

**Rural Region Quality Parenting Initiative Committee (QPI)  
Meeting Minutes - December 14, 2022**

In Attendance:

Kevin Quint	Warren Melhorn	Karissa Lemme
Angelina Blare	Lori Nichols	Kelly McKiddie
Kyle Crutcher	Tawney Simpson	Shelby Riley
Shana Rogers	Shelly Roering	

1. Welcome and Introductions –
  - ***Karissa from QPI/Youth Law Center explained how QPI came to fruition. Several years ago, the Youth Law Center organization out of San Francisco pursued litigation with Florida after learning of issues such as kids sleeping in offices and institutionalizing babies since there were no homes to place them in. After several cases they decided to implement a system to help organizations do better work and to avoid repercussions on the back end. QPI is under the Youth Law Center. Karissa has spoken at our last four Pre-Service Trainings and will also continue speaking at our Pre-Service Trainings with prospective foster parents giving an overview on QPI, what it is, it's principals and the cultural change.***
  - ***The next Pre-Service Training starts 1/21/22. We currently have 18 families and 30 people signed up from 10 counties across Nevada.***
2. Recap of the November meeting – ***Please see minutes attached to invite.***
3. Announcements & quick stuff
  - a. Caregiver Courier – ***The next newsletter will come out in January.***
  - b. Binti and foster care licensing updates – ***No update***
  - c. Foster Parent Handbook – ***We have both an electronic and paper copy of the Relative Foster Care and General Foster Care Handbook available. Laurie Jackson, Rural Region Manager is working on creating a handbook that will be used by case workers and social workers.***
  - d. Training opportunities: The Ripple Effect in February 2023 – ***This is an excellent trauma training. If you have a license, you can get CEU's for attendance. If not, we still encourage you to attend. We also encourage foster parents to attend this training since it gives unique ways of working with trauma. They offer a book for purchase that describes fight, flight, freeze and PTSD, without referring to them in those words. Kevin will get information on this training to the committee.***
  - e. See the article: “Why Christmas and the Holidays are Difficult for Children in Foster Care”
4. What are your ideas for supporting foster homes and children during the Christmas Holiday Season?

- *We have Angel Tree currently happening, which allows foster parents to get gifts for the foster children. A few years back the Division decided they no longer wanted all the gifts, only gift cards. However, that didn't work well, and we brought back all the gifts, so the children would have something to open on Christmas. This shows the kiddos that we care and they're important and cared for. Shelby and Lori also worked hard on Sweets with Santa. This was opened to foster families in the Carson and Fallon area and included Santa, cookie decorating, games, Karaoke, pizza, and hot chocolate.*
5. In response to the discussion item from the November meeting entitled, "Discussion on the dwindling number of homes, how to recruit, and how to retain the ones we have," two great ideas came up:
    - a. *Develop a QPI Facebook page for the Rural Region: Report from working group – Ty, Kevin, and Shelby are all part of this committee (Kyle also volunteered to help out). They're working with Karla Delgado (Public Information Officer for the Division) to see what we can and can't do with the Facebook page. The Committee wants it to be independent from the DCFS Facebook page but permission from the Department is still needed. The plan is to link to other social media accounts and have it be interactive. This Facebook page could have articles, announcements, and posts on QPI, as well as be a platform to provide information on how to infuse QPI principals in the work we do. It would allow open communication and allow foster parents and others to talk back and forth and share information and answer questions. This will be open to everyone, including foster parents, former foster parents, former foster youth, birth parents, and case workers. The goal is to make this a safe place and be a vehicle to make QPI a bigger part of what we do. This will hopefully increase foster home recruitment and retention.*
    - b. *Develop a Foster Parent Group via Teams: Report from working group – Kelly, Shelby and Kevin are on this committee and have a goal to open communication with foster parents and the Division. There will be quarterly TEAMS meetings with themes such as "ask the caseworker". Kelly will create a Survey Monkey to see when a good time would be to meet and how long everyone would like the meeting to be. They're hoping to get the first meeting set up for January to meet everyone and discuss the subjects the foster parents would like to discuss.*
  6. Update on Comfort Calls and Ice Breakers
    - a. *Liz Stetson and Dana Gray from the Quality Assurance Unit will present to us at our meeting in January -The QA Unit is presenting Comfort Calls and Ice Breakers to new workers. They will give us their presentation at our meeting in January. The QPI Committee could possibly help the Division make Comfort Calls and Ice Breakers sustainable and keep them in the front of the staff's mind.*

7. Update on the Champions Program and moving forward – *Shelby attended the Champions Conference in Reno in September. Champions is a six-month course, containing five hours a month and provides a deeper aspect of QPI, making the attendee a “resident expert”. Kevin is looking into the Division becoming a Champions site, but the cost for this is \$13,000. He will need to go to the Division to justify the cost and show the benefits of being connected to QPI, including training and recruitment. QPI is more effective if the training for foster parents is coming from an expert they know in their area, rather than someone out of state. The next Champions training cohort is in July. Please let Kevin know well in advance if you’d like to be considered since the cost is \$2,500 per person to attend.*
8. Transition Planning (QPI Committee goal: “Decrease trauma and disruptions through improved transition planning”) – *The Division does have a Transition Policy, however transitions in a rush can be chaotic. It’s easy to make decisions without being aware of the trauma this may cause to the children or adults. Transitions need to be as prioritized as Comfort Calls and Ice Breakers and should have some clear instructions. This is difficult since all transitions are different. Some suggestions and thoughts from members of the Committee included:*
  - *Create a framework showing week by week information such as when the child will move, visits, etc.*
  - *Have a paper with questions the social worker can answer, especially if we’re doing something against the normal procedure.*
  - *Make sure everything is explained to the receiving party, foster parent, and child if old enough, so they know what to expect.*
  - *Train case workers to know it’s ok that things don’t always go according to plan and it’s ok to tell the placement “I’m sorry”, rather than defending your decision.*
  - *Communication should be a priority between the two homes when workers want to move a child.*
  - *The QPI website has a lot of resources about transitions at [qpi4kids.org](http://qpi4kids.org). The Just in Time Training can be found at [qpinevada.org](http://qpinevada.org).*
9. Who else should we involve in the Rural Region QPI Committee? – *Please forward Kevin’s invite to community members, former foster youth, birth parents and staff. The goal is to eventually have more outside members than staff.*
  - *Angelina informed us that she’s been working with the Lifestyle Homes Foundation, who offered financial backing to do things for foster children. She will talk with Kevin, Shelby, and Kelly for ideas on how they can make an impact.*

**10. Set next meeting – *The next meeting will be January 18, 2023. Please let Kevin know if you'd like to add anything to the agenda. Karissa said that she thought we had a very productive meeting, especially considering it's the middle of December!***

**11. Adjourn  
*Meeting adjourned at noon***