

TATIANA RODRIGUEZ



Family Matters First

2023 Global Fellow

BIG BOLD IDEA

Abolish family separation and reunite separated parents with their children by empowering parents to build advocacy tools, support networks, and mutual aid.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Family Matters First (FMF) strengthens families by providing legal tools, peer support, advocacy, and mutual aid to end the separation of Black, Brown, and low-income families. FMF hosts "Know Your Rights" legal clinics with partner attorneys at Harvard Law and HLAB and partners with Boston University's Center for Antiracist Research, Mass General Hospital, JMAC for Families, UPenn Law School, and Rutgers Law School. FMF also provides monthly peer support groups and individual advocacy to parents at court hearings and foster care review meetings. If needed, FMF refers parents to early defense lawyers or partners with CPCS attorneys and supports parents in taking part in a participatory defense module led by impacted parents and advocates.

PERSONAL BIO

Tatiana is a first generation, Afro-Latina college graduate in social science. Throughout her life, she has experienced firsthand not knowing what foster home she would end up in, waking up in a shelter every day, and waking up without her son. Shortly after being a part of advocacy groups, Tatiana decided to start organizing other impacted parents and founded Family Matters First in 2020. She facilitates monthly peer support groups, legal workshops, advocacy meetings, protests, documentary storytelling, surveys, and community partnerships. Prior to founding FMF, Tatiana was doing participatory defense and working for the public school system, where she often witnessed the harms of mandated reporting and child requiring assistance cases. She has starred in two documentaries: "Broken" by Bill Lichenstein and "The Family Project" by Northeastern University.

Organization/Fellow Location

Cambridge, United States

Organization Structure

Nonprofit

