

STUDENT-LED COMMUNITY CONVERSATION



Table Host Guide

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- The following slides give you a glimpse of the Student-Led Community Conversation format and your role in it.
- Thank for lending your time and energy to our Community Conversation. Without you, we could not get this done, so thank you, thank you, thank you!

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION BASICS

- Bring a diverse group of community members together to address a problem
- Answer two (2) questions with action items that are:
 - Specific
 - Achievable
 - Time-specific
- World Café Format (small group discussions; participants rotate to different tables)
 - Collaborative
 - Conversational
 - Comfortable
- The large group is led by *Facilitators*.
- The small group is led by *Table Hosts*.

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- How can we increase opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in social events, recreational activities and gain access to employment in Berrien County?
- What specifically can I do to increase opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in social events, recreational activities and gain access to employment in Berrien County?

WHO ARE TODAY'S FACILITATORS?

- Marjorie Mayberry: Statewide Autism Resources and Training Project (START)
- Kathy Hickok: Berrien Regional Education Service Agency (RESA)
- Karen Heath: Berrien Regional Education Service Agency (RESA)

YOUR ROLE AS A TABLE HOST

- Facilitate the conversation at your assigned table
- Infuse energy!
- Keep the conversation action-oriented
- Diffuse obstacles!
- Assist participants in switching tables (Color-coded table designations with matching name tag assignments)
- Record and share ideas generated at your table

TODAY'S AGENDA

8:00 - 8:20	Table Host Meeting (Room B)
8:30 – 9:00	Greet guests & offer breakfast items
9:00 – 9:15	Welcome – Why are we here?
9:15 – 9:35	Conversation 1: Question 1
	Participants Switch tables
9:35 – 9:55	Conversation 2: Question 1
	Participants switch tables
9:55 – 10:20	Conversation 3: Question 2
10:20 – 11:00	Large Group: “Harvest” ideas/Action Items/Wrap-up

TABLE HOST RESPONSIBILITIES

- Facilitate brief introductions at your table — just names, remember time is tight!
 - No need for delving deep into explaining perspectives - that will come out with the ideas through the conversations (and time is tight).
- Encourage and ensure that people are jotting down key connections, ideas, discoveries and deeper questions on the placemats as they come up.
 - We will be using this to augment our notes that go into the action plan.
- Stay at your table when it is time for participants to switch. Help facilitators get participants seated quickly.
 - Welcome your next group of participants with the same brief introductions.
 - Get the conversation rolling.
- Jot down the key ideas (from each of your groups) for yourself.
 - You will be sharing briefly with the next group what the previous group came up with.
- During the whole-group wrap up, you may need to get the ball rolling with a comment you heard at your table.
 - We'd prefer for the participants to all take part in this, but if there is hesitancy at the beginning, we will look to the table hosts to kick things off.

ETIQUETTE REMINDERS

Participants may or may not need reminders of this:

- Focus on what matters.
- Contribute your thinking.
- Speak your mind and heart.
- Listen to understand.
- Link and connect ideas.
- Listen for insights to deeper questions.
- Doodle and draw on the placemats.
- Have fun!

FACILITATOR TIPS

The overall goal is to keep all conversation constructive, positive, and focused on solutions, action toward progress, and gathering perspectives and ideas from all participants.

We have listed some common obstacles in conversations. Don't be afraid to use these exact words as a reminder when needed:

- Tangents: when there are long stories, personal struggles, or comments about topics other than the current question, here are a few ideas for getting back on track...
 - "Let me read the question once more."
 - "I see how that gives background on your perspective, but let's talk about how to progress from there."
 - "Maybe that's something the two (three, four) of you could discuss after the time allotted for this conversation."
 - "That's interesting, but let's get back to inclusive thinking."

FACILITATOR TIPS CONTINUED...

- Silence: when there is a prolonged lull or when there are certain individuals not offering their thoughts...
 - “Joe, we’re interested in your take on that.”
 - “You may not have direct personal or professional impact on this question, but sometimes that’s just the fresh perspective called for.”
 - “Think of what you enjoy about living/working in our community. Where do you go in your free time, what do you do, who do you see? What adjustments might have to be made to so that people with physical, social, medical or intellectual differences might also partake alongside you?”
 - “Let me get us started, one idea I had was... Can I get your thoughts on that or hear some of your ideas?”
 - “Anything that comes to mind; we’re not ruling out here and now, were compiling possibilities.”

FACILITATOR TIPS CONTINUED...

- Negativity, listing obstacles: people who are eager to tell you that something won't work because of personal bad experience or because they can quickly list difficulties or obstacles...
 - "We're going to focus on what should happen, not so much on feasibility at this point yet."
 - "I understand you had a struggle in this area, thus illustrating the need to get creative about how to go about it. What are your ideas for progress here?"
 - "If you must list obstacles, for each, you have to offer a possible way around it."
- Dominance: when one person takes over the entire conversation and may even inhibit others from partaking...
 - "Those are good thoughts. Let's see what other people have to say, Mary?"
 - "You have a lot of experience here. Let's see what other new ideas there might be."

GOOD LUCK!

- You are now ready to host a Community Conversation!
- If you need assistance during the event, please raise your hand and a facilitator will come to your table.
- Enjoy the experience! You will leave today feeling fulfilled!