

## Independent Research on Parent Cafés

Independent evaluations of Parent Café efforts conducted by partners have found statically significant increases in:

- Mean scores on combined Protective Factors to reduce child maltreatment and on family functioning and resiliency
- Cross-ethnic group social interactions
- Ability to listen carefully to children, family members or friends
- Quality of interactions and relationship with their children
- Ability to handle stressful situations with their children or other family members
- Motivation to become involved in their community or their child's school
- Overall summary score for the Connor-Davidson Resiliency Scale

Below you will find summaries of independent evaluation efforts, as well as links to download the reports themselves.

### **Chicago Community Violence Prevention Program**

From 2013–2014, Be Strong Families led Community Violence Prevention Program's Parent Program, which provided funding for approximately 1000 parents each year to receive training and act as Parent Leaders for various community projects that promote Protective Factors for child maltreatment. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Research and Analysis Unit conducted an independent evaluation, including a training evaluation survey, a pre- and post-survey, and two exit surveys. Key findings included statistically significant increases from the beginning of the program to the end of the program in mean scores on combined Protective Factors to reduce child maltreatment and on family functioning and resiliency.

[Click here to download the reports.](#)

### **California Project LAUNCH, First 5 Alameda County, and Oakland Parents Together**

From 2011–2014, First 5 Alameda County, with funding from California Project LAUNCH, contracted with the community-based organization, *Oakland Parents Together* (OPT), to deliver Parent Cafés in East Oakland. Evaluation activities included developing a new survey to measure participant outcomes, gathering and analyzing survey data, and qualitative interviews with participants, parent leaders, and program staff. Key findings from the retrospective surveys include statistically significant increases in cross-ethnic group social interactions, ability to listen carefully to children, family members or friends, quality of interactions and

relationship with their children, ability to handle stressful situations with their children or other family members, and motivation to become involved in their community or their child's school. [Click here to download the reports.](#)

### **Missouri Project LAUNCH**

From 2012–2017, 896 parents/family members attended Parent Cafés as part of Missouri Project LAUNCH, a collaborative effort led by the Department of Mental Health, in partnership with the Department of Health and Senior Services and evaluated by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health at University of Missouri St. Louis. Methods of data collection included collection of sign-in sheets and pre/post-tests prior to the first Café and after the last Café. Measures included the Connor Davidson Resilience Scale, Protective Factors Survey, Heath Hope Index, questions developed by the evaluation team specifically for the Parent Cafés, and an Agency Implementation Survey. This study documented positive process outcomes which suggest that our proximal outcomes are moving in the right direction to achieve intended results over time. Respondents overwhelmingly felt that the Cafés had added value to their lives in a variety of areas, including community and family connectedness and parenting. Additional key findings included a statistically significant increase in the overall summary score for the Connor-Davidson Resiliency Scale in Years 3 and 4, increases approaching significance for family functioning and social support in the Protective Factors Survey in Year 4, and increases approaching significance for life satisfaction in the Well-Being in Years 3 and 4.

[Click here to download the reports.](#)

### **Best Start Panorama City and Neighbors Building Stronger Families Initiative**

From 2016–2018, over 500 parents across 13 different communities attended Parent Cafés hosted by Be Strong Families through the Building Stronger Families Initiative, in partnership with Friends of the Family and funded through the Los Angeles County First 5 Commission, far exceeding the goal of 135 parents served. Additionally, 81 parents attended Table Host Training to be able to support the efforts as part of the Café team. Independent evaluation results found that participants consistently reported that they made new social connections and extended those relationships beyond Cafés, had increased confidence in parenting skills, increased their knowledge and access to concrete support and resources, and reduced community isolation.

[Click here to download the reports.](#)

## **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and Be Strong Families**

From 2012–2017, 5,063 foster parents and 7,164 birth parents attended a total of 953 Cafés hosted by Be Strong Families as part of a longstanding partnership with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to provide services to child welfare involved families. Evaluation results found that 98 percent of foster parents found Cafés helpful, 96 percent learned something to help in foster parenting, 91 percent planned to try a different way or learned a new way to handle stress or challenges of fostering, 92 percent were more willing to ask for help, and 93 percent realized something that will help them in their relationship with their foster child’s birth parent. Additionally, 95 percent of birth parents learned something to help their parenting, 93 percent planned to try a different way or learned a new way to handle stress or challenges, 96 percent planned to take better care of themselves, 85 percent planned to change how they discipline their children, 81 percent learned about a program or resource in their community that will be good for their family, and 92 percent realized something that will help them in their relationship with their child’s foster parents or relative caregivers.

## **Maryland Family Network**

From 2012–2016, over 2,700 parents attended Parent Cafés through Maryland Family Network. Of Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Café participants, 99 percent said attending the Parent Café was helpful to them and 97 percent said they would attend another Parent Café. In addition, as a result of participating in the Parent Café, 96 percent said they will be more willing to ask for help when they need it, 86 percent said they plan to change something about their parenting and 93 percent said they plan to try to understand their children’s feelings.