



on the table

Your voice matters.

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CENTRAL CAROLINA
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Thank you for participating in *On the Table*.

By participating in *On the Table*, you'll be part of an exciting initiative to discuss not only what's great about our community, but also ways to make it even better — more generous, vibrant, and engaged.

On the Table is an opportunity to gather across our communities and talk about the issues, big and small, that impact our quality of life of our community. How did you get to the Midlands? Why do you stay and what do you want for the future? How do we build and maintain the schools, neighborhoods, and city we want? When we have a chance to talk about our experiences and hear those of others, we connect

and learn what matters to all of us.

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.

At Central Carolina Community Foundation, we know big ideas can spring from small conversations and people invest in what they help create. The youth voice needs to be part of these conversations.

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

About *On the Table*

The issues we face today don't often offer quick fixes. On the contrary, progress will only result when residents, organizations, businesses, and government work together to make contributions that add up to a greater solution than we can achieve on our own. The youth voice matters. Through *On the Table*, your students will join

thousands of others throughout the Midlands 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 neighborhoods, communities 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 the 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 and for causes they care about.
- Enhance their sense of connection and commitment to their community, schools, and peers.
- Have fun and learn together.



What You Will Find in this Guide

- Instructions on how to organize an *On the Table* conversation
- Prep lesson to do with youth prior to your *On the Table* conversation
- A facilitation guide and discussion starters for the *On the Table* conversation
- Follow-up lesson to do with youth after your *On the Table* conversation

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 or community. The goal is for young people to gather and discuss ideas to improve their schools, neighborhoods and city, and think about ways they can make our region stronger in the future.

More information is available at www.OnTheTableCola.org.

Planning Your Conversation

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 or group.

Partner with another teacher(s) at your school to host virtual *On the Table* conversations across classrooms or grade levels.

Invite community members (parents, local business people, clergy, community-based organizations, your City Council member, etc.) to join your students for an *On the Table* conversation.

Organize youths with similar interests (i.e. a school drama club with a local youth community theatre).

Partner with local youth-serving organizations or groups to connect young people across the city or region.

Before Your *On the Table* Conversation

Be sure to visit OnTheTableCola.org to register your event.

After Your *On the Table* Conversation

Have your participants complete the youth survey, if permitted, so the community may learn more about their experiences. More information about the survey is in this guide.

For more information, visit OnTheTableCola.org, email us at OnTheTable@YourFoundation.org or call 803.254.5601.



Youth Survey

Youth will be invited to participate in a specially designed short survey of 4-6 questions provided by Central Carolina Community Foundation. Schools and youth organizations will choose to utilize either an opt-in or opt-out parental permission slip for survey completion. A letter (sample included on next page) will be sent home explaining the survey.

Youth whose parents do not opt them out will receive an email with a link to the youth survey. Individual responses will be kept confidential. The survey data will be summarized as part of the *On the Table* Community Report to highlight youth voices in our region.

If parents wish to review the youth survey, a PDF version of the questionnaire will be available after September 30.

Please email onthetable@yourfoundation.org if you have any questions.

Youth Survey

Please send this to the parents of students who will be participating in advance of *On the Table*.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

On [DATE] students from [CLASS/GRADE/SCHOOL/DISTRICT] will join thousands of other Midlands residents who will come together, either virtually or socially distanced in—person, for small-group conversations. Designed to generate ideas and insights on how to make our community safer, stronger, and more dynamic, these conversations are part of a national civic engagement initiative called *On the Table* that is being implemented in the Midlands by Central Carolina Community Foundation, with support from First Citizens Bank.

We are pleased to offer our students the opportunity to participate in this important dialogue about the future of our community. At the conclusion of their discussions, which will be held [WHEN/WHERE/IN WHAT CONTEXT {virtual/in—person}], student will be asked to complete a brief online survey to share their insights and perspectives about the challenges and opportunities facing our community.

To ensure the health and safety of all youth participating in the conversation, we will be taking the following steps to prevent the spread of Covid-19: **Insert any additional details about your conversation guests need to know** (Will they need to download any software to join the conversation? Will they need to bring their own PPE (mask/hand sanitizer), or will materials be available? Will seating be provided, or will they need to bring a folding chair? Is there a specific question you want them to ponder before arriving? Is there any parking or direction information they need to know?)

This online survey is being conducted by Central Carolina Community Foundation for research purposes only. The survey will take approximately five minutes to complete and participation is voluntary. No personally identifiable information will be collected throughout this survey, and individual responses will be kept confidential.

Language for OPT-IN Letter

If you grant permission for your child to participate in the survey, please return this signed form to [WHOM by DATE].

I have read the information above. I grant permission for my child to take part in the survey.

CHILD'S NAME (print): _____

PARENT NAME (print): _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____

Language for OPT-OUT Letter

If you do not want your child to participate in the survey, please return this signed form to [WHOM by DATE].

I do NOT grant permission for my child to take part in the survey.

CHILD'S NAME (print): _____

PARENT NAME (print): _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____

To learn more about *On the Table*, including information about how you can participate by either hosting your own or attending a public conversation, please visit OnTheTableCola.org.

Sincerely,

Name/Title/Organization or School

Youth Conversation Lesson

Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to facilitate a group discussion where students talk about the issues they care about and brainstorm ideas they think have the most potential to bring about change in our community.

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.

Tools

- Facilitator Guidelines
- Conversation Starters
- Note-taking template
- Virtual meeting platform or space allowing 6 feet between participants

Preparation

If planning to meet virtually, plan for groups of 4-10 people. Depending on the size of your group, using a tool like breakout groups on your virtual meeting platform could be helpful to ensure everyone's voice is heard throughout the conversation. If meeting in person, we encourage groups sizes of 10 people or fewer. Depending on the composition of your group, we recommend mixing up ages, grade levels and schools (if applicable) to get youth talking with people they may not typically engage with. One adult per group or conversation can be present but is NOT required to facilitate the conversation.

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome everyone and explain that they will be participating in a momentous event where people from across the Midlands are meeting today as part of *On the Table*, hosted by Central Carolina Community Foundation. Explain that the hope is that these conversations will generate new ideas, inspire bold solutions, and cultivate relationships and collaborations that strengthen our neighborhoods, community, and lives.

BEFORE: Assigning Roles

Have each group assign a note taker, a facilitator, a timekeeper, and presenter.

DURING: On the Table Conversations

Using the conversation starters, the facilitators should guide a conversation, while the note takers use the template to capture the main ideas of the discussion, and the timekeepers monitor the clock.

AFTER: Next Steps

- Allow enough time for groups to begin to think about and discuss actions they could take to address some of the issues they 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 #OnTheTableCola on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

You may also send your notes or other materials to the *On the Table* team at OnTheTable@YourFoundation.org.



Guidelines

Facilitator

- **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 per group or conversation.

Note-Taker

- **Capture** the main ideas suggested by members of your group.
- **Complete** the note-taking template sheet.

Timekeeper

- **Monitor** the clock.
- **Keep** the group focused and on task.

Presenter

- **Confer** with your group to select the main ideas to share with rest of the participants (if applicable).
- **When** presenting, be sure to state the issue your group focused on first, followed by the solution(s) your group identified.

Conversation Starters

Use the prompts below to spark conversation. You need not use all of the prompts. Allow the conversation to flow organically and work to get everyone participating.

1. What is your favorite thing about your community?
2. Describe what makes a great school, neighborhood, or community. What are the qualities and characteristics? What makes it strong?
3. What is our community doing well?
4. What is the most important issue facing our community?
5. What can we each do to make our school, organization, neighborhood, or city better?
6. Which idea discussed at your *On the Table* conversation do you think has the most potential to bring about change in your community?

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 the 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.

Share Your Notes, Ideas, and Comments

You can share your discussion notes, ideas, or comments in the following ways:

Email OnTheTable@YourFoundation.org

Share on social media using [#OnTheTableCola](https://www.instagram.com/OnTheTableCola)

Mail to: Central Carolina Community Foundation, *On The Table*,
2142 Boyce Street, Suite 402, Columbia, SC 29201



Post-Lesson Reflection

Post-Lesson Reflection Overview

The Head, Heart & Feet Lesson can be done immediately following the *On the Table* conversations or in the following days to have students reflect on their experiences. Teachers across the Midlands will share feedback from their students. Central Carolina Community Foundation would like to amplify the youth voices across the city. 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.

Overview

- Reflect on their *On the Table* experience.
- Share their thoughts and hear from others.
- Plan next steps.

Materials

- Sheet of paper (notebook paper is fine), colored pencils or markers and a camera. You can also use a virtual tool like paint or the whiteboard feature on a virtual meeting platform.

Head, Heart & Feet Lesson

Before

Create an outline of a person. Chart ideas that capture what students most care about on the heart, promising ideas on the head and what students will do (the action) on the feet.

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.

During

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.

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?
- 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?

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?

Please document student responses. To make the head, heart and feet comments more distinguishable, you may want to use different colored markers.

After

Take a picture of your completed classroom drawing and upload the photo(s) to any social media platform and tag them with #OnTheTableCola or save a digital copy. You may also email them to Central Carolina Community Foundation at OnTheTable@YourFoundation.org

Explain to your students that their feedback and reflections will be shared with hundreds of people participating in the *On the Table* conversations.



Head, Heart, & Feet

What issue do you care about most in your community?

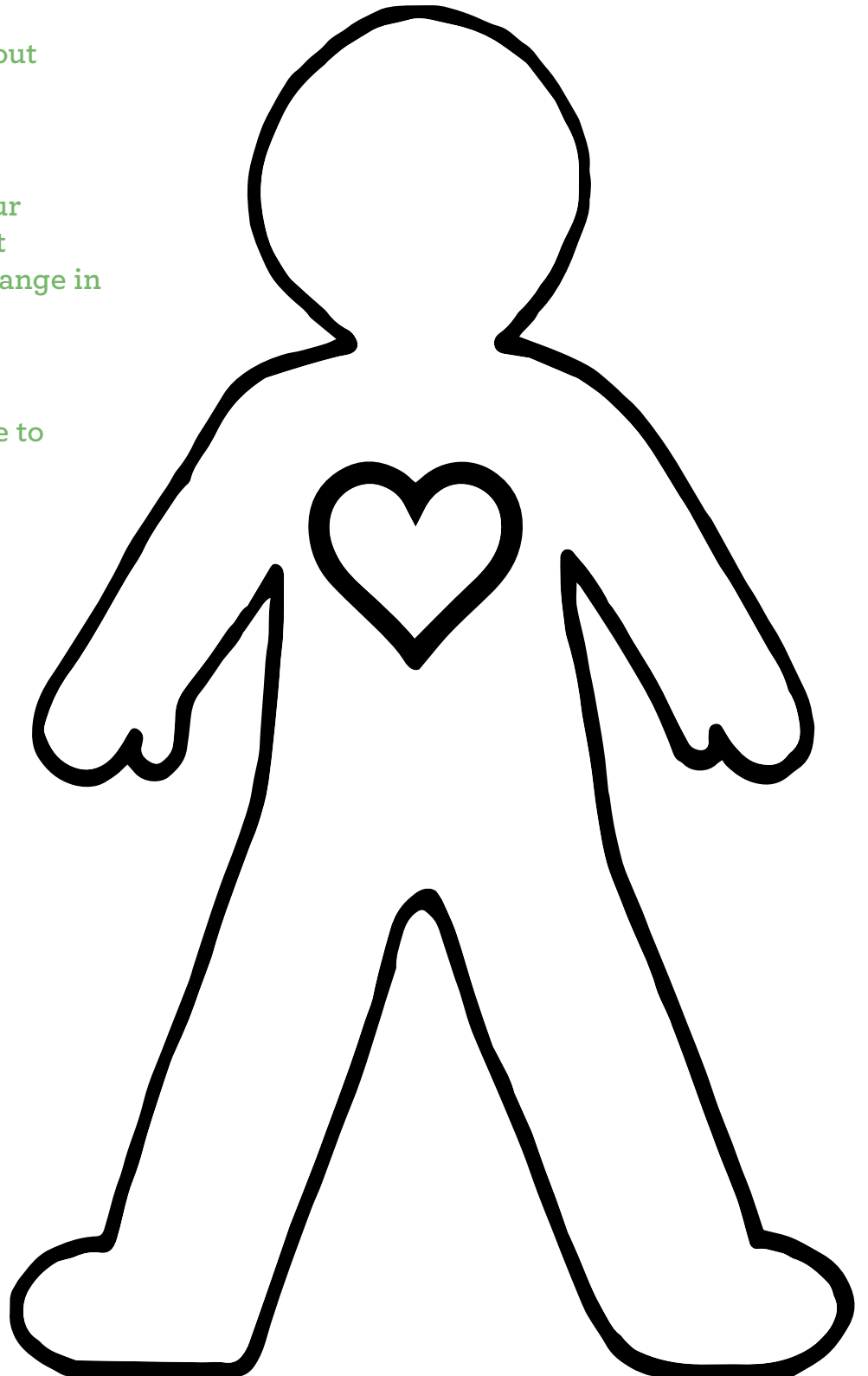
Place it next to your heart.

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.



The Power of Partnership

Be sure to follow the Community Foundation on:

 facebook.com/CentralCarolinaCommunityFoundation  @CCCFTweets  @CCCFpics

For more information:

Visit OnTheTableCola.org

Email us at OnTheTable@YourFoundation.org

Or call 803.254.5601

About Central Carolina Community Foundation

Central Carolina Community Foundation, the Midlands' local center for philanthropy, is a nonprofit organization serving 11 counties in the Midlands of SC by distributing grants and scholarships and linking the resources of individuals, families, corporations, nonprofits, and area leaders to community needs. We were founded in September 1984 by business leaders who wanted to establish a permanent endowment that would enhance the lives of citizens in the Midlands. In addition to *On the Table*, the Foundation leads the Midlands Gives online giving challenge, Connected Communities grants, the One SC Fund, annual scholarships, and more.

For more information, visit www.YourFoundation.org or call 803.254.5601.

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