



on the
TABLE
your voice matters.



YOUTH CONVERSATION GUIDE

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

Thank you for participating in *On the Table*.

On a single day, Tuesday, September 26, you'll be part of an exciting, county-wide initiative to explore the ways in which we can collaborate in order to make Lake County stronger, safer and more dynamic.

Young people are our future. Engaging your students and encouraging them to share their views, values and voices in this discussion only strengthens our community.

We appreciate your facilitation and support in this powerful exercise of civic discourse.

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 also 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 students:

- Deepen their knowledge and understanding of local issues.
- Explore ways to make a difference in their community or for the causes they care about.
- Enhance their sense of connection and commitment to their communities, schools and peers.

What you Will Find in this Guide

- Instructions on how to organize an *On the Table* conversation
- Prep lesson to do with your students prior to your *On the Table* conversation
- A facilitation guide and discussion prompts for the *On the Table* conversation (ideally held on September 26, 2017)
- Follow-up lesson to do with your students after your *On the Table* conversation
- For more resources visit www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable

How to Use this Guide

We have provided a list of suggested ways to engage in *On the Table*. However, do not feel constricted by these options, as they are only suggestions. We encourage you to customize your *On the Table* experience to best suit the individual needs of your school/ community. The goal is for young people to gather and discuss ideas to improve their schools, communities and region and think about ways they can act to make our region more united in the future.

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, city/town officials, 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 school-wide *On the Table* conversation in the lunchroom.

Before Your *On the Table* Conversation

Be sure to visit www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable to register your event. Make sure to denote “schools/youth conversation” as the partner organization in the drop-down menu while registering.

After Your *On the Table* Conversation

In today’s world, this act of coming together has never been more important. *On the Table* 2017 will connect individuals and communities of diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Talking – and listening – to our neighbors is an important first step toward creating a more unified community.

We encourage you to use the “Follow-Up After *On the Table* Conversation, Post-Lesson: Reflection” (page 7) so Legacy Foundation may learn more about your experiences.

Student feedback and reflections will be included in the Impact Report produced by the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE). IPCE will be putting together a report highlighting conversation themes and outcomes from Lake County’s *On the Table* conversations.

Thank you for coming to the table – we’re excited to have you as part of this important conversation. For more information, visit www.legacyfdn.org/onthetable, email us at legacy@legacyfdn.org or call 219-736-1880.

Youth Conversation Lesson

Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to facilitate a group discussion where students generate ideas for improving Lake County.

Objectives

- Reflect on positive work occurring in communities.
- Identify work that still needs to be done.
- Discuss ways in which youth can make a difference.
- Collaborate with peers in a civil discourse.

Materials

- Facilitation Guidelines handout
- Guiding Questions handout
- Note-taking template

Preparation

Have students sit at tables of 6-8 people. Depending on the composition of your group, we recommend mixing up ages, grade levels, and schools (if applicable). In other words, to the greatest extent possible, try to get youth talking with other youth they don't normally get a chance to talk with. We also recommend trying to have at least one adult at each table, but DO NOT require that the adult act as the facilitator. Instead, the adult can act as a participant at the table with a student facilitator. You can prep students to facilitate discussions prior to the *On the Table* event. Use the facilitator guide and prompts provided here to help prepare students.

Bell-Ringer: Introductions

Welcome everyone and explain that they will be participating in an important event where people from across Lake County are meeting today to discuss how we can create a more unified community and imagine the future of Lake County through a program called *On the Table* sponsored by Legacy Foundation, Lake County's community foundation. Explain that the hope is that conversations will generate new ideas, inspire bold solutions and cultivate relationships and collaborations that help to build and maintain strong, vibrant, safe and dynamic neighborhoods.

DURING: Conversations

Using the conversation prompts, the facilitators should guide a conversation, while the note-taker uses the template to capture the main ideas of the discussion, and the time-keepers monitor the clock.

AFTER: Next Steps

- Allow enough time for groups to think about and discuss actions they could take to address some of the issues raised in their discussions.
- Each student presenter (one per group) shares the main ideas from his or her group discussion.
- Ask students to join the *On the Table* discussion online using the hashtag #OnTheTable219 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. You may also send your notes or other materials to the *On the Table* team at legacy@legacyfdn.org.

Facilitator Guidelines

- Create a friendly and welcoming environment.
- 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.
- Identify one note-taker at each table.
- Be a participating member of the group.

Conversation Guidelines

Use the prompts below to spark conversation. You need not use all of the prompts nor go in any particular order. Allow the conversation to flow organically and work to get everyone participating.

- After welcoming everyone, go around the table and have participants introduce themselves and share personal experiences about their community.
- Describe a strong, well-functioning school, community or region. What are the qualities and characteristics? What makes it strong?
- What is the most important issue facing our community?
- What can we each do to make our school, community or region better?
- Let's choose an issue affecting our community and talk more specifically about how we'd address it – with unlimited resources and then, as a challenge, if we only had \$100 and one day to create change.
- Which idea discussed at your On the Table conversation do you think has the most potential to bring about change in your community?

Timekeeper

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

Presenter

- Confer with your group to select the main ideas to share with the class.
- When presenting, be sure to state the issue your group focused on first, followed by the solution(s) your group identified.
- Be a participating member of the group.

Note-Taking Template

Issue(s) discussed as a group (for example, education, employment, health, safety, etc.):

Notes:

Summarize the main ideas discussed as a group:

Share Your Notes, Ideas, or Commitments

Starting on September 26, 2017, you can share your discussion notes, ideas or commitments in the following ways:

- Email your notes, ideas or commitments to legacy@legacyfdn.org.
- Share your notes, ideas or commitments on social media using the #OnTheTable219.

- Mail your notes, ideas or commitments to:

Legacy Foundation
On the Table
1000 E. 80th Place, Suite 402N
Merrillville, IN 46410

Follow-up After On the Table Conversations 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 Lake County will share feedback from their students. Legacy Foundation would like to share the youth voices in the region.

Explain to your students that we want to hear from them. Their voices are an important part of the *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.

Head, Heart, and Feet

BEFORE: 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?

DURING: 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, they 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 (or passions!), and what they will do (the action) on the feet.

Have students respond to the following questions:

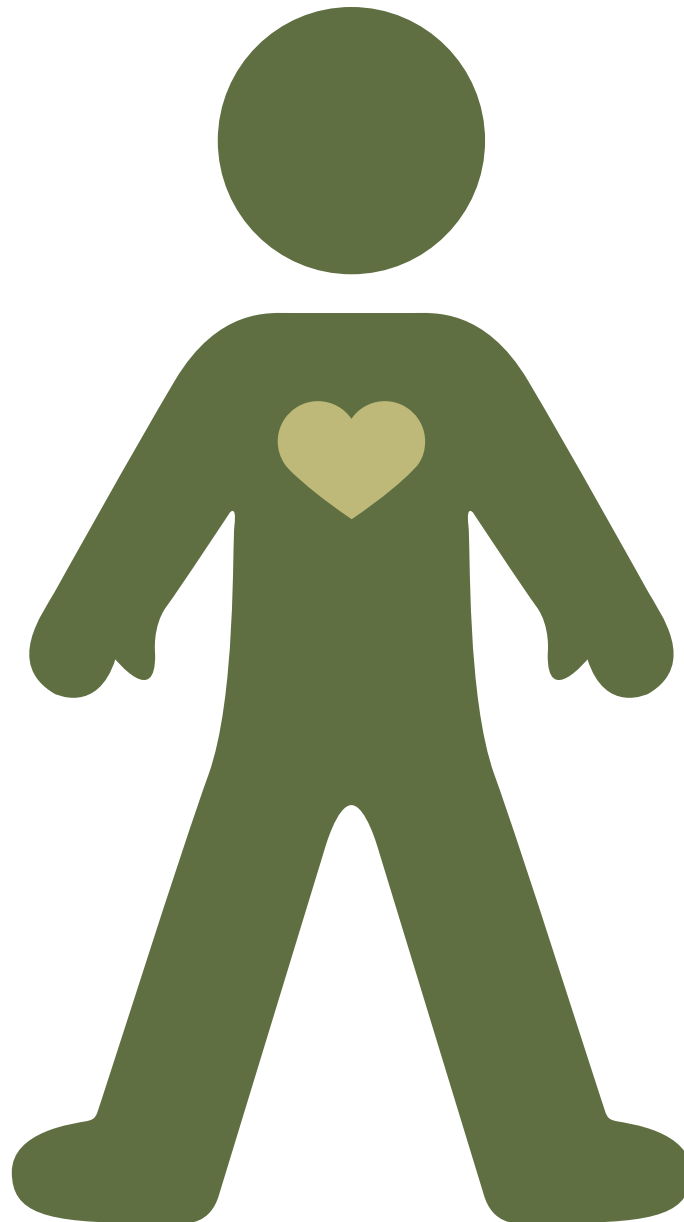
- For the heart, what is the most important issue facing your community that you care about?
- For the head, which idea discussed at your *On the Table* conversation do you think has the most potential to bring about change in your community? Additional prompt: Are there other ideas with the potential to bring about change in 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 inspired by the conversation. What actions could the class or group take to address the issues discussed? Please document student responses. To make the head, heart, and feet comments more distinguishable, you may want to use different colored markers. An example is provided on the next page.

AFTER: Next Steps

Take a picture of your completed classroom drawing and upload the photo(s) to any social media platform and tag them with #OnTheTable219. You may also email them to the *On the Table* team at legacy@legacyfdn.org. Explain to your students that their feedback and reflections will be shared with many people across the county participating in the *On the Table* conversations with an opportunity to be included in the Impact Report produced by the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement.

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 conversations 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 completes drawings and share them via #OnTheTable219.




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.



