



QPI

Quarterly Newsletter

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Quality Parenting Initiative: Getting Back to the Basics

In Scott County, we understand that healing happens through relationships. When children enter the child protection system having experienced abuse or neglect they need to be supported by genuine, healthy, and loving relationships. We believe in and are committed to building those relationships with and between birth parents, foster parents, relatives, and county and community partners.



Our QPI Community Values

- Children and youth develop and grow when they have loving and supportive families, know the adults in their lives have their best interest at heart, and live in healthy communities.
- Birth parents, relatives, and other family supports are valued partners in establishing safety and wellbeing for the children in their lives.
- Foster parents are valued partners in the effort to keep children and youth safe while supporting family success.
- Children thrive and families succeed when individuals, professionals, organizations, agencies, and communities come together with resources and supports, have shared goals, and relationships based on trust.

Our QPI Values in Action

QPI work in Action

Comfort calls are completed within 48 hours of a child's placement and used to connect the birth parent and the foster care providers. During these calls, the adults are often completing an introduction to one another and having a discussion about the child's likes/dislikes. This comfort call should give the birth parent a reassurance that their kiddo is being well taken care of while they are working on other things.

At times, we may have a complex case that results in comfort calls looking a little different. In early 2023, Scott County Child Protection made a hard decision to place a new born baby in foster care. To make the case even more complex, both parents were incarcerated and not allowed any contact with their infant child.

When the foster parents greeted baby for the first time, they were immediately thrust back into a lifestyle of late night feedings, giving them a lot of time to think and reflect on the situation at hand. Talking with foster mom, she spoke a lot about those late night thoughts and the ideas she began to have to connect with mom. Most of the ideas surfaced as foster mom thought about the first years of her own children's lives. For example, this foster mom would complete mini photo sessions for her children as they reached monthly age milestones. With baby fast approaching 2 months of age and being a trained photographer, foster mom started the first photo shoot.

Foster mom knew that in-person visits were not allowed, so these photos became the starting point for baby's parents to see all of her amazing milestones and growth. However, this was just the start for foster mom and the Scott County team. With monthly photo shoots still on the calendar, QPI blossomed before the parents eyes. Soon, baby's team began to send the parents videos of baby as she started to smile, laugh, sit up, scoot and even crawl. Foster mom made an attempt to make each video even more special by incorporating blankets and toys that came with baby when she entered foster care. The team also provided write ups including updates on how baby is doing, what she likes, and what she doesn't like (carrots). They included milestones, like the date she got her first tooth and a brief update on her personality and her health. The photo sessions even grew as they took more intimate and close up photos of her little hands and feet.

After receiving the update, the jail social worker emailed Scott County's case manager to share dad's appreciation and his comments about the write up. She also expressed how very excited she was to see how this helped mom. This mother had not been able to engage with anyone. She had not been able to show even a glimpse of parenting or her love for her child. However, the jail social worker said that once mom saw the video and the update she lit up and it was the first time she saw her engage as a mother. Mom shared stories about her pregnancy, what things were like for her as a child, and shared things about the child's dad. This is a celebration and a big step for this mother as she is reshaping how she engages and talks about her child.

When asking foster mom about her hopes for baby's future, she talked about her love for both baby and baby's parents. She hopes to continue being creative in bridging a strong relationship with baby's family (biological parents and even extended). They hope that baby is able to continue to thrive in a safe and loving home, and wherever that home is, they hope to always remain a part of her life.

Another bright example of great QPI work.

A foster family provided placement care for a baby when mom was struggling to provide stability. Currently the baby is on a trial home visit with mom and the foster providers remain a strong support. When mom becomes over stressed, the foster providers step in and provide a few hours of care. They work as a team in the best interest of the child which is exactly what QPI is all about. The foster providers have become a 'guide through life' source for mom in helping her parent her 1 year old, firm up an apartment lease, and other life skills.