

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 Collaborative of Washington

Parents Partnering with Communities & Organizations to Strengthen Families

STATEWIDE COMMUNITY CAFE HARVEST

DECEMBER 11TH, 2010

WESTWOOD RETREAT CENTER AT LACEY, WA

The Community Café Collaborative of Washington successfully held a one-day Statewide Community Café in Lacey, WA on December 11th to envision what can be accomplished with a statewide network. It was powerful to see what parents partnering with communities and other organizations could achieve. The audience was very diverse, 59 adults and youth and 22 children from 9 nations and 11 cities and 6 first languages participated in this event to explore the question, *"What is possible if we see ourselves as part of a larger network?"*

WHAT QUESTIONS WERE USED AT THIS CAFÉ?

- Q1: What is the leadership that brought me to this place?
- Q2: What is possible for my community if I understood my own fears more deeply?
- Harvest: What helps you to build the relationships needed for this work?
- What questions arise for you when you think of the possibility of a statewide network?
- What could your own contributions to this network look like?
- What could a statewide network be?

How many participants? 79 people

How many children? 22 children

What Community Partners were there?

Vaughnetta Barton-Early Learning Foundation, Ruth Harms-Thurston Community Network, Paula Steinki-Child Care Resource & Referral Network FFN, Judy King-Department of Early Learning. Two came from Utah and one from Atlanta, Georgia; Yoland Trevino, the keynote speaker from CA.

DOCUMENT: WHAT ARE YOU TAKING HOME FROM TONIGHT'S CAFÉ?

The harvest revealed lots of excitement about nurturing a Statewide Network to grow the learning and spread the practice. We were offered some concrete suggestions of how to do that in coming next year. We are going to have to stretch! Many suggestions involved the internet and using new technology as well as helping parents to physically visit other café sites. Here is what was harvested:

- Awareness of my community needs and resources
- Stay connected to my peeps'
- Recognizing the gifts and talents of the community
- Become role model for youth



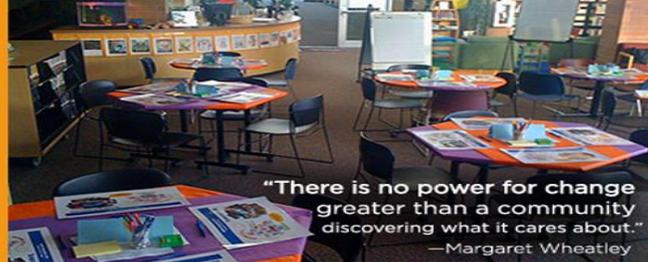
In partnership with the Community Café Leadership Team

* 3017 French Road NW * Olympia WA 98502 * (360) 870-7106* thecommunitycafe@gmail.com

- Cafes build good relationship with others
- Closed minded, need to be changed
- We don't know what we have
- Real community, more connections
- Work with others to create "buy-in" or find "champions"
- Need to be able to look a big picture, looking for opportunities
- Coming here today is a bold step
- A sense of belonging
- Reweaving the threads that connect us to our deepest humanity
- Time invested in children is never wasted
- Building community is everybody's duty
- Mejorar la comunicación, no solo en comunidad; sino entre la pareja
- Formar un grupo de apoyo para mujeres
- Community Cafés for youth
- Creating structure and space for leadership and communication to happen
- Focusing in what is working, positive actions and not negative ones
- Shifting from a culture of fear to a culture of love
- You don't know what can happen unless you do it
- What might happen verses what could be
- All meaningful and lasting change starts first on the inside and then works its way out
- We are created for each other, our lives are intertwined
- Ayudar a los padres a dares cuenta de que tienen que participar en la educación de sus hijos
- Be willing to explore and reach out
- Be a part of the change you wish to see
- Parents must be the first to be their children model (model leadership for children)
- Children will learn from action, instead of not learning from being told what to do
- Stay connected with each other to share stories, lessons, needs... with conference calls, webinars, quarterly meetings, cross-state projects
- Benefit to state network: work at all levels, from neighborhood, community, city, county, region and state.
- Dream together-Build a state vision
- Thinking about a state learning community not limiting to cafes
- Flow of information-what is new and works other community?
- Teen cafes via Facebook
- Build relationship face-to-face (café hosts have an opportunity to visit each other's cafés)
- Discovering common themes and conveying to others
- All information sent to one main café harvest site (website?)
- Mentoring component
- Sustainability for local cafes: requires training and understanding of the format and structure-more than a support group
- Larger Structure: blogs, website, great topics, creating books and information to be shared with other groups
- Strengthens of Café: Provide food and childcare, community with local context, selecting good topics
- Systems/mechanism for local and statewide levels to coordinate and communicate: collaboration, sharing staff, interacting. Example: funding for food and childcare
- System of communication and opportunities for mentoring
- Begins in families - youth education for teenagers

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- Begin Statewide Network means we are stronger together
- Possibilities to get more people to become aware of and join the Statewide Network

The next day, a slightly expanded leadership team along with Joan Sharp and Sue Feldman who helped facilitate and gathered to discuss learning highlights from Saturday and discussed the implications to a coalition building plan. Based on the experience of the first Statewide Café the following issues were presented:

CONTINUE-Current areas we want to keep developing:

- Work in rural, remote and marginalized communities
- Including nourishing local leadership teams to do the job
- Statewide Café (more again; other locations; consider including specific learning areas)
- Monthly coaching, teleconference
- Gather and disseminate stories
- Develop tools
- Develop resources
- Work with Strengthening Families WA and Quartet
- Develop existing café relationships; monitor sites, more connections, web update, blog, etc.

START-New areas for improvement observed at the Statewide Café to start working on:

- Being intentional about starting new work
- Mentoring for new and current parent hosts
- Systems of communicating
- Invite more hosts to Leadership Team meetings
- Consider additional language capacity for tools, meetings
- Develop more orientation teams (capacity)
- Increase involvement of youth
- Encourage community between Café such as Time Banks?
- Explore what else can happen at a Café such as Play and Learn
- Facebook, newsletter
- Café in every county -conceptual planning (with Quartet).

The Community Café Leadership Team on behalf of the Community Café Collaborative of Washington invites you to be part of our Statewide Network building plan. If you are interested in contributing some ideas or should you have any questions, please visit our web site for more information.
www.thecommunitycafe.com



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