## Be Strong Families Parent Café Model

Based on:
- Principles of Adult Learning
- Principles of Family Support
- Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework
- BSF empowered engagement approach and a social justice / peace-building lens informed by:
  - Appreciative Inquiry
  - Art of Hosting
  - Insights from humanistic, transpersonal, and positive psychology
  - Life Coaching

**Participants:** Parents, caregivers, agency staff, other adults involved in the lives of children

**Café Team:** including staff and parents as trained Café and Table Hosts

**Welcoming Ambiance:** For example, welcome sign, music, centerpieces, doodle supplies, refreshments.

**Materials:** Parent Café cards or questions (including Dads cards and A More Perfect Union cards), Agreement cards, Commitment cards

**Dosage:** Varies depending on purpose. Most commonly once/month or intentional, time-limited series with more frequency (No more than once/week)

### Activities

- Parent Cafés hosted with fidelity to the model, including:
  - Introduction to the Theme of the Café and Protective Factors: Resilience, Relationships, Knowledge, Concrete Support and Communication
  - One-on-One & Hosted Café Conversations
  - Individual & Collective Harvest
  - One-Word Closing
  - Feedback Form (part of reflective process)

### Participation

- Participants decide how much or how little to share. Parents share with and/or listen to peers during.
- Participants learn from others’ stories.
- Participants practice the Protective Factors.
- Participants build social emotional competence and active listening.

### Short-Term

**Participants feel...**
- Safe sharing their truth, values, and lived experiences with others.
- Heard, have strengths recognized and are treated with dignity.
- More comfortable using services and supports.

**Participants learn...**
- A new way to handle stress.
- Positive ways to deal with their children.
- Parenting challenges are a common, expected part of parenting.
- About active listening and have a chance to practice.

**Participants experience...**
- Usefulness of Protective Factors in own lives, including navigating complex social and political situations.
- Emotional release by sharing in safe space.
- Themselves as leaders.
- Participants reflect on own strengths and challenges as parents.
- Participants identify areas of relationships/parenting that they want to improve.
- Participants see other café participants as potential social connections.
- Participants move beyond own biases to connect with diverse others.

### Intermediate

- Participants reflect on parenting and relationships more often.
- Participants change behavior within relationships/family.
- Participants are energized and inspired, even when facing setbacks.
- Participants build and maintain social connections.
- Participants use concrete supports in times of need.
- Participants take steps to leadership, role with cafés.
- Participants know more about child development, parenting.
- Participants see possibility for own healing in others’ stories.
- Participants experience more self-acceptance.
- Participants feel more connected to each other.
- Participants share collective experience of positive energy, unconditional acceptance and support.
- Parents and staff build respectful and equitable relationships and build community within the organization.
- Community ties are strengthened through Cafés.

### Long-Term

- Families experience increased well-being.
- Children are safe and are raised by parents that respond to their developmental and emotional needs.
- Parents are leaders in family and community.
- Parents have greater sense of efficacy-take control of family’s well-being and mobilize resources for their family, working in equitable partnership with social services to keep their families strong.
- Social service providers shift from “deficit model” to equitable, respectful relationships with participants that recognize them as capable agents of change.
- Community members have compassionate, respectful and equitable relationships with others who are different from themselves.
- Move towards a more just, more equal, more free, more caring and more prosperous America.