




**on the
TABLE**
your voice matters.



FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable | [#OnTheTable219](https://twitter.com/OnTheTable219)



Thank you for participating in Legacy Foundation's *On the Table* initiative with your family.

Together, you will be part of a county-wide conversation that will bring residents together at 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 Lake County stronger, safer and more dynamic.

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



About *On the Table*

The issues facing our region don't often offer a "quick fix." On the contrary, progress will only result from residents and organizations working together to make contributions that add up to a greater solution that helps unite the place we call home.

Your voice matters. On September 26, 2017, your family will join many others throughout Lake County who are coming together to have conversations about what matters to us. 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 learn about other perspectives, explore ways to become more engaged in your community and have fun as a family. *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.



Having the Conversation

During your *On the Table* conversation, you will share what inspires you, the causes you care about and the ways your family can play a role in creating a stronger, safer more dynamic Lake County.

Your family's conversation will depend on your interests, the ages of the children involved and your family situation. The most important component is that everyone actively participates and voices their opinions. The best possible outcome is that everyone will be excited and motivated to talk and listen 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 Lake County 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 are the duties and obligations of belonging to a community. What does it mean to work for the common good?
- **What actions can a person take to help improve their 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 legacy@legacyfdn.org or through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) using #OnTheTable219.
- Call us at 219-736-1880.
- Send us a note at: Legacy Foundation, On the Table, 1000 E. 80th Place, Suite 402N, Merrillville, IN 46410.

5 Guidelines for Having an Open Dialogue

1. Explain why this conversation is different than regular mealtime chats.
2. Listen carefully and treat each other with respect.
3. 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.
4. Speak for yourself. Don't try to speak for others.
5. If you feel hurt by what someone says, say so and why.

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 nonprofit organization. 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.


Want more?

For more ideas about hosting your *On the Table* event, including additional conversation prompts, please visit www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable.

Be sure to follow us on:

 Facebook: www.facebook.com/legacyfdn

 Twitter: [@legacyfdn](https://twitter.com/legacyfdn)

 Instagram: [@legacyfdn](https://www.instagram.com/legacyfdn)

For more information: visit www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable, email us at legacy@legacyfdn.org or call 219-736-1880.

About Legacy Foundation

Legacy Foundation is a community foundation and the leading philanthropic partner in Lake County, Indiana. Through the generosity of a wide base of donors, Legacy Foundation has awarded \$40 million in grants and scholarships to nonprofit organizations and individuals since its founding in 1992. The foundation manages approximately \$50 million in assets and is governed by a volunteer board of directors representing a diverse spectrum of business, education, and the nonprofit and public sectors. For more information visit www.legacyfdn.org.

Legacy Foundation is one of 10 community foundations across the U.S. replicating the *On the Table* initiative this year with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Support for *On the Table* is one part of Knight Foundation's efforts to help cities attract and keep talented people, expand economic opportunity and create a culture of civic engagement. The Knight Foundation believes that successful communities are equitable, inclusive and participatory.



