

Community Café

CHANGING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN
THROUGH CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

Cafes Comunitarios

CAMBIANDO LA VIDA DE LOS NIÑOS
POR MEDIO DE CONVERSACIONES IMPORTANTES



The Community Café Approach

Parents and Youth Partnering with Communities & Organizations to Strengthen Families

Three Legs of the Approach

The Community Café approach sparks leadership to build the relationships needed to strengthen families and build a supportive community. Family members and/or youth lead Community Café conversations with the support of community partners. These hosts learn some hosting techniques, have relationships with café participants and knowledge of how to build on the assets of their neighborhood. The leadership of families and youth is needed to ensure the setting, language and conversation design reflects the people and is culturally relevant. Meaningful relationships develop as parents and community partners participate as equals in a series of conversations that promote reciprocity. These reciprocal relationships shift the current social service provider/service recipient norm. This approach can be integrated into any strengthening families activity or community setting. There are three components to this approach:

☀ **Appreciative Inquiry-The 4D's**

Appreciative Inquiry is a tool that helps us get away from the typical problem-solving mode and instead engages people to look at what has worked well in the past, then act based on strengths. It is an iterative series of conversations that creates new possibilities when people "discover, dream, design and deliver," together. An appreciative approach assumes that all humans have something to contribute to the group learning so care is taken to think about how to set up an inclusive environment and conversation. Conversations are designed to encourage the sharing of stories and value listening rather than fixing or convincing.



☀ **World Café Principles of Hosting**

Bridging and bonding social capital is built when conversations are meaningful and inclusive. Every conversation stays true to certain principles of hosting. The World Café Principles of hosting are:

- 1) Set the context
- 2) Create hospitable space
- 3) Explore questions that matter
- 4) Encourage everyone's contribution
- 5) Connect diverse perspectives
- 6) Listen together for patterns & insights
- 7) Share collective discoveries

(www.theworldcafe.org)

☀ **Strengthening Families Protective Factors and Youth Thrive Frameworks (www.cssp.org)**

All Community Café conversations relate to the research based, frameworks published by the Center for the Study of Social Policy which recognizes that parental resiliency, adequate knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, social connections and the social and emotional development of children are necessary for a child to thrive. When planning your café purpose and questions, ask yourselves, "How does this conversation relate to the Framework?"

For more information, tools and resources go to: www.thecommunitycafe.org or write info@thecommunitycafe.org