

Parent Café Newsletter

February 2020



“Help the life of one person and you can help the community”

-Steven Sawalich

Stenghtening Connections Within Our Communities


Through funding from the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division, Child Care Resource and Referral (R&Rs) agencies have been working together to strengthen their relationships with parents in their communities. The Parent Café experience was created to give parents the tools needed to increase family strength and resilience.

During the café experience, participants:

- Gain knowledge on the Strengthening Families’ **5 Protective Factors**.
- Discuss the CDC’s **Learn the Signs. Act Early.** books, phone app, and other materials as a valuable resource for tracking children’s development.
- Make connections and form relationships with other parents through interactive discussion questions.

By the end of 2019, the R&R agencies hosted **97 Parent Cafés**, connecting with **1,059 parents** throughout the state.

Number of Parent Cafés Offered by Region



Hubs	Parent Cafés
01-Sonoma	6
02-Butte	9
03-Placer	12
04-Alameda	18
05-San Benito	8
06-San Joaquin	3
07-Merced	12
08-Ventura	6
09-San Diego	4
10-San Bernardino	5
11-Los Angeles	14
Total	97



Languages cafés were facilitated in:

English	45%
Spanish	32%
Eng/Span	22%
Cantonese	1%

*Data and graphics provided by CCRC Research Division

The 5 Protective Factors

The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework was created to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. After attending the Parent Café, participants reported increases in the Protective Factors of **parent resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social connections.**

When asked about what they thought of the café experience, one parent replied, *“It was just a good reminder of the protective factors and how important they are in developing children, and things for myself, like self-care and social relationships. Especially [since] they are so often being ignored these days and was really the consistent issue among a lot of parents. So, being reminded of that and having a format where we could be social and discuss our issues was really good.”*

The 5 Protective Factors
Parent Resilience: Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma
Social Connections: Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental, and spiritual support
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development
Concrete Support in Times of Need: Access to concrete support and services that address a family’s needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges
Social and Emotional Competence of Children: Family and Child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize, and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships

Parental Resilience

93% Learned they can use the protective factors to keep their family strong.

84% Practiced ways to talk to others that improved their relationships.

Knowledge of parenting and child development

89% Plan to use the resources (e.g. Learn the signs, Act early) provided.

83% Are able to identify their child's developmental milestones.

Social Connections

96% Would return to another parent café.

51% Have stayed in touch with someone they met at the parent café.

Parent Testimonials

I really enjoyed talking and engaging with other parents. Although we are from different backgrounds, we were able to connect. We had the same fears, concerns, and worries...I felt safe to express my feelings.

I loved learning about other people and to know that all parents have difficulties and that we can resolve them with love, respect, and patience.

For me it was a positive experience where I could express my feelings and above all I felt heard. Thank you for all your help.

Thank you for providing a safe space for people to share their experience.

It was an eye opener to see others going and experiencing the same issues with children and family members.

Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County

Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4Cs) has successfully hosted and facilitated Parent Cafés in their community since 2015. As part of the Preschool Development Grant, 4Cs has been able to expand its Parent Café program by providing them with the resources needed to offer cafés regularly.

Sandra Lemus, the Parent Engagement Coordinator of 4Cs, and her team of facilitators host their cafés on the third Friday of every month. After speaking with the parents they work with, they found this to be the best time as it allows them to relax and decompress from their week and not have to rush out of the café to get the kids to bed and ready for school the next day. They provide families with dinner and child care, which participants have said helps make it possible for them to attend.

According to Sandra, *“We have parents who return regularly to continue to build the Protective Factors in their family, as we do first-time parent attendees. They are learning something that will help them as a parent, take better care of themselves, be more willing to ask for help, build lasting relationships, and how to make sure they understand their children’s development and feelings.”*

Many of the participants are regular attendees. One father has said that since he started attending, *“I learned that I can take everything, even the negative, and make them positive. Utilizing my resources to be more efficient as a father.”* Other participants have told the 4Cs team that they have learned some valuable lessons by attending the Parent Cafés.

“I am not alone and others struggle just as me.”

“It’s okay to take a break.”

“Keeping consistency in my son’s life is crucial.”



Do you want to be featured in our next newsletter?

Send us your Parent Café Highlights

Did you or your team experience an a-ha moment in one of your Parent Cafés or staff trainings? Share your inspiring moments with us and you could be featured in one of our upcoming newsletters!

Please send all stories and pictures to PDGCafes@ccrcca.org.