

Community Café Themes

Parents

Q1: What do you do when you don't understand what's going on with your child?

SUMMARY: When parents don't understand what's going on with their children, they often seek advice from professionals, especially teachers and medical professionals, and non-professionals, such as relatives and friends, especially those who have children as well. Other strategies include researching alone online and talking with the child directly.

Seek professional help (28)

- Teachers (10)
- Medical professionals (11)
- Local health department/DHS (2)
- 211 (1)
- Family advocates/other professionals (4)

Seek non-professional advice (27)

- Relatives (11)
- Friends (7)
- Other parents (4)
- Support networks (4)
- Speak to child's friends (1)

Talk with child directly (6)

Investigate on own (10)

- Ensure basic needs are met (2)
- Wait and watch (1)
- Research online (7)

Q2: What does your family need to do well? What do you think your child needs to do well?

SUMMARY: Parents believed the following would help their child and/or family succeed: more available resources; family-focused and less judgmental attitudes; positive family units and community environments; open communication; and more education.

Resources (33)

- More available resources (28)
 - Especially for single parents (2)
 - Local activities for all families (7)
 - Quality medical and dental care (3)
 - Basic needs met (3)
 - Parental support networks (6)
 - Mental health screenings
 - Transportation (2)
 - Mobile and/or in-home resources (3)
 - Respite services
- Awareness of resources
- Improvement of resources (3)

- Better quality of internet communities (2)
- Updated resources
- Fewer barriers to resources (1)

Attitude/Beliefs (24)

- Children first mentality (1)
- Emotional/social support of children (5)
- Willingness to ask for help/motivation to be better (3)
- Freedom for kids to be themselves/creative (5)
- Cultural competency (1)
- Less judgement/stigma (4)
- Self-respect/positive self-image (2)
- Patience (3)

Family Unit (20)

- Stability (3)
- Parental harmony (3)
- Love (4)
- Active involvement in child's life (2)
- Healthy parents (2)
- Set expectations and boundaries (6)

Community (15)

- Collaboration with faith-based groups (1)
- Safe and stable environment (4)
- Interpersonal kindness, compassion, friendship (3)
- Appropriate interventions (1)
- Dedicated, caring professionals (1)
- More family time (1)
- Positive role models for both parents and children (3)
- New governor (1)

Communication (10)

- Listening skills (2)
- Positive encouragement/praise (1)
- Open communication with family members (7)

Education (9)

- Encouragement to do well in school (1)
- Co-parenting classes (2)
- Ability to learn and explore without boundaries (1)
- Taught respect (1)
- Taught tenacity (1)
- Higher educational attainment (2)
- Health education (1)

Money (4)

- Financial support/higher wages (2)
- Better funded programs (2)

Q3: What would a community that perfectly supported families with young children look like?

SUMMARY: Parents believe an ideal community would have abundant resources, strong interpersonal connections, family-first mentality, an emphasis on good education and communication practices, and healthy families.

Resources (29)

- More resources available (17)
 - Medical care (3)
 - Greater variety
 - Mental health
 - Quality child care (3)
 - Respite services
 - Transportation (3)
 - For young/new parents
 - Referral centers
 - Mobile and/or in-home services (3)
- Fewer barriers (9)
 - No waiting lists
 - Equal opportunity for all families (3)
 - Location
 - Non-traditional hours
 - Fewer restrictions/qualifications
- More awareness of resources (1)
- More affordable resources (2)
 - Child care
 - Child education

Community (25)

- Local community centers (1)
- Strong interpersonal connections/less isolation (6)
- Family-friendly workplaces (1)
- Interagency collaboration (1)
- More community involvement (4)
- Safe, clean environments (10)
 - Less violence and crime (5)
 - Less bullying
 - Less fear for safety (2)
- Better investigation of foster families (2)

Attitude/Beliefs (21)

- Children/family-first mentality (4)
- Parental accountability/responsibility (3)
- Teenagers having respect for law enforcement (1)
- Focus on mental and physical wellness (2)
- Less judgement/fear/stigma (9)
- Freedom for kids to be themselves (1)
- Kindness (1)

Education (11)

- More support for teachers (2)
- Increased parental knowledge/education (1)
- Better public school education/equality amongst schools (7)
- Higher educational attainment (1)

Family Unit (8)

- Basic needs are met (2)
- Active involvement in child's life (3)
- Mentally healthy parents (1)
- Family stability (2)

Communication (4)

- Open communication with teachers (1)
- Positive, open communication within family (1)
- Good communication between agencies and parents (2)

Money (4)

- More funding for programs (2)
- Income-based support (2)

Politics (1)

- Educated legislators

TOP* OVERALL THEMES:

Using questions 2 + 3 → Ideal community and needs for families to thrive

* = 5+ responses total

1. More availability of resources (45)
 - a. Particularly medical/dental (6), mobile/in-home (6), transportation (5), and basic needs met (5)
2. Safe environment (18)
3. Less judgment/stigma (13)
4. Fewer barriers to resources (10)
5. More interpersonal connections (9)
6. Open communication within family (8)
7. Better public school education/equality amongst schools (7)
8. Set expectations and boundaries (6)
9. Freedom for kids to be kids (6)
10. Parental support networks (6)
11. Active involvement in child's life (5)
12. Children/family-first mentality (5)
13. Emotional/social support to children (5)