

# *Peers and People with Lived Experience*

## **RISE Magazine**

Rise Magazine is written by parents who have faced the child welfare system in their own lives. Through personal essays and reporting, parents illuminate every aspect of the child welfare experience from parents' perspectives. For professionals, Rise stories offer insight that can improve how to engage and support fragile families. For parents, Rise offers information, peer support, and hope.

Addiction is a major factor in children being placed in foster care. Many parents struggling with addiction fear that reaching out for treatment will lead to a child welfare investigation, yet living with addiction also puts kids at risk. Stories offer guidance and information on getting clean, repairing relationships with children affected by addiction, and knowing legal rights in seeking treatment.



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER  
**ALLY TRAINING HUB**  
Virginia Department of Social Services

## **Rise focuses on two goals:**

In the first writing workshop of Rise & Shine 2021, Keyna Franklin, Assistant Editor, facilitated a poetry icebreaker. During this icebreaker, parents developed the powerful “Just Because” poems.

- 1) To prevent unnecessary system involvement.
- 2) To reform child welfare policy and practice so that families who come to the attention of the child welfare system are less likely to be separated and more likely to reunify if children are removed.

## Rise & Shine: Just Because Poems

In the first writing workshop of Rise & Shine 2021, Keyna Franklin, Assistant Editor, facilitated a poetry icebreaker. During this icebreaker, parents developed the powerful “Just Because” poems.

### *Rise Magazine Poem*

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## Just Because

By Lindsay R.

Just because I am a woman  
I am not inferior  
I am not weak  
I am not submissive  
I am a bearer of life, power forms in my womb

Just because I am fat  
I am not ugly  
I am not lazy  
I am not going to cover up for your convenience  
I am a cup that overflows, with pride in every curve

Just because I am a survivor  
I am not my trauma  
I am not forever damaged  
I am not unable to live my life  
I am proud I rose from the ashes, my experience made me  
stronger, not stagnant