

HENNEPIN COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 27, 2023

Chair Dave Pinto
503 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Pinto and Committee Members,

For over a year, Hennepin County Children and Family Services has had formal membership with Quality Parenting Initiative-Minnesota. Thanks to the training, technical assistance, and ongoing champion work with QPI-MN, we have made significant changes in our practice.

As Hennepin County embeds the QPI principals in our work, we are seeing changes that positively impact children's well-being and support families in reunification:

- Comfort calls and icebreaker meetings are leading to increased communication and strengthened relationships between parents and foster providers. Following her first icebreaker meeting, one Hennepin County foster provider said she felt an instant, empathetic connection to the young mom in front of her.

"Truly, truly, it brings home the 'why,'" she said. "It's not just the kids, it's the family. It's that parent."

- When parents are comfortable with knowing who is taking care of their children and have visits sooner and more frequently, they can focus on what they need to do next to move toward reunification.

Post-reunification, one mom shared how the foster provider who cared for her son continues to be part of their life. "I feel like that's his other mom," she said. Her son and his former foster provider see each other weekly.

These examples show how Hennepin County children, parents, and foster providers benefit from supportive relationships and collaborative parenting in the child welfare system, as informed by QPI-MN.

Hennepin County supports HF-1672, appropriating general funds to implement Quality Parenting Initiative principles and practices to support children and families experiencing foster care placements.

Sincerely,



Irene Fernando, Chair
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