

**Reimagining Justice in Child Welfare/Dependency Court**

**Judicial Officer Training**

**Offered by the Court Improvement Training Academy**

DAY 3 – Tuesday, June 9, 2021

Via Zoom

**Agenda**

**8:00 – 8:30am Zoom Room open.**

**8:30 – 8:40am Welcome and Land and Forced Labor Acknowledgement.**

*Kelly Warner-King, Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA),   
 Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)*

*Chief Judge Cindy K. Smith, Suquamish Tribal Court*

**8:40 – 8:45am Check In.**

*Sarah Burns, Statewide Innovation Coordinator, AOC*

**8:45 – 10:45am The Power of Keeping Families Connected.**

*Kelly Warner-King, CITA, AOC*

*Jacob D’Annunzio, Managing Attorney of the Parents Representation  
 Program at the Washington State Office of Public Defense*

*Katie Biron, Family Connections, Amara*

This session will explore:

* Research on the harm of removal and ambiguous loss, as well as how to enhance resilience and develop families’ protective capacities by focusing on relationships.
* Family Time, including the impact of the new law, and how judicial officers can use the safety framework to ensure that Family Time Plans are optimized to support parent-child and sibling connections.
* What is possible when the system encourages early and effective communication between parents and caregivers, including life-long relationships that support children and parents.

**10:45 – 11:00am Break (includes a 5 minute wellness activity).**

**11:00 – 12:30pm Emerging from the Pandemic – Support for Children and Youth in School.**

*Peggy Carlson, Foster Care Program Supervisor, Washington State   
 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction*

*Shanna McBride, Early Learning and K-12 Education Program  
 Manager, DCYF*

*Chorisia Folkman, Lead Attorney and Youth Attorney, Tulalip Office of  
 Civil Legal Aid*

This session will explore:

* The importance of judicial officers’ efforts to ensure that the educational needs of children in foster care are understood and addressed.
* The presenters will share school discipline data for students in foster care and the need for trauma-informed support of students, especially as students return to school post-pandemic.

**12:30 – 1:30 pm Break for Lunch.**

**1:30 – 2:45 pm Glass Half Full – What Can We Take Forward from the Pandemic?**

*Cindy Bricker, Court Improvement Program Supervisor, AOC*

This session will explore:

* Findings of the BJA Court Recovery Task Force work
* Silver linings of COVID – What are they?
* Virtual hearings increase participation
* Engage people with disabilities
* Time-certain hearings
* Electronic filing
* Tribal court experiences
* Hybrid Court – What would be helpful and what would make it work?

**2:45 – 3:00 pm Break.**

**3:00 – 4:15 pm Tips for Making your Court Trauma Responsive.**

*Judge Anne Hirsch (ret.), Former Presiding Judge for Thurston County  
 Family and Juvenile Court*

*Chief Judge Cindy K. Smith, Suquamish Tribal Court*

*Sarah Burns, Statewide Innovation Coordinator, AOC*

*Laura Vogel, Child Welfare Training & Court Improvement Specialist, AOC*

This session will cover:

* The science of trauma and how it shows up in child welfare court
* Trauma-responsive practices and tips from judicial officers who have used them in state and tribal courts
* A conversation with parents and professionals about their experience in trauma-responsive courts

**4:15 – 4:30pm Closing and Check Out.**

*Kelly Warner-King, CITA, AOC*

*Sarah Burns, Statewide Innovation Coordinator, AOC*

Attendees will work in small groups to develop individualized action plans to integrate the concepts from the three days of training into their court practice.

**Faculty**

**Kelly Warner-King, JD**, is Director of the Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA) at the Administrative Office of the Courts. An attorney with extensive legal and policy experience in child welfare and education, Kelly designs and delivers training for judicial officers and court partners, facilitates interdisciplinary court improvement efforts and serves on a variety of state-level workgroups to improve the administration of justice in child welfare. Kelly’s experience includes work in the dependency court system as an attorney for parents and children, the manager of the King County Family Treatment Court and the coordinator of the Supporting Early Connections program for the Center for Children & Youth Justice. She received her law degree from New York University, where she focused on juvenile rights and representation. Kelly currently serves as Board President of The Mockingbird Society, a statewide advocacy organization that elevates youth voice to improve foster care and end youth homelessness.

**Judge Cindy K. Smith** is the Chief Judge of the Suquamish Tribal Court. She is also a   
Co-Chair of the Tribal State Court Consortium (TSCC). The TSCC is a joint effort between   
state and tribal court judicial officers and other judicial branch members in an effort to expand communication and collaboration.

**Sarah Burns, BSW/MBA**, is the Statewide Innovation Coordinator with the Administrative Offices of the Courts where she supports the implementation of Washington’s Safe Babies Court Teams along with managing the State Action Plan to reduce racial injustice in our child welfare system. In her prior role as Spokane’s Family and Juvenile Court Improvement Program (FJCIP) Coordinator, she worked with families in the dependency system to complete family law cases, facilitate complex change conversations between stakeholders, and manage juvenile court projects. Sarah comes to the courts with knowledge and experience in trauma responsive practices and the change process for the implementation of those practices. Knowing that wellness is the foundation of a trauma responsive organization, she encourages a culture of wellness for the professionals and families involved with the court system.

**Jacob D’Annunzio, JD**, is a managing attorney of the Parents Representation Program at the Washington State Office of Public Defense (OPD). Jacob began his career as a public defender at the Skagit County Public Defender, where besides working with juvenile and dependency cases, he was involved in creating the Family Treatment Court, working towards increasing visitation available for families, and working toward a foster mentor program. Prior to joining the team at OPD, Jacob worked at the Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA) providing training and support to attorneys and judges working in dependency and termination cases. He held a second position with the Society of Counsel as an attorney representing parents and children at Shelter Care hearings. Jacob serves on the Children, Youth, and Family Services Advisory Committee, Washington State’s Citizen Review Panel, and various other committees where he works towards improving the state’s child welfare system.

**Katie Biron** is a foster and adoptive parent. Believing that children do best when all the adults in their life are able to work together as a team, Katie’s passion is helping caregivers and parents build child-centered relationships with each other. Katie started her journey in the world of adoption and foster parenting when she and her husband adopted their first daughter 12 years ago, and then fostering their son, whom they eventually adopted. Due largely to her relationship with her oldest daughter’s mom, Katie saw a need to help other caregivers and adoptive parents understand why children need connection to their first families, as well as provide practical tools and suggestions for building and maintaining these essential relationships. These and other experiences led her to create Fostering Connections for Families, where she authored a training course on building and maintaining connections between all the important people in a foster child’s life.

Katie is the co-creator and Program Manager of the Family Connections Program™. The Family Connections Program focuses on developing a network of support for families involved in the child welfare system by establishing relationships focused on the child’s wellbeing. This program helps caregivers and parents build a working relationship to maintain essential connections for the child placed in out-of-home care. The goal of the program is to reduce the trauma experienced by these children by supporting and facilitating a positive relationship between the child’s parents and caregivers. A legislative bill establishing this program in WA state was signed into law in 2020 (House Bill 2525). Katie also helped design Amara’s Strong, Tough and Resilient (STAR) Adoptive Parent Group, which provides an opportunity for adoptive parents to create a lasting community with one another and gain tools and resources to advocate for and support adoptees.

Katie is a member of numerous committees at the state and local level, including the Washington State Dept. of Youth and Family Services Legislative Oversight Board. Katie blogs about foster care and adoption at [www.fosteringconnectionsforfamilies.com](http://www.fosteringconnectionsforfamilies.com), and in her spare time, enjoys being crafty, working in her garden, and dreaming of drinking her coffee while it’s still hot. She and her husband Jonathan live outside Seattle, WA with their four children.

**Peggy Carlson** is the Foster Care Program Supervisor at the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). She earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Portland State University and has over twenty-five years of experience advocating for underserved youth.   
Her previous roles include School District McKinney-Vento Liaison, Foster Parent Recruitment/Retention Specialist, and Director of a nonprofit camp for foster youth. She is a member of the American Bar Association’s National Foster Care Community of Practice and is currently supporting the US Department of Education in developing a national foster care exchange platform.

**Cindy Bricker**, for the past eight years, served as the child welfare Court Improvement Program Supervisor at the Administrative Office of the Courts. In that role she promotes continuous quality improvement of child welfare court proceedings and enhances collaboration between the judicial branch, child welfare agency, and tribes to improve outcomes for children and families.   
Cindy oversees grant projects such as the Parents for Parents Program, Youth Leadership Summits, Finding Fathers in Dependency Program, etc. She oversees the Court Improvement Training Academy providing training and system improvement support for the courts and child welfare community. A more recent focus of her work has been responding to COVID-related impacts on the dependency court process and the families they serve. Cindy staffs the Child Welfare Committee of the Board of Judicial Administration Court Recovery Task Force to assess challenges and opportunities to recommend improved court practices in child welfare cases resulting in better outcomes for children, youth, and families including considerations of race equity, trauma, access to justice, technology, and funding.

**Laura Vogel** is the Child Welfare Training and Court Improvement Specialist with the Administrative Office of the Courts where she coordinates training opportunities for judicial officers and court partner, along with facilitating cross-systems court improvement efforts. Prior to working for AOC, Laura was employed by Thurston County Superior Court as the Family Recovery Court Coordinator, and subsequently as the Safe Babies Court Community Coordinator. Originally from the Midwest, Laura’s early career involved coordinating specialty criminal domestic violence courts and high risk lethality teams. She spearheaded the effort that resulted in the implementation of the first domestic violence court program in the state of North Dakota. Laura received her Master of Public Administration degree from Kent State, where she focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public systems. Laura is also a Certified Trauma Support Specialist and brings expertise in trauma-responsive practices, cross-systems collaboration, and therapeutic court programs.

**Chori Folkman, JD/MSW**, CWLS is the lead attorney at the Tulalip Office of Civil Legal Aid in Tulalip, WA. She builds on her previous years of experience working as an attorney at Teamchild and Legal Counsel for Youth and Children in Snohomish and King Counties to provide holistic representation to Native American youth involved in dependency cases through the Tulalip Tribal Court.