



LISTENING CAMPAIGN MOTHERS FROM PÁJARO

2016 - 2017

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

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REPORT OVERVIEW



This summary of key findings from the **Pajaro Parent Listening Campaign** draws on data collected from March 2016 to March 2017.

The Pajaro Parent Listening Campaign was launched to deepen an understanding from a parent perspective.

ABOUT PAJARO

Pajaro is a census-designated place (CDP) located in Monterey County, just outside of Santa Cruz County. As a predominantly immigrant farmworker community, Pajaro's majority population (99.9%) of 3,070 is Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Over half (59.3%) of the population is foreign-born, and nearly a third (31.9%) lives below the poverty level. The median household income is \$33,194, with a male median income of \$17,054, and a female median income of \$12,628. The median age is 23.6 years, below the state median of 35.2 years. More than a third of the total population (34.8%) is under 18 years of age. Just over a quarter of the population (25.5%) possesses a high school degree or higher. While data are limited, Pajaro is home to indigenous Mexicans whose native languages include Mixtec and Zapotec, and for whom Spanish or English literacy may be limited. Data from Pajaro Middle School's 2015-16 School Accountability Report Card illustrates that out of total student enrollment (440), the majority of students (98.4%) are Latino, over half (56.6%) are English Learners, and nearly all (92.5%) are identified as "Socioeconomically Disadvantaged."



METHODOLOGY

FLOWER MAPPING



Arts-Based

SANDPLAY



Relational

IMAGE-BASED INQUIRY



Strength-based

KEY LEARNINGS



PARTNER LEADERSHIP

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE + RELATIONSHIP + TRUST + DIVERSE SKILLS + DELEGATION



PARENT COHESION

SUPPORT + TRUST + SHARING + MOTIVATION + INSPIRATION



PARENT RESILIENCE

CONFIDENCE + STRENGTH + HOPE



CHILDCARE DEVELOPMENT

LEARNING + RESPONSIVE + ADAPTIVE



CHILD ADAPTATION

STRUCTURE + SEPARATION + COMFORT



PARTNER LEADERSHIP AS THE FOUNDATION

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE + RELATIONSHIP + TRUST + DIVERSE SKILLS + DELEGATION

The emergence of a partner leadership team resulted in a foundational element for the Pajaro Listening Campaign. The team, composed of four female leaders, each from a different organization, was new to working together in this manner. Two of the partners had a history of working together in the community. Towards the end of the listening campaign, an additional female leader joined the team, and one to three of the partners consistently participated and co- led the parent listening sessions. Each partner conducted parent outreach to identify and recruit parents at the onset of the campaign, and continued to inform participating parents about upcoming listening sessions. The four partner organizations were: Assumption Church, Parents as Teachers, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, and the Pajaro Family Resource Center.

The development of this cross-sectoral team of partners was built upon a reflective practice of pre- and post- listening session conversations. While a key purpose of these partner meetings was to prepare for the parent listening sessions and consider the learnings and next steps from each session, the approach to the work paralleled the relational design of the parent listening sessions. As such, the partner team utilized the image-based inquiry methods as openings to their planning and reflection sessions prior to their utility at parent sessions. In this way, the partners “pilot tested” the methods, learned about each other, and supported each other in trusting environment, grounded in shared values, and in recognition of each other’s skills, talents, and expertise. The Parent Listening Campaign sessions shifted from being co-led with the consultant to partner-led.

A partner team was formed that was built upon **trust, shared values, and recognition** of each other’s skills, talents, and expertise.



PARENT COHESION AS THE ROOTS

SUPPORT + TRUST + SHARING + MOTIVATION + INSPIRATION

I would like my mom at my side, but that is not possible.

The food is not the same here. It tastes different. The ingredients don't taste the same.

We cook the same food here at Christmas, but it was happier in Mexico. We would always eat together and be together. It was beautiful.

- Participating Parent reflections translated from Spanish

A parent support network appeared to develop out of the parent listening sessions. Over time, parents increasingly demonstrated a growing sense of social cohesion.

From an individual reflective process, the parents began offering each other support and encouragement, sharing ideas for leadership and cross-learning, reflecting on the learnings as a collective, and identifying similar beliefs, aspirations, experiences, memories, feelings, and desires.

Some common themes that emerged out of the inquiry included the following.

- Geographic separation of families in Mexico
- Children with special needs
- Difference in food in US
- Immigration concerns
- Childhood in Mexico
- Prenatal challenges



PARENT RESILIENCE AS VIBRANT FLOWERS

CONFIDENCE + STRENGTH + HOPE

The most prominent learning observed from participating parents was a sense of resilience. The image of a bold, upright flower, utilized throughout the inquiry symbolized this learning, and was referenced with frequency by participating parents.

While innumerable challenges - some shared - affect many participating families, the narrative that rose up most evidently may best be described by one of the participating parent's flower map. With four children in the image and rain above, the mother shared that "storms do come, but we have umbrellas."

Additional observations that point to this outcome include the following.

- Increased confidence in speaking, by standing up while sharing, saying their names in an audible voice, not covering their face while speaking, and speaking more audibly
- Sharing increasingly personal information about themselves and their families
- Taking the activities and learnings from the sessions home to use with their children and communicate with their children

More important than anything is to be a mother.

I still have the sandplay and my children play with it. Now they want to go to my childhood home in Mexico.

Reflected on my family. I was transported back to Michoacan. We returned to our childhood.

- Participating Parent reflections translated from Spanish



CHILDCARE DEVELOPMENT AS NUTRIENTS

LEARNING + RESPONSIVE + ADAPTIVE



With child development expertise as part of the partner team, an outcome of the parent listening sessions was improved childcare provision. The number and range of children at the onsite childcare during the listening sessions was substantial. On average, two dozen children, ranging in age from infants to five year olds, were in the childcare. A rather chaotic environment at the church illustrates the early listening sessions at the church, which transformed into a near silent environment by the last session.

Issues observed by the team's child development partner during debrief sessions involved separation, socialization, special needs, potty training, tantrums, routines, and limit setting. With leadership and support from the team's child development partner, the following changes in childcare were established: appropriate number of childcare providers (3), age-appropriate stations, constructive play activities and toys, and a mini training for the childcare providers



CHILD ADAPTATION AS BUDDING GROWTH

STRUCTURE + SEPARATION + COMFORT

The combination of a partner team supporting parent participants (depicted as the sun and rain in the flower mapping), the sense of parent cohesion (depicted as the full garden of flowers in the flower mapping), and the individual, bold flowers standing tall, seemed to have resulted in some changes in the children, themselves. Increased parent self-confidence, creative activities to engage with and communicate with their children, and singing together with their children are some of the ways in which participating parents appear to have transferred the experience of the parent listening sessions directly to parenting. The adaptation to separation at the last session was a visible outcome of change in the children.





RESEARCH TO ACTION: PARENTS LEADING

A VISION FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

Participating parents of the Pajaro Listening Campaign completed their inquiry with the following **shared VISION for change.**

FAMILIES COME TOGETHER, HAVE FUN, LEARN, AND KIDS SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER KIDS

CHANGES

- Outdoor nature experiences, access to parks, beaches, and other local/regional spaces
- Safe, free, fun, accessible recreational center (onsite childcare/adult classes)
 - baking, cooking, sewing, English, computer literacy, Zumba, first aid training, bigger libraries

STRATEGIES

- Develop leadership skills, lead, mentor, cross-learn, support each other
- Offer translation for multiple language needs including Mixtec and Zapotec
- Support for self care, body awareness, and mindfulness
- Obtain immigration and family supports

ROOT CAUSES

- Few parks, only little parks, unaware of outdoor opportunities, unaware of places in nature that are close
- Lack of transportation, don't drive, don't have a car, don't have a driver's license, don't know how to drive
- Lack of services and resources for children and families in Pajaro

It makes me happy to know that others are interested in what we think.

- Participating Parent reflections translated from Spanish

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