



Amber Erickson Joins the West Michigan Partnership for Children

Strong evaluation skills, a dedication to community partnership, and rigorous research experience promise to be an asset to new start up in Kent County.

The West Michigan Partnership for Children (WMPC) welcomes [Amber Erickson](#) as the Director of Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI). Erickson will play a key role developing and executing the WMPC's PQI plan and leading the WMPC PQI Advisory Council.

Erickson comes from the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy's Community Research Institute (CRI) at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) where she managed a portfolio of research projects. She served as lead evaluator of Kent County's System of Care, the Community Family Partnership, where she focused on measuring key outcomes for youth, many whom were involved in the foster care system.

"Amber is an excellent evaluator and has high standards," said Dr. Jerry Johnson, Research Director at CRI. "She took on one of the most high-profile community-based programs and turned it into an all-star program for CRI. She's developed excellent working relationships with people across the spectrum."

In addition to her work with CRI, Erickson served as an adjunct professor and a field supervisor for candidates in the Master of Social Work Program at GVSU. Amber graduated with a M.S.W. from the University of Michigan.

"I'm so excited to welcome Amber to our team!" said Sonia Noorman, Chief Operating Officer of the WMPC. "Her experience in evaluation and research will ensure our progress in determining best practices for the children and families we serve. Her training as a social worker will assist her in engaging and understanding our workforce."

The WMPC will partner with Bethany Christian Services, Catholic Charities of West Michigan, D.A. Blodgett—St. Johns, Samaritas, and Wellspring Lutheran Services to provide foster care services to children and families in Kent County through a contract with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services beginning October 1, 2017. The WMPC will pilot a performance-based contract and utilize a case rate that incentivizes permanency and allows for flexibility and creativity in funds to empower and strengthen families and improve outcomes for children.