



Dear Community Partners and Friends,

It is my honor to be serving as the new executive director of the Child Protection Coalition.

I've cared deeply about the coalition members since I became a foster parent 16 years ago. That was when I came face-to-face with a 2-year-old who didn't need a perfect parent. He just needed safety and love while his parents were working on issues that had roots in their own troubled childhoods.

Fostering was terrifying at first. After all, I was in charge of someone else's child. Would I know what to do when he cried? Or when he was sick? Or when he threw a tantrum in a store?

But then I realized I wasn't doing it alone. Social workers from DHS were there to support me.

A CASA volunteer was there to represent his best interests in court. His attorney, the judge and the district attorney were working on the legal proceedings. Family & Children's Services was there to provide counseling.

In short, I was surrounded by a system committed to children and families so that I could focus on my commitment of keeping my foster child safe and loved. It was my job to take him to the park; it was their job to work out all the complicated issues related to his case.

As a former foster parent, I am forever thankful to all of you for how much you help and care for children.

At the Child Protection Coalition, my goal now is to help us all work together so that children can get the protection, justice and healing they deserve.

For those of you who already are coalition members, please be on the lookout for an email or phone call from me in the next couple weeks. I would like to meet with all of you individually to find out what I can do in this role to help you and your organization as we all take on the immense responsibility and even greater privilege of helping the children who need it most.

Whether you're a community funder, an agency partner, an elected official, an educator or a concerned citizen, I want to hear your input.

Sure, we all are already doing our part. But when we collaborate, that's when children and families truly will get the best service we have to offer.

I look forward to working with you all in the months and years to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nellie Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nellie Kelly | Executive Director

www.protectioncoalition.org