

Dear QPI Stakeholder,

Thank you for your support for the Quality Parenting Initiative Minnesota Kick-Off October 24 and 25.

Over 200 stakeholders registered for the two-days of learning and action to “Put Parenting First” as national QPI leader Jennifer Rodriguez suggested should be the focus for all children and youth in our system of care.

Two media stories on the Kick-Off and Jennifer’s PowerPoint are available for your review at www.aspiremn.org/qpi.

Join the work – implementing QPI in Minnesota:

Eight Action Work Groups were designed by those gathered on October 25. Action Work Groups select an issue area, define actionable steps for marked improvement, and invite key stakeholders to join the work. The goal is for each Action Work Group to conclude the work of their group within a series of months. Each Action Work Group described below welcomes additional participation. Please let Kirsten Anderson know (at kanderson@aspiremn.org or 651-288-3437) if you would like to join one of the work groups described here: (those of you who helped establish work groups on Oct 25 are already signed up with your Action Work Group co-chairs)

QPI MN Action Work Groups:

- **Information Sharing** – Assuring foster and birth families are given vital information at placement to comfort and support the child/youth and establish connection between foster and birth families. (meeting Nov 15)
- **Transitions** – Supporting positive transitions to and between placements, goal of creating a best practice checklist for all transitions (meeting Nov 6, 6:30 pm)
- **Communication & Chain of command** – Creating clarity in the chain of command for decision-making and support for foster parents, birth parents, and youth. (meeting Dec 6, 10:30 am)
- **Language** – Bring new understanding and sensitivity to all stakeholders by articulating preferred and healing words to be used that emphasize strengths and support the value of children, youth and all families (meeting Nov 15, 9 am through Skype)
- **Kinship** – Learn from kinship families what information would have been helpful to have at time of placement – including training. Create steps to assure kinship placements are more actively supported. (meeting Dec 6, 7 pm)
- **Access to Resources** – Beginning with foster parents create easier connection to key resources to support parenting – including an FAQ about exiting resources (meeting Nov 17 at noon)
- **Recruitment Support** – Help agencies refer potential foster parents to the agency that will best be suited to support each foster family based on interests, geography, skills (meeting TBD)
- **Connections: birth parents, siblings, foster parents** – Refocus attention on strong connections between birth and foster parents, siblings and children/youth in care. (meeting TBD)

Each work group will be working to recruit additional stakeholders – including county representatives, tribal representatives, youth, birth and foster families. If you have an interest in joining any of the groups, please contact kanderson@aspiremn.org.

Your Ideas are Welcome!:

We received many excellent evaluation forms from the Kick-Off. And, we continue to be very interested in your specific ideas for QPI in MN, and, specific names of individuals you believe can make an ongoing contribution to the implementation of QPI in MN. Please send ideas and suggested stakeholder names to kanderson@aspiremn.org. Thank you!

QPI Steering Committee:

A Steering Committee is being assembled including all of the founding organizations, key stakeholder representation, and with a keen interest in assuring that foster parent, birth parent and youth voices are included in leadership for QPI MN. The first meeting of this group is scheduled for November 8, 2:30-4:30 in St Paul. The Steering Committee is responsible for decision-making for QPI, including supporting Action Work Groups, developing the work plans, and communicating with all stakeholders as part of implementation and growth of the initiative throughout Minnesota. One of the first tasks for the Steering Committee will be to synthesize the value statements created by all those gathered for the first Kick-Off day (posted below) to become our QPI MN value statement (brand statement).

We look forward to continuing in these important discussions with you. Thank you for your contributions and leadership on behalf of all Minnesota children, youth and families.

Warmly,

Kate Rickord (St David's Center) and Kirsten Anderson (AspireMN)
QPI MN Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Overall Value/Branding Statement Goals – developed by those gathered Oct 24:

- With great foster parenting, children feel strengthened, supported and loved in a way that builds their resilience to navigate their experience. A child feels seen, empowered, and knowing that their goodness, brightness and light shines through being.
- Foster parents become great team members by exhibiting mutual respect, empathy, collaboration, commitment, flexibility, tolerance, utilize their communication and advocacy skills while remaining family and child focused.
- The relationship between foster and biological parents should be a healthy, mutually respectful partnership for the best interest of the child.
- With great foster parenting, at the state, local and tribal levels, we collectively and collaboratively engage, respect, inspire, advocate, and participate with system partners, where the focus of the cause is to drive best practice and best interests of our children.

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