



Host Toolkit 2019



on the table

what you do matters.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a silver fork over a white plate of food. The plate contains a colorful salad with green lettuce, red tomatoes, and purple onions. In the background, there is a glass of water and other plates of food on a dining table. The lighting is warm and focused on the hand and the plate.

4

Why Belonging?

5

Getting Started

6

Tips For Leaders

8

Conversation Starters

9

Notes

10

Family Conversations

11

Tips for Positive
Family Conversations

12

Family Conversation Starters

13


Developing A
Belonging Action Plan

14

Sharing The Conversation

15

The Power of Partnership



For more than 50 years, Blue Grass Community Foundation has inspired generosity and activist philanthropy in the Bluegrass and beyond. We work with donors to help them identify meaningful opportunities to use their passion for good. Since 1967, Blue Grass Community Foundation donors have collectively awarded more than \$91 million for charitable programs and projects that make our communities better places for everyone.

We know big ideas can spring from small conversations. We also know people invest in what they help create.

That's why we're especially proud to bring *On the Table* to Kentucky. Now in its third year, *On the Table* is an opportunity to gather with friends, neighbors, colleagues, and maybe, some people we're meeting for the first time to have important conversations while sharing a meal.

This year, *On the Table* will focus on fostering inclusion and belonging in our city. We'll gather around tables, discuss ideas, and more importantly, build an action list to create a more welcoming and inclusive community.

When we listen to each other, learn from one another, and commit to positive action, powerful things can happen.

WHY BELONGING?

In the two years we've hosted *On the Table*, our annual survey of participants has indicated that equity, social inclusion, and race relations are key topics of interest.

As a community foundation dedicated to making the Bluegrass even more generous and welcoming for all, we're committed to responding to this important feedback.

Understanding that equity, social inclusion, and race are broad issues spanning everything from historical oppression to pay equity, we've decided to focus this year's conversation on creating a city that fosters belonging.

Research shows cities reap numerous social, economic, and environmental benefits when community members feel a deep sense of attachment. Blue Grass Community Foundation has observed the transformative impact of our investments in city-building initiatives like the Legacy Trail, (RE)IMAGINING CHEAPSIDE, and SplashJAM at Northeastern Park.

On the Table 2019 will explore how contributing to everyone's sense of belonging — especially those from historically marginalized communities — can help us cultivate diverse relationships, increase civic participation and ownership, and build a more equitable city.

What do we mean by historically marginalized?

Historically marginalized groups have been systemically denied fair opportunities and basic human rights such as participating in the workforce, pursuing an education, accessing quality health care, and gaining admission to public spaces and buildings. For more information and examples, visit bgcf.org/onthetable/resources.

LET'S GET STARTED.

To Prepare For Your *On the Table* Conversation:

Register and Review Resources

Register your *On the Table* conversation. This applies to individuals and organizations hosting one or several conversations. To help you prepare for hosting this year's conversation, we've developed an informative webinar and compiled a list of resources — articles, videos, and books. You can register and check out these great resources at bgcf.org/onthetable.

The Guests

The invitation list is up to you. Eight to 12 guests per table is ideal. Start with people you know — friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors — or expand your circle. Consider co-hosting your conversation with a local place of worship or nonprofit, asking your guests to bring a friend, or inviting people from your network who don't already know each other. *On the Table* is about giving everyone a chance to speak and be heard. If you want to host a larger gathering, consider breaking into smaller groups and allowing time for each to report to the larger group.

The Day

Block off a couple of hours on **Wednesday, March 27, 2019**, to host your *On the Table* conversation. It can take place over breakfast, lunch, dinner, or any time in between. Conversations can be hosted anywhere — in homes, restaurants, places of worship, coffee shops, schools, libraries, offices, parks, and other public locations.

REGISTER YOUR EVENT!

Whether you are hosting one conversation, several, or 10 or more, be sure and register your event at bgcf.org/onthetable/register.

THE TABLE IS SET. NOW WHAT?

To help guide your conversation, we've provided a list of prompts related to this year's theme. You are not required to use all of them. They are intended to keep the conversation focused and action-oriented. We suggest you begin with the first prompt, but again, this is not a requirement. Please use the prompts in a manner that most resonates with you and your guests. Due to the nature of this year's conversation, we've added a more robust list of instructions to review with participants before beginning the conversation to ensure it remains civil and respectful.

We believe in the power of conversation to clarify, energize, and organize people to do things for good.

Tips For Table Leaders

- Avoid micromanaging the conversation or dismissing any person's comments.
- Model active listening skills. Be attentive. Show interest. Don't interrupt.
- Intervene if arguments or unproductive debate arises, but also allow enough space for discomfort.
- If you don't understand something, ask for clarification.
- Model compassion and patience.
- Be mindful of power dynamics. Ensure that young people, women, people of color, low-income people, etc., have equal space to share insights.

Setting The Tone

Ask every participant to commit to creating a safe/safer space while recognizing it is impossible to guarantee absolute emotional safety for this conversation.


Please remind participants of the following:


- Be respectful in both verbal and body language.
- Listen with compassion and an open mind.
- Consider that we've all inherited unjust histories. Make an effort to acknowledge the past while creating space for moving forward together.
- Remember that individuals from marginalized communities frequently assume greater risk and responsibility in conversations about discrimination. Encourage everyone to equally participate.
- Don't judge. Everyone is at a different place in terms of knowledge and ability to articulate ideas pertaining to inclusion and belonging.
- Remember that discomfort is required for growth and learning.
- Try to make "I" statements and avoid sweeping generalizations.
- Be aware we won't solve everything today. It's the conversation that matters.


Introductions


Ask all participants around the table to share their name, neighborhood, and what brought them to the table in one sentence. Encourage your guests to keep phones and tablets in pockets or purses during the conversation. Once the conversation has ended, ask everyone to share photos and key thoughts using the hashtag [#OTTKY19](#).


CONVERSATION STARTERS.


 Can you recall a time you felt especially welcomed and included within a public place in our city? What made you feel welcomed and included?


 Where in our city (community, neighborhood, or school) do you feel most welcomed and included? What makes you feel that way?


 Is there a public place in our city (community, neighborhood, or school) where you feel unwelcome or unsafe? What are your ideas for improvements?


 Have you ever witnessed unkindness or discrimination toward someone considered different? How did you react? What did you learn?

 What is one barrier keeping people from feeling a sense of belonging and inclusion in our city (community, neighborhood, or school)? Barriers can be related to physical accessibility; social issues like racism, ageism, classism; gender-based safety issues; and the perception of feeling unwelcome or undervalued.

 What can our city (community, neighborhood, or school) do to be more welcoming and inclusive?

 What cultures, languages, or religions do you want to be more engaged with? What are your ideas to better connect?

 What can we do to recognize and celebrate our differences?

 What will you commit to do in the next three to six months to ensure that your fellow community members — especially those from historically marginalized communities — feel an increased sense of inclusion and belonging?

“It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.”

— Audre Lorde
Poet, Civil Rights Activist

Notes

Use this page to jot down a few ideas you want to share from your table.

What are the most important things discussed at your table?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

What are your group's big ideas?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What will you commit to do in the next three to six months to increase inclusion and belonging where you are (city, community, neighborhood, or school)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....





FAMILY CONVERSATIONS.

BELONGING STARTS EARLY.

We understand that fostering a more inclusive city begins early. It is in their early years that children are first exposed to values that inform the ways they view themselves and others within the wider community. Parents and caregivers set the first and ongoing examples of inclusion and belonging for their children.

Seemingly small things like the cultural backgrounds of neighbors invited over for lunch or comments made during a television program convey your values about inclusion and belonging. So, this year's *On the Table* family conversation is of particular significance.

Following are a series of prompts to help your family have a conversation about how you can all contribute to belonging and inclusion in your neighborhood and your city. Select the ones most aligned with your interests, the age of your children, and your family's specific situation.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

Prepare your children for your *On the Table* discussion by letting them know that thousands of people will be having a conversation about creating a more inclusive and welcoming city. Before your conversation, you may want to take a walk around the block or visit a public place and note who is present and absent in these spaces.

Tips For A Positive Family Conversation

- Avoid micromanaging the conversation or dismissing any person's comments.
- Model active listening skills. Be attentive. Show interest. Don't interrupt.
- Intervene if arguments or unproductive debate arises, but also allow enough space for discomfort.
- Model compassion and patience.
- Be mindful of power dynamics. Ensure younger or more introverted participants have equal space to share insights.




What do we mean by family?

By family, we mean any group of two or more people who share goals, values, and long-term commitments to one another.

CONVERSATION STARTERS.




Share a memory of feeling a sense of belonging or inclusion.

Ask all family members to tell one positive story about a time they felt special, important, or a sense of belonging within your family. Examples may include performing a short play for relatives at a holiday dinner, having a piece of personal artwork framed and displayed, or getting treated to breakfast in bed on birthdays. All answers are correct. After all have shared their special memory, explore the following:

-  How did the experience make you feel?
-  Why is it important to make all family members feel special or that they belong?
-  Is the effort we invest in making everyone in the family feel a sense of belonging worth it?




Connect children's understanding of personal belonging and inclusion to civic responsibility.

Ask your children to think about how they can actively ensure everyone in the larger community feels special and included.

-  How can they safely help if someone is noticeably in need?
-  What steps can they take to ensure kids outside their social group are included in activities?
-  How can their home safely become a more welcoming place for people in the neighborhood?

Make your social circles more inclusive and diverse.

Discuss how you can make your social circles more inclusive and diverse.

-  Is there a cultural or faith-based group you are interested in learning more about? If so, what is a first step you can take to meet members of this group?
-  Is there a new family in the neighborhood or school whose background and experiences are different from your family? If so, are you open to inviting them over or meeting for lunch or coffee?
-  Would you be open to visiting a faith-based celebration outside of your own?

Develop A Belonging Action Plan For Your Family.

Conclude your belonging conversation by developing an action plan. Your plan should consider the commitments, resources, and interests of all family members. Actions may range from a monthly commitment to a one-time activity to begin moving in the right direction. The SMART model for goal setting, below, will help you transform your important conversation into action that will enrich your family and community.

Specific. Describe what your family would like to do and how it can help increase inclusion and belonging in your family or community. Example: To expand diversity within our social circle by inviting neighbors, co-workers, and classmates from different backgrounds to birthday parties, cycling trips, or out for coffee.

.....

.....

Measurable. How will your family measure your inclusion and belonging goal? Example: Starting next week, we'll do something socially with people who don't look, think, and/or worship like us once per month for a year.

.....

.....

Action Plan. How will your family achieve your inclusion and belonging goal? Example: We will expand our social circle by four to six people starting with people from diverse backgrounds who we are familiar with and want to get to know a bit better outside of school or work, or quick hellos to in the neighborhood.

.....

.....

Realistic. Is this goal doable? Does your family have the time, energy, and financial resources to carry out this goal? Example: We love socializing, so inviting a few more guests to our gatherings won't take too much extra effort and will be lots of fun.

.....

.....

Time to Review. How often will your family assess and reflect on your inclusion and belonging goal? Example: After each gathering, we'll check in to see how socializing with more diverse friends and neighbors impacted our gathering. Did everyone socialize well? Did we miss making an accommodation in terms of cultural or physical accessibility? Are we learning and having fun?

.....

.....

WRAPPING UP.

Sharing The Conversation And Feedback

Thank participants for sharing their thoughts and experiences. Remind them to...

- Share photos, key thoughts, and a few words summing up the conversation and their personal action plan commitment at [#OTTKY19](#) or bgcf.org/onthetable.
- **Share feedback.** Encourage your guests to take the short, post-conversation survey before departing the table, either by texting [OTTKY19](#) to [797979](#) to receive a link for the survey, or by visiting bgcf.org/onthetable to download a paper survey. The survey is your opportunity to share all of the good ideas that emerged from your *On the Table*

conversation. You'll be able to tell us about yourself, the themes of your conversation, and the ideas you will take beyond the table. All feedback will be anonymous and aggregated into actionable data for our community.

Participants may also share feedback and other comments by...

- Emailing us at onthetable@bgcf.org.
- Leaving a message with us at [859.225.3343](tel:859.225.3343).
- Sending us a note:
Blue Grass Community Foundation
On the Table
499 E. High St., Suite 112
Lexington, KY 40507

Engaging Our Future

Young people are critical to our city's future. *On the Table* strives to engage those voices and support creative and energetic ideas from our community's youth — at school, community groups, and places of worship. For additional ideas on how to engage youth, go to bgcf.org/onthetable for a toolkit designed specifically for use in schools and youth organizations.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP.

At Blue Grass Community Foundation, We're In It For Good.

Blue Grass Community Foundation believes that by working together, we create a stronger, better community for all. *On the Table* is made possible by the efforts of our many committed, dedicated partners. Our heartfelt thanks to all of them!

On the Table 2019

Engagement Committee.

Ivy Brashear
Mountain Association for Community and
Economic Development (MACED)

Craig Cammack
City of Lexington

Mary Cobb
Kentucky Refugee Ministries

Anne Gay Donworth
Lexington Public Library Foundation

Annissa Franklin
Urban League of
Lexington-Fayette County

Kurt Gohde
Transylvania University

Vanessa Grossl
GLOBAL LEX

Colleen Hall
Lexington Public Library

Michelle Hollingshead
Imprint Coaching + Consulting

Alexis Meza
Community Volunteer

Milton Meza De Los Santos
Bluegrass Community & Technical College

Christian J. Motley
New Leaders Council Kentucky

Karissa Porter
Common Good
Community Development Corporation

Lance Poston
University of Kentucky

Miranda Scully
Fayette County Public Schools

Hoda Shalash
Community Volunteer

Nada Shalash
Community Volunteer

Emanuelle Sippy
Prichard Committee Student Voice

Kristy Stambaugh
City of Lexington

Todd J. Stoltzfus
University of Kentucky

Darryl D. Thompson
Fayette County Public Schools

Kremena Todorova
Transylvania University

Adrian Wallace
The Bishop & Chase Foundation

Richard Young
CivicLex

Blue Grass Community Foundation Staff
Lisa Adkins
Halee Cunningham
Barbara Fischer
Laurie Preston
Jason Tate

Lead Placemaking Consultant.

Jay Pitter, MES, is an author, lecturer, and international placemaker whose practice mitigates growing divides in urban centers. She spearheads institutional city-building projects rooted in neighborhood knowledge and focused on cultural heritage interpretive planning, gender-based mapping, inclusive public engagement, safe streets, and healing fraught sites.

Local Consultants.

Andrea James
S&A Strategies

Reva Russell English
Artist, Activist, Farmer

Funding Support.

Blue Grass Community Foundation

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

**GET INVOLVED.
WHAT YOU DO MATTERS!**



on the table

what you do matters.

March 27, 2019

**BLUE GRASS
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

WE'RE IN IT FOR GOOD.

bgcf.org/onthetable

#OTTKY19

499 East High Street • Suite 112 • Lexington, KY 40507 • 859.225.3343

Photos: Sarah Jane Sanders