

presented by



QPI  **QUALITY
PARENTING
INITIATIVE**

CHAMPIONS TRAINING

TRAINING #1:

QPI as an Advocacy Strategy

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

AGENDA

01

Welcome and Introduction

02

Youth Law Center: Vision & Values

03

QPI As a Systems Change Strategy

04

The Role of a QPI Champion

05

Breakout Groups

06

Wrap-up and Reminders



MEET THE QPI CHAMPIONS TRAINING TEAM



TERRY HARRAK
Training Facilitator



DIANE STANG
Group Leader



KATE RICKORD
Group Leader



KIRSTIE JETLAND
Admin & Coordination

TODAY'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01

To understand QPI as a system change strategy of the Youth Law Center.

02

To understand the concept of advocacy and recognize its significance in driving positive change.

03

To understand the purpose and responsibilities of a QPI Champion.



MEET TODAY'S SPEAKER



JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ
Executive Director
Youth Law Center

Jennifer Rodriguez, J.D., is Executive Director of the Youth Law Center (YLC) and a leading advocate for transforming foster care and juvenile justice systems across the country so youth can thrive. Jennifer spent many years of her childhood in foster care and juvenile justice facilities, and has spent most of her life advocating to ensure justice, compassion and opportunity for youth touched by these systems. Jennifer's advocacy has resulted in significant national policy, practice and culture changes. She joined the Youth Law Center as an attorney in 2007 after eight years working at the California Youth Connection, a nationally recognized foster youth advocacy organization. Jennifer was appointed by President Obama to the National Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities, which released a report promoting strengthening families parenting the most vulnerable children.

YOUTH LAW CENTER (YLC) VISION

The Youth Law Center advocates to transform foster care and juvenile justice systems across the nation so every child and youth can thrive.

Our advocacy focuses on three goals for children and youth in foster care and juvenile justice:

1. End practices that harm children.
2. Ensure excellent parenting for every child, every day.
3. Guarantee that every child has the opportunity to thrive in adulthood.





YLC VALUES

We advocate for children as if
they were our own, with...



Knowledge

of the law, research, and the
facts on the ground.



Integrity

to do what is best, regardless
of financial or social
consequences to ourselves,
and to deserve the trust of
our supporters and clients.



Respect

for the individuality of
children and families and
their potential to thrive and
for the efforts of those who
strive to serve them.



Commitment

to pursue solutions urgently
and relentlessly.



APPROACH

We have many
strategies for
transforming systems
through legal
advocacy

Litigation

Legislation and Policy Reform

Media Advocacy

Training

Advice and Technical Assistance

Leadership and Public Education

Quality Parenting Initiative



THE QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE (QPI)



Launched in 2008 by the Youth Law Center, the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) is a national movement for foster care systems change, committed to ensuring that all children in care have excellent parenting and lasting relationships so they can thrive and grow.

Today, QPI leads and provides advocacy support to network that includes 80 sites and 10 states comprising of children and youth, birth and foster families, foster care agency leadership and staff, judges, legal professionals, policymakers, adolescent development experts, and other community stakeholders all committed to ensuring every child in foster care receives the best possible care and support.



QPI CORE PRINCIPLES

01

Consistent excellent parenting and meaningful relationships are the most important services we can provide to children and youth in foster care. Every policy, practice action, and statement the system adopts should strengthen parenting skills and relationships.

02

Research on child, youth, and brain development and the effects of trauma not only demonstrates the importance of parenting and positive relationships but also provides guidance on how best to support them. Agency policy and practice should be informed by research.

03

The individuals most affected by policies and practices are in the best position to design and implement change so that systems ensure excellent parenting and meaningful relationships for children who enter their care.



QPI THEORY OF CHANGE

QPI is a Change Movement

People who do the work know what needs to be changed and how to change it.

People are loyal to the things they create.

People will implement change when they understand why they are implementing it.



QPI PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE CHANGE



Lived Experience: Improved practices that involve youth and families in decision-making processes.

Transition Planning: Policies and protocols to eliminate abrupt moves and reduce the need for any moves at all by focusing on child-centered placement practices.

Sibling Connections: Policies and protocols to prioritize maintaining sibling relationships, and practices to maintain connections if that isn't possible.

Normalcy: Allowing children and youth to live normal lives, guided by developmental research.

Lasting Relationships: Supporting relationships between families and youth, even after the youth leaves care.

EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMS

CHANGE:

- Birth and Foster Parent Relationships
- Normalcy
- Transitions

YOUR VOICE MATTERS



ROLE OF A QPI CHAMPION

- **Prioritize excellent parenting and lasting relationships for children and youth in care.**
- **Explain QPI and communicate the value to stakeholders, agency, and leadership.**
- **Develop action plans to improve policy and practice to support excellent parenting.**
- **Build or join QPI steering committees to advance the action plans.**
- **Involve youth, birth parents, and caregivers in decision-making.**

BREAKOUT

QUESTION:

- What about the QPI approach resonates with you?

GROUP DISCUSSION



REMINDERS

01

Let your group leader know if you can't attend one of the sessions!

Red and **Orange** Groups:

Kate Rickord: krickord@qpiylc.org

Yellow, **Green**, and **Blue** Groups:

Diane Stang: dstang@qpiylc.org

02

The next session is on Tuesday, February 11th with Dr. Charles Zeanah.



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THANK YOU!

Next Session:

THE SCIENCE BEHIND QPI: Attachment and Relationships

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

9:00 am PDT | 11:00 am CDT | 12:00 pm EDT

