



EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE INFORMATION

Episode Title: San Mateo Parents Club

Episode # & Date: Episode #6 – December 5, 2019

Episode Description: Today Judy profiles a tremendous asset for new and young parents, the San Mateo Parents Club.

Episode Web Page: <https://sanmateofocus.com/san-mateo-parents-club/>

TRANSCRIPT

Intro:

I'm Judy Gordon, and *this* is San Mateo Focus. San Mateo Focus is a weekly podcast that gives you a shot of San Mateo information.

Episode:

Nothing brings out the divergent emotions of joy, love, fear, and uncertainty quite like the experience of becoming a parent for the first time. Although some people seem to move into that phase of their lives with ease, for many people, it takes time and support to boost their confidence and guide them as they experience the early days of parenting. Luckily, the San Mateo Parents Club has a history of creating a local network for new parents.

The San Mateo Parents Club is a community of local parents that encourages friendship and advice. The Club was started in 1994 and now has over 350 active members, who come from all parts of San Mateo and the surrounding areas. It provides support for parents with children from birth through kindergarten. Since people can join when they are expecting their first child, membership to the Club makes a good baby shower gift.

The most comprehensive and cost-effective membership type is the *Household Membership*, that provides all the benefits for parents that the club offers. There is also an option to join as a single parent, or, if you want to continue your membership after your children enter first grade, you can purchase an alumni membership.

The experience of parenting young children in San Mateo has changed since 1994. When the club initially began, it was more geared toward stay-at-home Moms. Over the years, the club made a priority of being inclusive of working moms, and two years ago, the club officially changed from the San Mateo Mothers Club to the San Mateo Parents Club. According to Jenn Etheridge, who is currently the Club's Vice President, the name change reflects that they want to be inclusive of all types of parents and families, of all shapes and sizes. The club also understands that working parents can't always participate in the daytime events. The household membership allows Grandparents and caregivers to participate in the activities with the children,



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Membership really benefits people who are new to the area and want to meet other adults and kids in San Mateo and find playgroups for their children. Others are interested in the adult social aspects, and the chance to get to know other parents in the area, separate from their kids. The benefits of Club membership are numerous. Besides playgroups and childrens' outings, the communication aspect of membership is comprehensive. There is a monthly newsletter, a community forum, and a private Facebook group for members. Over 25 local businesses provide discounts to members, and the "In a Pinch" program provides meal delivery assistance to club members during a family emergency or other major life event, like the birth of a new baby, an illness, or surgery.

Speaker events are offered on a variety of topics. They are varied based on member interest, and often include articles in the monthly newsletter for members who miss the speaker. Some of the most popular speaker topics have been: Finding the right preschool; Feeding tips for babies; Feeding tips for toddlers; Estate and financial planning; and Speaking so kids will listen.

Parents who join the club find the friendship and support that they get from a group of other parents is really valuable. Plus, they like that someone else is planning the events for them so that they don't have to spend time investigating activities to keep their children engaged. Parents who meet as a result of membership in the club stay friends long after their children have aged-out because the connections in those early days of parenting are so strong and special.

Members pay attention to other areas of the community, too. When you're a new parent with so much going on, it's hard to also donate your time away from your home. The club has a Community Service role on the Board that organizes events and drives for members.

For instance, the club will organize ways to donate diapers or backpacks to Samaritan House. The Club held a fundraiser for the Paradise fire victims last fall and connected with a parent group in Chico so that they could directly help families. The club also has made a donation to United Way after the fires.

Even though the over 350 members are all focused on networking around being a new parent, it doesn't mean that everyone has the same interests. To address those interests, there are a number of different subgroups that are formed within the club focused on adult interests outside of kids. Some of the most active groups are the knitting group, the book club, and a game night club. And, there are also large club events. For their winter celebration, the Parents Club will be renting out CuriOddyssey in Coyote Point for an evening.

The current President of the club is Margot DuManoir. The club is led by a group of active parents who volunteer for a 13-month position. That allows for a month transition each year. It's a relaxed organization that works, there is rarely a need for elections, and people can share responsibility for a position. If you're interested, you can participate.



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Outro:

Okay, that's all the time we have for this episode. Have a great week. Thanks to Jack Radsliff for the original music to this podcast. If you'd like more information about our sponsor or the topics in today's episode, go to sanmateofocus.com.

— end of episode —

PODCAST OVERVIEW

Podcast Name: San Mateo Focus

Logo:



Description: Whether you're new to San Mateo, California, or a long time resident, the San Mateo Focus Podcast is the place to learn about local history, good eats, and things to do.

Website: <http://www.sanmateofocus.com>

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Producer/Co-host: Peter Radsliff

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