



Good evening everyone I would like to first offer my sincere thanks and Sunflowers to Governor Dewine for such great compassion for our foster care community and foster care outcomes and also thank you to the Children Services Transformation advisory council for hosting this series of forums it is such an honor to be here before you all

My name is Jaye Turner and I am a former foster youth with several roles. I am a child of God and my favorite role of all: I am a mother, my son is my best friend. Next to those amazing roles I sit on the Board of ACTION Ohio who have been doing outstanding work to improve foster care outcomes and that's not just here in Ohio, but in our nation.

I am also a Service Reception Coordinator at a private foster care agency where I spend my nights working on finding placement for youth going into care or I am transporting them to their placement home as well as walking our foster parents through crisis. I am also the proud founder of an organization named El'lesun which is created to advocate for and serve our foster care community as a whole so we are creating programs for our youth to thrive even in their circumstances and having support groups for our foster parents because we know that without ongoing support our youth will not prosper.

I want to share with you all one issue with the system. Within the many roles I am learning yes, but I am also able to connect and listen to the frustration of not only our youth but caseworkers and foster parents and what's mind-blowing and heartbreaking is to get calls from our foster parents requesting to put their 30-day notice in on a child or give up their license because they don't feel equipped to handle the child's trauma when they're "misbehaving" they call our agencies in hopes of support and while we have training on how to handle that type of situation so that a child's placement isn't disrupted not all the time does that help and our foster parents still feel as if they aren't getting the support and training they need from us to better do their part.

We know that there are not enough foster parents here in Ohio and it's not because people don't care or that they don't want to help but it's because they lack support and don't want to feel as if they're doing it alone.

There is light in all of this; there is a great solution, and that's surrounding our Foster Parents with a Live Support Group where monthly meetings are held for a time of fellowship where their voices are heard and support is given within each other and the community so they aren't just relying on their agency who lack the time to support them.

With El'lesun we have created and will launch our Support Groups that will provide community resources in ongoing training around crisis prevention trauma as well as helping our youth towards independent living because we know that if our foster parents aren't supported and well then our youth will still experience instability in and out of the system...