



La Leche  
League NZ

*Supporting your breastfeeding journey*  
*E tautoko ana i tō ara whāngote*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



## Mission

To help mothers 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.

## Values

**Respect / Manaakitanga:** Respect and understanding of a new mother/parent's experiences and cultural context in regard to their children and whanau/family needs

**Acceptance / Tautoko:** Support without judgment is the foundation to growth and each person is encouraged to make the decisions that are right for them and their whanau

**Commitment / Manawanui:** Commitment as a voluntary community service offering peer to peer encouragement of connection through breastfeeding

## La Leche League New Zealand Strategic Plan

### Goals & Objectives

In order to fulfill our mission and deliver on our commitments to mothers, whanau and babies - we have three key strategic goals to build resilience in our service:

1. Strengthening our volunteer base to better support, appreciate and inspire our Leaders
2. Establishing a framework for operational and financial resilience to remain relevant and take up opportunities in the breastfeeding support sector
3. Establishing the organisational structure through teams for our internal mahi and service delivery.

### La Leche League New Zealand Inc.

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[LLLNZshop.org.nz](http://LLLNZshop.org.nz)

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



Janine Pinkham  
**Board Chair**



Sarah Hudson  
**Board Secretary**



Katie Fourie  
**Vice Board Chair**



Jackie Chambers  
**Board Member**

## Administration Team



Eleanor Becker  
**Financial  
Coord.**



Sarah Parkman  
**Office  
Administrator**



Barbara Kerr  
**Funding  
Coordinator**



Janet McClean  
**Team Leader**

## PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)

Carol Bartle RN, RM, PGDipChild Advocacy, MHealSc, IBCLC  
Alison Barrett BSc, MD, FRCS, RANZCOG, IBCLC  
Dr. Yvonne LeFort BSc, MD, FRNZCGP, FCFP (Canada), FABM, IBCLC  
Dr Leila Masson MD, MPH, FRACP, DTMH, IBCLC  
Kath Ryan BPharm, PhD, MPS  
Selene Mize BSc, JD  
Janet Weber BS, MS, PhD  
Judith Galtry DipWomensStud, BA, PhD

*“La leche league has been in my calendar twice every month for more than a year. It has been invaluable to have regular and reliable support and to find a village after I had a baby. There is always someone to make a coffee or snack, hold my baby if I need the bathroom and to discuss, not only how to overcome breastfeeding issues, but also talk about the beautiful and bonding experience breastfeeding is. It is great to connect with other like minded people.” - Emma, Feb 2023*



**Cover photo credit Jonathon Borba**

## Annual Report 2023

### Janine Pinkham, Board Chair

*“The care and protection of breastfeeding for every family is a fundamental primary health concern and La Leche League Leaders are dedicated volunteers striving to serve within this kaupapa. As an organisation we realise that misinformation and social pressure may cause difficulties that require breastfeeding parents to seek outside assistance. Our mission is to be there with mother-to-mother support around Aotearoa.”*

The words above provided the opening for the 2022 annual report and they are as true today as they have been for the history of La Leche League in New Zealand, and so are worth repeating.

### The year in review – April 2022 to March 2023

Leaders report each year on their breastfeeding mahi aroha. Gathering these activity statistics enables us to evaluate how well we are achieving our mission and assess the impact we have. Thank you to Leaders for the time and care taken in recording this crucial information.

It is pleasing to report that following the reduction in prevalence of infections and restrictions related to the Covid pandemic the activity of our volunteers has dramatically recovered. Leaders around the motu take a bow as you learn that the contacts you have had with the breastfeeding community have increased nearly 75 percent, to **16,224** for the year ended 31 March 2023 (9,288 in 2021-22).

As a health-related organisation LLLNZ comes under the Ministry of Health’s Covid-19 mandates, and it is heartening that the mandates have been relaxed. It must be noted that Leader numbers reduced by 30 percent, to **81**, over the three years since the beginning of the pandemic.

The pandemic required new ways of working that have added valuable accessibility for those wanting breastfeeding support and for internal Leader communication and administration. The variety and flexibility of digital capability are likely the reasons for the remarkable increase in contacts we have seen this year. Digital tools will continue to be used to extend the reach of La Leche League support.

### Leader Activity

In addition to the huge increase in contacts mentioned above it must also be noted that the average number of contacts per Leader has increased to just over **200** (2022=108). This is a significant increase on recent years which have shown relatively stable average contacts and can be attributed to the more effective use of digital resources and to more accurately recording such contacts. This flows into the number of kilometres Leaders have driven in their work = **15,082** (2022=8,051).

Some examples of how Leaders work:

*“I use Facebook and just started an Instagram page, I have posted flyers on community pages as well.”* (Aimee Skelton, Howick Group)

*“I attend monthly hui with maternity kaimahi which covers a lot of breastfeeding korero that I contribute to regularly.”* (Lena Whetton, Hawkes Bay Group)



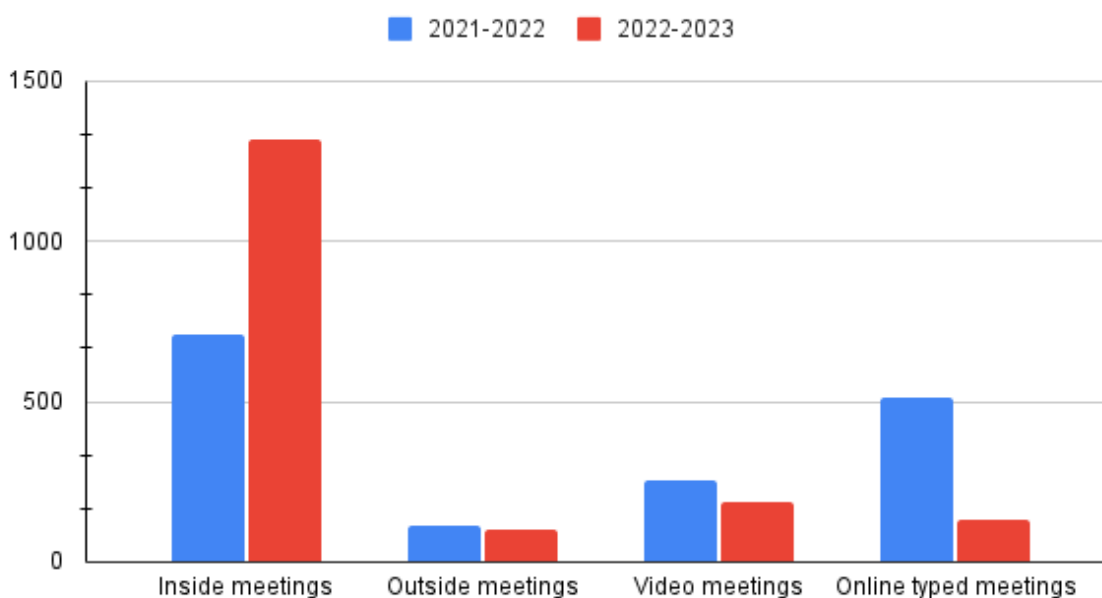
## Social Media Contacts

Some Leaders are social media whizzes and have hundreds of contacts through various platforms, mainly Facebook where they maintain a presence in multiple forums. More and more social media is a tool used by all Leaders and is reflected in the almost doubling of social media contacts this year to **3,132** (2022=1,609). Parents seek information online for anything parenting related and we want a mother with a breastfeeding question to know she can find reliable information and a listening ear from La Leche League. Support via social media can be intense and needs careful facilitation of our pages. We are proud of how Leaders have used their skills to great value in social media.

## Meetings and groups

This year saw the welcome return of in-person meetings which allowed La Leche League breastfeeding support and encouragement meetings to increase significantly. Meetings were held in traditional community spaces inside, outside in parks, on video calls and in typed online settings. Zoom and Facebook are popular digital settings. Leaders offered and facilitated **436** meetings this year - (2021-22=367) – an 18 percent increase.

### Meetings 2021/22 and 2022/23



*"I absolutely love the philosophy of La Leche, and the support you provide to mothers. I wholeheartedly believe I am a much better parent in so many ways because of the foundation I received from La Leche meetings." Rosie, 13.04.23*



## Meetings and groups (continued)

There were **25** (2022=27) locations around New Zealand where La Leche League breastfeeding groups met. Meeting in person is where breastfeeding can be discussed, and confidence of mums boosted through shared experiences and encouragement. Average attendance at inside meetings and meetings overall was **four** and remained highest for typed Facebook meetings with around **nine** attending (2022= eight) and lowest for outside and video meetings at around **three**. These numbers do not count the Leaders present of whom there could be several who jointly facilitate the meetings.

More information about the LLLNZ online meetings can be found on our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/LLNZ>



## Supporting Leaders

Enrichment and planning are essential. Nearly **300** additional meetings were held to support Leaders in their mahi aroha, including Awahi support team meetings, group planning meetings and also Board and management meetings all facilitated by our volunteers.

The passion and commitment Leaders have for supporting breastfeeding families has again flourished and Leaders can be proud of the way they have combined to serve the breastfeeding community; it is appreciated by the mothers who come to us and by us all within our organisation.

*"Thank you so so much for your response! This has made me feel so much better. I was feeling so stressed and feeling like I wasn't getting anywhere. All of these tips are so helpful, thank you so much!!" Anon - Aug 2023*



## LLNZ Board Elections

In September 2022 terms ended for three LLLNZ Board members who were elected at the inaugural election following the introduction of the new LLLNZ constitution in 2019. This first three-year term was hard working and complicated by the need to address the Covid-19 pandemic. We thank Janet McClean, Lorraine Taylor and Linda Dockrill for their fortitude during this time of re-establishment.

Three new Board members were elected in September 2022: Janine Pinkham, Sarah Hudson and Katie Fourie. Shortly after the 2022 AGM the two Board members whose terms had time to run withdrew from the Board for personal reasons. We were disappointed to farewell Whitney Davis and Isa Pike and thank them for the hard work they did on the Board whilst members.

Board work continued with two vacancies for several weeks, and appointments of interested people were sought. We were pleased when Jackie Chambers stepped forward to fill one of the vacancies. Jackie is a long time LLL supporter who now has the next generation of her family involved.

The Board continues with only four members and is open to appointing an additional member.



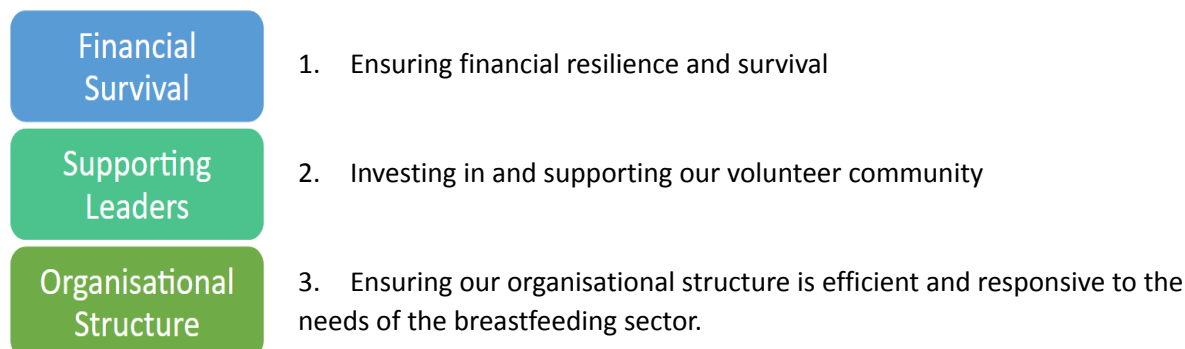
*Whitney Davis presenting at the LLLNZ Wairarapa Workshop in 2022*

*"When I first went along to one of the La Leche League session's I was really struggling with breastfeeding and felt completely lost. After even meeting with them just once I felt so empowered and I was given super helpful tips that I still use 1 year later. I love that the group is so non-judgemental and welcoming which makes me comfortable asking any and all questions. I always come away feeling that my questions are fully answered and in a way that is well researched. I don't know where I would be without them." Anon - Feb 2023*



## Embedding a new structure for LLLNZ

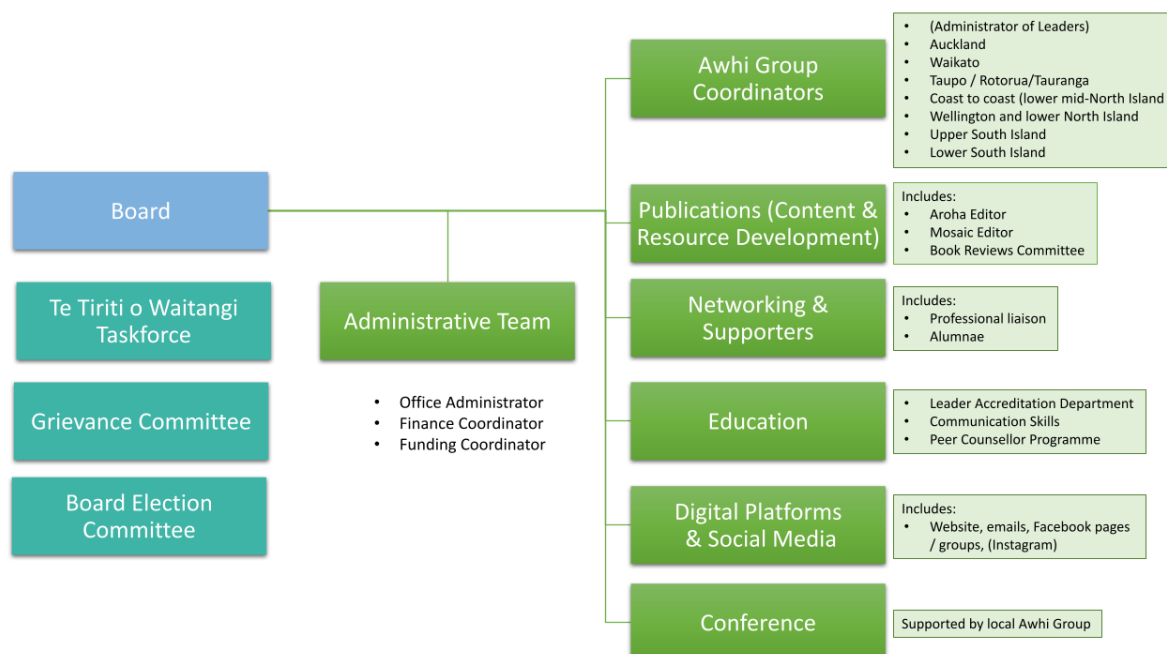
The LLLNZ strategic plan identifies three key priorities:



These three focus areas are interlinked.

In June 2022 the then LLLNZ Board introduced a new structure for the organisation using a teams approach. This was needed following the disbanding of Departments which were mainly based on a regional, or “Area” structure. Moving to an entirely teams-based approach builds on the national teams structure that has already developed, e.g. with the Awhi team, admin team, publications and social media teams.

Since then, work has continued to finetune the structure and to recruit members to the teams. A team approach has the potential to be responsive to changing needs and to use individual strengths more effectively. The revised organisational chart looks like this:





## Key indicators of organisational wellbeing

The LLLNZ Board has continued to track key indicators of our organisation's vitality, starting in 2021. Key indicators include:

**Volunteer numbers** – As mentioned Leader numbers dropped significantly during the pandemic but have stabilised now at **81**. There are **15** Leader Applicants (Leaders in training) (2022=23). There is continued focus on supporting and encouraging Leaders to be as active in the community as they strive to be.

**Management and Board Capacity** – the creation of a management network from the team structure is under formation. Teams are developing their individual work plans and from these integrated management will emerge, as each team relies on and works with other teams to achieve their objectives. It is envisaged that the Team Leader from each team will become a member of the management network. Until the management network is established Board members continue to maintain a close overview of operations. As mentioned in the Board elections section above the Board has only four members instead of five.

**Conference and Workshops** - Regular Leader Connect video meetings continued this year and remain a valuable way for Leaders across the motu to check in, connect and upskill. Sessions this year included supporting the mother of multiples, tongue-tie, the LLLI variety of terms policy, and making great grant applications. Regular monthly sessions have resumed since March as part of our investment in Leaders and Leader Applicants learning and knowledge. The Waikato Awhi group held a very successful workshop in October 2022, to which Leaders from all around New Zealand were invited. Those attending enjoyed finally being able to meet in person after so many months of isolation due to the pandemic. A Communication Skills session was held in the Wairarapa in September, attended by many from around the region including breastfeeding advocates from other organisations. In normal circumstances an LLLNZ conference would have been held in October 2022 but due to Covid uncertainty this did not occur. With the 2020 conference also unable to proceed we have missed two of our most valuable opportunities for community outreach, networking and enrichment. A conference for 2024 is in planning, see more below.

**Staffing Capacity** – Sarah our Office Administrator has cemented her place at the office and continues the crucial work supporting our Leaders, with initiative and creativity. Eleanor continues as our diligent Financial Coordinator, keeping tabs on the incomings and outgoings. Barbara Kerr joined the admin team as Funding Coordinator and has been doggedly pursuing multiple funding opportunities for the office and wider organisation. Barbara's successes build positivity within the team and on the Board. Janet McClean is a volunteer member of the admin team and her experience is valued. The Board greatly appreciates all the work the admin team does in the absence of an official National Coordinator.

**Financial** – The financial situation for LLLNZ remains tenuous. Traditional funding streams have dried up or dwindled. We are grateful for the financial support we attract and are deliberately seeking new opportunities. Our capacity to take up new ventures is limited by the decrease in Leader numbers and the time they have available to volunteer. Organisational expenses have been cut back extensively over the years.

## Te Tiriti o Waitangi Task Force

The first step of implementing the LLLNZ Te Tiriti ō Waitangi Relationship policy was to establish a taskforce to examine issues and report to the Board. This committee now has six members, including two Board members: Linda Dockrill, Ngakeiha Racey, Erica Lourie, Lorraine Taylor, Jackie Chambers, Katie Fourie. The task force is in an orientation phase and would love to hear from Leaders interested in contributing to the mahi. In line with the policy, LLLNZ has begun incorporating Māori principles into LLLNZ Communications Skills training materials.

## La Leche League International (LLLI)



Carolyn Driver Burgess continues as the LLLNZ representative on the LLLI Board of Directors, fulfilling the role of co-Chair. We will have Carolyn's extensive experience contributing to the LLLI Board until April 2025.

Other Leaders from New Zealand contribute to the work of LLLI on various forums. The DCE Administrators group is a network of Leaders in national roles from La Leche League around the world. The DCE Review Panel is a sub-committee of the Bylaws Committee which reviews LLLI policies. The Board Election Committee (BEC) works to ensure fair elections to the LLLI Board, and has Mary Roache, Janet McClean and Janine Pinkham representing LLLNZ, with Mary as the Chair of the LLLNZ committee.



## Looking ahead

**LLLNZ Conference 2024** - The Board is delighted to report that we are working steadily towards our 2024 conference to be held in Cambridge, Waikato. The theme celebrates the 60th anniversary of LLLNZ and will be an event not to be missed. It will be our first national conference since 2018. A six year gap is just too long.

**Infant and Young Child Feeding Committee (IYCFC)** – Nominations were called for in May and the successful candidates announced in July for the New Zealand Infant and Young Child Feeding Committee. The first meeting of the committee was held during World Breastfeeding Week at the beginning of August. La Leche League Leader Whitney Davis was successful in being appointed to the committee. We look forward to learning more about how the committee will be configured including the possibility of other Leaders joining sub-committees. The Kaupapa of the IYCFC is to implement the [National Breastfeeding Strategy for New Zealand Aotearoa | Rautaki Whakamana Whāngote \(2020\)](#)

## Thank you to our financial supporters

We are reliant on generous contributions to keep our free breastfeeding support going.

Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) is a key funder for La Leche League groups operational expenses and Leader ongoing education. COGS funding has been more difficult to obtain in recent years for some groups. We appreciate the continuing support from COGS and remain positive that general support will be reinstated as changes due to the Covid pandemic are reversed. Thanks too to all the other funders of LLL groups that allow groups to keep going and that support Leader development.

The Lottery Community fund provided **\$30,000** during this financial year. This fund is crucial to our future and greatly appreciated.

The Ministry of Health/Te Whatu Ora supported LLLNZ with a contract for **\$18,855** annually to provide breastfeeding information to families. We value this ongoing partnership.

The Lion Foundation gave **\$4,000** towards operational expenses this year which was very important and gratefully received.

One Foundation provided **\$1,500** towards the rental of our head office and we are thankful this support has continued into 2023.

The John Ilott Foundation, administered by The Public Trust provided a welcome **\$1,000** towards operational costs at head office.

Pub Charity provided **\$4,694** during the year to cover the re-print of essential leaflets and has continued this support into 2023.

Obtaining operational funding from a range of sources enables the national office to continue to support our work in the community.

It is pleasing to see an increase in donations at both the national and consolidated levels, over **\$5,000** and nearly **\$9,000** respectively. This includes **\$1916.05** from our 'Step up for breastfeeding' campaign. Thank you to those regular and one-off donors who value our contribution to the well being of breastfeeding families.



## Your Support Makes a Difference

La Leche League New Zealand provides one to one, and educational support to thousands of mothers and parents each year, but we can not do it without the support both financial and social support of the wider community.

<https://givealittle.co.nz/org/la-leche-league-nz>

## Finance Report Information

La Leche League New Zealand Inc qualifies as a Tier 3 organisation with the Performance Report being prepared under the standard PBE SFA-A (NFP) Public Benefit Entity Simple Format Reporting - Accrual (Not-for-Profit).

La Leche League New Zealand has the national component of its Performance Report audited except for the entity information and the Statement of Service Activity.

The full Performance Report (unaudited) is provided as a separate document in conjunction with this narrative report. Both documents comprise the annual report.



*Our Leaders are voluntary community workers who provide quality information and peer to peer support to other mothers, parents, whanau, health professionals - both online and offline - often juggling their own babies and families, working in paid work, and other community commitments. They are committed to keeping the breastfeeding wisdom available to new mothers and parents.*

*Pictured LLLNZ New Leader ceremony L to R :Erica Lourie, Jacqui De Smidt, Anna Sian, Tamsin Kreymborg & Vashti Duncan*



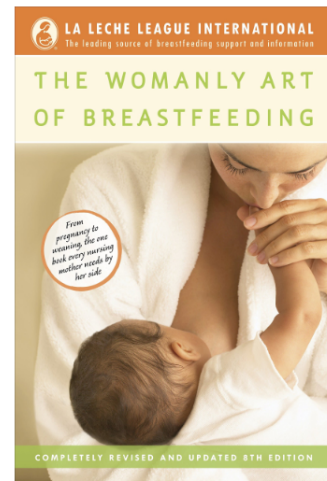
# The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding 8th Ed

The one book every parent needs for breastfeeding and early days with their baby



“Breastfeeding is a connection as well as a food source, a baby’s first human relationship, designed to gentle him into the world with far more than just immune factors and good nutrition.”

— La Leche League International, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*



FOR OUR RANGE OF BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES, MEMBERSHIP & DONATION OPPORTUNITIES (AND MORE) PLEASE VISIT

[LLNZShop.co.nz](http://LLNZShop.co.nz)

## Need help?

There are many ways to connect with La Leche League New Zealand

To find your nearest group or to phone a Leader directly, visit [lalecheleague.org.nz/get-help](http://lalecheleague.org.nz/get-help)



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## Membership of LLLNZ

*Your membership supports La Leche League Leaders, who are available to answer questions and provide practical tips and emotional support for breastfeeding mothers. As well as this, a portion of memberships supports the national organisation of La Leche League New Zealand*

**JOIN TODAY** [LLNZshop.org.nz/membership](http://LLNZshop.org.nz/membership)

