

Rural Region Quality Parenting Initiative Committee (QPI)
Monthly Meeting Agenda
July 19, 2023; 11:00 am to Noon (Meeting held via Teams)

Attending:

Ashley Smith	Bobbette Jamison-Smith	Brittany Best	Dorothy Pomin
Jessica Carstens	Jhoanna Presswood	Kelly McKiddie	Kevin Quint
Kyle Crutcher	Kylie Riske	LaTanya Cash-Calhoun	
Lori Nichols	Megan Tingle	Melanie Jones-Bluford	
Melanie McCormick		Mia Kuzens	Rebecca Burt
Shana Rogers	Shelby Riley	Shana Rogers	Suzette Ramirez
Tawney Simpson	Tim Baran	Warren Melhorn	Sunshine Perry

1. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. New Chief at FPO
 - i. Meagan Tingle- a new Chief at FPO, Permanency, Adoptions, ICWA. She was a foster care specialist, recruitment, and hopefully someone will be filling her old position in August. She talks with Washoe, Clark County, nationally, and tries to get resources together and tries to keep up.**
 - b. New Contractor working on a very special project
 - i. Dorothy Pomin- she used to work with DCFS. She will be working with Licensing and to work on the retention of homes.**
2. Recap of the June meeting
 - i. The recap of the meeting was sent out with the meeting invite and agenda**
3. Announcements & quick stuff
 - a. Caregiver Courier
 - i. It just came out- It was to cover summer activities: camps, activity books and resources that we will be able to send out to our homes and our workers for the kids. Please send Shelby anything that we may be able include for our homes.**
 - b. Foster care licensing updates and the Pre-Service Training
 - i. Lori Nichols- We have had 4 General foster care homes licensed since April- 1 Carson, 1 Fernley, 2 Elko. We have 3 in Carson, 1 in Lovelock, and 1 in Fernley almost ready to license. We are doing recruitment events all the time. We do have 36 families signed up for our training- we have maybe 24/25 families to pull through our training that will be over on August 3rd. We are starting our background checks a bit earlier than we normally do, and we are hoping that this motivates our families to stay and keeps them engaged.**
 - c. July is “Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Month”
 - i. Kevin reminded everyone that the theme for the QPI/Just In Time Website for July is “Drowning Prevention.”**

Kevin also announced that QPI is putting on a webinar entitled, “Nurturing Bonds and Empowering Communication” 11 AM. Kevin will be sending out the link for it- it only takes a few seconds to register!

4. QPI Themed Conversation and Sharing: How can we problem solve the respite issue for our parents so they can keep their “pitchers” full to care for our kids properly? Also and along those lines, what can be done to retain foster homes that are already licensed?
 - a. Lori Nichols-“This is a retention issue. There are a lot of unknowns about respite. I think that respite should be a requirement for our foster families, so that they get some down-time, so that they do not get burned out. Another state requires it and it made all the difference.”
 - b. Dorothy Pomin-“Maybe we should look at licensing a few folks just for respite, for when they don’t want to foster all the time.”
 - c. Lori Nichols- “We are gentle with our homes, especially when they are just beginning, so we try to not overextend.”
 - d. Kevin Quint- “Respite care over a certain amount in a year is taxable income according to the IRS. This is not meant to discourage but to be aware and let homes know.”
 - e. Megan Tingle- “We should try to consider the normalcy option, not just the paid option, such as Grandma.”
 - f. Kelly McKiddie- “A fair number of couples are being denied respite and a bunch of couples don’t live near their family where they can get respite. What if for the first two months after they’re licensed, they only do respite?”
 - g. Dorothy Pomin- “What about the older foster homes, if we asked them to do respite, because they know how much respite means to the homes, and we keep the new homes for longer placements?”
 - h. Ashley Smith- “We encourage a signup sheet for respite (this week this family can do respite, and so on) and it also shows that they might be willing to repay the favor later.”
 - i. Dorothy Pomin- “The taxation is a really good point. In my day, we wouldn’t get ‘paid’ for respite, even for a few hours, and we would trade off, I’ll take your kids for this time, and you’ll take my time for this time, and it would get around the tax thing.”
 - j. Lori Nichols- “We need to make sure that we are making good choices regarding our parenting choices. Make sure that our standards of normalcy aren’t being stretched too thin.”
5. QPI Champions
 - a. Conference in San Diego in September: We can send two people
 - i. **Rebeca Stoffel and Kevin Quint will be going to San Diego in September**
 - b. Update on DCFS becoming a Champions site (see handout)
 - i. **This is a work in progress. Kevin has submitted a proposal to Rural Region Manager Laurie Jackson for DCFS to become a Champions site. The Champions program is an opportunity for the Division to take a “deeper dive” into QPI by having staff and partners trained to not only learn, embrace, and spread the word about QPI but also to deepen the child**

welfare system's resolve and ability to make QPI part of all that is done in the rural child welfare system.

6. Presentation on Comfort Calls and Ice Breakers: Tanya Calhoun, QA Unit
 - a. **The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit has been tracking the Comfort Calls from the rural areas from January to May. We have about 3-4 cases where the worker is unable to complete the Comfort Call, and this is usually due to the parent who is incarcerated. Other reasons for Comfort Calls not being made include, a parent was unresponsive, a parent was in a different facility (or location), a case worker was not making a notation that they completed a comfort call, a parent was not interested, etc.**
 - b. **In some instances, the foster parent are making the comfort calls. The case workers are supposed to make notations if there are barriers if the foster parent is unable to complete a comfort call.**
 - c. **Brittany- "When I facilitate the comfort call, I make sure that the foster parent and the biological parent are both there so that there is a mediation, but both sides are there."**
 - d. **Many inmates have access to phone systems inside the facility. We may want to look into something to set up when an inmate has a child in the foster care system.**
7. Update on having a conversation with Louisiana about Comfort Calls
 - a. **Kevin had a meeting with Carole Shauffer. We are going to try to create a meeting with the rural Louisiana division and our division to discuss their process on Comfort Calls. If possible, Kevin will ask them to present to us at a future meeting.**
8. Continued discussion on engaging birth parents-Melanie McCormick, Carson City CASA Director

Melanie addressed the group: "Our parents, when first starting, have emotions that are flying (anger, ashamed, mad, upset, fear, etc.). It is hard to break through to them because we speak Child Welfare, and they see us only as that those emotions. Kevin and I have been looking at a mentor program for our new parents. This is where the new parents can talk to parents that that previously had their children removed (and reunified or had a family member get guardianship) and create a questionnaire that we will give our new parents so that they know there is someone is in their corner. We should be talking to some of the service providers in the area to make sure we are not duplicating anything! And I am looking at funding because I am a non-profit here in Carson. We can write for funding and receive it.
9. Workgroup updates
 - a. **Funding Workgroup – Did not discuss**
 - b. **QPI Facebook Page Subcommittee report- Kevin reminded everyone of the QPI FB page.**
 - c. **Caregiver Corner Subcommittee report**
 - i. **We continue to have a small handful show up. We give reminders and we have different people show up each time. There was more sharing of**

resources and resources this last time, which is positive! We don't have any regulars, yet.

10. Transition Planning (*QPI Committee goal: "Decrease trauma and disruptions through improved transition planning"*)
 - a. Review and comment on the Transition Document that was developed in 2017
 - i. We do put this document in our Pre-Service Training**
 - ii. Please look over this document and see if anything needs to be changed**

11. Set next meeting
 - a. Wednesday, August 16th, 2023 11 AM**
 - b. Meeting adjourned at noon**