





The Power of Conversation: How Parent Cafés Support Early Childhood Success

### Introductions

Suzan Gage Executive Director



Matt Bonner Administrative Director & Parent Café Host



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Early Childhood Care
Coordination-Team Lead
& Parent Café Host



Glen Kaminski Parent Café Host & Café Participant



### What is a Parent Café?

Parent Cafés were first developed in 2007 by parent leaders from Strengthening Families Illinois as a parent-to-parent way to build the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors within families.

In Parent Cafés, every voice is valued and everyone can both learn and lead.

Parent Cafés are physically and emotionally safe spaces where people talk and listen to each other on topics that matter to them, such as the challenges and victories of raising a family, enhancing well-being, or being involved in the recovery process of someone they love.

Through individual deep self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning, participants explore their strengths, learn about the Protective Factors, and create strategies from their own wisdom and experiences to strengthen their families.







### **Protective Factors**

### Parent Café Components

First developed as an inperson model, but can be done virtually

4-5 trained hosts with shared experiences

Select 2-3 protective factors to focus conversation around

Agreements

Full group discussion

Breakout tables each with a trained table host

Conversation cards – each table selects a question(s) to discuss around the protective factors

Meals are usually provided

Gift cards usually provided as a "Thank You" to the attendees for their time

Resource table

Childcare may be provided



# Conversation Cards



#### AGREEMENTS

- Speak from your own experience Use "I" statements.
- Listen attentively Do not interrupt.
- No judgments, positive or negative
- Do not give advice
- Confidentiality What is talked about in the group stays in the group.
- Full Presence Please, no multi-tasking.

FAMILY AUTHENTICITY (LIBERATION : VITALITY | COLLABORATION | EXCELLENCE | LOVE | SPIRIT

BeStrongFamilies.org



# The Agreements









### Ways ELCNWF Has Implemented Parent Cafés

Community Partner-Hosted Sites

Dad's Cafés

Childcare Provider Parent Engagement Night

**ELCNWF Staff Development Session** 

## Parent Testimonial



### **Contact Information**

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