

What is a Parent Café?

Project LAUNCH implemented a small grant parent café project that was based on the strengthening family protective factors model developed by the Center for the Study on Social Policy (CSSP). The goals of the parent cafés were to engage parents in meaningful dialogues, promote the **protective factors** (identified by CSSP), and develop leadership skills in the parents who were trained to facilitate these parent cafés as parent hosts.

(For more information on this model refer to <http://www.cssp.org/community/constituents-co-invested-in-change/community-and-parent-cafes>).

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Concrete Support in Times of Need: *KNOWING ABOUT COMMUNITY RESOURCES*
- Understanding of Parenting and Child Development: *HOW CHILDREN GROW AND DEVELOP*
- Parental Resiliency: Learning Healthy Ways to Handle Stress: *COURAGE*
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children: *HELPING CHILDREN GET ALONG WITH OTHERS*
- Social Support: *SOCIAL CONNECTIONS TO OTHERS*

**Capitalized words are parents' definitions of the protective factors.*

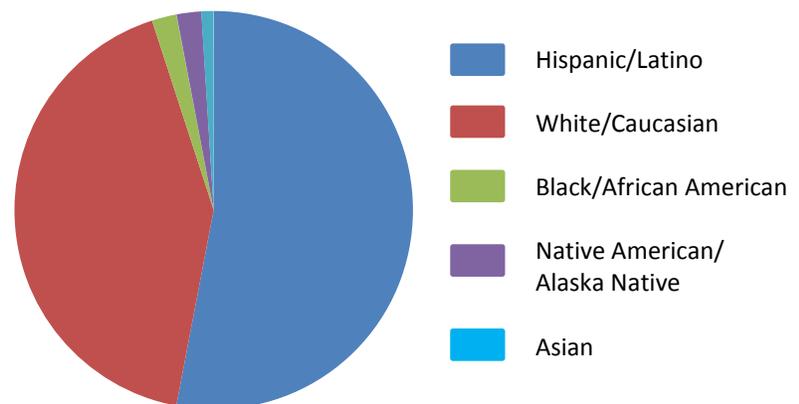
Who participated in the Parent Cafés?

One of the prevention and promotion strategies for Project LAUNCH was family strengthening and parent skill building. To address this goal Project LAUNCH experimented with parent cafés to see if this was a modality that provided some families another opportunity to develop parenting skills and provide connections to community resources.

This small grant project funded eight communities across Oregon to host a minimum of five parent cafes each. The funded communities hosted more than 45 cafes and reached over 300 parents.

* 269 participants completed the parent café survey.

Participant Race/Ethnicity



74% of the participants were parenting **with someone**
26% of the participants were parenting **alone**

82 % of the participants were **Female**
18% of the participants were **Male**

Findings

99.6% of participants would attend another parent café.

The analysis of the parent café surveys and harvests (a descriptive narrative of the café) were resoundingly positive, from both the parents who participated in the cafes, as well as the organizations that sponsored the cafés. Indications of success in certain locations include:

- securing additional funding to continue monthly community cafés
- continuing the café model within other grantee parenting activities
- self-organizing of parents to sustain the parent cafés on their own

Item	% Yes Responses
I learned something new about programs in my community	93%
I learned something new about parenting and how children grow and/or develop	91%
I learned a new way to handle stress	89 %
I learned something new about how to help my children get along with other people	87%
I met a person (or people) I plan to stay in touch with	85%

What Parents said about the Parent Cafés

“I really liked the discussion and meeting other parents.”

“It was a different experience being able to talk openly about our families and expressing our needs.”

“I love coming. It was really good to share parenting skills and how to deal with your children. It’s good to interact with other moms and get really good advice back.”

Implications for Policy and Practices

Parent Cafés can be a successful model to:

- Engage parents in meaningful dialogues
- Support equity by soliciting engagement from diverse groups of families
- Connect parents to community resources
- Connect parents to other parents sharing similar experiences
- Serve as a foundation for other parenting skill development such as parenting education and parent leadership
- Support community based participatory research
- Inform organizations and agencies about parent’s goals, strengths and challenges

Nationwide, Project LAUNCH demonstration sites are pioneering new ways to promote young child wellness (prenatal - age 8). In 2009, Deschutes County was selected as the LAUNCH demonstration site for Oregon.

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