



Family Conversation & Action Guide

Let Your Table Take You Places

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018



on the table.
Your voice matters.



THE CHICAGO
COMMUNITY TRUST
AND AFFILIATES

Thank You for Participating in On the Table 2018 with Your Family

Together, you will be part of an annual event in metropolitan Chicago that will bring residents together at family dinner tables, local restaurants, church basements, community centers, classrooms and more. Community members—young and old—will come together to discuss the ways we can make our communities stronger, safer and more dynamic. From those discussions will come actions that improve lives and communities.

We are so glad that you have decided to join us!



*Thanks to Allstate for their generous support
of On the Table 2018*

About On the Table

No matter where in Chicago you live, you have a story to share—a story that shapes your view of the challenges and opportunities found in our neighborhoods and cities.

At The Chicago Community Trust, we believe that when people come together to share their stories and discuss issues important to them, we all can be inspired to take action that makes a difference. *On the Table* connects individuals and communities of diverse perspectives and backgrounds to do just that.

On May 8, 2018, your family will join thousands of others throughout the Chicago region who are coming together to have conversations about what matters to them. By learning from and with each other, we have the power to impact both neighborhoods and lives.

Why Participate in On the Table?

On the Table is an excellent learning opportunity—a great way to model civic responsibility, learn about other perspectives and explore ways to become more engaged in your community.

On the Table can help your family:

- Make a difference in your community or for the causes you care about.
- Get to know your neighbors and others in the community.
- Have fun and learn together.

A family volunteer organization, the Honeycomb Project had an intergenerational conversation about what matters most to them. As a result, they initiated a series of six new projects to address the issues that emerged. To read more about ways youth development organizations, schools, teachers, young people and their families are taking action visit onthetable.com.



Having the Conversation

During your *On the Table* conversation, share what inspires you, the causes you care about and the ways your family can play a role in strengthening the Chicago region. Your family's conversation will depend on your interests, the ages of the children involved and your family situation. No matter the conversation, the goal is to give everyone a chance to voice their opinions about how to improve our communities together.

Before your discussion, prepare your children for *On the Table* by letting them know you will be having a conversation about your community. You may even take a walk around your neighborhood to help them understand and define its boundaries and characteristics. Let your children know that they are part of a special event, where people across the region are gathering to discuss their hopes, dreams and desires for our community.

Here are some tips to guide the conversation:

Share the Reasons You Care About Your Community

Start by asking everyone to tell one positive memory or story about your community coming together—such as a church picnic, family reunion in a local park or a neighborhood festival. What are the key characteristics of a great neighborhood? What are the positive characteristics or qualities of your community? What are the needs of your community?

Develop Your Child's Understanding of Civic Responsibility

Ask your child to think about and discuss what the duties and obligations are of belonging to a community. What does it mean to work for the common good? What actions can you take to help improve your community?

Ask Your Family Members What They Care About

What cause does each family member care about—and why? Are there issues or problems in your neighborhood that worry or concern you? Do you have an idea to help your school, community or neighbors? What can you do alone or as a family to make a difference in your school, neighborhood or community?

Who is Responsible for Creating and Sustaining Great Communities?

What is your role as a parent, child, student, teacher, etc.? What could you do to be more civically involved in your community? What is one thing you could do to help another person? What things might you do to connect with people outside your community?

Sharing your Experiences

We want to hear from you—and how you have been inspired by your conversation. *On the Table* is a forum for important conversations to take place. We hope it sparks more civic pride, more collaboration and greater progress in our region. Share your success stories, challenges and ideas with us:

- At **www.onthetable.com** or through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) using **#OnTheTable2018**.
- Leave a voice mail message with us at **866.737.6951**.
- Send us a note at:
The Chicago Community Trust
On the Table
225 North Michigan Avenue Suite 2200

5 Guidelines for Having an Open Dialogue

1. Listen carefully and treat each other with respect.
2. Each person gets a chance to talk one at a time.
Make a plan to ensure everyone has an opportunity to respond. Don't cut people off or interrupt.
3. Speak for yourself. Don't try to speak for others.
4. If you feel hurt by what someone says, say so and say why.
5. It's okay to disagree.

Taking Action

After your *On the Table* conversation, you may want to develop a plan for taking action to address the things your family discussed. To get started, here are two ways you can focus your efforts on a specific cause or issue that everyone cares about:

What organizations are you involved with?

Consider volunteering for or donating to a place where your family is already connected—like your child's school, your place of worship, or a favorite museum or park. This will allow your children to directly observe the real impact of your family's efforts.

What activities do you already enjoy?

Brainstorm activities your family already enjoys. There are many community service activities that you can do together. For example, you may decide to volunteer at a local community garden, participate in a charity walk or run, foster an animal from a local shelter or sign up for a local community service project.

Your Community Matters. *Your voice matters.*

We want to hear from all *On the Table* participants about what matters to them. Please fill out the survey and ask your guests to do the same by texting ChiOTT to 797979 to receive a survey link. In the coming weeks, we will be sharing the results of the survey with the community.