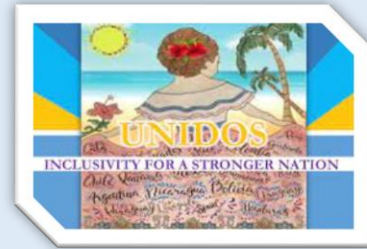


Commissioner's Message



September is National **Kinship Care Month**. Connecticut continues to be a leader across the country with approximately 51% of children under the age of 18 years old, who are placed into a family setting, residing with kin.

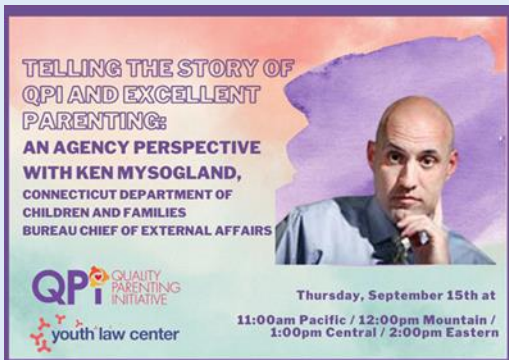
The diversity of our workforce and amongst the families we serve is to be continuously honored and celebrated. "*Unidos*" is the theme of **Hispanic and Latino a/x Heritage Month 2022!** Inclusion and all voices at the table result in stronger more sustainable planning. All families and communities deserve our best acknowledgement and respect for their heritage, culture and language. Please read our "*Spotlight on What's Right*" about **Jackie Vidal** - recipient of the first **Yocasta Del Rosario Memorial Award**.



Across the country, **988** has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*. We all must continue to lift the stigma of seeking support during **Suicide Awareness Prevention Month** and every day. *In 2021, 14 children ages 11 through 17 took their own lives in CT, with the mean age of 15.3 years old, and gender being equally distributed (7M, 7F). 71% of the children identified as white. More children under the age of 13 died by suicide in 2021 than have previously been recorded. The increased number of younger children in Connecticut who have died by suicide is also part of a national trend. Across the country, suicide is now the second leading cause of preventable death in children starting at age 10 (CFRP21annual).*

"*It's been a long journey, but I am still on it.*" Words spoken by **Ashley May Williams** as she tells us her story of achieving over 1,000 days of sobriety. **September's Recovery Month** theme - "*Recovery is for Everyone. Every Person. Every Family. Every Community.*" Ashley has many powerful messages for all of us about recovery, engagement, and reclaiming her new life!

We know the impact of substance misuse. We recognize the importance of consultation with our Area Resource Group (ARG) clinicians as we observe, assess, and refer those persons struggling to maintain sobriety. Child safety remains our priority. A sober caregiver is what every child needs to be safe and adequately cared for.



"*The Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) is based on the belief that every child needs to grow up in a caring family and that the primary goal of foster care must be to ensure that children and youth in the system receive excellent parenting every single day through committed, developmentally informed relationships with the adults caring for them.*" <https://www.qpi4kids.org/principles-of-qpi/> The principles of QPI were reinforced and on full display this month. Our Bureau Chief of External Affairs, **Ken Mysogland**, presented a webinar to a national audience of QPI jurisdictions on how



excellent parenting sustains lifelong family ties. CT was also represented in Reno, Nevada by a team led by Foster Care Director, Natalia Liriano during the Youth Law Center's **QPI Champions Conference**.

Speaking of enhancing our skills of assessment and engagement, September is **Child Welfare Workforce**



Development Month - a time to celebrate our achievements, "recharge" and enhance our skills. "*Thank you Dad,*" is how Destiny Bromfield referred to Social Work Supervisor Brian Smith during a recent Youth Advisory Board Meeting. Read how Destiny refers to the 6 years under Brian's supervision and his never-ending belief in her abilities, his patience and how she looks to the future.

Enjoy this month's "*Spotlight on What's Right*" Newsletter and let's keep those positive stories coming!

Stay strong everyone!