

A path of smooth, light-colored stepping stones leads from the foreground towards the background on a sandy beach. The scene is illuminated by the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise, with the sky and water reflecting the light. The stones are arranged in a slightly curved line, leading the eye from the bottom left towards the top center of the image.

Hands & Voices

Family Leadership in Language & Learning Center

The Stepping Stones to Valuing Yourself as a Parent Leader

December 14, 2023

Christine Griffin, WA H&V

Cora Shihad, CA H&V

OBJECTIVES

List identifiable traits of future parent leaders

Define capacity building techniques and strategies

Explain the benefit that parent voice has on system change



1971 EDUCATION FOR ALL

The First Disability Rights Law in the US



Together They Were Stronger-
Thriving Communities



**IDENTIFYING
TRAITS
OF FUTURE
LEADERS**

Flexibility
Unique *Discerning* Honest
Flexibility *Empathetic*
Passionate Tired
Compassionate *Personal*
Kind
Knowledgeable
Safe
Understanding
Inspirational *Collaborative*
Patient Determined
Resourceful
Trustworthy



LEADERSHIP WITHIN

Leadership Is...

- Not simply something we do
- It comes from a deeper reality within us
- It comes from values, principles, life experiences and essence
- Leadership is a process, an intimate expression of who we are
- It is our whole person in action
- We learn what we achieve, not how to achieve



RECOGNIZING FUTURE LEADERS

Provides a Calm Safe Space

A Good Listener

Encouraging

Compassion/Empathy

Think Creatively

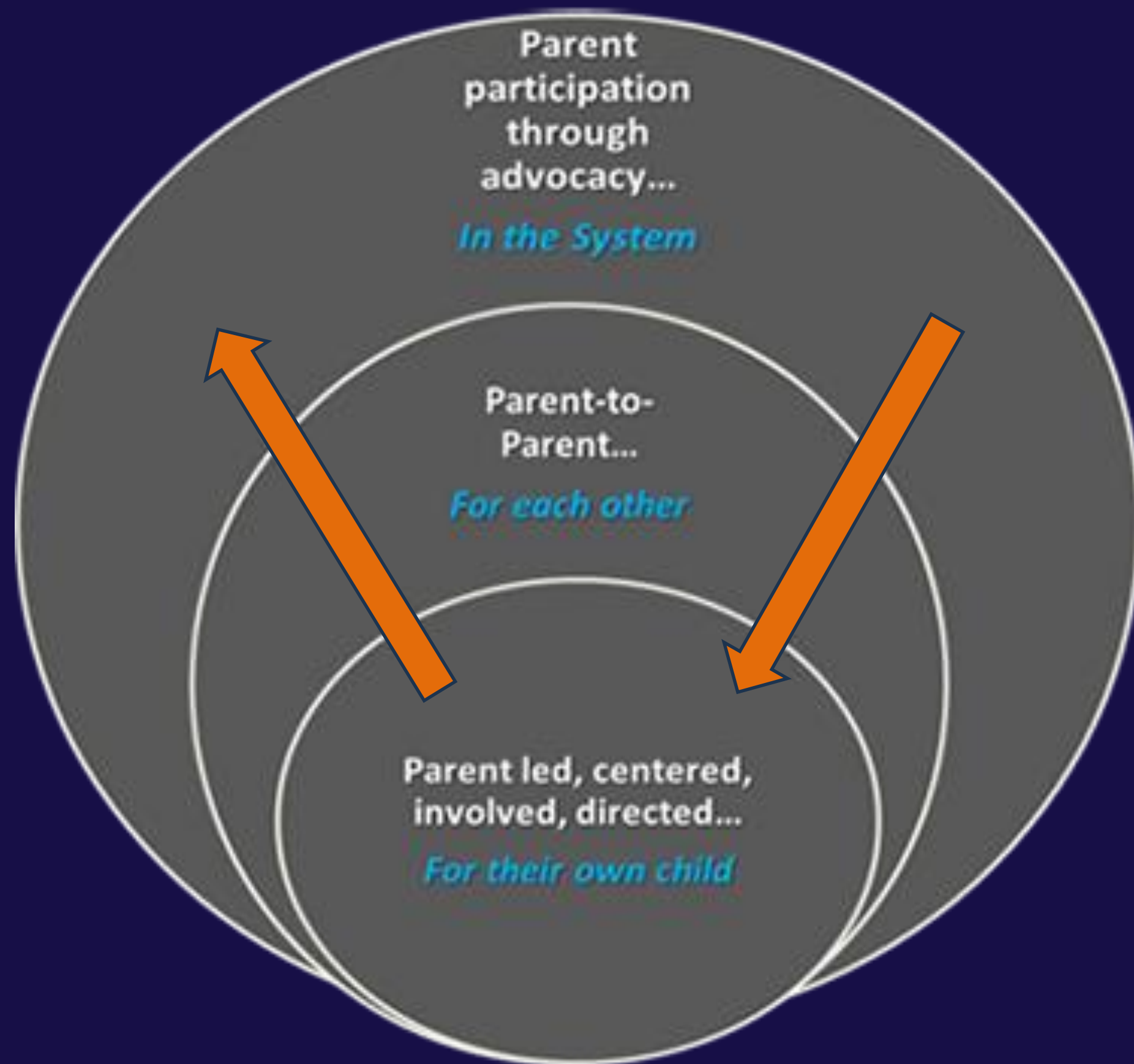
Sense of Commitment

Passion

Resourcefulness



Parent Leader Survey Responses



THE LEVELS OF PARENT LEADERSHIP

PARENTS LEAD BY:

- **Caring for self**
- **Advocating for their child**
- **Connecting with families**
 - Modeling, Supporting, Listening
 - Providing Family Events
 - Encourage Self-Determination
- **Outreach to professionals**
- **Participating as a stakeholder**
- **Sharing their story in a meaningful way**
- **Ongoing Professional Development**
- **Connecting with legislators**



A path of smooth, light-colored stones on a blue-green water surface, receding into the distance. The stones are arranged in a line, starting from the bottom right and moving towards the top center. The water has a shimmering, rippled texture. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CAPACITY BUILDING TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES

A path of smooth, light-colored stones leads through shallow, rippling water. The stones are arranged in a winding line, starting from the top center and moving towards the bottom right. The water is a deep blue color, and the ripples are visible around the stones. The overall scene is serene and suggests a journey or a path forward.

ENGAGING PARENT LEADERS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENT LEADERS

Opportunities

Personal
invite

Interests

Thank You &
Reach Out

No
Judgement

Understand

Parents are more likely to become parent leaders when they...

- Feel accepted
- Are recognized
- Receive positive feedback
- See other parents like themselves
- Find a community to grow skills:
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing infusion
 - Deaf Plus
 - Latino Council

CONNECTION & COMMUNITY



INCLUDING DIVERSE PARENT LEADERS

Explore
Incorporate
Access



BELONGING



Accessibility

Getting into
the building



Diversity

Being invited
to the table



Inclusion

Having a voice
at the table



Belonging

Being heard
at the table

Risk and Uncertainty

High

Anxiety

In Charge
of
Change

Low

Boredom

High

Low

Skill and Confidence

**BALANCING
FORCES
IN CHANGE**

BOUNDARIES

What is the task?

What is the time commitment?

Who will be supporting me?

What are the expectations or outcomes they are looking for?

Is this volunteer or paid?

A path of smooth, light-colored stones leads across a dark blue, rippling body of water. The stones are arranged in a line that curves from the top center towards the bottom right. The water has a subtle, wavy texture. The overall scene is serene and suggests a journey or a path forward.

**CAPACITY
BUILDING FOR
PARENT LEADERS**

THE THINGS WE TELL OURSELVES

**No Way!
Never in a
Million years**

**Well, what
do you know,
I Am Leading!**

**I was Born
to Lead!
Bring it on**

CLEANING YOUR FILTER ACTIVITY

Berry, B .2021





LEARNING TO LEAD:

HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD AND WHY?

Ubuntu:
I am because we are

ME. YOU. US. I/WE. ALL.

Berry, B .2021

INTERNAL BARRIERS

Beliefs literally create our reality; they are the lenses or filters through which we interpret our world.

Beliefs can transform our life in either life enriching or life limiting ways.

Our goal is to consciously engage them vs. unconsciously being driven by them.



Cashman, Kevin (2008) Leadership from the Inside Out

TAKE TIME TO SELF-REFLECT

When people often give us feedback inconsistent with how we see ourselves.
(mirroring)

When we feel stuck or blocked our inner critic may be holding us back.

When we are not open to new information, or other people's views.

When we react to a situation disproportionate to the situation.



THE POWER OF VULNERABILITY

Vulnerability is the birthplace of
innovation, creativity, and change.

Tedtalks: Brene Brown--*Listening to shame*. (2012).



PHOTO: RAMONA ROSALES



Let ourselves be seen
Love with our whole heart
Practice gratitude and lean into joy
Believe we're enough

Tedtalks: Brene Brown--Power of Vulnerability.
(2010).



**THE BENEFIT OF
PARENT VOICE
ON SYSTEM
CHANGE**



PARENTS AS LEADERS

“Parents have been under-represented at the level where decisions are being made about programs and services for their children. But parents remain the consistent, long term “case manager” for their child; overseeing the programming and ‘watchdogging’ its quality.”

Wright, 2001



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SHAPING SYSTEMS THROUGH PARENT LEADERSHIP

- Representation
- Collaboration
- Advocacy
- Legislative
- Accountability

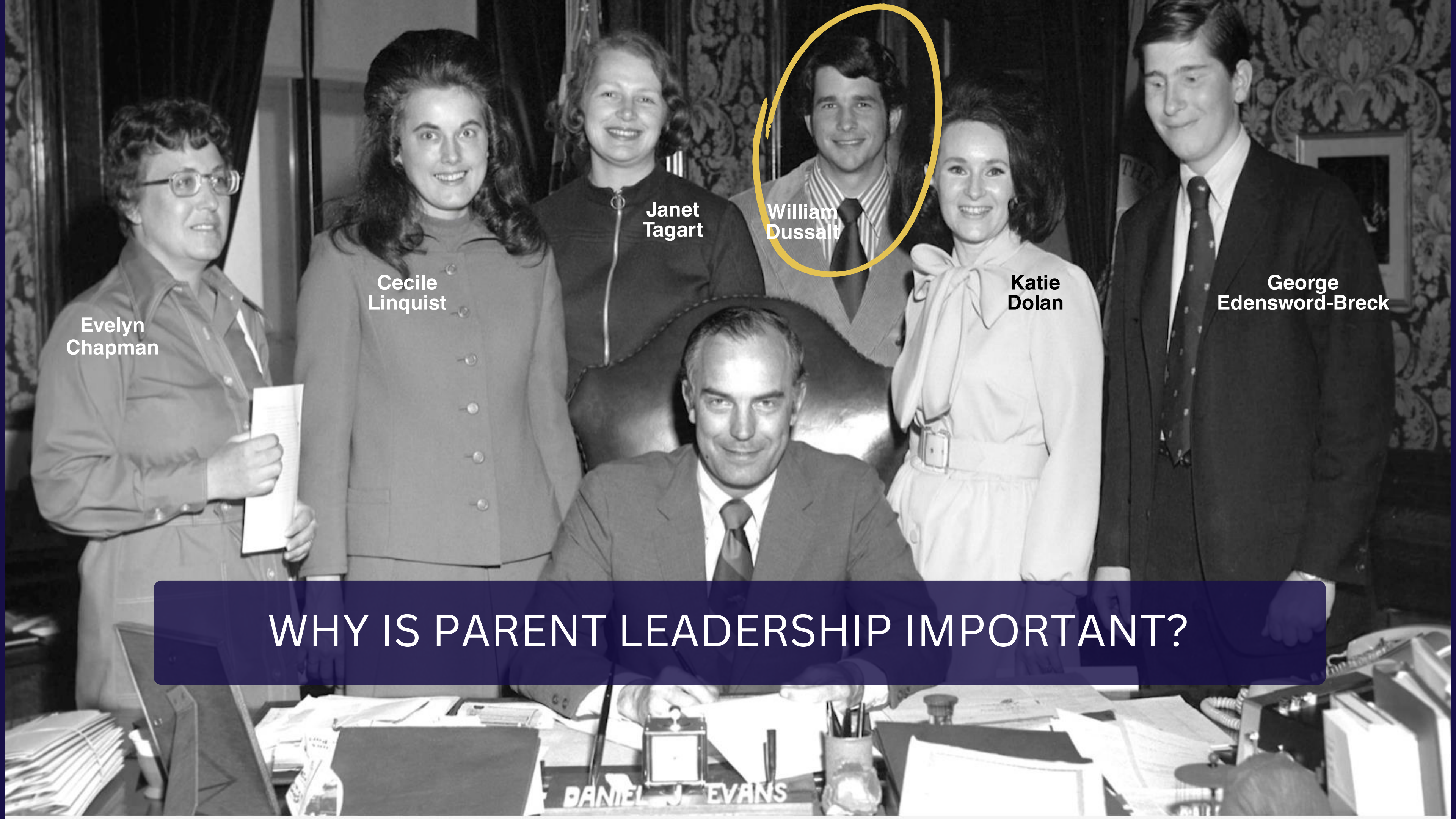
PARENTS IMPACT SYSTEMS

Assuring parent input...

- Built/budgeted into the system
- Includes both individuals & organizations
- Support for training & development

Influencing through leadership:

- Early Identification & Intervention
- Educational Systems
- Medical/Health Systems
- Professional Training Systems
- Pre-service and In-Service



Evelyn
Chapman

Cecile
Linguist

Janet
Tagart

William
Dussalt

Katie
Dolan

George
Edensword-Breck

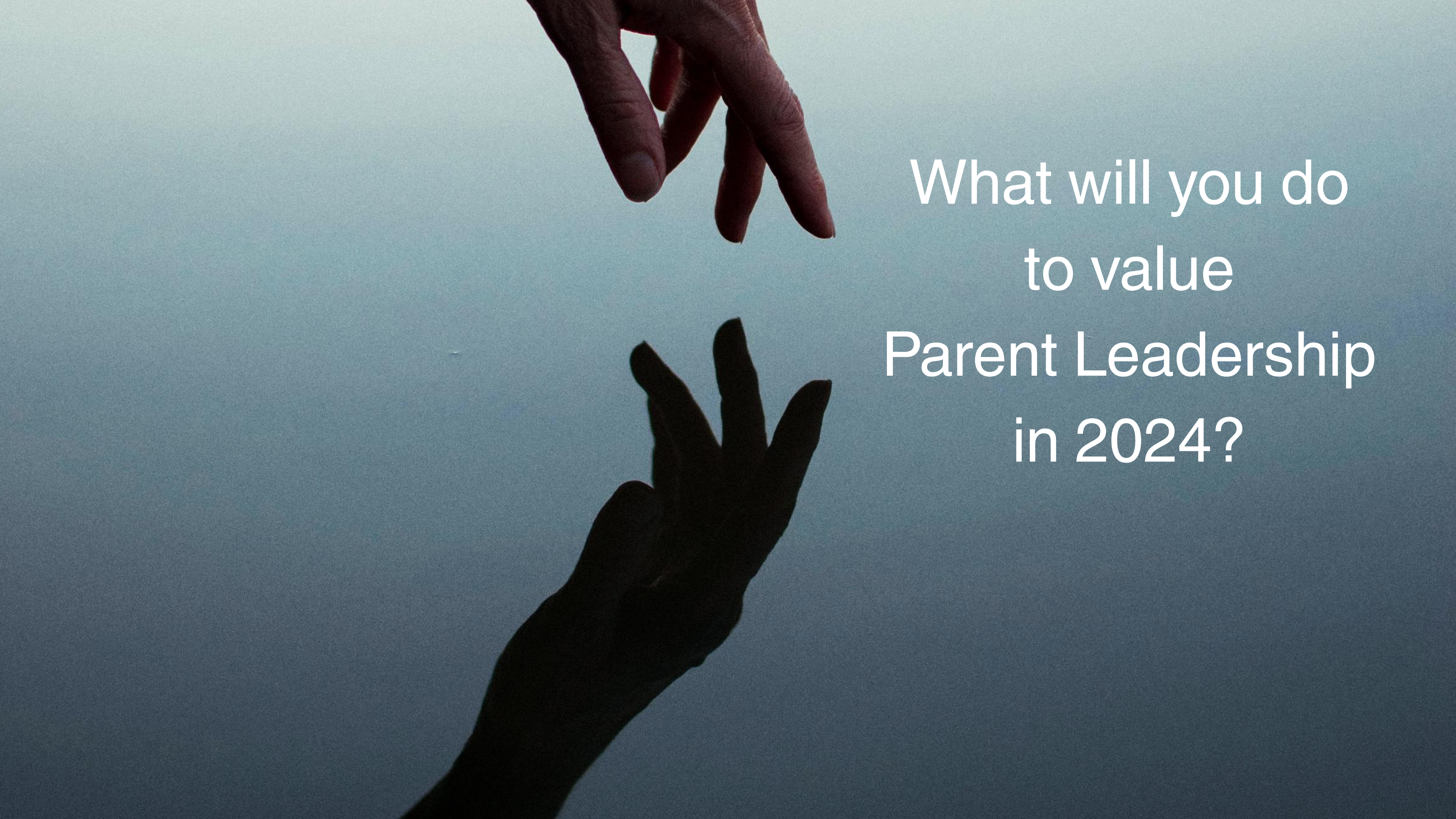
WHY IS PARENT LEADERSHIP IMPORTANT?

DANIEL J. EVANS



“I’m so aware of how much we have to do... the absence of effective advocacy, like the kind of strength and commitment that I saw in Janet, Katie, Evelyn and Cecile...without continued advocacy the gains we made will be lost. ... We need that commitment and passion for another 50 years if the change is going to be meaningful.”

**William Dussault-
Special Needs Attorney and Advocate
*Together They Were Stronger***

A hand is shown from the top center, reaching downwards. Below it, a dark silhouette of a hand is shown, also reaching upwards. The background is a smooth gradient from light blue at the top to dark blue at the bottom. The text is positioned on the right side of the image.

What will you do
to value
Parent Leadership
in 2024?

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