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BE STRONG FAMILIES CAFÉ TRAININGS PROMOTE PARENT-LED ENGAGEMENT

Oklahoma City, OK – April 3, 2024 - The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth, in partnership with Be Strong Families, is thrilled to announce upcoming training opportunities aimed at empowering individuals and organizations across Oklahoma to support and strengthen families through community-led initiatives.

Parent Café Training:

Date: Wednesday, April 24, 2024, to Thursday, April 25, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day

Location: 4810 S. 129th Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74134

The Parent Café Training is a two-day immersive workshop designed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to produce and host Be Strong Families' Parent Cafés. Through experiential learning and interactive activities, attendees will delve into the foundational principles of parent-led engagement, fostering community, trust, and Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors.

Parent Café to Vitality Café Add-on:

Date: Monday, April 29, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Online via Zoom)

Following the Parent CAFÉ Training, the Parent Café to Vitality Café Add-on workshop provides an advanced opportunity for certified Parent Café hosts to further enhance their skills. Participants will explore the Be Strong Families Domains of Vitality, learning how to transition from hosting Parent Cafés to Vitality Cafés. This one-day interactive workshop aims to empower participants to strengthen and empower families at a deeper level.

Note: Attendance at and certification in Be Strong Families' Parent Café Training on April 24 & 25, 2024, or October 30 & 31, 2023, is a prerequisite for the Parent Café Vitality Café Add-on.

"Be Strong Families' Café Trainings provide a transformative experience, empowering participants to foster authentic parent-led engagement within their communities," said Caitlin Merritt, OCCY Community Planner.

In addition to the transformative experience described by Caitlin Merritt, Shannon Luper, of Girl Scouts Behind Bars and Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma, highlights the significance of these café trainings, "The 'No Judgement Zone' of the cafes provides comfort in taking off my professional hat and putting on my parent hat to release some of the pressures of single parenting."

Priority for participation will be given to organizations serving the birth to age five population. For more information or to register, please contact Caitlin Merritt at caitlin.merritt@occy.ok.gov or call (405) 606-4907.

In other exciting developments, the Center for Children and Families, Inc., in Norman, has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from United Way Norman to implement Be Strong Families Parent Cafés following their participation in the fall cohort. Additionally, Shannon Luper with Girl Scouts Behind Bars and Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma will be implementing the cafés in the Northeast Oklahoma Correctional Facility in Vinita, OK, bringing valuable insights and support to families within the prison system.

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