

Father Engagement is Everybody's Business Webinar

Kiersten Beigel: Good afternoon, everybody. This is Kiersten Beigel. I'm with the Office of Head Start, and I would love to welcome you this afternoon, or midday or morning, as the case may be for some of you. I'm going to be your moderator for this webinar, "Father Engagement is Everybody's Business," and I am absolutely thrilled to be able to do that.

We have a lot going on this week at the Office of Head Start, as you know, since you registered for this webinar. This is part of a series of resources/events that are happening, the week before Father's Day, and we're really excited to be able to offer the field some new resources to support the work that we do in partnering with fathers, in our programs -- Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

So, before we get going, I'm going to -- let's do a little tech talk here. I wanted to remind you, you can use your computer speakers to hear the webinar. If you can't hear the presenters, you can, of course, always attempt to turn on your computer speakers. And if you're having problems with your speakers, or they're not working, you can -- we've got a phone number here in the public chat that Natalie, who's our webinar coordinator, put up for everybody. So, you can see that in the public chat. It's a number with a dial in that you can call in, if you're having trouble. I also wanted to direct you to Sam. Sam has his own tab next to the public-private tab. There's a "Sam" tab. And if you are having any trouble, any kind of technical issues, you can do some private chatting with Sam and he'll help you out. So, that's our tech talk.

I wanted to tell you that we have a pretty interactive session for you today. We're really excited. We have a pretty laid back group of folks, who are very passionate about their work with fathers, to say the least. And I think they're going to keep it pretty conversational, so this -- we may be doing a little webinar free styling here, a little different than the usual style of webinar. And they're also excited to get to know a little bit about you. We'll be doing some polling questions, asking you to weigh in, and they'll guide you when it's time to do that.

So, now I would like to give you a chance to hear from them. They're going to introduce themselves, and we'll start with David, who is in the upper left hand corner here. And if you guys could just tell us who you are and a little bit about your connection with this work.

David Jones: Okay, thank you, Kiersten. Welcome everyone. I'm so excited that you're all participating with us, on this webinar. My name is David Jones. I am the Fatherhood Specialist here in the Office of Head Start. I co-lead all of our fatherhood efforts with Kiersten Beigel. And I have about 15 to 20 years of experience providing services directly, indirectly for fathers, individual work, group work, you name it, within the context of Early Head Start, Head Start, and also as a consultant to other programs. So, welcome.

John Hornstein: Okay, I'm John Hornstein. I'm on the upper right hand side, the one with the glasses up there. I'm delighted to be working with David and Ed and Kiersten on this. I work at the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement and have been doing fatherhood work for over 30 years. And kind of backed into it when -- at a time when -- I remember very distinctly the first time I said to myself, "I've got to do more about this," was at a conference when the keynote speaker was asked, "well, what do you do with fathers, then?" And the speaker said: "Well, nothing, because they don't show up." So, that got me not "laid back," as Kiersten said, but quite passionate. So, I'll move onto Ed.

Edwin Cheromiah: [Greeting in Pueblo Laguna language] This is -- my name is Edwin Cheromiah, and I just greeted you in our Pueblo Laguna language, the Keres language. I was just wishing everybody a good afternoon. Also again, I've been with the Pueblo Laguna Fatherhood Program through the Laguna Head Start, for the past eight years. Way back in 2004, these men -- a few men got together and wanted to have fathers more engaged. So, it went through PFS first of all, but then, finally came into Head Start. That's where I've been; that's where I was hired for this position. And I continue to offer services for dads, you know, resources to different programs that we have here in Laguna, and also offering them just the support that, sometimes, fathers need to move forward. And it's a pleasure to be with you today.

Kiersten: So, we were really -- you might have heard some of our muted voices. We were really excited to see folks rolling in; we had well over 1,000 people register for this, which is very telling about how interested people are in father engagement. So, today what we're going to do, in about an hour and a half. And I'm going to monitoring chat. So, as questions come up along the way, we might stop and take some of those, or I might make some decisions about holding those towards the end. But what we're going to do is reflect kind of on where we are now and where we hope to go in building supportive partnerships with fathers, think a little bit about sort of the movement -- of the fatherhood movement and how things have evolved in Head Start, with regards to father engagement. And we want to renew our enthusiasm and commitment to this work. We want to identify some ways to build father engagement that is systemic, integrated and comprehensive, and we'll talk more about what that means. And we hope to share some new resources for you. Some of the resources that are coming out this week that you may use to improve your program practice with fathers. So, without further ado, I turn it over to David.

David: Hi, so we're going to begin with our first polling question, which is a two part question. We want to get a feel for, you know, the participants on the call today, so we'd like to ask that everyone participate. So, Natalie can you please go ahead and launch the poll?

[Background Noise]

David: And the first question is, what is your role within the Head Start program? So, we'd like for everyone to sort of take a moment and click on the choice that best fits the role that you have in the program within where you work. If -- obviously, if you're not within a Head Start program you can choose one of the other options. We'll give you a few seconds to do that.

[Background Noise]

David: And Natalie, I'm not sure, in terms of time, but give them a couple more seconds and then we can take a look at the results.

[Background Noise]

David: Okay, can we see results from the first question? Wow, so, it looks like about 26 percent of you are family and community partnership staff, 11 percent are parent involvement staff, and then, just sort of mix of, sort of directors, sort of leadership in the program. We actually have some focused male involvement staff, health staff. So, this is great and this sort of connects with the title of this webinar, which is, you know, "Father Engagement is Everybody's Business." So, this is really nice to see. So, can we move now to the next polling question?

[Background Noise]

David: Okay, it's going to come up in a second.

[Background Noise]

David: So, what is your gender?

[Background Noise]

David: Take a few moments; make your selection.

[Background Noise]

David: And the one thing I want to say about the previous polling question is, again, irrespective of your role within the program, you know, everyone can make a meaningful contribution to working with, supporting and engaging fathers.

John: Uh, huh.

David: That's one of the things that we really want to underscore with today's webinar. Okay, can we see the results, please, Natalie?

[Background Noise]

David: It takes a couple of seconds.

David: Ah.

John: Wow. You know, that leaves a certain percentage unaccounted for.

David: Yeah.

John: But still, the proportion is pretty interesting isn't it?

David: It is. It is and I mean this is really important for us because, again, we want to make sure that we're being thoughtful, in terms, of how we respond how we present and what we're saying. We have a sense that, you know, our programs are predominantly populated by female staff, but we just want to make sure that we're being thoughtful and sensitive to the entire audience. So, thank you so much for your participation. Natalie, you can go ahead and close that poll.

[Background Noise]

John: What it also says David is the majority of conversations with fathers are between female staff and fathers.

David: That's right.

John: Yeah.

David: That's right. And so, it speaks to and underscores the importance of, sort of, what happens when those opportunities present themselves, in terms, of what we do with them. So, we're waiting for the next slide. And while we're waiting, basically, what we're going to do, moving forward, is just going to be really reflecting on fatherhood and Head Start and Early Head Start and sort of talking a little bit about the historical evolution of the fatherhood movement within Head Start.

[Background Noise]

David: Seems we may be having a little technical difficulty.

John: I've --

David: Do you see the slide?

John: Yeah, but I clicked on the tab at the top that put me back to father engagement.

David: Okay. So, I just did the same thing. So, I mean there's a lot that we can cover to address, you know, why fatherhood evolved in the way that it has. You know, we can sort of ask ourselves some questions about the role that women played. And let me say that women have been exceptional in their understanding and support of the movement to support father engagement. And I think were it not for their initial insight and their fortitude and support, I'm not certain we would have evolved to where we have today.

John: Yeah.

David: You know; they had to allow men in.

John: Right.

David: And then what about the men?

John: Yeah.

David: I think they had to dare to be different and step out of their comfort zone, but what is important is involving fathers. Initially, we got to a place where in the awareness stage, what that meant was that we were not only asking more from fathers, but we were also asking more from programs and from staff. So, that means everybody had to be a little bit different, in terms of the way that they were working and what they did. In the second stage, the acknowledging stage, you know, programs -- we began to believe that programs needed, sort of an adjunct or separate services for fathers, in order for them to be effective, in order for them to be meaningful. And, I think at the time, John and Ed, if you agree, that was appropriate.

John: Sure.

David: Until we began to see what happened when the father involvement staff left the organization. You know, sometimes the -- all the great effort, the great work that had gone into producing this program sort of went out the door with that individual. So, we've evolved, now, in our thinking to not only expect that staff build relationships with fathers and that fathers engage. But, we are suggesting that fully integrating services for fathers, as a component of overall services is not only appropriate, but it can contribute to sustainable service provision, when we make fatherhood everybody's business.

John: Uh, huh.

David: And it's important to note that, initially, you know some fathers were hesitant, almost reluctant, for very valid reasons. You know, there were some cultural reasons for their distance from educational programs, as well as, some of the systemic stuff that we're all aware of. But, in some cases, we have fathers who have received incredible support and guidance from their own fathers, and they drew from that experience, and it was easy to really work with them and talk to them about what was important for them as fathers. And then we had the other end of the spectrum with fathers that did not have that experience that were committed to doing something different for their children than what they received. John, would you like to say -- anything about the connections and opportunities for connections at the different developmental stages?

John: Yeah sure. I mean, I think this is a great kind of reflection on the history. And I -- the other day I was wondering, you know, what did fathers, themselves, have to do with this change? And I think fathers, themselves, are expecting more of programs, because society, as a whole, has changed. But, I think, one of the things about expectations is that it may feel really different at different ages, what -- the kind of connection you can make with a father, when he brings an infant to a program, or when you do a home visit, is quite different than that father whose thinking of their four year old as a ball player. So, I think there is a lot of complexity to this process. But, I also think that this idea that somehow everybody -- that full engagement means really thinking about every aspect of the program, as being something that fathers are involved with and that it's not a distinct and separate thing. I think that's an important thing. At the same time, there may be some things that are distinctly for fathers, and those shouldn't end necessarily.

David: That's a really good point.

John: Yeah.

David: So, as we consider what we mean or, sort of, what we're thinking about when we talk about moving from involvement to engagement, as you can see from this slide. You know, a lot of times, in my experience sort of being in a program, sort of leading the evolution of a program that became more father-friendly, consulting with other programs that were beginning or attempting to start fatherhood initiatives. Programs tend to gravitate to do what comes easy, or what satisfies program's goals of actually having a fathers' event.

And that's not to say that these events are not meaningful and they don't provide opportunities for connectedness, but tying the event to a process that facilitates ongoing opportunities for connectedness and relationship building is the key, with the goal in mind of learning about how, you know, fathers think and feel about their role as parents and what's important to them in relationship to their child's development. You know, we are at a place where we want staff to extend themselves and seek opportunities to connect. There's so many routines and complimentary supports within Head Start that provide opportunities to connect with fathers that can result in systemic, integrated and comprehensive services, as shown on this slide. You know, we encourage you to dig into the resources that's being released this week and begin assessing your programs' current services, the intersections, and/or opportunities for connections with fathers, you know, at times of pickup and drop off.

You know, if families transition and I know there's this process where a lot of families transition into Head Start or Early Head Start, initially, in home-based and they move into a center-based option if that's available. There's a significant change in the amount of time that you have to communicate with families when they're in home-based juxtaposed to center-based, during pickup and drop off.

So, staff have to be really crafty about seizing the moments and taking advantage of those opportunities to communicate with families.

John: Can you go back?

David: Sure.

John: Is it possible to go back?

David: Of course.

John: Because I want to put an X right there, alright.

David: Okay.

John: And there's some interesting research on mothers and fathers, when they drop off kids at childcare. And one of things they've found is that after a problem -- I'm sure many of you have seen situations where the child kind of has a hard time transitioning in and cries and both the parent and the child have difficulty. So, in this research they called up both mothers and fathers like 10 minutes or so after they dropped the child off and what they found was that when it was a problematic one, when it was a separation issue, both mothers and fathers were still upset. They were still really concerned. The difference was, was that the mothers typically had somebody to talk to about it and the fathers didn't.

So, you know, what David said about these particular times to make a connection, that time, when the, with the difficult drop off, that may be a great time to build a connection with a father. Now, you can move the slide.

David: Make a point.

John: I just wanted to use the X.

David: This is yours, John.

John: Okay, Yeah. So, and this kind of gets to what I was talking about, is these barriers to involvement and engagement are different. So, involvement is, like, what's getting in the way, as far as just a physical thing, you know. Is it transportation? Is it ability to make it to the program? It's all kinds of these almost physical kind of barriers, whereas the barriers to true engagement, to a true partnership with fathers is really more internal. It's more, what am I bringing to these relationships? What do I believe that the father believes about the program or about child rearing?

So, it's more this internal stuff that's in the way of fully engaging with fathers. And so, when we get to professional development, that's what we're going to want to think about. So, you know, what is in the way of a father walking across the threshold into a program or actually participating in a meeting, when there's an issue?

So, I think that we're moving to thinking in a deeper way about how we form these partnerships. So, yeah; so, now we can move to the research.

David: Well, John, before we move to the research slide --

John: Yeah. Yeah.

David: I would just like to add a little conversation about this last bullet.

John: Okay. Oh, you're using the star. I see.

David: A little fancy here. You know, this is where a lot of the work really happens with staff, as it relates to professional development, when we start to think about the barriers.

John: Yeah.

David: I think it's important for us to really acknowledge and accept the fact that it is difficult and that it may take time and effort. You know, in the fatherhood resource that we're releasing, today on the ECLKC, on page 22, there's really nice quotes from a staff member that speaks to her beliefs about the father's role and who she felt she should be talking to about child development, and how with good staff training, peer support and supervision, she was able to change her belief system and begin to look at other personal and professional biases that were affecting her work with fathers.

John: Yeah, yeah.

David: I think that's just a really important point to make that we know that this work there's some complex issues. And moving from one place to the next will take some time, energy and effort.

John: Yeah.

And David, so much of that stuff, those sets of beliefs about what my role as a parent or my role in communicating to a parent about which issues is pretty deep stuff. We're not necessarily conscious of it. We just do it.

David: Right.

John: It's something that's culturally formed in us. And so, I think some of it is just acknowledging that and bringing it to the surface. So, yeah, it's a really good point.

David: And the trust that has to be involved, in terms of the relationship with your supervisor to get to a place where you're actually beginning to wrestle with some of those issues.

John: Exactly, yeah.

David: Okay.

John: Okay, so the research says a lot and to try to put the research on fatherhood on one slide is very difficult. And before I get into this, I'd like to say that this might feel a little offensive to some people, and that's okay. But, part of it is that this doesn't say anything about women really. And when I say well, fathers make important contributions to children's development. Well, that doesn't mean that mothers don't make the same contributions, or that mothers in some cases make the same contributions that fathers do, or some fathers that mothers do.

So, I think this you know it's not as like you know one -- two sided as it may seem. So, I just want to, you know, make that disclaimer first, because I think this can start feeling like oh, dads do this and mothers do this, when, in fact, it gets mixed up a lot more than we might think.

The first bullet is men are fully capable of nurturing young children. We know that. We know that throughout history, men have young children. In some societies, men play a larger role in the nurturance. In many societies, that's changing; but men's brains respond to a baby's cry, the same way women's brains do. The same parts of the brain get activated when they hear a cry. Society has helped them figure out what to do when they hear that cry, but the neurological phenomenon is the same. Men, naturally, raise their voices to a higher pitch when they're talking to infants. Of course, if you ask them whether they are, they might say, "no, I'm not doing that." But, then they go "ooh yeah, [inaudible]".

So, you know there are things that men are very capable of nurturing young children. Another point on this one is that men tend to look more nurturant with young children when there aren't women there. That when there's not, and I would attribute it to well, you know, there's some role definition going on here and I'm going to you know play this role. But, we find, in general, that when there aren't women near, men show more nurturance. The second bullet, and this could go on and on and on, and some of this material is in the guide that David referred to: Fathers make important varied contributions to children's development, regulation and self-control. There -- the way they play with young children causes children to actually control their impulses a little more or know what the limits of that are. We -- you know, there's this discussion of fathers tend to play more roughly with their children, and, sometimes, mothers get a little nervous about that, or even Head Start staff get a little nervous about that.

And certainly we don't want that to go too far and -- but at the same time, a certain amount of that is -- helps the child gain self-regulation. Language development -- well, men tend to make children work harder, when they say something. And the classic example is when the toddler goes to the refrigerator and goes "ju", like that, the mother opens up the refrigerator, gets a cup and pours juice; whereas, the father goes "what?" And then the child goes "juice." And the father goes "oh, you want some juice." And so, like I said, that's in general. Some mothers are going to be more like fathers that way, some fathers more like mothers, but, in general, kids in the toddler period, anyway, have to work harder with their language.

Same is true for cognitive and emotional development. Fathers have a distinct impact on that -- that active play with fathers, nurturant play, actually supports cognitive and emotional development and there's pretty strong research evidence to support that. It, the -- in fact, the relationship between, this is a different piece of research, but the relationship between a father and a child is not necessarily measured by whether the child goes to the father for security.

Certainly, in good relationships that happens. But, a better measure, better predictor of the relationship between a father and a child is how they play together. So, that's something that we want to encourage. And then the final bullet is well, it's good for a lot of other things too. When fathers are involved, when other men are involved in the lives of mother's children, then mothers can be better mothers. They can mother more effectively and some of that is economic, of course. Some of it is, as with any of us when we've got the support of another person, we can do our jobs better. Fathers themselves report that when they're involved with their children, when they're engaged with their children, they feel better about themselves. And that's almost self-explanatory and then, society as a whole, people that are engaged in fathering, men who are engaged in fathering engage in less crime. They're more productive members of society and there's a number of outcomes. So, that's a lot of the research in a nutshell and I don't think that most people on this call need to be convinced of this in any way.

But, it's nice to have some of these ideas, so that we can kind of deepen our understanding of what the effect of fathers is and what the effect of being involved in children's lives and their programs is on fathers.

[Background Noise]

John: Oh. Yeah go ahead, David, yeah.

David: So, with this particular slide, what we kind of wanted to do was to have our participants that have engaged in a little bit of interactive exercise. Sort of, if you can, if you're willing, take a look at this picture and then just type into the chat, sort of, what you see in this picture. We just kind of want to get a feel for, sort of, is there anything that strikes you, as you're looking at this father and this child? So, if you could take a moment to type into it. I think we're going to use the public chat.

So, type into the chat your, sort of, reactions when you see this picture. So, we'll take a few minutes to have you do that.

[Background Noise]

David: John, is there anything else you wanted to say while they're -- while we're waiting for someone maybe to type a --

John: Well, the picture is so compelling. I hate to distract people. But, I would -- if anything I've said about the research was -- struck you as: "gee, I don't really -- I'd like to hear more about that," I would direct people to the guide, because there's a section of the guide that kind of summarizes the research on fathers, in particular, the contribution they make to children's development.

David: Okay, well it doesn't look like we have any brave souls. Oh, whoa here we go.

John: Okay.

David: There is -- thank you so much Lada, a dear friend of mine, former colleague. Well, hopefully she still considers herself a colleague.

John: She's -- she felt sorry felt for you and had to write something.

David: I know, right. She sees a picture of the loving father with his child.

John: Uh huh.

David: Very interesting. Now, is there anyone else out there that sees something similar or something different that would be willing to share it with the group? We need one brave soul.

Sam Gourlay: Actually, this is Sam Gourlay. Unfortunately, we're having a little bit of an issue with public chat right now. So, there are a lot of people that are airing wonderful comments, but they're unable to get them into the public chat area. I apologize for this.

John: Okay.

David: Can you see them, Sam? Can you see them?

Sam: Yeah. I'm going to try to relate them through the private chat. Thanking everyone for directing them to me. I'll try to push them in.

David: Awesome, thank you.

John: Great, great. Well, maybe, we can come back to that and move on with the slides. You want to do that David, or?

David: Yeah, that works. So, this next slide is going to be an opportunity for Ed, John and myself to kind of weigh in a little bit.

John: Yeah.

David: I particularly like this slide because it is illustrative of our expanding definition of the father's role. We've completely moved away from men thinking of themselves as solely financial providers. Each of these roles have specific meanings to fathers, given their past experiences, where they are in their current lives, where they are going, and, of course, their maturity level. And I'll just start with one of them and give John and Ed an opportunity to chime in. Advocating, you know, to me, advocating is what should you learn that you're an advocate for your child. It's one of those now-and- forever roles, so John.

John: Yeah, you know it's funny, David, when you picked on the advocate role because you immediately brought me back to when my daughter was born and she was in the neonatal intensive care unit. And my job as a father at that time was to advocate for the wellbeing of my child. You know, it was to deal with this healthcare system that I didn't understand and was really angry at. And so, you know, there's that, there was the nurturer part of that, the protector part of that, but there was also, like I had to advocate for my child. I had to know something, and so, I appreciate you starting with that one.

The one that I pick up on is this friend-playmate, because that's a very complex one. You know, we tell fathers: "Well, if you want to be the disciplinarian you can't be your child's friend. You got to be the father. You got to be the discipline, the person that provides discipline." At the same time, you know, there's a slash playmate and we know that in the relationships between fathers and their children, it's often a very playful relationship in that the child, as early childhood people we know, the child learns through the process of play.

So, I think that that one is, that one's got a lot of complexity to it, but it's one that we know kind of fathers connect with. So, that's my two cents on that one.

David: Awesome, Ed.

Edwin: Yeah I'm here. I would -- we had just talked about this earlier and I was just talking to one of the fathers here that, or actually a grandfather, about some of these things. And we -- you know, a lot of it has to deal with for us, from a native side, is our core values. You know, again, you know, building strength on the -- where we incorporate culture, ceremony, traditions and healing and, of course, humor is a big part of you know native men and, of course, all men, in general. And that -- we are hoping that was going -- some of the teaching that we do through spiritual guidance is that it helps us. You know, increase and strengthen family preservation. And that's what we're all kind of looking for is offering that family preservation and for our children to continue to offer those teachings as they become parents later on, role modeling some of those things, especially.

Again, you know, a lot of it is creating a safe place for men, you know, to come and talk about these types of things. And a lot of it sometimes doesn't always take place in a [Inaudible] setting, but a lot of it also takes part at our fatherhood program here at Laguna. Again, it's again all about strengthening, you know, family relationships, family involvement and just being a responsible father that again goes back to the preservation.

David: Okay.

Edwin: You know those are just some of the things that we had talked about earlier, so --

John: Yeah. The other day, Ed, you also said something about how in Laguna, that the -- that men transmit certain things culturally, to the kids, as the educator in a sense.

Edwin: Right, right and that's -- a lot of the cultural teachings come in from the [inaudible] side. It also includes planting, because the planting doesn't only include just planting of a seed in the ground, but it also -- there's a cultural teaching behind that where you're planting other knowledge into a child and, you know, planting those important roles that they will be facing as they become adults. So, those are some of the things that growing and nurturing of those particular things.

John: Wow, right.

David: You know, and John I was thinking a little bit, too, about what you said you know with your daughter. And I think that one of the things that we don't always acknowledge, or allow ourselves to, sort of, appreciate, in men, is they are afraid, that they're scared. They're scared of embracing the fatherhood role.

John: Yeah.

David: Embracing sort of the expanding definition of their role, and also afraid of negotiating systems. I can't even imagine what it must be, feel like to have a daughter in a neonatal intensive care unit and have to negotiate, you know, all these professionals. And we, you know, as humans, we tend to rely on professionals to make important decisions that impact our lives for us, because, we trust that they have a particular expertise. So, I think that as we continue to expand our understanding of how we need to be thinking about working with fathers, it's okay, it's important for us to realize, rather, that they do become afraid. They are challenged by fulfilling all the multiple roles that we're asking them to fulfill and that these fears are very real for them, and they have to be acknowledged and supported.

John: Yeah, that's great David. I mean you're right on. And I think that, of course, when you're talking about fear in men and society, you know, we don't like to show it.

David: Right.

John: Right, we don't necessarily like to show our fears, but, probably, if you ask most men who happen to be fathers, too, what their greatest fear is they're not going to say their own safety. They're going to say fear for their child.

David: Right.

John: Which is probably very in common with women. But, it's -- and, but do men actually reveal their fears in the same way? Do they talk about them? And I think that's real "pay dirt" when you -- when a father, actually, will say, you know, that I'm afraid that my child isn't going to succeed in school, or my child isn't going to be accepted by peers, or whatever the issue is, then you're dealing with a passion that makes him a father. Then, you're nurturing the nurturer, when you can listen to that and support that man. But, if you're at the place where a father is sharing some of those fears with you in a way that's comfortable, then I think you've made real progress in your relationship with that father, for sure.

David: That is a really important point. Alright, so I think we had a few comments. We're going to move back really quickly --

John: Okay.

David: To the previous slide. And I just want to share what's interesting -- Lada sort kicked this off and she's obviously female. But, then, we had three men comment and the comments were: "Wanting to stay connected; a father wanting to stay connected to his child; the importance of the skin-to-skin contact between father and child; and a man showing gentle love and care."

John: Yeah.

David: All very positive, which is great.

John: Yeah.

David: So, I think we've done a good job of sort of getting people excited and getting them to celebrate what we're doing and having them feel really positively about fatherhood. When Kiersten and I recently showed this slide and sort of used it, as part of our presentation in the Leadership Institute, there was some different perceptions that came from a predominately female audience, which was really interesting. For the most part, participants were supportive and they were able to actually look at the strength in the picture. But, then some of the participants seemed like the father looked like he was uncomfortable. He didn't really know what he was doing. The baby's face looks like it's a little crunched up in between his shoulder. The baby looked uncomfortable.

I mean they took it to some really interesting places and it was almost as if they wanted to take the baby out of that father's hands, which was really interesting to us. And a question for – from us to the group would be, how would you help this father build upon what we see in the photo that is a strength? And, if there are some things that, now, that you're looking at it from a different lens, that you would want to, sort of, change or provide some support and guidance around. What might be the first thing that you would say to this guy? That's rhetorical. I'm not expecting you to answer. But, John you want to weigh in?

John: Yeah, I think – I mean any picture of a man or a woman holding a child evokes a pretty strong kind of just-below-the- surface responses. And, I mean, you see a baby and you want to hold the baby. I see babies in supermarkets, and I try to steal them all the time. I mean it's like it's -- there is a response. There's a very -- and I guess if you had a response and you didn't even put it down on paper, or the computer, I guess, now, is oh -- I would try to understand that response before doing anything, you know, or as you're doing something. But, certainly I like, David, what you're saying; so, yeah there's plenty that you can see in this picture to work from. And yeah, I -- actually I immediately go to what you're asking. It's like well, how would you start making a relationship with this father based on what you see right here?

David: Uh, huh. And you know. I mean, it's like just really simple basic questions that's going to give you some insight into where this father is at. What's important to him? How he might be thinking in that moment? You know, how does this feel for you? What are you thinking when you hold your child so close in this way? Is there a particular reason why you hold him that way because it could be cultural?

But, those are points, questions that will then begin to generate some really significant conversations with that father.

John: Yeah, yeah, great.

David: So, we're going to move and John this is you.

John: Oh, look at this. Look at this. That's good. I've seen this before. This is the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, and I assume that many of you on the webinar have seen this very colorful graphic. I think it's -- I actually really like this Framework. I think it puts together exactly what it says: That parent and family engagement, and you could -- instead of parent and family, you could put father in there, not without family. Not without the parent, but you could put father and it would all still apply. So, when father engagements are systematic and integrated, across program foundations and impact areas, family outcomes are achieved. So, and then hence you're working on child outcomes. But, this progression is interesting. And I almost like to think of this as, so, the program foundations, they're like the nervous system. They're the brain. They're the thing that sends messages to the whole body, right?

So, the program leadership is like yes, we believe in it. My brain believes in father engagement. I actually reflect on my own relationship with my father, and I want to make it a priority for this program and these are the ways I'm going to support everybody. And that -- part of the point here is that everybody in the system is engaging with fathers -- the same for continuous improvement and professional development. They're kind of like -- these are the things, these are the foundations. These are what makes a whole system work. Kind of see the program environment that -- the impact areas as kind of the muscles and the organs of the organism, right? You know, these are things that get things done. The partnerships with families, with fathers are where we get things done. The teaching and learning, the partnerships with other agencies and certainly creating a welcoming environment for fathers is a large piece of what we need to do to send that message.

But, if you notice along the top, the arrow, positive and goal oriented relationships. Well, I see that as the blood in the system. That's the circulatory system. That's what keeps everything refreshed and going. Maybe, the metaphor doesn't work that well. I don't know. But, the -- I don't want to neglect that arrow at the top, because for all these pieces to work together, for this body to work together, we've got to reflect on our relationships with men who have their children in our program. That we have to keep that blood flowing, by constantly giving it oxygen, by refreshing it, and that is through our relationships with these fathers, whether it's at the drop off, whether it's in -- at a picnic. Whether it's sending a document home or calling home. Whether -- you know in so many ways -- Ed, did you want to say something? Was that -- I just heard somebody's voice. Okay.

Edwin: No, John, I was muted there, sorry.

John: Okay. So, in any case, I think in every one of these elements and the outcomes you can see specific kind of things that we can do with fathers, family wellbeing as an outcome area. Well, one of the things that I think I've seen in programs that do very well with fathers is that they acknowledge that these men also need to feel good as men in our society, if they're going to do a good job as fathers. So, and we talked about this the other day when we were planning, that this is an important piece too. It doesn't just mean that we scrutinize fathers and expect them to be nurturant and play with their children. But, we also want them to be supported in who they are themselves and how they feel about themselves as competent human beings in this society.

Edwin: So --

John: Yeah, go ahead Ed, yeah.

Edwin: Yeah, again just talking about the program leadership, the continuous program improve -- all of the things that you have up there. I think that's where we're at, right now, with supporting the fathers in those things, because, you know, again, the more you're -- again it goes back into our core values of what we just talked about the strengths, to build upon those strengths too for family preservation. Right now within our process, again, since we've had this fatherhood initiative, but we've had some challenges, but still yet we're -- I think the most important thing is to try to make sure that we encourage fathers to come in and be a part of their -- the whole cycle for the educational piece, school readiness.

John: Uh huh.

Edwin: You know, again, we do that through -- we have a lot of dads now that are coming to program, I don't know what they have to do with the fatherhood program, but I think it's just making more making the men feel more comfortable and setting -- by setting goals they're able to, you know, come up with the family priority goal worksheet screening tools. And again, very involved in ISSP or IEPs, you know? Involving parents in those things make them comfortable and help them engage, I guess, more so in their child's readiness for school. So, I just wanted to interject that.

John: Yeah, that's great, Ed. When I was out in Laguna this last year, we were looking at the transition to school and you -- there was an event in which the kindergarten teachers came to the program and each was in a different classroom, because there's a number of elementary schools. And what was -- one of the things that was really striking about that was I think there were just as many men there, as women -- I could be wrong. You know, I could be primed to look for that, but I felt that there were a lot of men engaged, just as engaged, having just as many conversations with these kindergarten teachers. And it was great to see, but it was -- I mean you didn't have to look for it. It was there. It seemed very equitable.

David: Okay. So, John, we need to move on to the

John: Okay, sorry, yeah, yeah.

David: Okay.

John: So, a polling question.

David: Uh huh.

John: Okay. I need to see it. Let's see.

David: And yeah, Natalie's going to load it.

John: Okay.

[Background Noise]

John: Right. When thinking about

David: Hey, John --

John: Do you want me to read it?

David: Yes, yes.

John: Yeah. Yeah. "When thinking about father engagement that is systemic, integrated and comprehensive, I would say our program is: Beginning, progressing thriving and innovating, or stuck." And go ahead and answer the question.

[Background Noise]

David: So, can we see the results?

John: Oh, there they are -- just as you asked. Isn't that interesting?

David: Um hmm hmm.

John: What's that mean, David, that umm hmm hmm? But, 29 percent progressing, that's great.

David: That is really great.

John: Yeah, yeah.

David: And we have five percent that are thriving and innovating.

John: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

David: What's going to be really important, post this webinar, is for any of you, out there, who feel that you are stuck, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. If there's any way that we're going to be able

to provide some support and guidance for you, that is one of the main reasons why we're doing this webinar. For those of you that are beginning, kudos. We hope that you're moving forward in a really nice way and, you know, you move onto a place where you're progressing and you're thriving and innovating. But again, for all of you, at any stage of your evolution, if there's some way in which we can be supportive, once you've looked in at the resources that we're launching this week and you have questions about them, please reach out to us. That's why we're here. Natalie, thank you. John?

John: Yeah, I actually mentioned some of these things earlier that the foundations are essential here, and I think the question that we just looked at is basically about continuous improvement. So, where are you, in relation to engaging fathers? I mentioned that there's a lot that can be done in the leadership of a program to support. I mean, if we go back to the framework, we're thinking of a systemic and integrated thing. Well, that whole idea of a dynamic system, an organization as a system, the leadership within the system needs to be fully behind that and engage with that. So, that's an important component of it. My experience with this is that, often, the programs that are thriving, in relation to this -- well, first of all, they almost always say -- the leadership almost always says: "We still have a ways to go." But then, I also find that there really is a personal commitment on the part of the director or the manager toward work with fathers.

And I'm not saying everybody has to make that their sole and primary mission, but I think that when -- what I found is that there's often for the programs that are thriving a real passion in the leadership for this. The continuous improvement, going back to that, is -- this is part of this whole idea of having a framework and having a webinar like this and having the guide is that we can be intentional about what we do. We may feel that we're doing very good work with fathers, but when you're doing it in a systemic way and an integrated and comprehensive way that means you're doing it intentionally, as well. And so, that's when -- so, yeah, where were we five years ago? Where are we now? And where are we going? What steps do we need to take to get there?

David: Awesome.

John: Yeah.

David: So, this next slide, sort of, builds upon and expands upon the last part of that previous slide, the sort of professional development piece. Not to negate, sort of, the men in the audience or in the rooms, but I want to speak sort of directly to the women in the room. And then, before I continue, remember I was the one who said how instrumental women have been in contributing to the success of the fatherhood movement. So, now you know I'm getting ready to be a little --

John: Yeah, but --

David: Professional development is so tricky. I can't tell you. I've spent so much time, energy and effort as a director, supporting directors, supporting programs around getting to this piece of, if you're really going to do this work in a way that's systemic, integrated and comprehensive, it begins with the leadership understanding that there has to be this continuous improvement process. But, it is grounded and it begins with professional development. So, this can be a really hard conversation to have in programs, because, I've never met a successful fatherhood program that had a one-and-done staff development that prepared the staff to adequately work with fathers.

John: Yeah.

David: In my experience, when staff have been trained and are on board, it is synonymous with being involved in the process of supporting fathers. Very basic -- show up and we can dance. But, when they are on board or willing to grow to do that self-assessment and wrestle with some of their own more deep-seated issues and/or challenges, they are now engaged in the process of engaging fathers.

You know, just like we have to help men get to a place where they were healthy enough to confront their challenges, we have to also help female staff be healthy enough to know when they require additional supports. And this slide, sort of, speaks to my belief, based upon my experience, there's no research connected to this, that when staff have sort of, said, "okay we're on board with working with expanding services for fathers and supporting and engaging fathers," that they will engage in conversations with them that takes them a little bit outside of their comfort zone. Those conversations are going to be extremely child-focused. They'll be very specific. They're going to be so self-aware of how they're communicating and what they're communicating. So, they're clinging to those boundaries at an optimal distance. Those anchors are really, really important, but once they move to a place where they're a little bit more engaged and again, they're doing the self-assessment, they're wrestling with some of their own deep-seated issues in supervision or in therapy, if necessary, whatever the case may be, then, they're a lot more comfortable, in terms of how they, sort of, approach these conversations with fathers. John?

John: Okay.

David: Was that you who put the X?

John: You bet.

David: Oh, okay.

John: But, I'll wait till the elephant slide comes up.

David: Okay.

John: So, let's – do you want to move to?

David: Yeah.

John: We've got a polling question.

David: We have another polling question for you, because, we want to try to keep this interactive. And I know that once we do something that's a little bit provocative we might get more responses. So, Natalie, please launch the first question. I'll go ahead and read it as she – oh, there it is. "How comfortable are you in building partnerships with fathers?" "I am very comfortable." "I am mostly comfortable." "I am somewhat comfortable." "I am uncomfortable." "I am very uncomfortable." So, this is, sort of, a way that you can, sort of, privately weigh in and chime in now, on where you're at, with respect to this question. We'll give you a couple seconds for you to do that.

[Background Noise]

John: Somebody's whispering.

[Background Noise]

David: We have a lot of people, so, we're going to give you guys a little bit more time.

John: Ah, there it is.

David: Thank you, so much for calling in. We have results?

John: Yeah.

David: So, it's taking my system a little bit longer for them to show. John, can you speak to them?

John: Yeah, yeah. 23 percent of the people, on the call, are saying they're "very comfortable;" 20 percent, "I am mostly comfortable;" 10 percent, "somewhat;" 1 percent, "I am uncomfortable," and zero said, "I'm very uncomfortable." So, what this is that people seem to be in a pretty good place with building partnerships with fathers for the most part. I think that, yeah, really the large majority are going, "I am mostly comfortable" or above. And I think that's great. That's great. Now, being comfortable and engaging -- certainly the comfort level is important to genuine engagement. But, as I said before, it's not just comfort, it's intentional things that we do to do that. But --

David: Exactly. And so, let's move to the second part of that polling question, which actually speaks to competence and the way you get to a place of increasing competence goes back to professional development. So, this question says: "Have you received professional development around building supportive partnerships with fathers? So, again, we ask you to please weigh in. Give you a few minutes to do that. "I have received extensive training." "I have received some training." "I have received a little training." "I have received no training."

[Background Noise]

David: Okay, Natalie can you do the honors, please? Oh, I think you're right on time. Wow, so, look at this, John.

John: Yeah.

David: A little bit different.

John: Yeah, yeah. No, like eight percent; so, of the respondents: This isn't -- this doesn't add up to 100 percent. So, if this were 100 percent of the people, on the call, these numbers would actually be higher. So, if you -- like so 16, so 24 percent are saying "received little or no training" and that actually probably would need to be increased, if we were looking at 100 percent because we're only talking about, maybe, less than 50 percent here. So, that's a pretty large portion that haven't had specific training.

David: And again, what that could result in is, once we have a better understanding about what some of the limitations are for programs around getting that professional development, is ways in which we may be instrumental in providing some support and guidance around that. That sounds like we should be getting some inquiries and some questions around how programs might be able to build their capacity to do this.

John: Yeah, I think that in both parts of this question, it's also a reflection of who called in.

David: Yes, oh go ahead.

John: So, we've got people on the webinar that have an interest, and, perhaps, even a comfort with working with fathers. And not surprising that they would want or expect a little bit more in professional development.

David: Exactly.

John: Yeah.

David: Okay, so, the social worker with me, or I would not actually be true to the social worker within me.

John: Yeah.

David: If I didn't ask you to dig a little bit deeper, with a few rhetorical questions. And they're up on the screen. So, when we talk about what does it mean to really connect with fathers, some questions that come to mind is: "What are the potential benefits?" "What, if any, are the costs?" "What might be some unintended consequences?" "And are there any other potential concerns?"

John: Uh huh.

David: So, for me, just to prompt some discussion, I think benefits are: You have the opportunity to receive another parent's perspective on child development and what's important to them, as it relates to their child. You have opportunities to increase staff competency and capacity to communicate with and support fathers. And then you're also increasing fathers' comfort being in the program environment. The more comfortable they are in the environment, the more willing they are to engage in the various activities that are offered. "What are some of the costs?"

Well, again, we sometimes push and encourage staff to work outside of their comfort zone. We want them to be intentionally different, which is not necessarily always easy to do. We want them to be okay with the time that it takes for programs to transition. And we don't talk enough about this. You know, you go from starting to progressing to innovating. Those are, sort of, three different points of intersection, but there could huge chasms, between what it means to go from starting to progressing, from progressing to innovating. And few programs I've seen are at that innovative place. And some aspects of what they do may be innovating, but not as an entire program. Ed, you had talked, as we were preparing for this, about some unintended consequences. You want to speak to that a little bit?

Edwin: The intended consequences, oh God. I can't remember where I was at with that. We're just sitting there talking about different things. But, I think

David: You were -- I can just prompt you a little bit. You were talking about some of the reaction of some of the mothers

Edwin: Oh yeah, exactly. You know, I know that when I first came into the program there was really nothing geared to fathers, and that was the whole initiative behind this. But, now that the strength of the fathers has started to come in, I think the women were feeling a little bit left out and again, that's where the consequences were. Again, you know it's hard to just, you know, really, you know, to focus on just 100 percent of either/or. So, you know, that was kind of a challenge that we're facing. And so, the women started their group up again, and again, you know; it's good and it's all well and good.

We all work together as a team, but again, you know, it was like -- I think the women were feeling a little left out of the loop, because more dads -- we were actually having a lot more dads coming into program and, you know, before when it used to be, kind of, pretty much women-based. And even going on further out of the Head Start program, you know, we see a lot more fathers, now at WIC, Child Find, all those things. And, I don't -- I'm not going to say it's entirely because of our fatherhood program, but I think that men are feeling more comfortable in coming into these types of environments.

John: Yeah, it's -- yeah, I think that it's a challenge, because it takes some skill on the part of a staff person, when both the parents are there. Who do you talk to? And if you're talking to the father -- I actually know a mother who told me this is -- she says look: "Why are you talking to him? I know the answers to your questions -- he doesn't." And, so, you get into those, kind of, gatekeeping, kind of, issues around the child. So, it's harder to talk to two people at once, then to one. So, I think the consequences are, kind of, professional development consequences and skill consequences on top of it, yeah.

David: Any other potential concerns, John, that you would --

John: Well, it may actually, and that brings up the next slide. You know, in dealing with men who are nurturing young children, there may be some elephants in the room. And, maybe I just stop for a moment and -- this is an awful cute elephant though, David.

David: It is.

Edwin: It is Dave.

John: But, this, you know, what is the elephant in the room? What is there between women who care for young children and men, who come into the program, who are the fathers of those children, or the men in the mothers of those children's lives? And the larger, kind of, elephant in the room, in my opinion, in having done a lot of this work over the years, is that all of us, men and women, have, kind of, previous relationships with men in our lives. You know, whether it's our fathers, or whether it's that game that so many people play, from early adolescence on, and in high school, about relations between the sexes, in that those dynamics of how you talk to men, period, can enter into a conversation about -- that have, kind of, under the surface, when you're talking about the care of a child.

And so, I think it's raising that elephant in the room, kind of, as David has portrayed it, as not necessarily operating all the time or preventing good communications from happening. But, I think we do have to acknowledge that the game, the various kind of communications that go on, between men and women, in our society, often involve the -- you know, other things than caring for young children. And again, to bring that to awareness is probably an important part of a professional development program.

David: It really is. And just I think really a few other important things to add to it you've already said. You know, this brings up, sort of, implications for how you support families, particularly fathers, around substance abuse issues and domestic violence issues and even just fear issues of what it means to connect and build a relationship given the sexual tension, that takes place between men and women.

John: Yeah.

Edwin: David.

David: Yes.

Edwin: This is Ed. Again, just talking about the elephant, I think, from the native perspective, also again a lot of it has to do with our historical traumas. You know, again, you're looking back at what men versus women, what their -- what we're -- what is culturally appropriate, at that time.

David: Right.

Edwin: That's some of the major impacts of some of our programs here. You know, [inaudible] that you know the elephant is right there on your back, you know. Again, that's where we're -- you know, we have a lot of these social emotional issues. And, all the economic health and wellbeing of our children are, kind of, compromised because of sometimes those cultural -- I'm not -- in a sense inadequacies, or I don't know if that's the right term, but that's something that sometimes we, kind of, have to face here in Laguna.

David: Oh. Okay. Thank, you. So, we will move along. John, this is you.

John: Yeah, yeah. I think that this area -- and I love these pictures, by the way. The -- look at the engagement. Look at like the man, the woman and the kid all paying attention to the same thing. So, much learning is happening when you see that. And I just love the picture down below. You can see how the kids just -- this child that's on the carpet is just like loving looking up at this guy. I don't know what he's saying, but it's -- he certainly has engagement from the children right there. The program environment, I think, you might ask the fathers what it's like to walk into your program. The experience of a father walking into a program, with young children that's designed by women, and I've got numerous slides of program environments, and I can put them up there and say, you know: "Is this comfortable for most men to walk into?" The step across the threshold into the program may feel very different, for a man.

So, I think it's very valuable to think about you know is this a welcoming environment for a man? That doesn't mean you have to have like deer heads on the wall or anything. What it means is, you know, having pictures of men, having the size seats somewhere that they can sit in. And really, I think, you can probably go to men and have them walk in and see. But, it's almost less a physical environment than it's the, kind of, than it's the, kind of, interpersonal environment. And, that goes back to the relationships on the framework slide. Is -- is it a welcoming place, when a man walks into the door with a child.

Since most of you said you were comfortable, you, probably, have those places, but it's something again to be -- to think intentionally about. I -- the other one that's circled here is teaching and learning and I already addressed the pictures. But, when men come into volunteer the classroom, their interactions may look a little different than you would expect when a mother comes in. The instruction may not be quite as direct. It might a little bit wilder.

That's not to say that some women won't come in and be quite wild, when they come into the classroom. I certainly have seen that. But, the frame is different. The interactions may look a little different and they, as I pointed out in the research slide, those kind of interactions have benefits for kids as well.

David: Awesome. And, so, now, we have the distinct pleasure of having Edwin Cheromiah, Sr. talk, specifically, about what all this looks like within the context of a program. So, Ed I'm going to turn it over to you.

Edwin Cheromiah, Sr.: Alright, thank you very much, and thank you for having me. I do appreciate it. Again, this is just, kind of, a picture of, you know, really good feelings at the Head Start with the rainbow showing, depicting you know that children are very important, sacred in our lives here, at the Head Start program. I just have a few slides here just to, kind of, depict some of those things. [Inaudible] okay. We were talking about all the things that we have just talked about, coming from the beginning of the slides.

Here are things that we're attempting to do here at the program is to make sure that we ensure that we support fathers in every way. And, a lot of that has to deal with, you know, making them feel comfortable. The picture on the upper left hand corner there is a picture of just some dads who were helping with an activity, and I believe it was our Easter activity. And, you know, the dads are coming in doing that more because, I think, the teachers are more engaging with their fathers, as they're coming and they're making them feel comfortable, knowing that they are important part of their child's upbringing and wellbeing.

Again, we always encourage parents, dads, to come in and show their talents and that was just a picture they had taken of me, as I was talking to the kids about music. And there's other things that we do in the culturally -- the cultural way of things, you know, our cultural traditional dances. We encourage dads to come in and sing songs for their parents. I'm sorry, sing songs for their kids. They are helping making the -- our traditional costumes for the dances. They're making -- the teachers are absolutely making them, you know, feel comfortable here. And, of course, we always have the challenges all the time still yet, but I think that's also helping them with helping the men set goals, set priorities. And also again, you know, if a child comes in with an IEP or an [inaudible], you know, the dads are more comfortable knowing that they can do these things for their kids.

Like I said, we include fathers in classroom activities. We have literacy programs to -- where dads are coming in and reading to the children. There's also programs to where we're teaching our Keres language to the kids and we have actually in our program one -- two teachers that actually speak -- teach the Keres language. And we also have two custodians and a male cook. So, we're starting to get more male involvement, because of just the comfort level that they feel, right now. And again, all of it is just to ensure that the kids are ready for the next level of education. Again, on the -- we -- I also coordinate a monthly fatherhood night. And that's what we call them, just simply, as that, fatherhood nights. And I have a grandparent here, if you don't mind, I'd like for him to, kind of, give you an idea of you know, his perspective on our fatherhood nights.

Wilbur Lockwood: Yeah, I'm Wilbur Lockwood, and I'm a grandparent to the fatherhood organization here in Laguna. And they have really been very instrumental to telling us different things that need to be possibly addressed, not only traditionally-wise, but how we can go ahead and be a better parent, I guess, is what it is, you know. Nowadays, we've got a lot of young parents out there with kids that, really, they don't know how to run or raise as a family. And, in order to do that then we, you know, we all sit down together and offer suggestions of what we need to do, maybe possibly to better each other in raising our kids or grandfathering, grandmothering our kids and also that they can have a productive life when -- whether they leave the reservation or not, and go out into the world, which is like when Ed mentioned about seed planting. You know, that's one of the things that we try to stress that life is like a seed, you put it in the ground and it grows and spreads out.

Well, that's, basically, how our life is, is you know we put ourselves on the pedestal and let our parents teach us different things. And not necessarily we try to avoid all the bad stuff, but still yet you know somehow, somewhere they get in there and all. But, we try to tell the fathers, you know, try to live as an example, for your own kids and love your kids. You know, it's not, not to a point to where you -- it's embarrassing when you go up to your child and hug them or give them a kiss on the cheek or whatever and say, you know, "I love you". And all the sudden we see that on the reservation, because that's not part of us really and all. But, you know, Ed has gone out of his way, I think anyway, to really try to stress that to us fathers out there; his nightly meetings that he has every month and all. If we could get more fathers in there, I think, basically, we can have a better working relationship among each other and among their own families out there in the community.

Edwin Cheromiah, Jr.: Right, just some of the things that we've been doing along them with our father program. And again, the expected outcomes, of course, is to overcome some of the barriers. And this, kind of, picture depicts some of those things, overcoming barriers to improve positive involvement in our children. This is something just called a "jack rabbit shuffle" that, you know, that was created by Dr. Clayton Small in the Road of Life curriculum, which we also use here. And also it's culturally appropriate. It's educational, especially, you know, again, it helps. You know, it helps, especially if it's -- and that's the parent coming in for the first time seeing these things, how important it is to drop some of those barriers.

So again, that's all to increase, you know, just fatherhood involvement. We are also developing fathers and cultural fathers and children's cultural development. This particular slide here is a father. This father is teaching these children our annual -- it's called a -- it's called the Corn Dance. And it's, again, going back into preservation of our livelihood and hoping and praying for rain so that we can plant -- the seed has been planted will continue to grow and also flourishes back into the children. So, those are some of the things that we've been really working at here at the Laguna Head Start Program.

And again, this is just a group picture of some of the guys that have been here throughout the years. This guy in the center holding the ribbon has been a very instrumental part. He no longer has children here at Head Start but continues to come back. And he was one of the guys back in '04 that started the whole program. And the guy off to the left-hand side behind him on the back row there with the cap, the big guy with the big cheesy smile, he's also. And the guy, with kind of, his hand over his shoulder is a -- oh wow, what's happening? Did something there. How I'd get out of that?

David: It's alright -- just go ahead.

Edwin Cheromiah, Jr.: He's one of the guys -- those are the men that have really pushed this program along, before he came to Head Start. It was first done under the, the -- what was it called now? The oh, PFS, Partners For Success Program, and they eventually came here to Laguna. But, right now, our mission statement, kind of, says it all and summarizes everything that we're trying to do here at Laguna Head Start. And our mission is just this: The mission of Laguna Fatherhood Group is to support fathers interested in contributing their skills and resources for the development of their children at home, in the community and school settings, all the things that we've been just, kind of, talking about all throughout the whole slides.

So, again that's kind of what we do here at Laguna. And if there's any, you know -- I would encourage anyone to give us a call and we can always talk a little bit more about this. So, again, that's kind of my presentation there. Thank you.

David: Yep, one more.

Edwin: Oh, this is the Father Engagement Resources?

Kiersten: Yep. Thanks, Ed, this is Kiersten, and I know we're wrapping up. We're probably going to go a couple minutes over for those of us -- for those of you who want to stick around for another five minutes. We -- I want to just let you know a little bit about the resources that we keep referring to. The Head Start Father Engagement Birth to Five Programming Guide just came out today with an information memorandum to all programs. Las Manos de Apá is a set of resources for programs for working with Latino fathers around supporting their relationships with their young children, particularly around literacy. There's support group curriculum and training material. We also have a couple of videos that we're sharing. The Best Practices Series that the National Center is doing. This is the first in the series that we're putting out called Engaging Fathers and Engaging Young Fathers Through Support Groups. These are basically -- they'll be some facilitation guides to support training conversations and group interactions with staff around, kind of, what your takeaways from the videos are.

So, these are, kind of -- can function like exercises in your program for thinking about father engagement. There was a -- I'm sorry that our public chat wasn't working so well. I appreciated some of the comments. Janus McBride had talked about, you know, just really reiterating the point that you really need staff buy-in in terms of, you know, getting father engagement, involvement going. Otherwise, it's a real struggle. And there was a question about the PowerPoint.

This PowerPoint won't be shared, but the resources -- there are a lot of training and material in the resources that we've talked about. And you can contact us for specific things that you're looking for from the PowerPoint if you're wanting, to support a particular exercise, that kind of thing. We'd be happy to share it. So, David, I think, if you want to take us out with some summarizing points about what we've talked about today.

David: Sure, so our last slide just really underscores everything that we discussed, basically saying that fathers are important to their children, which all of you know, their families and their communities. You know, the relationship building with fathers is key, looking at the program leadership, the continuous improvement processes, professional development, all of those things that we discussed. Utilize these resources that we're providing for you to really assess your family and your father engagement. Hold thoughtful conversations, even some of the challenging conversations that you may need to have. When we say let's have a real conversation and you know what that means. You know, conduct some real program planning on how to do this. Make this integrated throughout your entire program. Engage in staff development. Implement and evaluate and review. And, celebrate fathers and families.

This is our time to not only do it, just because it's June and it's Father's Day approaching, but fathers are so instrumental to their families and their communities and we want to make sure that you're thinking about that throughout the year. I want to take this time to really thank, first and foremost Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, our fearless leader, the Director of the Office of Head Start, for just supporting such important work; Edwin and John for co-facilitating; Kiersten Biegel, who is an absolute gem, and without whom I'm not sure we would have been able to pull all of this off this week. Thank you so much. The National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement, our technical support team at I-Link, Natalie and Sam and all of the participants who joined us for this webinar. It is extremely important to note that we are aware of the great work that's taking place in programs across the country and through some collaborative partnerships that you've established.

Our only goal is to provide tangible resources that can increase the likelihood that your father engagement efforts are not tied to an individual or external consultant, but are connected to an integrated system of meaningful services for fathers, children and families, and we thank you. Kiersten?

Kiersten: Thanks everybody.

John: That was awesome, David.

David: That was a wonderful job all the way around guys. Thank you so, so much. Thank you all the participants. I think people are starting to sign out. So, we don't have time for questions, but I guess people will email us.

Edwin: Okay, that sounds great. Alright, thank you very much.

John: Thank you.

Edwin: Thanks, everyone.

Kiersten: Thank you.

Edwin: Goodbye, we'll see you all.

Kiersten: We'll talk to you soon.

Edwin: Very soon.