



School & Youth Toolkit 2019



on the table

what you do matters.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

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.

ABOUT ON THE TABLE.

Issues like increasing inclusion and belonging don't come with quick fixes. Progress will only result when we all work together. Young people often tackle these issues in a courageous and open-minded way, so we are especially pleased to add your students' insights to this year's *On the Table* conversations.

Why Participate In *On the Table*?

This year's *On the Table* theme is an excellent learning opportunity. Young people thrive when they feel a sense of belonging in their classrooms, larger school community, and neighborhoods. Exploring belonging will create an opportunity for students to speak openly about cliques, self-esteem, and healthy friendships.

On the Table conversations will...

- provide an opportunity for students to model respectful and courageous conversation
- deepen students' knowledge and understanding of local issues
- explore ways for students to make a difference in their community or for the causes they care about
- enhance students' sense of commitment to their school, community, and peers
- allow student to have fun and learn together.

What You Will Find In This Guide

- How to organize your *On the Table* conversation
- Youth conversation lesson
- Conversation starters
- Reflection activity

For more ideas and support materials, visit bgcf.org/onthetable.

How To Use This Guide

We encourage you to customize your *On the Table* experience to best suit the needs of your school community. The goal is for students to gather and explore important ideas for improving their schools, neighborhood, and city.

School districts throughout the region have partnered with Blue Grass Community Foundation to make this opportunity available to your students.

On the Table Conversation Menu of Options

There is no one way to host an *On the Table* conversation.

We have compiled some ideas to help you get started. You should not feel limited by the choices provided.

Consider the following:

- Host an *On the Table* conversation within your class.
- Partner with another teacher(s) at your school to host *On the Table* conversations across classrooms or grade levels.
- Invite community members (parents, local business people, clergy, community-based organizations, your city council member, etc.) to join your students for an *On the Table* conversation.
- Organize some after-school clubs to participate in an *On the Table* conversation together (e.g., get the basketball team talking with the drama club).
- Host a schoolwide *On the Table* conversation in the lunchroom, over breakfast, lunch, or after school.

Before Your On the Table Conversation

Be sure to visit bgcf.org/onthetable to register your event. Each registered host will receive a limited edition tote bag, pens, stickers, and a Host Toolkit.

After Your On the Table Conversation

In today's world, this act of coming together has never been more important. Talking — and listening — to our neighbors is an important first step toward creating a more collaborative and connected community. We encourage you to use the "After the Conversation: Post-Lesson Reflection" (page 10) so Blue Grass Community Foundation may learn more about your experiences. Thank you for coming to the table —

we're excited to have you and your students as part of this important conversation.

For more information, visit bgcf.org/onthetable, email us at onthetable@bgcf.org or call 859.225.3343.

Youth Conversation Lesson

Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to facilitate a group discussion where students generate ideas for fostering greater inclusion and belonging in communities across the Bluegrass.

Objectives

- Share experiences of feeling that you belong.
- Reflect on the social and design factors that contribute to a sense of belonging.
- Identify barriers to everyone feeling a sense of belonging.
- Collaborate with peers in a civil discourse resulting in personal action steps for creating greater inclusion and belonging.

Tools

- Facilitator guidelines
- Conversation starters
- Notes template (page 7)

Preparation

Seat students at tables that seat eight to 10. If possible, mix up ages, grade levels, and schools. Get conversations going among youths who don't usually have a chance to talk. Try to have at least one adult at each table, but do not require that an adult act as the facilitator. Adults may act as participants with a student facilitating. Prepare students to facilitate discussions prior to the event using the Facilitator Guidelines and Conversation Starters on page 6.

Welcome And Introductions

Ask all participants to share their name, neighborhood, and what brought them to the table in one sentence. Encourage participants 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 [#OTTYouthKY19](#).

Before You Begin

Have each group assign a note taker, a facilitator, and a timekeeper.

Having The Conversation

Student facilitators should use the conversation starters to guide the conversation. Note takers should capture main ideas using the template provided in this toolkit. Timekeepers should monitor the clock.

Wrapping Up The Conversation

- Allow enough time for groups to begin to think about and discuss actions they could take to address some of the issues raised during discussions.
- Invite each student presenter (one per group) to share the main ideas from his or her group discussion.
- Ask students to join the *On the Table* discussion online using the hashtag [#OTTYouthKY19](#) on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube. If your school has a policy against using social media during school hours, encourage students to join the conversation at home. You may also send notes or other materials to the *On the Table* team at onthetable@bgcf.org.

Facilitator Guidelines

- Create a friendly and welcoming environment.
- Identify one note taker at each table.
- Keep the group focused and on task.
- Make sure everyone is participating and has time to talk.
- Make sure no single student is dominating the conversation.
- Be a participating member of the group.

Note Taker

- Capture the main ideas of your group.
- Complete the note-taking sheet.
- Be a participating member of the group.

Timekeeper

- Monitor the clock.
- Keep the group focused and on task.
- Be a participating member of the group.

Presenter

- Confer with your group to select the main ideas to share with the class.

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?

 Do you think leaving people out of activities and cliques is a form of bullying? Why or why not?

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

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

 What is one thing you can do to make a fellow student feel included?

 If you had superpowers, what is one thing you'd do to make sure every student in your school felt included?

 What is something you can do to make sure your group of friends is welcoming to everyone?

 If you had \$100, how would you spend it to help students who feel left out feel a greater sense of belonging?

 In *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss writes, "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." How can we get students to care more about inclusion and belonging in their school?

 The next time you see a student being left out or bullied, what is one thing you can say or do to safely intervene?

Notes

Use this page for ideas you want to share from your table.

Issue(s) discussed as a group:

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Notes:

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What are your group's big ideas?

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Post-Lesson Reflection

Bell-Ringer Activity

Have students silently respond in writing to the following prompts:

- How did it feel to participate in the *On the Table* conversation?
- What did the conversation make you think about? If there are ideas you did not have a chance to share during the conversation, share them here.
- Would you want to participate in a conversation like that again? Explain.
- If you had to choose one issue that was discussed in your conversation to address, what would it be and why?
- What actions could the class or group take to address this issue?

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

Student Group Activity

Lead a discussion using the questions below, permitting as many students to share their ideas as possible. You may want to use a “one and done” rule so that once a student speaks, that student cannot speak again until everyone in the class has spoken. This can help prevent a small group of students from dominating the conversation. It also will encourage all students to participate.

Explain to your students that on a big sheet of paper they will create an outline of a person, put promising ideas on the head, what they care about on the heart (passions), and what they will do (actions) on the feet.

To make the head, heart, and feet comments more distinguishable, use different colored markers.

Have students respond to the following questions:

- For the heart, what is the most important issue facing your community that you care about?
- For the head, which idea discussed at your *On the Table* conversation do you think has the most potential to bring about change in your community?

Additional prompt: Are there other ideas with the potential to bring about change in Lexington or your community that you did not have a chance to share during the conversation?

- For the feet, share examples of an action you are most likely to take that was inspired by the conversation. What actions could the class or group take to address the issues discussed?
- Document student responses.

Head, Heart, And Feet

- What issue do you care about most in your community? Place it next to your heart.
- What idea discussed in your conversation has the most potential to bring about change in your community? Write it next to your head.
- What action could you take to address this issue? Write it next to your feet.
- Take a picture of your completed drawing and share it on social media using the hashtag [#OTTyouthKY19](https://www.instagram.com/OTTyouthKY19).



WRAPPING UP.

Share Your Notes, Ideas, Or Commitments

Thank your students for sharing their thoughts and experiences. When we listen to each other, learn from one another, and commit to positive action, powerful things can happen. Please wrap up the conversation in the following manner:

- Take a picture of your completed classroom drawing and upload the photo(s) to any social media platform and tag them with [#OTTyouthKY19](#). You may also email them to Blue Grass Community Foundation at onthetable@bgcf.org.

- Leave a message with Blue Grass Community Foundation at [859.225.3343](tel:859.225.3343).
- Send us a note:
Blue Grass Community Foundation
On the Table
499 E. High St., Suite 112
Lexington, KY 40507

Explain to students that their feedback and reflections will be shared with thousands of people participating in *On the Table* conversations and will be included in a post-event report.

After The Conversation: Post-Lesson Reflection

Overview

This lesson can be done immediately following the *On the Table* conversations or within the following days to have students reflect on their experiences. Teachers across the region will share feedback from their students. Blue Grass Community Foundation would like to share the youth voices across the city.

Explain to your students that we want to hear from them. Their voices are an important part of *On the Table* conversations. We value their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and actions.

Objectives

- Reflect on their *On the Table* experience.
- Share their thoughts and hear from others.
- Plan next steps.

Materials

- Big sheet of white paper or flip-chart paper, colored pencils or markers, and a camera.

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.

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**BLUE GRASS
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

WE'RE IN IT FOR GOOD.

bgcf.org/onthetable

#OTTyouthKY19

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

Photos: Sarah Jane Sanders