

presented by  youth law center



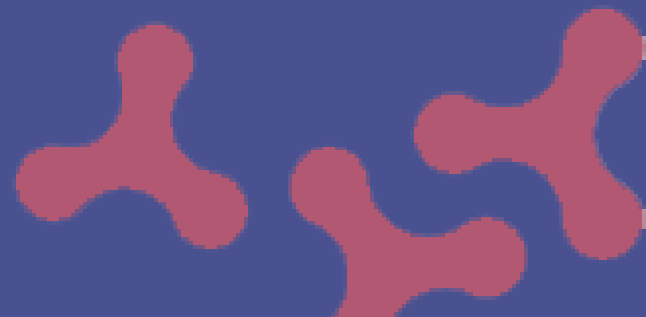
JaSPCAN Presentation:


Quality Parenting for Children in Out-Of-Home Care

November 30th, 2024

YOUTH LAW CENTER (YLC)

The Youth Law Center is a national advocacy organization working to improve foster care and juvenile justice systems





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**For 45 years we have been
concerned about homes for
children who cannot live with
their own families.**



The US has gradually moved from an orphanage or group care-based system to a family-based system of care.






This was a result of several factors.

- 1. Abuses were uncovered in many institutions particularly those serving children with disabilities.**
- 2. Decision makers became aware of new and existing research on the adverse effects of group care, particularly on young children.**
- 3. Foundations and other policy leaders were committed to this change.**
- 4. Standards and supervision for facilities serving young children became increasingly rigorous.**
- 5. Funding incentives for the use of group care changed so that the use of group care was more expensive.**



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**This change created its own
challenges.**

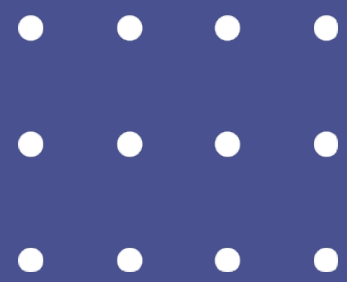
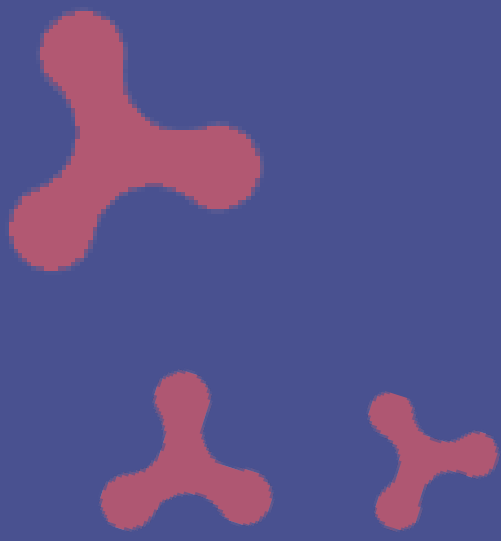


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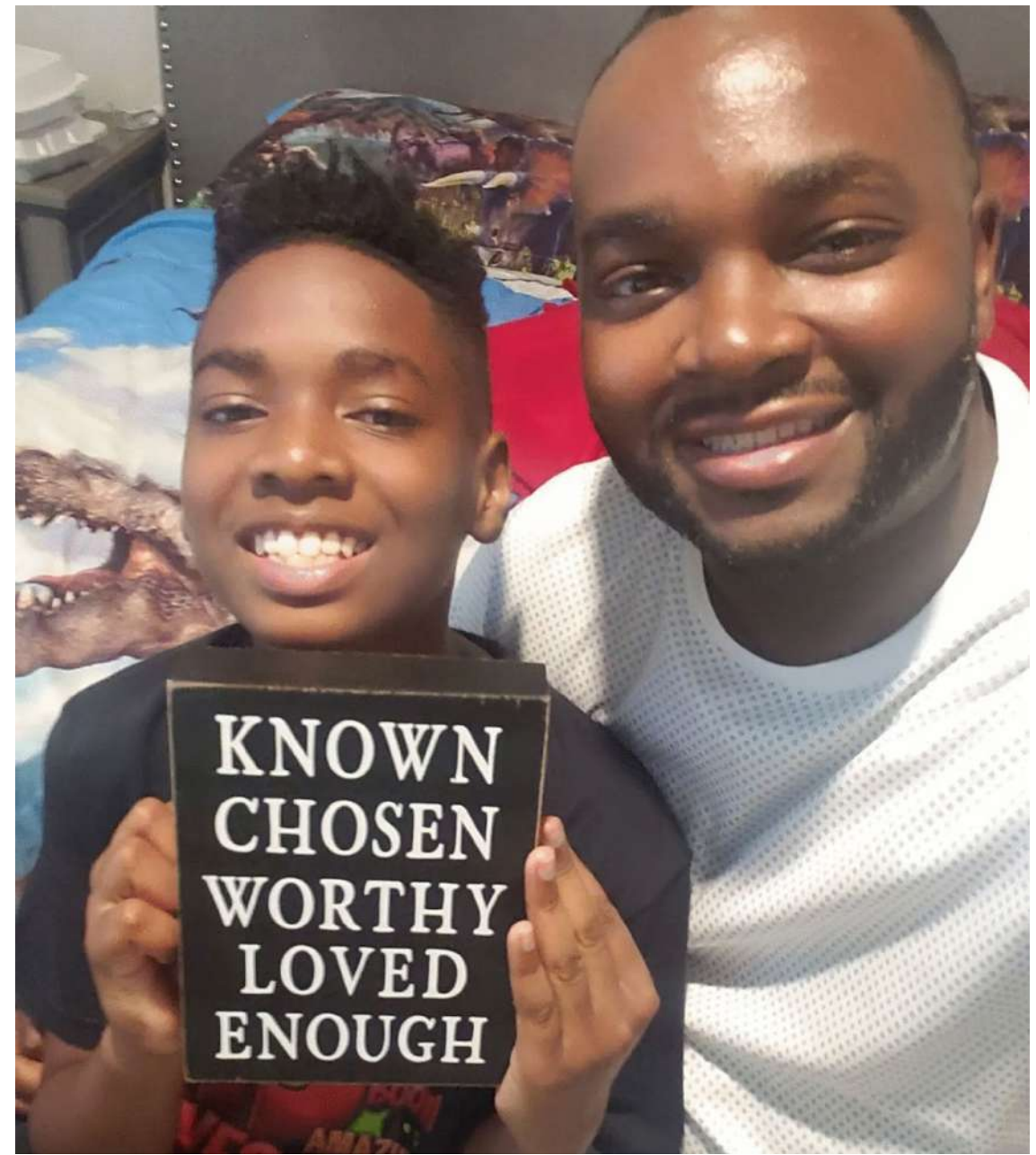
- 1. Need to identify more families who could provide care for children.**
- 2. Need to ensure high quality of care in each family.**
- 3. Need to ensure respect for birth families and culture.**

Think differently:
Loving children as
if they were our
own.





Not places to live: Parents and families






Vide link <https://youtu.be/3WHAPPjKqM0>



Vide link <https://youtu.be/XgYP1S496uU>




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Child development research provided information on how children should be cared for:

- 1. In family settings with consistent caregivers**
- 2. Caregivers should have education on child development and trauma**
- 3. Experienced caregivers mentor and support newer caregivers**
- 4. Caregivers support birth families so children do not have divided loyalty**
- 5. Caregivers are part of the professional team making decisions about children**
- 6. Children participate in normal activities like their peers**
- 7. Caregivers maintain lifelong relationships even after children leave their care**

The people who do
or experience the
work told us how to
meet these goals.





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- 1. Caregiving must be a respected professional activity**
- 2. Expectations for caregiving should be clearly spelled out**
- 3. Systems should be selective in recruiting caregivers**
- 4. Systems should encourage relatives, friends and community members to care for children**
- 5. Caregivers should have training readily available**
- 6. The number of children in a home should be limited**
- 7. Potential caregivers should understand the need and rewards**
- 8. Caregivers need access to services for children**
- 9. Caregivers need community based support**

Policies and practices governing out of home care had to be changed.

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DSS Policy and Procedure Guide		
Chapter 12: Staffings, MDRTs, Icebreakers, CFTs		
Division 03: Child Welfare	Item 008: Caregiver Transitions	Issued: August 22, 2024
Suggested changes send to: DSS PSC/A Mailbox	Replaces Issue: New	
References: PPG 03-05-035 , PPG 03-05-037 , PPG 03-05-013 , PPG 03-08-406 , PPG 03-08-004 , PPG 03-12-006		
Preamble / Policy / Purpose / Definitions / Procedure / Transition Roles / Transition Planning / Pre-Transition Prep / Pre-Transition Process / Transition Meeting Process / Post-Transition Follow-up		

Preamble
Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides (PPG) are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. As a Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) Agency, our policies are designed around our shared principles: every child deserves excellent parenting and meaningful relationships; policy and practice informed by research; and putting those with lived experience at the center of policy change. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

Policy
A transition occurs when a child is moved to a new caregiver for initial removal, safety plans, voluntary placements, disruptions, reunifications, permanency, or other changes in caregiver both planned and unplanned. The expectation is the transition from one caregiver to another will be managed sensitively and should involve careful consideration of the child's perceptions and reactions to the move. In absence of emergency, careful planning and preparation should occur with the child, parent or legal guardian, tribal partners, caregiver(s) and any other persons and service providers necessary to support the transition.

Purpose
Children and youth can experience multiple changes with caregivers, and those transitions often result in trauma not only for the children but also for caregivers, families, siblings, and all professionals involved. Thoughtful transition plans positively impact the children's ability to trust, build and maintain secure attachments, and develop long-lasting healthy relationships. The purpose of this policy is to reduce trauma and/or psychological, cultural, developmental, relational, spiritual, and emotional harm to all children/youth involved with child welfare system ranging from infants to young adults when transitions occur.

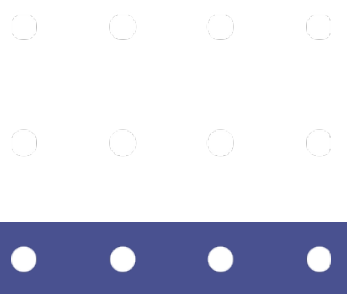
CWS POLICY & PROCEDURES		PLACEMENT TRANSITION PLAN (PTP)
		Revised: 10/04/18 Page 1 of 2
PLACEMENT TRANSITION PLAN (PTP)		
County Policy Date: 01/18/11 Signature on file: Tracy Backstrom, Assistant Director	The San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services values foster youth, foster parents and birth parents as collaborative partners in Child Welfare Services. Prior to moving children to a new placement, staff will collaborate with youth, foster parents and birth parents to plan for a positive transition for foster children. To support the transition, the SW will coordinate with the youth, foster parents and parents affected by the change and create a Placement Transition Plan (PTP) that utilizes the About Your Child (AYC)/All About Me (AAM) and Team Decision Making (TDM) processes.	
Background	Members of the Quality Parent Project (a team of foster parents, social workers, birth parents and CWS staff) identified the need to plan transitions for children between placements. The PTP is designed to create more positive transitions for children between in care and to help ensure the success of the subsequent placement, or the successful reunion with the child's family of origin.	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a collaborative team among the adults and youth involved. Create the opportunity for the child's needs to be heard. Provide information and educate the new home regarding any of the child's needs, medical, emotional and/or developmental. 	
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce trauma, minimize the loss/grief issues for the youth and families. The function of the PTP is to identify steps, timelines and responsibilities in the move including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timeline of the transition including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The needs of the children Educational, medical, mental health, religious/faith-based, cultural, dietary, extracurricular/social and circumstantial considerations. Consideration of the Foster Care Payment Other considerations as identified at the meeting. Identify any additional steps that may be needed. 	
Development of the Placement Transition Plan (PTP)	A PTP will be completed whenever a child is moved or goes home on an extended visit. The PTP event details will be included in all court reports when the recommendation is to return children home or to place them home on an extended visit, prior to the TDM. Depending on the circumstances, the PTP will also be developed at the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imminent Risk TDM Emergency Placement TDM (assigned SW will be identified by TDM facilitator.) Placement Move Exit from Placement 	

1. Systems had to treat foster parents as respected partners with other professionals

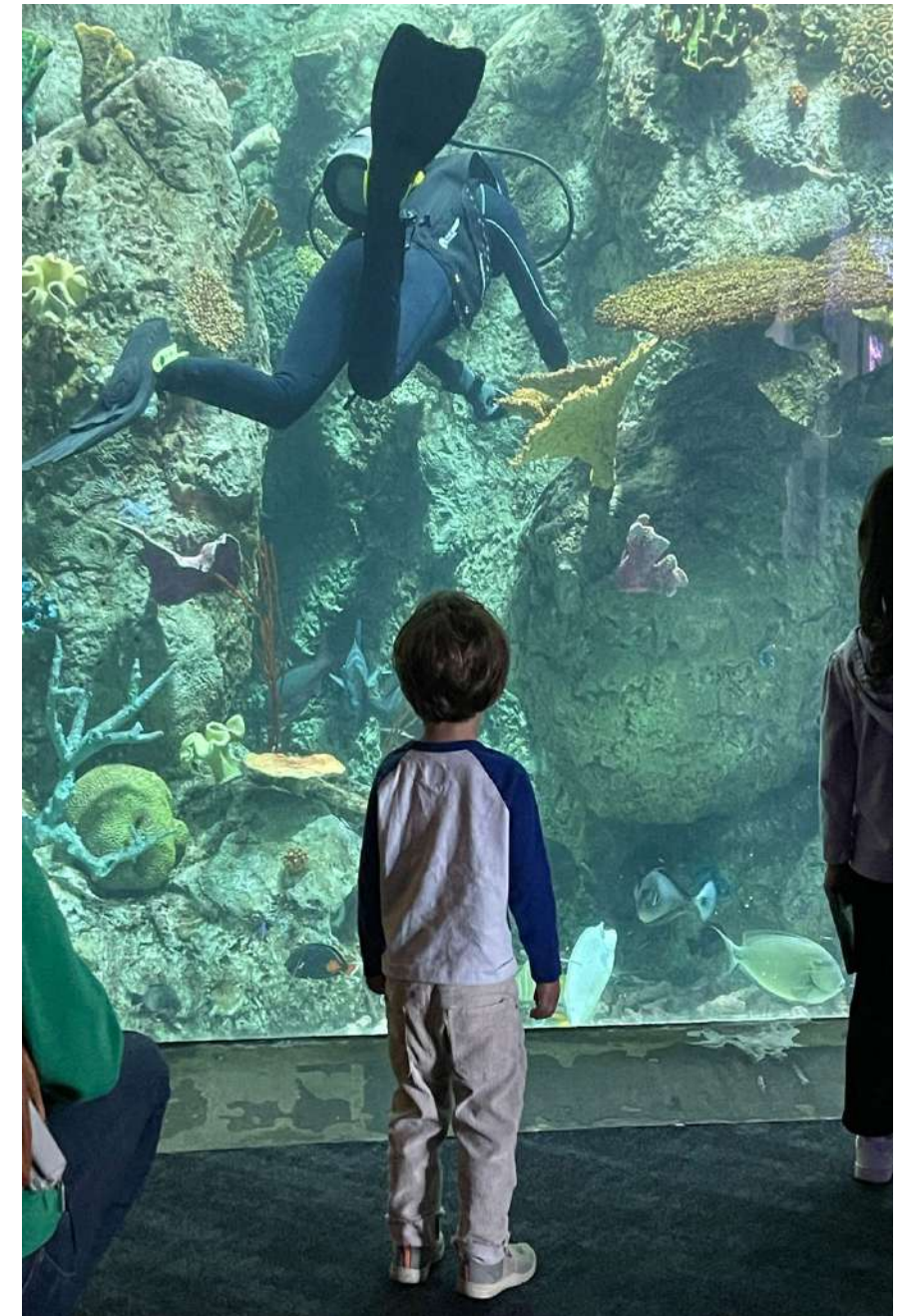




Vide link https://youtu.be/ppg-ame0_hc



2. Barriers to normal activities has to be removed. For example, many children were not allowed to visit friends homes or go on family trips.



3. Foster parents had to be encouraged and expected to become emotionally attached to children in their care.

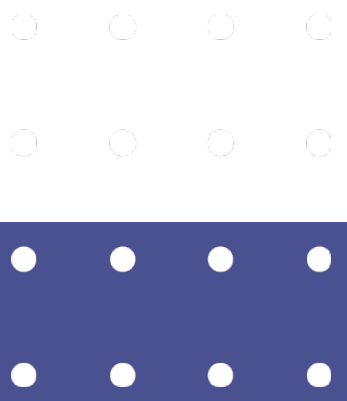


4. Foster parents and birth parent relationships had to be developed and encouraged.

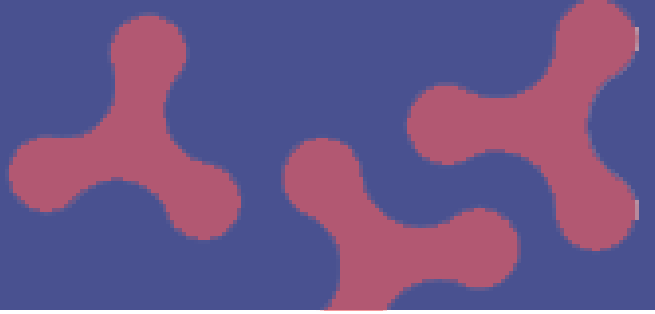


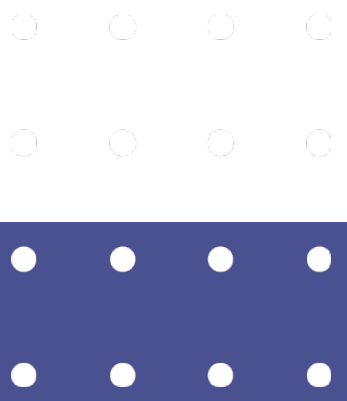


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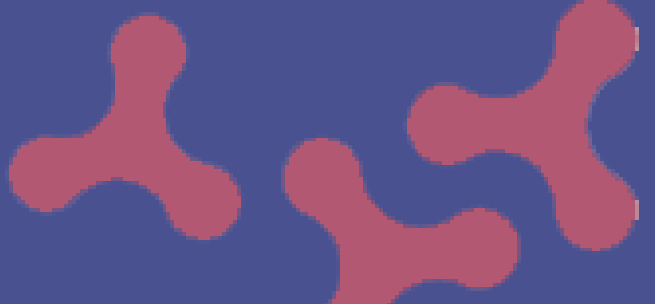




5. Relatives had to be identified and enabled to care for children.





6. Children could not be abruptly moved from one family to another.






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How the systems function.



QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE (QPI)

The Quality Parenting Initiative is an advocacy strategy of the Youth Law Center





Vide link <https://youtu.be/GXQZDi8aOWw>



QPI sites develop an ongoing steering committee to make policy changes.





QPI committees involve a cross-section of child welfare: social workers, foster parents, youth, birth parents and leaders

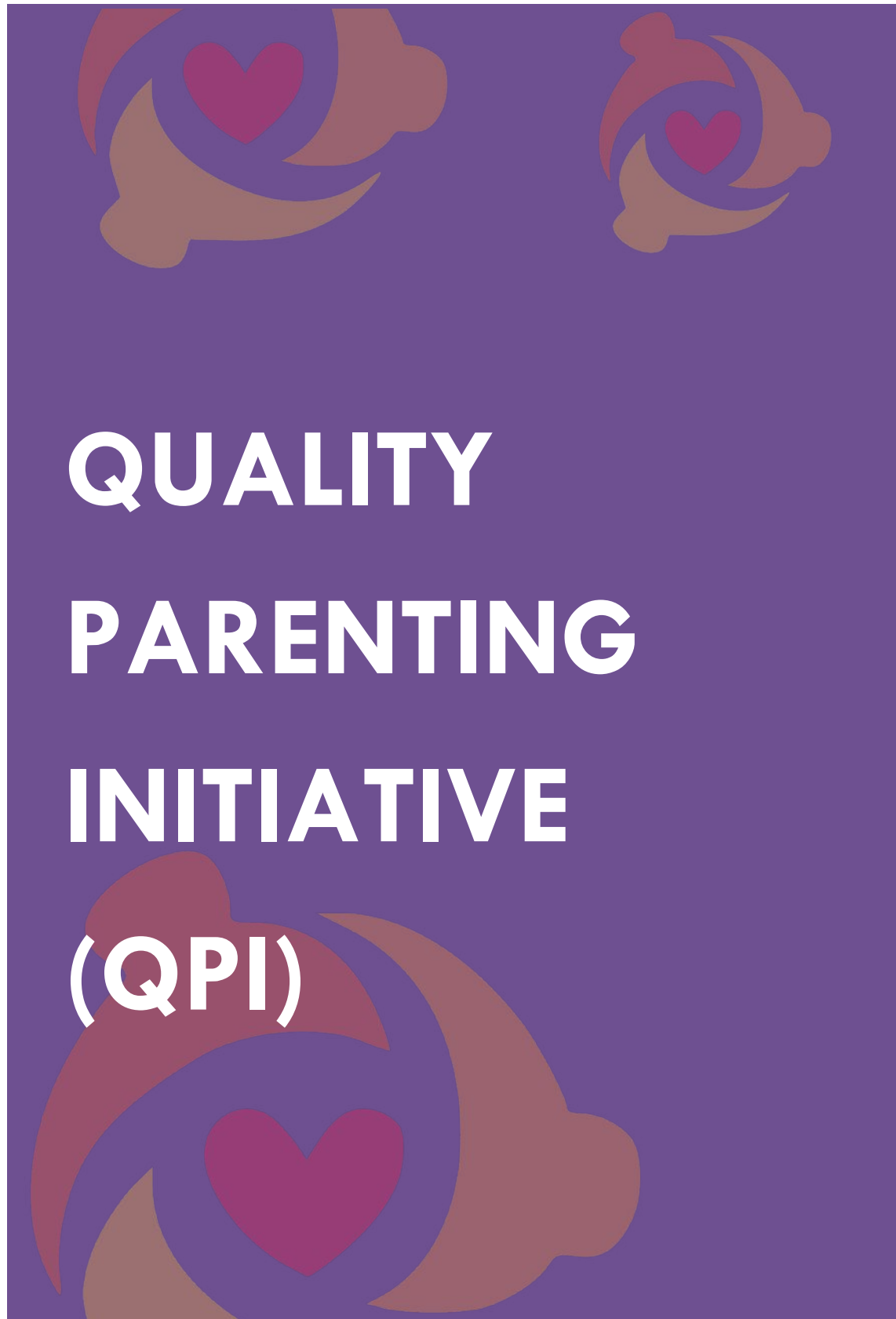


Leadership acts on the committee's suggestions and measures their impact.

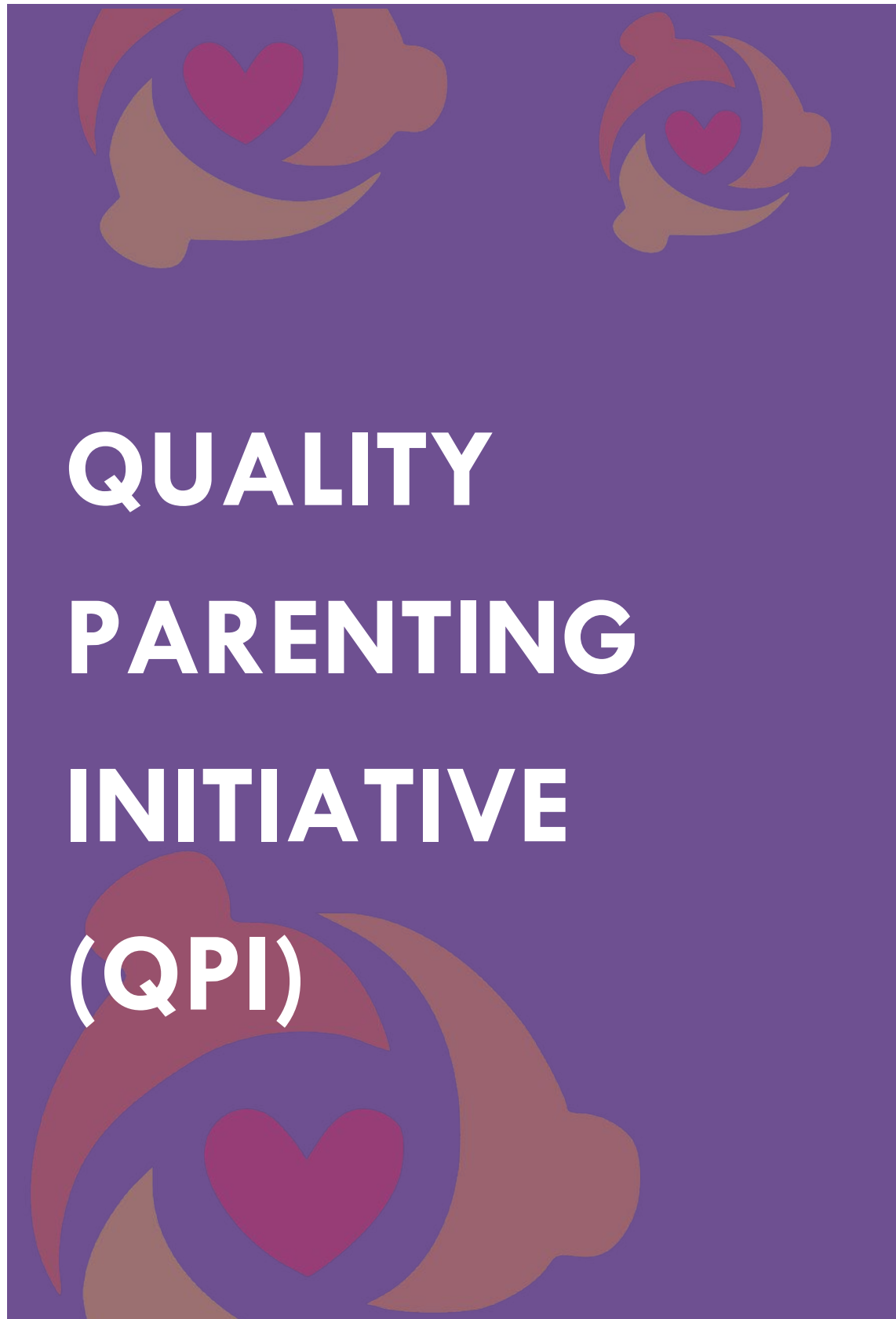




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QPI committees suggestions resulted in changes including:



1. State and federal law allowing foster parents to make reasonable decisions for children in their care and to allow children to participate in normal childhood activities



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2. Law, policy, and practice requiring a phone meeting between birth parents and when the child first goes to the foster parent's home. Continued contact is encouraged.



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3. A planning meeting is required when children move from one home to another, and includes:

- 1. Adequate notice and time to prepare**
- 2. Gradual transition**
- 3. Consideration of timing based on planned family and community activities**
- 4. Continued contact after the child moves**



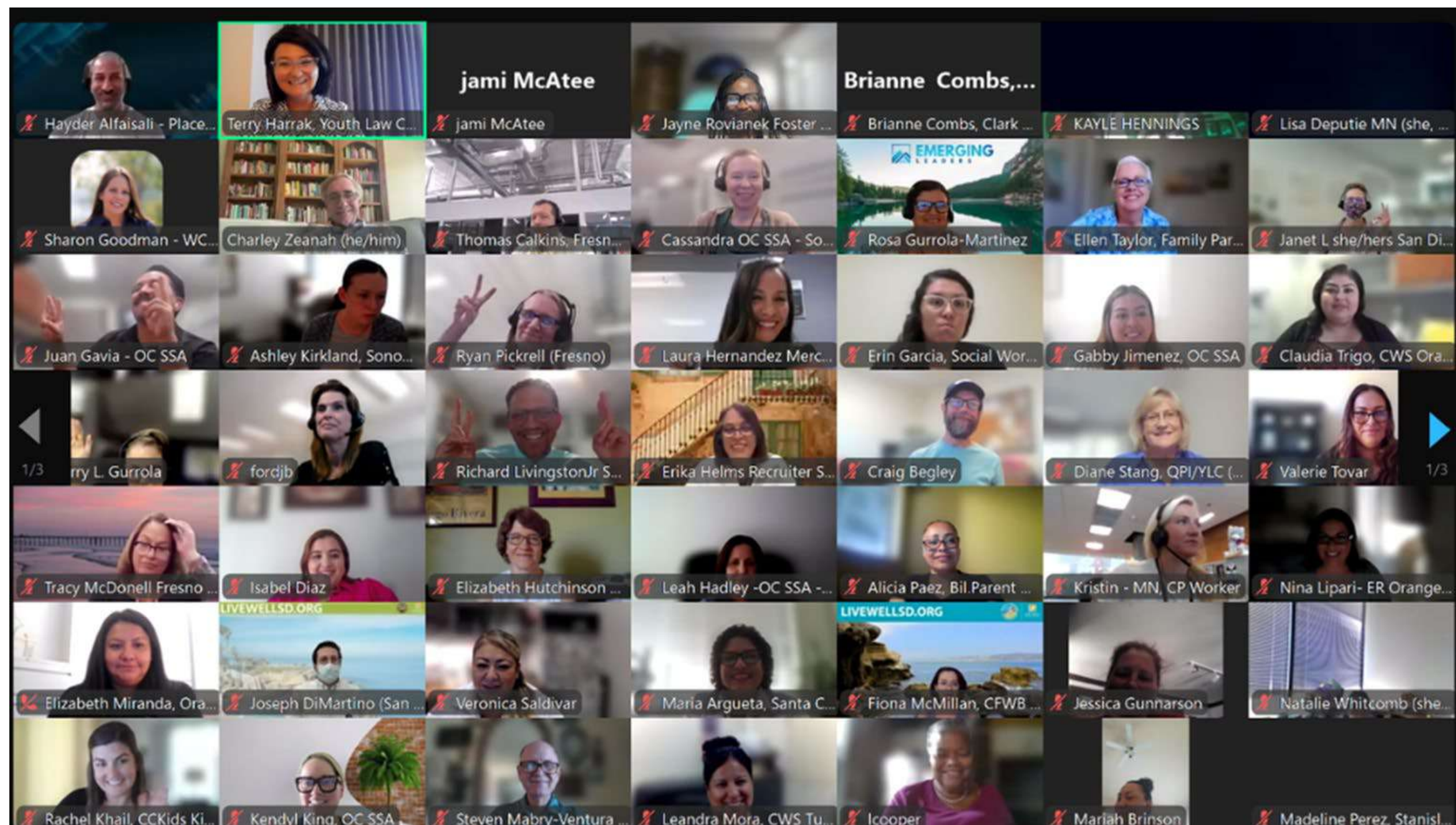
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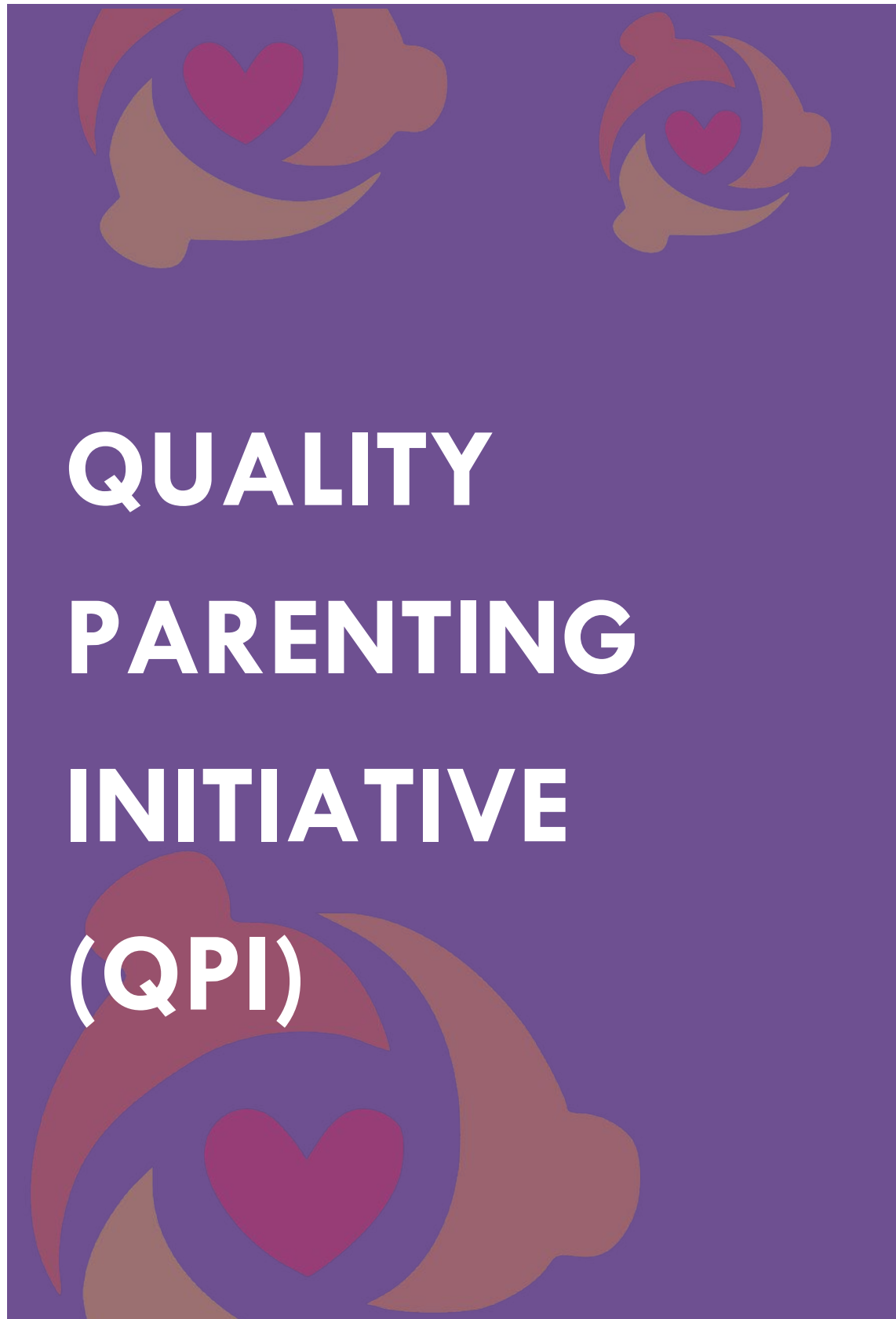


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4. Foster parents assist birth parents in regaining custody of their children and help them after they are reunified. If they are not reunified, birth parents maintain some relationship with their children.

5. Advanced online training is available to parents.

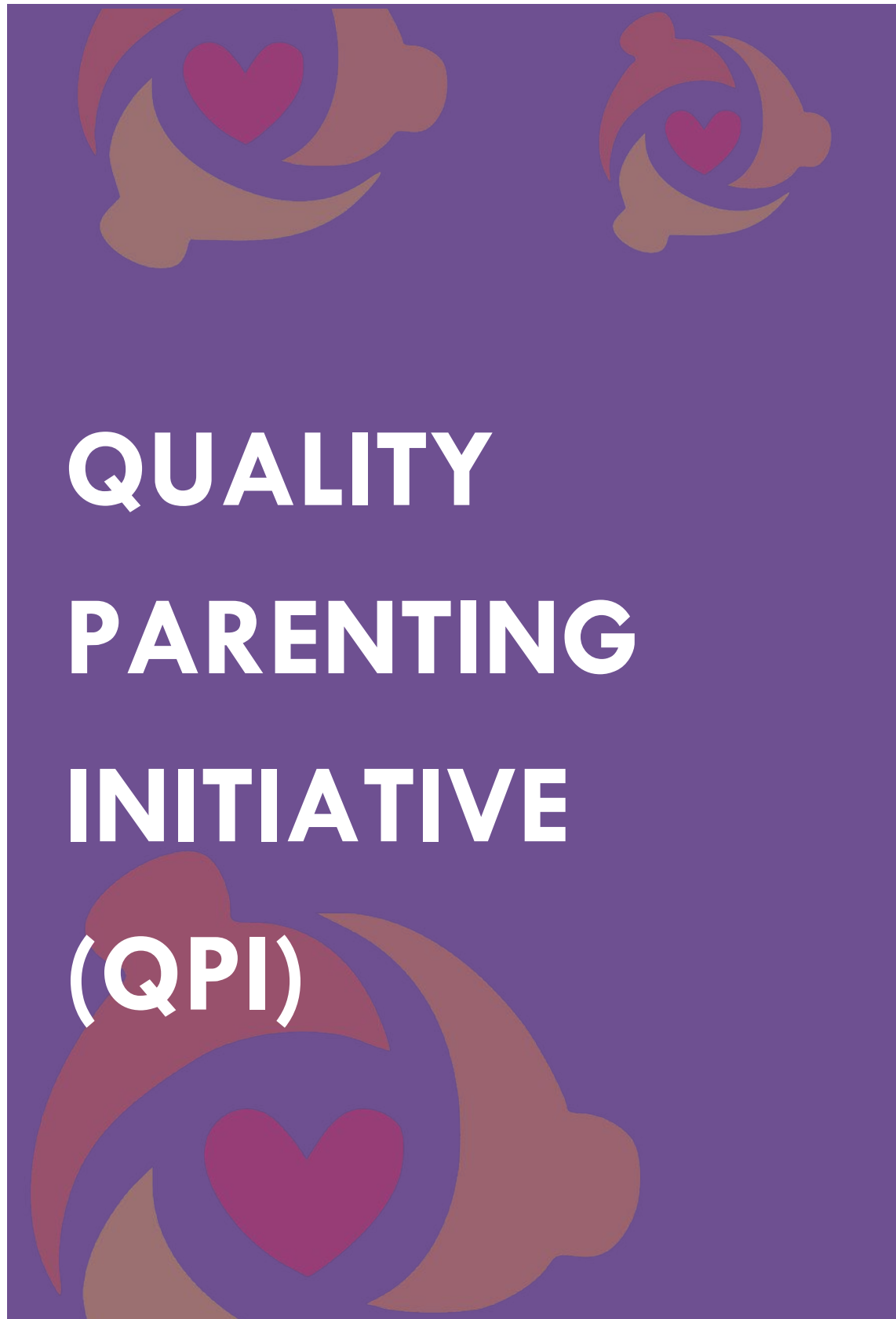




6. Peer mentor programs for foster parents.



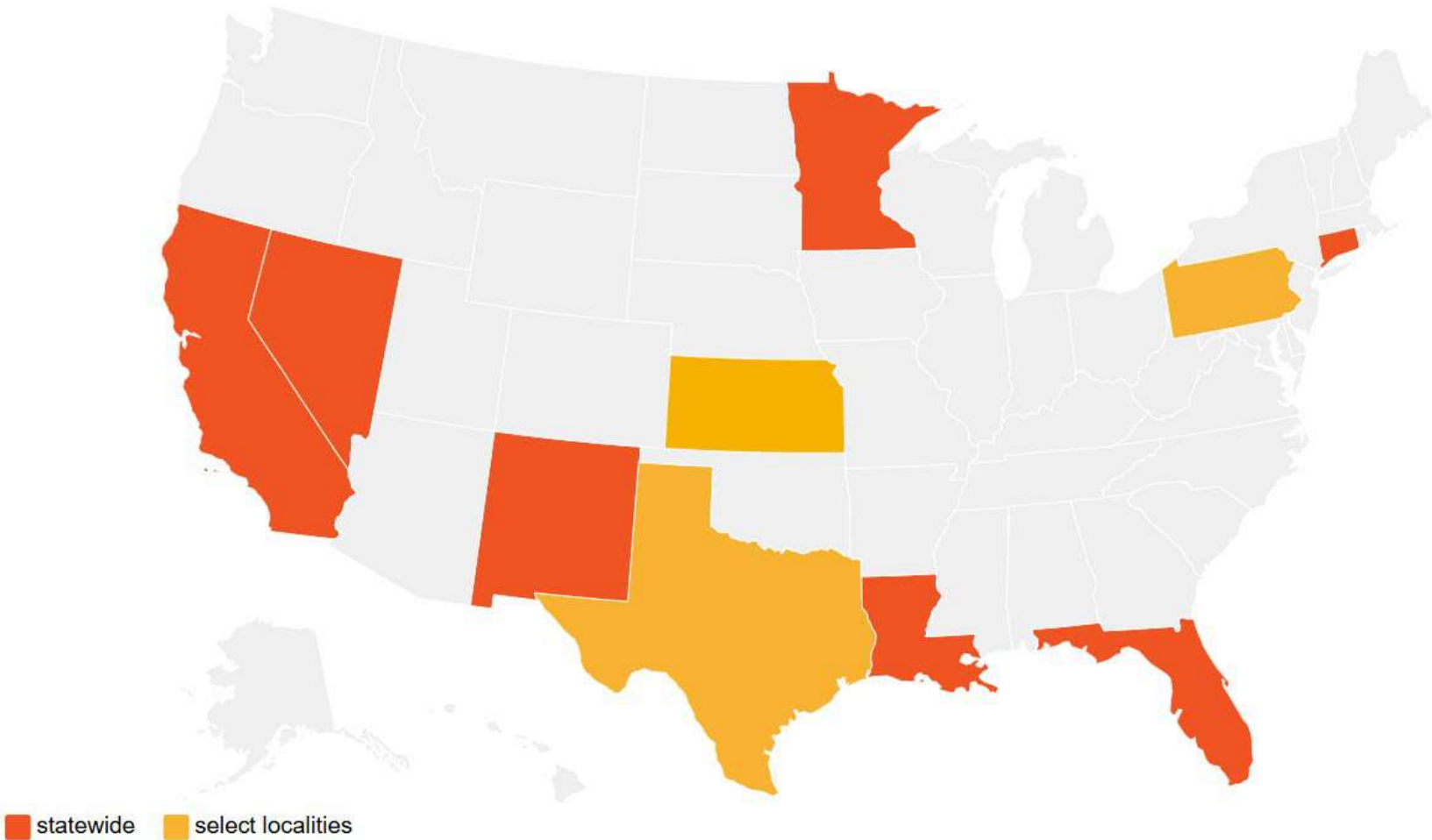
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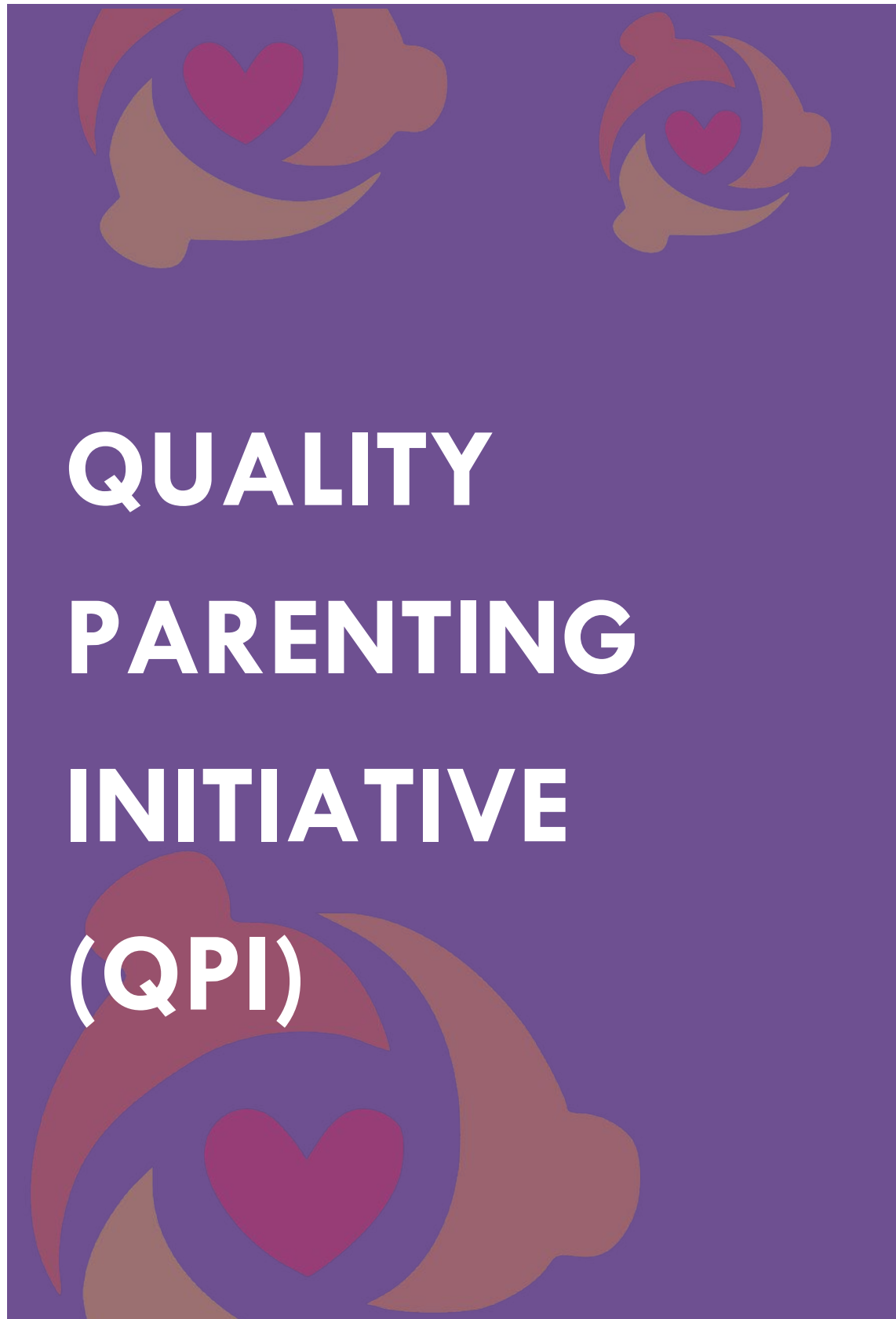


As a result, systems have been able to recruit and retain more excellent families to care for children.



We began this approach in 8 areas in Florida and California 15 years ago. We have expanded to cover 10 states and over 80 sites. Several jurisdictions have been implementing this approach for over 15 years.





QPI sites meet together regularly. They have monthly trainings and work groups and yearly conferences and communicate by newsletters and through our website, QPI4KIDS.ORG



QPI Conferences



Champions are trained to implement QPI in their areas.





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A peer-reviewed study found QPI successfully changed attitudes in the system by increasing teamwork and reducing mistrust.



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On-going research is measuring the effects of policy change on children and families.

Quality Parenting Outreach (QPO) Transitions Survey 2024

Caseworkers
 In January 2024, Fresno County Resource Parents and DSS Caseworkers received a survey to identify what is important when children and youth move between homes.
 Top 3 important things caseworkers do to help in transitions:
 • Talk to the child about feelings or questions. (95%)
 • Being part of transition planning meetings. (88%)
 • Help the child stay in touch with important people. (88%)
 *As identified by 40 Caseworkers

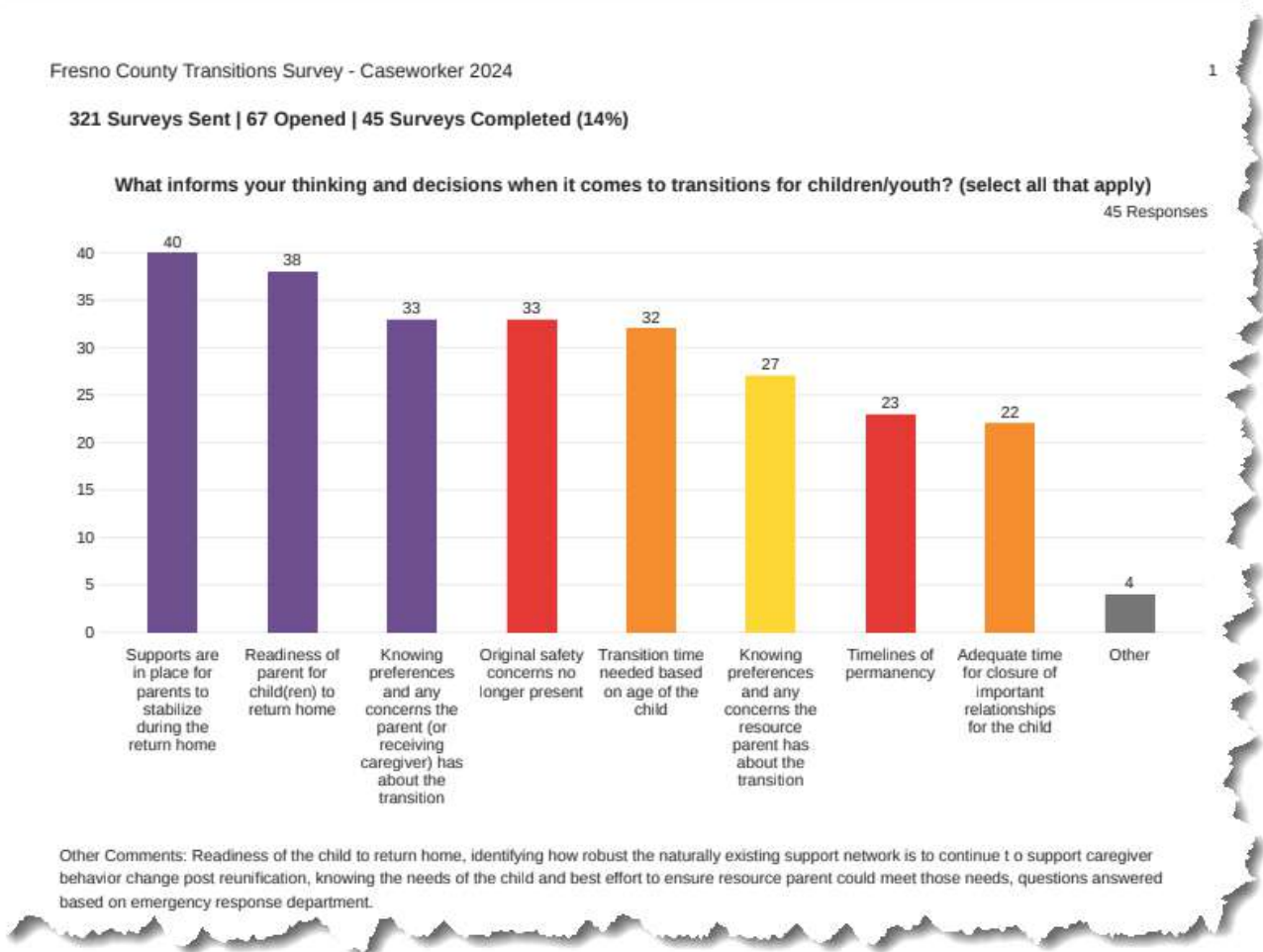
Resource Parents
 Top 3 important things resource parents do to help in transitions:
 • Talk to the child about feelings or questions. (93%)
 • Make sure the child leaves with all of their belongings. (81%)
 • Help the child stay in touch with important people. (78%)
 *As identified by 83 Resource Parents

Common Themes
 Resource Parents and Caseworkers agree the Top Priorities in Transitions:
 • Child Safety
 • Child's Emotional Well-Being
 • Continuity of Relationships
 Resource Parents and Caseworkers agree the most important factors in a transition home is readiness of the parent and that supports are in place for the family.

Posit
 First ranked need:
 • Resource Parents
 child's backg
 special needs
 • Caseworkers
 parents, resou
 welfare casev

Connect or ask questions:
DSSQPI@fresnocountyca.gov

QPI QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE





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Changes effected by QPI (despite the pandemic):

- 1. Increased satisfaction by resource parents and social workers**
- 2. Strong relationships between birth and foster parents**
- 3. Reduced trauma to youth**
- 4. Elimination of the need for group care for very young children**



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THANK YOU!

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