

PARENTS' CAFÉ



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Communication

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A
PARENTS CAFE

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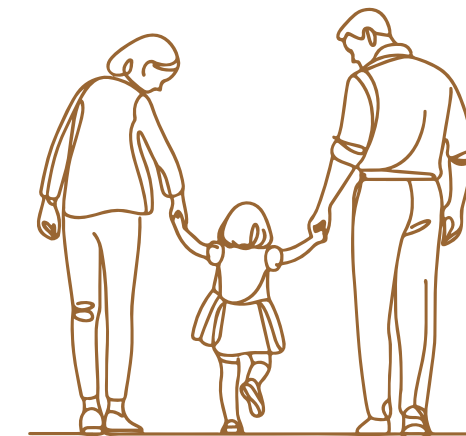
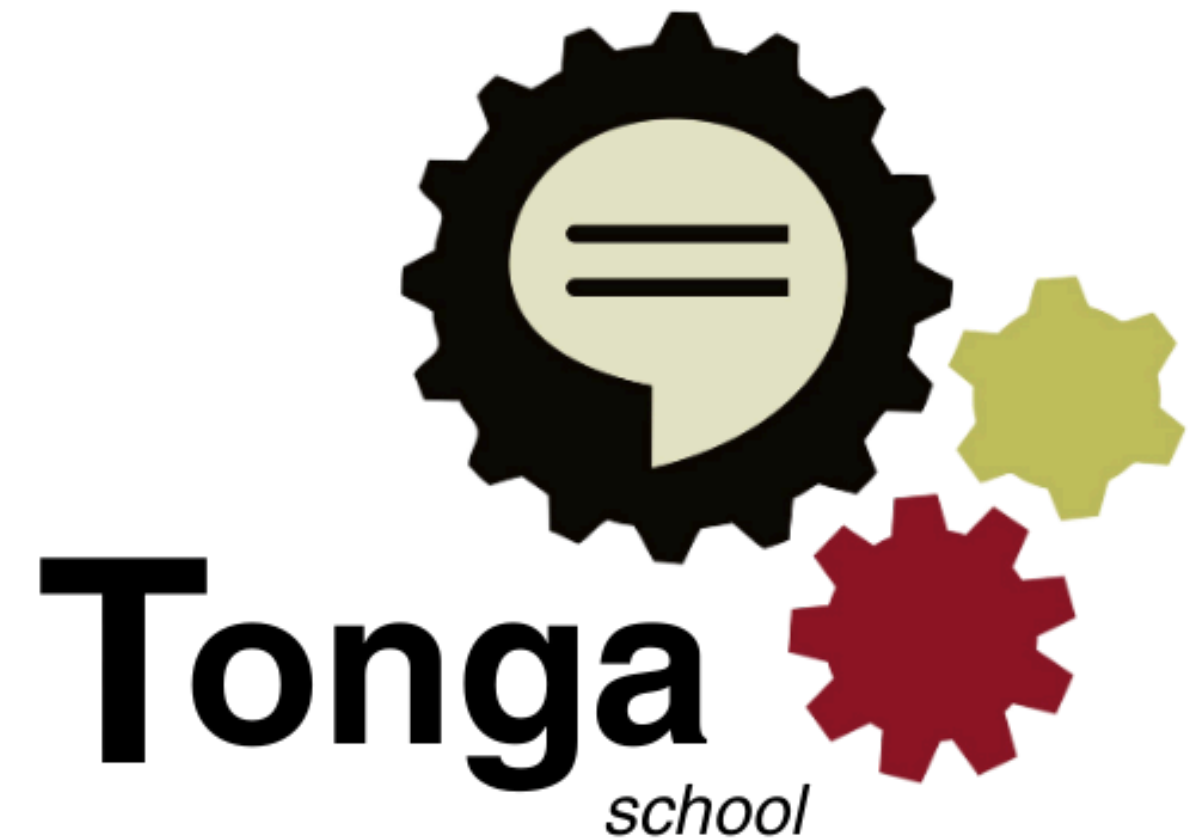
What is a Parents' Café?

This guideline will help you, as parents, to create, set up and deliver your very own Parents' Café **in your child's school!**

A Parents' Café is a **relaxed and welcoming space** for **parents** to connect with each other and the school community. Participation is entirely voluntary and in an informal space. It's a space **led by parents and for parents**. The primary goal is to **build better communication** between parents and the school while celebrating and recognising cultural and linguistic diversity.

Additionally the Parents' Café can **help parents to connect**, learn from other parents and allows newly arrived parents to discover more about the local culture. A Parents' Café can help the school to learn what resources parents and students need, allow them to give advice to parents in an informal setting and learn from the experiences of parents.

Parents can learn from one another and build relationships in a **supportive environment**.



How to set up a Parents Cafe?

Choose a location, ideally within or close to the school.

-> Approach the relevant staff within the school to gain access to a meeting room or communal space free of charge.

-> If within the school is not possible, check local organisations that can support the initiative, for example, the partners within the project. They perhaps have a space you can meet!

Pick a regular time

Find a day and time that suits most parents (e.g., **after dropping the children at school**, early evening or **even** after school).

Do not forget to put up Parents Cafe posters

Other practical things to prepare:

- Toys or books for children - parents will be responsible for their own children but something to entertain little ones is needed.
- Tea, coffee, and light snacks.
- Keep it casual
- Discuss school issues that concern many parents

Stay organised:

- Suggest topics to motivate participation.
- Encourage parents to take initiative.
- Involve school staff casually: Invite them to drop by, but attendance is optional.
- Form a “Family Team” to initiate the Parents Cafe.



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How to run a Parents' Café?

Running a Parents' Café should be a simple, welcoming, and consistent experience for families.

To make sure as many families can attend as possible, run a poll to decide on the best meeting time that avoids clashes with school runs or work hours (for example: create a WhatsApp group for example).

Each session can have different themes—such as parenting challenges, navigating the school system, or school activities—to engage everyone and to share. the Parents' Café can also be kept simple: just focus on one topic.



Session Ideas

These are just some ideas to get you started! Give the opportunity to all parents (or you) to suggest topics for Parents' Café.

Parents' Café sessions should be standalone gatherings rather than linked sessions. It's important to remember that some parents will attend everyone, while others may come and go or drop in occasionally.

Session 1: Parents' Café + Tonga

- Give each parent/school staff a chance to introduce themselves
- Present the Family Booklet. Perhaps pick one page to go through (for example: the school rules).
- Remember to discuss about meeting next time and next weeks topic.
- We recommend running each Parents' Café for no more than 2 hours — no strict agenda needed, just a balanced and engaging pace.



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Make sure to warmly welcome any new faces at each Parents' Café. A friendly introduction helps everyone feel included and part of the community. Be aware of cultural differences.

They can say their name, country of origin or languages. However,—make it clear there is no pressure to share. How you do it is up to you — perhaps a quick round of names or an icebreaker.

Inviting Others to Join

To help Parents' Café remain an ongoing and sustainable activity, it's important to connect with new parents and build a sense of community both online and in person.

Here are some suggestions of ways to reach out and stay connected!

Personal Invitations

Use effective means of communication
Inform them about topic, place and time.

Ask the school to dedicate a section on the school website



Parents Ambassadors

Be a Parents Ambassador and engage with other parents.

Just a quick chat about the purpose of Parents' Café and a few tips on how to spread the word or invite friends can go a long way. Ambassadors might also help make others feel at ease during sessions or share updates in parent groups or chats.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS



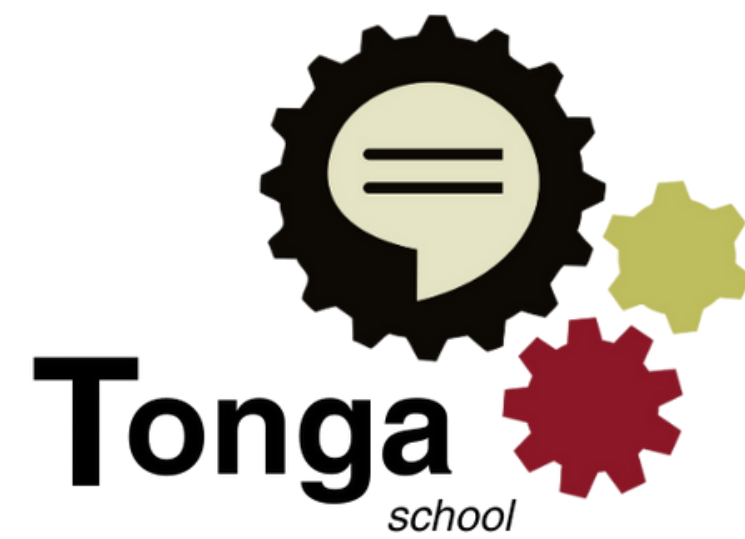
Cultural Sensitivity: Respect and celebrate differences in customs and traditions.



Keep It Casual: Interactive and informative



Provide Childcare: Create a space where toddlers are entertained, allowing parents to focus on discussions.



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