



Community Cafés:

Changing the Lives of Children through Conversations that Matter

Our Beliefs

Social change is possible one conversation at a time

All children, therefore their families, have an inalienable right to the five protective factors

Our Values

Courage, Community, Health, Freedom, Compassion

Our Knowledge Base

Cafes are a series of guided conversations that provide the stepping stool we utilize to reach for higher heights. This stool has three legs of support:

1. Strengthening Families:

I will continue to have courage during stress or after a crisis; I have friends and at least one person who supports my parenting; I can access basic needs when I need them; Parenting is part natural and part learned*; My children feel loved, like they matter, and they can get along with others. (*This phrase is written by the Illinois Family Partnership, www.ifpn.org).



2. Leadership:

Significant change requires leadership development - a developmental process of self leadership to constituency representation. Relying heavily on the leadership development model developed by Kouzes and Posner, and Siegel's "Parenting from the Inside Out," we discuss the leadership skills that produce positive change. Topics include: how to challenge the process, motivate, inspire, and encourage ourselves, our children, our families and others in our community.

3. Parent Partnership:

Positive social change requires effective parent partnership building throughout the ecological model. Community Cafés facilitate parent voice to impact policy and programs to better provide protective factors for children and families. Café conversations focus on the stages of relationship building while providing a container for co-learning and cooperative action.

What is a Community Café?

Community Cafés are planned, led and monitored by trained parents and community members who learn the World Café process, can relate to the participants and build on the assets of their neighborhood. The World Café technique harvests collective knowledge and transforms it into action. (Juanita Brown, *The World Café*, Berret-Koehler, 2005.) Group-building traditions, customs, visuals, foods and music from the cultures represented in each café, help to ensure cultural relevance. Meaningful relationships develop as parents and community partners participate as equals in a café series that sustains a value of reciprocity. Funding provides support for mileage, childcare, meals and a stipend for the training, planning and hosting time. This support ensures all participants can attend without concern that their participation is taking away precious resources from their family.

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