social media should always be regarded as beyond our control and therefore public.
- Just as at a face-to-face LLL meeting, members of LLL of [Group Name] are asked to participate in our Facebook dialogue in an accepting and supportive way and should expect to be similarly accepted and supported.
- There is no one right way to practice mothering through breastfeeding; there is no “LLL way.” Members are free to respectfully contribute their own thoughts, experiences, feelings, beliefs, and opinions if and when they want.
- You may read things on the page which may surprise or even shock you. You may disagree with some of the opinions stated here. We ask that you please accept what feels comfortable for you and your family and respect others' differences.
- The focus on the Facebook Group, just as at LLL Series Meetings, is always “mothering through breastfeeding,” so please do not use this as a forum to promote, sell, or advertise products or other causes, no matter how worthy. LLL Leaders are accredited by La Leche League International and are trained to support mothers and babies through telephone and online helping and to lead LLL Series Meetings. As official representatives of LLL, only Leaders may speak for LLL and are guided by the organization's philosophy.  
<http://www.llli.org/philosophy.html>

**MEMBERSHIP** ~ The LLL of [Group name] Facebook Group is open to any woman interested in breastfeeding. We encourage you to attend local meetings and would be delighted to have you become a member of La Leche League of [GROUP NAME]. La Leche League membership supports mothers and babies in your local community, in your state, and around the world. Membership is \$[AMOUNT] which includes [INSERT GROUP, AREA, and LLLI BENEFITS, ETC.]

**REMEMBER!** ~ Focus on mothering through breastfeeding; take only what seems right for you and your family. Please be respectful to other Facebook Group members.

Please help keep this a positive and safe place for mothers just like you to come and seek support from other mothers and La Leche League Leaders. If a Leader finds a post inappropriate or in violation of the rules, it will be deleted.

- Health care providers are welcome to join the Group, but are encouraged to act as observers only. This is a mother-to-mother support group. If a health care provider has any concerns or additions, please contact a Leader off-board.

Warmly,

[Group Leaders]

## Sample II: Information for Facebook Group Members

**If you have a breastfeeding concern or question that needs a Leader's immediate attention, please call.** Our contact information can be found here: [Group website address or Leaders' names and phone numbers]

Welcome to **La Leche League of [Group name] Facebook Group**. We want to make sure that as a new member you are aware of the rules of the Group. Please read them and let any of us know if you have any questions.

Our Facebook (FB) Group is managed much like a La Leche League Series Meeting. It is a safe place for mothers to come and seek support from other mothers and La Leche League accredited Leaders. This Group is a friendly place where confrontation and negativity will not be allowed.

### Rules:

- This Group is commerce-free. No buying or selling any items on the Group pages. Items that specifically involve baby-wearing and nursing (excluding pumps) may be offered for free. Groups like <http://www.freecycle.org> have been popular for getting other items to a good home.
- Health care providers are welcome to join the Group, but are encouraged to act as observers only. This is a mother-to-mother support group. If a health care provider has any concerns or additions, please contact a Leader off-board.
- If you have a serious problem or question that needs a Leader's attention and one of us does not respond, please call. We have a hard time responding to every post. Our contact information can be found here: [Group web address]
- Advising on choices other than a mother's own milk is not in our scope of activity as La Leche League Leaders. Therefore, we cannot allow posts requesting or offering milk or encouraging milk-sharing in this forum. Our stance on milk-sharing can be found here: <http://www.llli.org/release/milksharing.html>.
- Post at your own risk. This is a closed group and all who join must be approved, but there are no specific criteria by which people are approved. We do limit the Group to women. If you are posting pictures, know that they are available to anyone in our Group (and possibly their friends) to see.

If a Leader finds a post inappropriate or in violation of the rules, she will delete it. If your post is deleted and you don't understand why, please contact \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_. Thanks for joining our Group – we hope you find the help and encouragement you need, and eventually pass it on to others!

Warmly,

[Group Leaders]

## Mixing Causes Policy Statement

[Group name]

Before starting our monthly support Group meetings, Leaders read the following statement:

***"La Leche League is an international, nonprofit, nonsectarian organization dedicated to providing education, information, support, and encouragement to women who want to breastfeed."***

A wide variety of individuals and organizations have expressed an interest in sharing their home-based business, outside interests, church projects, or money-saving opportunities with mothers on the on-line Group or attending La Leche League Series Meetings. While these opportunities might be of interest to some mothers in the Group, we, as Leaders, have made a formal commitment to the purpose and philosophy of LLL. This commitment clearly states that the LLL Group is not to be used as a forum for a Leader's non-LLL interests or to do the work of organizations other than that of LLL. Leaders may not use their Leader status to promote causes outside of LLL.

Therefore, it is the policy of LLL of [Group name] not to allow Group members or mothers attending our meetings to distribute flyers or promote any outside causes before, during, or after our meetings. Additionally, we will not share our meeting sign-in sheet or Group member list with any individual or organization for marketing purposes. Thank you for understanding and supporting us in this matter.

Sincerely,  
(Leaders' Names)

## La Leche League International Mission Statement

Our Mission is to help mothers worldwide to breastfeed through mother-to-mother support, encouragement, information, and education, and to promote a better understanding of breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the baby and mother.