[Music]

Sharon Yandian: Welcome to this next in our series of this year long professional development opportunities focused on children who are dual language learners. Today's focus is assessing progress of children who are dual language learners, and we're focusing on the whole child birth to 5. We really want you to take advantage of this opportunity, and before we begin, I just want to remind you about the viewer's guide and the list of resources that are available for download. You know, as you are watching the webcast, you may want to use that.

We know that many of you have questions about how to best systematically observe and assess progress of young dual language learners. We're going to bring you the very best that we can today, but know that the research field is still working on this, and there's much to learn. Our current Head Start regulations guide us in what we are required to do around assessing progress and individualizing, and in addition, the 2007 Head Start Act is guiding us as we look at how to be most responsive, both culturally and linguistically, and it has informed today's webcast.

Again, about our children who are dual language learners, we want to remind you that those children, our children who are dual language learners, have much in common with others their same age, yet because learning in two languages has some aspects that are different in terms of the development in learning, particularly around language, we want to talk to you about that today and those implications for how we assess.

The other thing we want to remind you of is the framework that we're using today. Again, for our 3-to-5-year-olds, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, which you're very familiar with, looking at that whole child across all domains, the cognitive, social, emotional, physical, creative arts, approaches to learning, and others. And for our youngest children, our infants and toddlers, though the Child Outcomes Framework is not used with them, we still have goals in all areas of their development, and we're going to be talking about assessment -- assessing those aspects, as well today.

Just to make a distinction, today we are talking about the whole child, what he knows and can do, regardless of their English language ability, and what we do with that information in terms of our assessment practices. I know you're going to tune in next month.

Hopefully, you'll join us for our focus on how we assess progress towards English learning. So as we begin, I'd like to introduce our panelists. First, Angie Godfrey is my colleague at the Office of Head Start, our infant/toddler specialist. She has many, many years working with American Indian/Alaska Native programs, and she was a Head Start director. Dayana Garcia. Welcome, Dayana. She's currently our disability content expert at the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center.

She was a Head Start fellow, and she was also a grantee disability coordinator, probably among many other things. Linda Espinosa. Hopefully, you all know Linda. She's our expert on early childhood assessment, particularly as it relates to children who are dual language learners, and she's most recently published a book "Getting It Right for Young Children from Diverse Backgrounds," which I read, and I enjoyed.

Graciela Italiano-Thomas, she's an expert in early childhood education and working with dual language learners, and today again, she'll serve as our facilitator.

Graciela Italiano-Thomas: Thank you very much, Sharon. Welcome to our panelists and welcome to our audience to this first segment of our program today... why and how we assess progress for all children. Before we begin, I want to just let you know that we're going to get into some pretty complex discussions here, and as you watch us, what our intention is to strengthen you in the knowledge that you already have.

You are all on a continuum towards becoming great teachers. We know you care and have passion for the children and families you serve. As you watch us and hear us struggle with some of these issues and questions, reflect on your own practice, think about your classrooms, think about the teachers, the children there, think about the families, and find what works for you from what we are saying.

We really intend to support your work here, and we come from the heart in connecting to your passion about serving Head Start children. So let's get started. When we talk about assessing, we usually think about formal, standardized tests. Remember, we're talking about children birth to 5. We're talking really about observation and intentionality. What do we mean when we say to assess children, children's progress, Sharon?

Sharon: Well, I think you just started saying it, Graciela. Really, we're looking at a variety of strategies that we use to look at children, children's learning. Ongoing observations are very important. We're

looking to be able to inform our decisions about our teaching and children's learning. We're looking at their strengths and their needs.

Graciela: Great, great. I think we have a video of teacher Kolb. Some of you may be familiar with her. She works in Portland, Oregon. She was we featured in our last webcast because she is an experienced teacher, who shares with us how she integrates in her day her observation of the children. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Teacher: During center time if it's possible for me to just float, meaning that I move from center to center or area in the room to area in the room, then I do that because that is where I can really see what the children are doing, what they're learning, where they might need some scaffolding, where they are just on the verge of something...

... and I can be there to help them and make sure that the next thing happens for them or to connect them with another child because even at this point in the year we have a lot of children who are still not connecting socially. Some of them will be going on to kindergarten, and those are the ones I really want to make sure are able to make those connections. If I'm able to move around the room and do that by supporting their language or something else that they're doing, then I like to take that opportunity. [Video ends]

Angie Godfrey: The wonderful thing about this video is that the teacher shows us that observation is not an additional task that she has to do, but she's integrated into her work with the children. She moves through the classroom, watching the children as they're engaged with either an individual activity or a small group activity, and she's learning from each child as she moves through the classroom and observing how she can plan through the curriculum and through individual goals for each child's experience and for group experiences in the classroom.

Linda Espinosa: Through this video, we saw how the teacher so clearly connected her learning goals or her curriculum goals for the children with her assessment activity. So she was observing for the things that are important for children to know, and the graphic that we have on display illustrates this relationship, I think, quite well.

It shows how curriculum is a major outlining of what it is that we are intending to teach, and then we plan and we implement and we engage in these ongoing assessment activities to assess progress over time, and then we make those adjustments and individualize instruction, which clearly she's thinking

about as she's observing each of these children. What would be the next step to help this child learn that social goal to be more ready to go to kindergarten?

Sharon: I think that I mean, you're making a really good point. You know, really, it's the intentionality, right, in terms of she needs to know what she is observing for in order to be able to continue to move the child along.

Graciela: So this brings us to our next point of discussion... When a teacher is observing preschoolers, how does she know what to look for? Linda: Critical question and what we have to do is always remember to go back to our curriculum goals and our learning objectives for the children because that will outline what it is that we are intentionally teaching.

For instance, if my children are getting ready to go to kindergarten, then I want them to be able to engage in socially appropriate ways and follow directions, those sorts of things. That's what I'm going to be looking for, and it's outlined in my curriculum guidelines.

Graciela: Let's watch this next video, where we actually see a teacher observing and then sharing with us some reflections about what she observed and why she did it that way. Linda: Good.

[Video begins] Child: Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine. Teacher: Ivy, you want a turn? Ivy: One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine. Teacher: Brianna, you want a turn?

Brianna: One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine.. Ivy: I was the fastest one! Teacher: She did a good job again, didn't she? Yeah.

Teacher: The counting section also shows the children interacting in a small group, which is really nice because they get a chance to practice their counting and interact one on one. Brianna's counting skill is much lower than all of the other children who are there, and Vincent was just perfect because when she'd count correctly, he would tell her, "Good job, Brianna!"

So I purposely had Brianna always count last because then she got the example of all the other children before it was her turn to count. So it was just a way to help her be successful in the counting. [Video ends]

Linda: So in this video clip, we saw that the teacher had very carefully structured a learning activity that allowed Brianna to be successful in counting.

All preschool children are intentionally taught how to count. She also knew Brianna needed a little bit of help, so she allowed Brianna to go last and learn from her peers. It's a wonderful example of learning about the child and incorporating that into your structured activities you do with children.

Sharon: You know, I liked the one where that really stuck out for me was she, "I purposely decided." I think that really also kind of echoes what we're talking about.

Graciela: She used peers, too. She used the peers, her knowledge of the temperament of the other children. I mean, there's observation about everything there, every child, Brianna, and her knowledge of what she needs to teach in the curriculum. Sharon: In a very natural way.

Graciela: Yes. So...when a teacher is observing infants and toddlers, how does she know what to look for?

Angie: For both Head Start and Early Head Start, we look at the whole child. For Early Head Start and working with infants and toddlers, it's not, as Sharon said, in the Child Outcomes Framework, but we still have curriculum goals, and we still have outcomes we're looking for each baby and toddler...

... and what the teacher's really looking at is observing through daily routines and through experiences, watching the baby to build on the interests of the baby and to be able to observe over time what it is that the infants and toddlers are both interested in so that she can support and what it is, both working with them individually and as a group, that she can plan for and support each day. Graciela: Great.

Dayana Garcia: And, Angie, let's not forget about our children with disabilities. That is an added component. Children with disabilities -- the teachers also need to think about how to link what's happening during those regular observations with the goals and objectives of the IFSP or the IEP for a preschool child and a lot of the same strategies are used with children with disabilities. For example, on the video with Brianna, for a child who has a language delay, the teacher would use the same strategy...

...so it's important to keep in mind that the teachers that are working with children with disabilities have that added component, and they are working with the entire family and a team. They have that support.

Graciela: Great. Thank you. So... what specific procedures can we use on a daily basis to document children's learning and instructional needs?

Linda: Excellent question and the core of what we're doing really is based on our careful observations of children. So as was illustrated by teacher Kolb, you can do this throughout the day. Center time's a great time.

You can go in and observe through the lens of your important curriculum objectives and goals. So she's looking at social development because she knows that's important. One of the things that we used to do was to carry little sticky notes in our pockets, and then when we would see something and in fact, everybody who came into a classroom was engaged in this observation process, and we would write down what children said, exactly what they said, a date, put their name on it, and put it in the child's file.

So we have ongoing evidence of what this child is doing under different settings throughout the year. One of the other things that we can do before children go to center time, they often write some sort of a plan. You can capture these play plans or whatever you call them, and it's amazing how much progress you're going to see from October, say, to April, how much improved ability for children to communicate through this abstract thing we call writing.

The other thing you can do is collect children's art work, and again, you're going to see preschoolers go through this tremendous progression of being much more sophisticated in how they draw pictures and figures and whatnot. Keep samples of that and keep samples of that over time.

Sharon: Right. I was going to say teachers are very aware of when there is a shift in terms of the -- because we all get eventually get a lot of art work home, but there are certain pieces that really help you see that progress that you want to be able to document, and I think what you're saying, Linda, is let's make it easy.

Whatever strategies work, make it easy. I've seen people have a clip board in each center, where they have a sticky note on there, and if they have that opportunity, they just write the child's first name and the comment. At the end of the day, they collect them; put them back in the file. You know, we're looking for ways to continue to help teachers hone those skills so that when they're observing they know that it is for a particular purpose.

Linda: And in some ways I mean, I believe all teachers are continuously assessing progress anyway. They might not be systematic about it, and they might not be recording it, but we're all making these decisions based upon what we believe children can do from our interactions with them, from our observations of them. This is really just a process of systemizing it and linking it tightly to our curriculum goals.

Graciela: How can teachers do this with infants and toddlers, Angie? Angie: In many ways, it's so similar to what Linda was just talking about. It really is observing progress over time. What's so critical to working with infants and toddlers is the relationship with the families, engaging with the families on a daily or as frequently as possible to really understand what it is parents are seeing about their young child, what it is what their expectations are about the child and what it means...

... both the behavior that the parents and family does and the behavior that the staff does. They're both doing observational assessment, much the way that we do with older children, but the context is that they're really learning the meaning of it, what does it mean what a baby's doing and what does it mean to the family, as well as to the staff.

And the other key that's so important again, you still have goals, but that this is happening in the context of daily routines and daily experiences the baby's having and in the context of shared information with the staff and the families.

Linda: The aspect of observing children in their natural habitat in the context of the classroom, watching them as their interacting with their peers, watching -- observing carefully when you're having

conversations with children, observing them. Are they climbing up that ladder? Do they have little friends on the playground? So asking yourself these things and looking for patterns.

So you wouldn't just necessarily make a conclusion about a child when you saw them, say, in a small group activity not responding to you. That may or may not tell you something important about his personality, his willingness to engage, his language level, et cetera. You really have to observe and look for this behavior over different contexts to be able to see whether or not the child can do this easily and repeatedly.

Sharon: And I think that as we get to the next segment that's important for all children. It's particularly important for children who are dual language learners as we talk about that variability, so that's a great point. Graciela: We actually have 3 short clips now that we'll be watching of and we want to make sure that we clue the audience on who we want to follow.

This is going to be a group of children who are very actively engaged in doing "la pequena aranita" in the classroom, and we want you to focus on the young boy with the brown hooded t-shirt at the end of the room and another and his name is Marco and another young boy right next to him, who is very engaged, and we are going to see that first clip.

Then we're going to see the same classroom, the same children, dancing "guantanamera." and then we're going to see them yet again in a more literacy-oriented, reading a book with a teacher. So let's watch what we learn about these two boys and the other children in the room as we watch the clips.

[Video begins] [Singing the "the itsy, bitsy spider" in Spanish]

[Singing "guantanamera" in Spanish]

Teacher: [Speaking in Spanish] [Video ends]

Dayana: And there is so much happening in those clips. I just love watching them, and they are having so much fun, but like Graciela said, we want to think about those little boys that were in the back on the

first video are not really engaged, they're not participating. On the second video, you see that there are some children jumping and dancing and using scarves, and then you see the difference using a different context and looking at the same children in a very small group activity when the teacher is reading to them using their home language.

I think that the importance of looking at the same children in this different context is key. It's an incredible, important strategy for all teachers to use because we really can see who the child is when we look at them, and we see the abilities that children have in different contexts.

Linda: So for Marco in the first two videos, you might have wondered about his hearing ability. He wasn't responding to the music, he didn't seem to be engaged with any of the activities that were going on, but in the third one, we had a very different impression of Marco. When he was in the small group, the teacher was talking almost directly to those two, little Marco and his friend Jamal, Okay, and they had a book, he had a book to focus on and respond to.

So a very individualized interaction that clearly he knew what some numbers were and he was willing to point them out. The first two videos might have given us a really misunderstanding of what Marco was capable of. So good to see all three.

Angie: The other thing that I thought was just wonderful in that video was obviously there was such an attachment between Marco and the teacher as she was reading. They were in a smaller space and having a smaller experience, and he was reading the book like she was and pointing to what she was, and there was -- even though Jamal was in the middle and she was reading to Jamal, there was such a strong attachment between the two of them in terms of the activities that Marco was engaged in.

Linda: And did you see him practice book-handling skills? While she was reading, he picked up that little book and started moving the pages along, so he's learning some really important early literacy skills from that, yeah, once you break it down.

Graciela: What I loved about the video is that you can feel a cultural atmosphere in that classroom. The teachers are of Latin -- Latinos, and a lot of the children's native or home language is Spanish but not all, but you can feel that the children are seeing -- are living in a classroom that reflects part of their culture, and that also has implications for observation because you may see a much more holistic child, more depth to the child when the culture mirrors what they are familiar with.

Sharon: You know, in addition to the culture or mixed in with the culture is the warmth, and that's I know Angie has talked about that. You know, it really sets the context for being able to let children learn and allow for those opportunities for observation. Linda: And they feel safe. They feel safe to be able to express what they do know and to interact and express at their highest levels, and a question I might have for Marco is do large groups and a lot of noise and a lot of activity -- does that maybe intimidate him?

Another question I would ask, how long has he been in this program? Is he really new? So maybe he's slow to warm up to the group kind of thing, but to assist Marco as he adapts and adjusts, I would probably arrange for a lot of small group opportunities, try to arrange situations so he can find friends in addition to Jamal so that he can find these social connections with other children, and that might help him feel confident, safe, and secure.

Graciela:So the next step that we want to discuss is how do we use our observation to scaffold learning for individual children? Sharon: Well, I think Linda just said it. It's our job to capture what they know and can do, and we really have to create those opportunities to let them show us what they can do, how they feel, what they're thinking, wherever they are, and I think then as observers we connect that to our curriculum and our planning.

Graciela: Great. We have actually a little clip of -- a short clip of a teacher doing just that with a child who is learning English. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Teacher: This one? You guys love the rainbow fish, huh? Okay. There's the rainbow fish. "Rainbow fish to the rescue." There's the sad, little fish. Look how sad it looks. He wants to be friends, huh? Let's see. Where do you see him? There's rainbow fish with all of his friends around. All the friends with one scale, huh? Look at this one with the jagged fin. You see how jagged it is? Yeah. Wonder why it got so jagged.

Brian brought a book, "Rainbow Fish to the Rescue," which is a pretty complex story. It has a lot words. When I read that book to the whole group, of course, you know, we talk about the story during it, but it's way too much English for Brian at the level of English learning he's at.

So when Brian brought that book to me, then I could way back to just pointing out the pictures and talking about this story in much simpler English and make that understandable for him, and he obviously liked the book because he brought it and he wanted to interact with it. [Video ends]

Linda: So in this example, the teacher was very sensitive to the cues from Brian, and she knew what level was Brian's English ability so that she could adapt her book reading strategy based upon what she knew his comprehension level was.

I absolutely adored the fact that that didn't stop her from reading the book, understanding that this content was very interesting to Brian, so she brought out the content, was able to talk about the pictures in the book, so it's an enriched literacy activity at the level that is appropriate for Brian given his current stage of English comprehension.

Sharon: And I would just say, also, we often see there are large group reading activities, small group reading activities. Both of them are appropriate. You know, there are times where we really need to do this small group, and oftentimes perhaps more frequently for our children who are dual language learners, to allow for that attention.

Graciela: And that brings us right to the development. How are these children who are dual language learners similar or different in their development, and how does that affect our practices in assessment?

Linda: Well, and that's a very good point because dual language learners have many similarities in their developmental patterns as children who are monolingual. Running, climbing ladders, catching balls, those sorts of things, responding to music, usually unless it has a strong cultural overlay.

Usually, these kinds of things that is not dependent upon language, you will see probably typical rates of progress and development, and you should expect that. The areas where we need to start making some adaptations are in language development and these things we call early literacy skills.

So we're going to need to know that that aspect of their development is going to proceed differently, and it doesn't mean that it's deficient. It just means that because they are learning through two languages they're going to have to learn the vocabulary word for "glass" in more than one language.

That takes time, so things like vocabulary development might look like it's a little slow, but in fact if you remember, they'll have it in both languages, so in fact, they might -- we could consider that advanced, you know, eventually, so...

Sharon: Well, you know, you're just making the point, also, that the populations of children who are dual language learners are very diverse. I mean, some have less exposure to English and much more and they're very proficient in their home language. Some have more experience with English and less in their home language or this variation or are quite proficient in both, that it really begs us to really understand what languages are available to the child and how they are used.

Graciela: Great. And so here in this next clip we're going to see a little girl who is showing some very, very interesting skills without really much language there. Let's watch.

[Video begins] [Indistinct chatter] Teacher: Oh, I think they're sitting over there by Noah. He's over there looking at a book. [Speaking in Spanish] [Video ends]

Linda: In this clip, we saw a little girl who was very proficient at sorting shapes by color and size. We didn't see the beginning of it, but she very quickly was able to put those right shapes exactly where they belonged in their color row. These are sophisticated skills, and she could demonstrate that nonverbally. Now and if you'll recall, after it was over, she was so proud.

She did this, she was so proud, and the teacher came by and validated that for her and congratulated her and then helped her to label what each of those colors were in Spanish, in the language that the child understood, and the little girl did know some clearly she knew "azul," and she was able to provide that label.

Another thing the teacher could have done was label it in English, as well, "en ingles" and then label those colors in English because children are able to respond to interactions in both languages, and maybe if she wanted to take it a little bit further, she could have also identified the shapes.

Dayana: And, Linda, another thing I noticed that's a great strategy she used is that she paused after she asked the little girl what color was it, and really, we sometimes need to take that time. Teachers need to take the time to wait for a response, and so let's not forget that. That's a great strategy, and I loved that she did that on this activity.

Linda: It's extremely important, and I'm glad you mentioned that. Dayana: Thank you.

Sharon: Yeah. And, you know, the last point, I think, is and you started to say it, Linda so it's clear there's a lot that she knows already, so now it's time to be setting up those opportunities that are pushing the envelope a little bit more or that maybe don't have the space to put the shapes, you know, that the patterning would happen, and it still could happen in a way that doesn't require the use of language.

Linda: And you can do it with lots of different materials. You could have lots of different kind of buttons and see if the little girl spontaneously classifies them according to size or the softness and roughness, et cetera, by various attributes that these little objects have. Unifix cubes, you can do the same things, but you want to give her more and more opportunities to display -- to deepen and display this particular skill, which she seems very capable at already.

Sharon: And then you would go ahead observe and document that. Graciela: Right. Well, thank you, ladies. We've had a very, very rich discussion, and this brings to our conclusion the first segment -- to the conclusion of the first segment, or how -- why and how we assess progress in all children.

So here are going to be some of the takeaways from this segment. Assessing is a part of our teaching every day. Assessing relies primarily on observing children repeatedly in different situations, at different points of time, and by different observers. Assessing helps us answer the questions: How is each child progressing?

How do we scaffold learning experiences and plan our curriculum? Children who are dual language learners may show different patterns and rates of progress in competencies that are language-based. Thank you for joining us for this segment. We hope you've enjoyed our conversation and have found it useful, and please stay tuned and come back for our next segment, where we will discuss assessing the progress of children who are dual language learners.

[Break - ends 33:40]

Graciela: Hello and welcome back to Segment II of our program. We are continuing our conversation on assessment. This time, we're focusing on children who are learning in two languages. So let's just go ahead and begin. What strategies can we use to determine what children who are learning in two languages know and can do?

Linda: Well, we always have to remember that children who are learning in two languages can and will demonstrate their competencies and their strengths in multiple ways, both by how they behave and the language that they use -- any language that they use. So we need to be aware of the multiple varieties of ways that children can Demonstrate their progress and their growth.

The other thing, I think, we need to be aware of is that it's frequently -- it's possible to underestimate children's true competencies, and this is especially true when the teacher does not speak the language of the children. Graciela: Yes. Very important.

Sharon: Yeah. I mean, I think the bottom line is we really need to focus on all that the child knows and can do in both of those languages, and I know we're going to talk a little bit later maybe about some of those strategies about how we do that. We need to be able to understand what is happening, how the child is responding in order to document that whole picture of the child.

Graciela: And I think it's also very important to validate all of the languages so that we know what the children really know in the languages that they bring to the classroom, right? So let's look at this next video where this teacher really shows how she respects and validates the children and their languages.

[Video begins] Teacher: Solve the problem, Annie. There you go. Set it up. Thank you. Shayla, are you coming? Shayla: She will play with me. Teacher: Daniela's going to play with you? Shayla: She's my friend.

Teacher: Aw. She is your friend. You bet. Everyone... Daneila: She can stack with me. Hola, Shayla. Teacher: Hola. Hola. You are speaking each other's language, Spanish. Can you tell her how to say hi in Vietnamese? How do you say hi in Vietnamese?

Shayla: Vietnamese? Teacher: Yes. Good morning, Gabe. We're learning how to say hi in Vietnamese. Shayla: Yeah. Teacher: Do you know how to say it? Should we get Teacher Ngoc for some help?

Shayla: Chao. Teacher: Chao? Okay. Can you tell her? Chao. Daniela: Chao. Teacher: Chao. Hola. You learned how to say hello in each other's languages.

In our classroom right now, we have 3 different languages, actually 4 different languages represented. We have Spanish speakers, we have Vietnamese speakers, we have English speakers, and we have one Russian speaker, so at home, the children are speaking all of those languages. The language of instruction in the classroom is English, but we're fortunate to have support in Spanish and support also in Vietnamese once a week. So we have folks that come in one day a week and help support those children in their home language.

Teacher Ngoc: [Speaking in Vietnamese] Child: [Speaking in Vietnamese] Teacher Ngoc: Yes. Child: [Speaking in Vietnamese] Teacher Ngoc: Yes. Good job! [Speaking in Vietnamese]

Teacher: Teacher Ngoc is our Vietnamese support person. She comes in once a week, and for our classroom this year, she comes in on Thursdays, so what that means is the way that I use her support is to have her read the books that the children have been listening to all week and talk about the projects we've been talking about all week.

If there are any social things that need to be worked on, someone's having a hard time being friends with someone else, then that's a time when she can also work on that. She stays the entire period of time. So she's here from the beginning of the children's day to the end of their day and supports their language throughout. To borrow a term from a friend, she provides a language oasis for the children in Vietnamese. [Video ends]

Linda: In this video, we saw a teacher who was very aware of the languages that the children spoke at home. She also was setting up situations, carefully structuring situations so that children would have opportunities to practice that language, and she combined different groups of children, asked them to use their home language and you could see the pride that the child had when she could say hello and then somebody else was able to repeat it.

The other people didn't know that language, so that child was able to actually practice and get supported in her use of her home language, which takes many times courage on the part of a teacher to really allow that to happen when these are languages that are unfamiliar to the teacher.

Graciela: Great. Sharon: That's a good point. Graciela: Thank you. And in this next clip, we have a different approach to social interaction. Let's watch out the teacher -- it's a little boy that we've met before, Marco with the hood, and in this case, he's interacting with a young girl in his classroom. Let's watch.

[Video begins] [Speaking in Spanish] [Video ends]

Dayana:I love this clip because it shows you clearly the strategy that teachers should have about tuning in with what's happening. She really knew what the child wanted, and she helped transition that and helped him interact with the other friend so that they could really have interaction. Teachers really need to tune in to what's happening in the classroom and know, and it really takes a lot of skill to get to that point. Sometimes, they're so busy, and they don't notice those moments, but we need to take advantage of those moments.

Linda: Right. You know another thing that we saw in that video from Marco again, we're not seeing a lot of language out of Marco, but he acted in socially appropriate ways with this little girl, who he clearly wanted to have some sort of a connection with.

So he's following her around. He's not saying anything, but he's smiling that big smile, and the teacher, as you said, tuned in, picked up on that, and facilitated that opportunity for that little girl to give him the plate so they could have this connection and then he could give it back, and you could almost see that, the two of them looking at each other and smiling. There's a moment. They're making friends.

Angie:One of the things that it seems to me if you know, we were talking earlier about observing patterns with young children, but the patterns I've observed in the videos we've watched is the strong connection between the teacher and the children.

You can understand where they're planning and how they're planning just by some of the experiences in the way that they work with children in the room. The other thing that I think is so important is reflecting on where children are in terms of the experiences, and these children were a little older, but for infants and toddlers, I just think it's language is happening, it's developing...

We understand receptive language, but so much of it is the gestures, the teachers reaching out and connecting with children around gestures and around engaging children in a process, and it's just I think it's such an important thing to remember in terms of language development...

... because particularly the youngest babies are so open to language, whatever that language is that's around them, and it seems as if the videos we're looking at -- these teachers really understand that they're building on something that started, and I like that. I think it's...

Sharon:I think that's a wonderful comment. I think also the thing I want to bring up is, you know, we're seeing teachers who are English speaking, and we're seeing Spanish speaking in some of the other videos. So that is happening, should be happening, can happen if you don't speak the child's language. That's okay.

All the better when you have that home language to use, but we definitely-- we definitely expect that to be happening and see that a lot with our English speakers.

Linda: For instance -- for instance, let's say I'm English speaking teacher and I'm reading "The Very Hungry Caterpillar," and as part of my activity, I have all the children holding different aspects of what this very hungry caterpillar is eating, and so as I go through the book and I read the book to the children, at different points, I'll say, "Who has the orange, who has the strawberry, et cetera?"

And Dayana, she's got very appropriate behavior. She's looking at me, she's smiling, she's engaged in it, but Dayana has very limited English comprehension abilities, so when I say, "Who has the plums?" and Dayana doesn't know. She's looking at me, but she's holding something. She doesn't necessarily know its plums.

Okay. I am interpreting, just as you said, from her nonverbal behavior, from her physical behavior that she wants to engage and participate, so I'm saying, "Ok. This is what a plum looks like. Who has the

plum? Dayana has the plum!" and then Dayana might say... La ciruela. Yes! Si, si. En espanol. Muy bien. Plum and la ciruela. And you know what?

Dayana:For children with disabilities, it's really important to know that if a teacher -- if that child doesn't respond even though you used all those different strategies and had the visual cues to add to that story and everything, if the teachers still feel that there is a concern about a language delay, they need to take an extra step and assess the same abilities in the home language and make into consideration -- take into consideration that it needs to happen in the home language and in English, as well.

So if after doing all of that there's still a concern, then that's when it is important for teachers to reach out and look for the appropriate supports to make a referral for that child. Graciela: Great. And why is it so important to find out really what the child knows in the home language, as well as in English?

Sharon: Well, I mean, I think we've talked a little bit about it before, Graciela. We really want to get a picture of the child's deep knowledge and overall competence in the domains that we've been talking about social, emotional, cognitive, physical development, and we need to do that in all of the languages that the child offers and are available in the environment. So that's one of the reasons, I think.

Graciela: And in this next video clip, we're going to see just that, a Vietnamese boy working with Teacher Ngoc in his own language. Let's just watch.

[Video begins] [Speaking in Vietnamese] [Speaks in Vietnamese] Teacher Ngoc:Yes. [Speaks in Vietnamese]

[Speaks in Vietnamese] Teacher Ngoc:Yes. Good job! [Speaking in Vietnamese] [Video ends]

Sharon: Great. This is a perfect example of this thing that we're talking about in terms of deeper knowledge. You know, the teacher here is talking with the -- I wish I could tell you I speak Vietnamese -- but I did get someone to tell me what they were saying, and basically, she's saying, "Yes, these are flowers. Yes, this is a white flower," and then she goes on to ask, "What if we had a red flower?"

"What colors would that make?" and then he got, I think, pink, and she said, "Yes!" And so at that point, we're learning that he understands his colors, so that's a very important concept, and we wouldn't have known that necessarily if we weren't able to access that information in his language, in his home language. Linda: And she can share that information with the monolingual English speaking teacher. So the teacher knows he has the concepts.

He doesn't have them in English, but he has these concepts in the home language. Sharon: And that it really triggers her obviously, we'll be talking about this next month but talking about learning those words in English, not the concept, and then she'll be able to really step up what she is focusing on with him in terms of his learning because she understand that he knows that already. Graciela: There are also other ways to assist children in continuing this conceptual knowledge or deep knowledge like we're talking about.

In this next clip, we see a teacher working in Spanish with a group of children and working on syllables, which is a very important concept for children to understand in any language if they are going to learn how to read. Let's watch.

[Video begins] [Speaking in Spanish] [Video ends]

Linda: So what we saw was that these children were easily able to count jueves, jue-ves. They knew there were two syllables, and jueves, by the way, in case you didn't know, is Thursday in Spanish, but the children were able to count out and identify each separate syllable, a wonderful preschool early literacy activity, and that ability is an important foundational skill to learning to read in English.

They can do it in Spanish. You know, the teacher might then switch to English and start reading a story or naming words or whatever and having children even counting out their name, al-e-jan-dro, so that they get that number of syllables in a word, kind of, down. Graciela: Right.

Sharon: Yeah. And I think it's really important for teachers to be able to understand the features and the mechanics of the languages of those that are spoken in their classroom to the extent that they can because it will give insight into what's happening for the child who does speak a different language, whether the language is syllabic or not, and that again connects us to why it's so important to work with families because some of that information can come from families, and some of it comes from other professionals who can help.

Angie: That's so true, Sharon, and I think by just talking to families and understanding the features of a language, it's key to children's language development, and you may not speak it, but just to learn intonations or patterns or songs that families may sing to their children at home allows both the teacher and the children the opportunity to play with language and to be immersed in the sounds of language...

...which really does also, even with the youngest children, support the ability to learn across developmental spectrum, not just with language learning but in many areas of learning.

Graciela: So... What can we learn about a child's overall development by observing the child's behavior and language interactions and how can we use this information? So let's watch Andras. This is a young boy trying to have breakfast with a teacher. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Teacher: Toast or cereal? Huh? To what do you want? You want the cereal? Okay. Open the door. Open the door and get your cereal. You can shut it, please. Thank you. You want the trail mix? I thought we'd do that for snack. Find a cereal. Where's the cereal? That's for snack. That's a snack. Find a cereal. Oh. That's for snack. Find a cereal -- that's a cereal. You want that one? [Video ends]

Linda: We saw Andras, and even though he wasn't able to speak very much, we didn't hear him expressing much in English, however, he was able to follow pretty easily the directions of the teacher. The thing I loved about this was that when he had the door the refrigerator open and the teacher said, "Shut the door," she didn't go in and shut it for him. She waited. He shut the door. He understood. He had comprehension of English.

So fairly advanced level of comprehension, but he doesn't have all the vocabulary clearly because when they were then looking for the cereal he kept going for the snack, and she'd say, "No. That's the snack," and then she did an excellent thing in terms of scaffolding because he kept going back to the snack. She said, "No that's the trail mix."

She took it out of his way so it wouldn't confuse him. So then he could reach for the cereal, and then she was able to label it for him. So we saw her just kind of naturally adjusting her language so that this little guy could be successful with the amount of comprehension of English that he happened to have.
Dayana: And, you know, Linda, when children are in those early stages of English acquisition, it may

appear they have limited knowledge of either language, and it's really important to know that this doesn't mean that this is a delay.

It's just a very typical part of the process of how children develop their abilities and their language, and that video really reminded me of my son Sergio when he was two, and he wasn't really talking at the same rate as other children the same age, but I knew as a parent and as a professional that he was really being a sponge and trying to capture everything and learn everything that was around him and all the new words.

And it's just important for parents to know that they need to trust that instinct and just let them go through that phase until they really start acquiring the language.

Sharon: So that's an excellent point, and I think that one of the things I also noticed, to build on to Linda as well as you, is that the teacher was following his lead. She really was following him, not trying to intervene, and that's something that sometimes is very hard to do for teachers. We want to do, we want to help, we want to see the outcome, but following the lead really got her the information that she was trying to... Linda: Especially if she thinks he doesn't understand.

Sharon: Exactly.

Linda: But she let him show her that he did understand. He just didn't have the particular vocabulary. Sharon: Yeah. It's that pausing that you talked about earlier, too, right? Dayana: And not only that, but also to really know that it's part of the process and the child is going to eventually speak, and the strategy is to not just look at the verbal pieces but to also look at other parts of communication. Graciela: Right. And this kid Andras is just a perfect example. He communicates no matter how. I'm sure that it's a pleasure to have him because he's going to make himself understood.

Linda: For a period of time, children who are acquiring a second language on top of an established language might actually look like they're not talking very much at all, so they might actually look like they don't have much vocabulary in either language. Just in that sort of one period where they're starting to learn and understand the features of this new language, things might look like they're a little stalled.

No. You're exactly right. It's a very normal process of dual language learners as they're becoming proficient in both. Graciela: Let's watch him in a different context now. He's doing some actual prewriting activities with another young girl, and let's watch how the teacher and these two children interact.

[Video begins] Teacher: Pull hard. Child: Mondo. Teacher: Mondo? Does mondo color? Child:Si.

Child:Si? Teacher:That's Michael oh, you're going to help Michaela? Thank you. Did you check with Michaela, make sure it's ok? Aah!

[Child speaking in Spanish] Teacher:What is it? Aldo. Aldo. He's over there with Gregoria.

Teacher:Yeah. [Video ends]

Graciela:I love this one. Andreas not only as a toddler feels very comfortable going to scribble on his classmate's paper, the teacher actually holds herself back, and I love that. She was ready to "Oh, Well, you want to?" She manages to really accept his behavior.

Not only is it age appropriate, but it might be that he's very used to this behavior in his own cultural environment, so she respects what he's doing and, you know, understands -- says something about, "Well, you might want to ask her in the future," but does not correct. And she held you could tell she was holding herself back.

So and the other piece is Aldo is another boy in the class who -- he's a child with disabilities, and Andras at some point hears a voice in the background and manages to ask the teacher about Aldo. Did you see that? And I think that shows caring, that shows an understanding of the classroom community. For a young toddler, I think it's wonderful.

Linda:All important learning goals. Graciela:Yes. Angie:And you do have a sense of learning goals. I love both clips.

I think in both clips there's a real respectful environment. In the first one, Andras is so involved in selecting his breakfast. There are so many competencies that you're seeing him engaged in without using any language, English or any other language. The teacher is speaking English to him, and he understands, but he's very engaged in the process of getting his breakfast, and then in the second one, also, he's very engaged, and it's wonderful.

You know that there are learning goals there because it is really an opportunity to develop peer interaction and to really begin to work. He reaches across to Michaela's paper, but he doesn't do it in a way that wants to take over a paper or infringe on her space in any way.

He's just engaging with her, and the one time he does speak, he asks about, as you say Graciela, he asks about another child in the classroom, and he's very connected. So you have a sense of, again for me, seeing competency across a variety of spectrums, and you know that this child is growing and reaching developmental milestones and that language is a piece of it and dual language.

He's learning in two languages, and that's going to come together for him. Graciela: Thanks, Angie. Let's now watch another group of children as they are playing doctor in two languages.

[Video begins] Child: The, um oh, let me get the doctor thing. [Children speaking in Spanish] I already got the doctor thing. Oh, yeah.

It was in the shelf here. [Teacher speaking in Spanish] [Children speaking in Spanish] [Video ends]

Dayana: I love this video, "the doctor thing." And, you know, even for me as a grownup when I was learning English, I remember using some words like that when you don't really grasp the language, and so for children, it's very common to see how they mix, and it's so important for teachers to know that sometimes children may understand the context, but just because they don't understand one word shouldn't impede them to continue with the activity.

I remember a little girl from China who the very first day in school didn't understand the word "playground" and she was terrified when she heard that they were going to the playground. She didn't know what it was, and so they really needed to put that into context and explain that they were going to

play, they were going outside, so it really made sense for her, and she was able to go outside, and it was a totally different story for her.

Linda: Well, and speaking of a child who's new into the classroom and doesn't understand English, what if that word had been bathroom and the child didn't know how to communicate her needs to the teacher?

So I think one of the things we need to be aware of is that we probably should teach children common words so that they can get their needs met and learn from them what that words means in their home language so that we can assist them when need be, but the other thing that I think teachers can be aware of is the fact that children are going to have vocabulary words -- different vocabulary words in each of their languages.

So we may be taught her "playground" in English. Maybe there isn't a corresponding word in Chinese, you know, and that's perfectly normal.

So they'll know some words in one language, other words in other languages, and frequently, they'll mix them, as we saw in the little video clip, which is a perfectly natural and normal part of development for dual language learners, and in fact, it's a very sophisticated aspect of linguistic competence because they're able to choose which features of each language they can insert to make meaning, to make that communication, to get their needs met, et cetera.

So it's not anything teachers should be concerned about. In fact, most adults in bilingual communities frequently go back and forth between each language for different purposes, for emphasis, singing in Spanish.

They say Spanish is the language of amor! Graciela: Of love and birds! Sharon: I just wanted to go back to, Dayana, to what you said because I know many programs do this, but for those who don't, you know, really, once you have a handle on those languages you have in your classroom, you know, not only do we want the children to know those key -- the bathroom and all those things -- so that we can -- so they can feel more comfortable early on. You know, we need to really work with our staff to get them to have key words, as many as they possibly can in the languages of the children.

They're spelled phonetically, whatever way you can in order to begin that communication, which will help with the interaction and the trust and all of those things. Linda: And then that English language learning happens in a much more natural way. Children won't freeze up and become anxious. That's right. Graciela:Yes, and don't we want to know about the home environment, too? Why would we want to know how the home environment supports the development of the whole child?

Linda: We really do need to talk with families and find out about what were those early language learning experiences children had, who was talking to the children, who reads to the children, in what languages, what type of print have they been exposed to, who have been their playmates, do they have an older sibling who comes home and talks to the child in English?

What are the preferences of the parents around ongoing development of home language and acquisition of English, that sort of thing? So we need to know a lot from parents about what those early experiences are because at some point we're going to need to make a determination about which is the child's dominant language.

Typically, children are not totally balanced. One language they will be more proficient in, and for teachers, that should be the language that we assess most aspects of the curriculum in because that's the language the child can show his true abilities and their strengths and everything else.

Sharon: I mean, the other thing is, how do we draw children in, particularly those children who are not going to come to us to say, "I love trucks?" We need to know what they love, those interests that they have in order to gain their trust and begin to work with them in a meaningful way.

I think have an example. I was working with a program who was just embarking on a project on supporting dual language learners, and so they actually had a child in their classroom from a francophone country. They thought he was African-American, and he may have been partly African-American, but they did not know that in his home environment they were speaking French, as well, and so that's just an example of how also we don't make assumptions and we really need to talk to families, and I think we have a couple of resources for this.

I know the book -- Linda's book that we mentioned earlier, in the back to "Getting It Right" does have a home language survey, something that helps you if you need more support in terms of how you talk with parents or specific questions you might ask them that may get at the information you need.

Also, I don't know several years ago, the "English Language Learner's Bulletin" Number 78 has a home language survey in it that may also serve as a resource for people. Graciela: It's such an important point you're bringing up because this active listening to families, listening there's a cultural aspect to this too.

It's not just finding facts. There is different cultures have different ways of understanding language and particularly language and children. There are -- I've heard parents in many different languages say...

Graciela:[Speaking in Spanish]

"Children are to be seen and not heard," and if that is the value of the family, you need to know because there may be a lot of receptive language there, but the child has picked up on this message from adults that children are not to speak to adults, and so there's more than just the factual knowledge of which languages and who speaks them. There are stories also that help you understand at deeper levels.

If you are very careful about listening actively and not assuming from just observations, you may find a lot more there than you think that will inform your assessment of progress. Angie: And its progress, again, for the -- and I go back to infants and toddlers again -- for the baby and for the family. Gathering information from families informs teaching practices, it informs the work we do with babies.

Staff can lose so much time if they're not aware of what families' expectations are for their baby in terms of sleeping or eating, in terms of physical activities.

In some cultures and again, what you say, Graciela, it's so important that we understand family traditions, cultural practices, what it is that we believe in, and if I swaddle and carry my baby and expect to do that for a long period of time, my expectations about rolling over and sitting up may look very differently than someone else's expectation. The same with eating and sleeping patterns. It's so important to understand that from families and to support babies' development in those areas.

We can miss a lot of valuable time if we're sitting there confused about why a very young child is not engaging with us, and we have to take responsibilities for that. You know, just think of the ways that we have to be open and make space for what each family brings to us. I was working with a program where

it was so important listening, even for when babies are born, the day they're born, they're put into the arms of elders to listen to the stories of who they are and where they came from.

That's important knowledge for a teacher to know in setting goals for that child, that listening is a huge part of how that baby's going to eventually develop language, and if I'm expecting to hear words or to work with that child in a different context, then I'm not going to be able to support that baby's learning and to have really accurate goals for that baby and for the baby's learning and growth.

Graciela:Right. Dayana:You know what, Angie? Another strategy that's sometimes overlooked and that's really important for when you're working with families who speak another language is to work with the interpreters.

They really play a key role in how we really get to know the family, and they come with us and out with us during some parts of the assessment or during the home visits, and it is so important that teachers know how to work with them, and for the interpreter, they not only need to speak the language but also know about that family's cultural background so they can really identify, and it's important for the teacher to know how to work with that person and keep the information confidential, not just for the family's respect.

The interpreters should know that, as well, and during the meetings, it's good that teachers always look at the family or caregiver and not the interpreter because they're going to get the information from the family primarily, and they need to make that connection with them.

Angie:So true.

Linda: On that point of confidentiality, all of us when we work with families and we have these conversations and we obtain information, it is all confidential, and we need to treat it with respect because it's personal and important information. Angie: And there's an important piece to that, too, that we have to remember.

I always think of sometimes your very first encounter with a family or your experience, and then after you've been developing a relationship, you begin to trust each other. The things that you talk about, the conversations, the information looks so different.

Angie: It's again, it's the developmental progression of that relationship with the family, and part of that is then believing we are going to hold confidential what they say to us, so even how we talk and converse grows over time, also. Linda: And one of the things I've found with families is once you have that rapport and that trust and they know that you're acting for the child's benefit and welfare, families open up.

Linda:They want to talk about their children. They want to share you all the little stories. Absolutely. There's not parent that doesn't want to, you know, bring you in to that family structure so you will understand how wonderful their child is, and we can affirm that. Sharon: And I think it's important because, as we talked earlier, we do have the resources available, the home language survey and things like that, but it is not a one shot. It's not the beginning and the end.

We really need to kind of go back and find those opportunities to create the spaces, as you're saying, and get -- it's almost, as we talked about, the conceptual knowledge, the deep knowledge, the deeper relationship with families happens over time, and that's where you're going to get that information that will really help you In your work. Graciela: And this also helps you really find out about different aspects of the temperament of these children because this is a very important element in observing progress for children.

Different temperaments go about learning in different ways, and so this happens in the classroom, too, as well as with the family. Let's watch this video clip where we have children that we've already seen dancing now in a more calming sensory activity, and enjoy because it's a wonderful video.

[Video begins] [Singing in Spanish on recording] [Speaking in Spanish] Wheel! Whoo! Whee! Whoo! Whee! [Video ends]

Angie: I think I've said this about every video, Graciela, But I really love this video, and one of the things that I love about it, as well, the children at the end are just really open. Their faces are open, their arms are reaching out. I particularly liked watching the little girl at the end, who rolled over to experience this floating veil going over them from the back of her head, and it is although we're watching them do this with the veils it really...

...speaks to temperament and to the fact that every child is born with a temperament about how from something as simple as how they like to be touched, how they want to sleep, how they want to react to you. I just -- sometimes when I'm watching babies interact, I just love when they'll just turn away from you because they've had enough, and I think that it's so important to be respectful of all those cues and to really talk and to communicate with families so that we understand what it is about a child's temperament.

And again as teachers and as we've seen some very gifted teachers today, we're not trying to fit children into a schedule or a plan or an activity, but we're adapting and setting goals to ensure that the learning experiences are both across developmental levels and skills but across things that are so important such as temperament. Graciela: Right and you just bring up to my mind the following question, what are the risks of depending on, for the assessment, on the child's understanding of English? What do we lose, and what are the threats there?

Angie: Oh, I think it's so important and, oh, we've talked about -- we've talked about that so many times that we really do understand language in the context of the whole development of the child and understand it. Linda and Sharon can talk about more and Dayana with older children. For me, it's really understanding the entire cultural piece, as well as the language of the family and how we work with it. Even if I don't speak the language, how do I respect what it means and how families' and our expectations around the development of children is.

Sharon: Right.

No. I think that's a good point, and for me, it just begs another question. You know, you have to ask yourself, are you assessing this conceptual knowledge or cognitive development, or are you relying on the fact the child's understanding of English in order to be able to access that information, and that's for me the first part.

Linda: So just because a child wasn't able to do something you asked him to do doesn't mean that he doesn't know the concept. For instance, if I have pictures of animals and I ask a child to point to the cat, point to the dog, that child might even know dog and cat in English, but they might not understand the direction because they've never heard the words "point to."

So they don't know what I'm asking him to do. So there could be all kinds of language confounding factors that lead us to underestimate the level of conceptual development that a child has when you're dependent on one language only. What you know, I would say one other thing in terms of what's the risk when you rely upon an English only approach.

I think as teachers and educators we're also at risk of limiting ourselves from experiencing the full multitude of languages and cultures that enrich us, our understanding of the world, our life, the way we approach our teaching and our families and our children.

I think it limits us, as well as potentially underestimating what children are really capable of doing. Dayana: And another thing is some children are judged by being slow to speak when it really is being slow to speak English because these children may have a very sophisticated vocabulary and be very fluent in their home language, but if we limit ourselves to just the English piece, then we need to be careful with judging and labeling. Linda: It's like we're only looking at one half, one part of the child. Sharon: That's right.

Conversely, the risk is that they may not have a developed vocabulary, they may not have all that, but, you know, if we don't know that, then we're really not going to be able to provide any type of as you say, bring in other supports because we won't know, so... Linda: So because he doesn't know it in English, we can't assume that he does know it in his home language. We still have to follow up and find out what is his proficiency.

Sharon: We can't assume he can, or we can't assume he can't. Linda: Exactly, exactly. You can go either way. Sharon: Mm-hmm.

Angie: And again, we have to really look at as we said earlier, we're looking at the whole child; we're looking at children and what it is that we're observing. I just love what we talked, also, about earlier, observational assessment, that we're really looking at even the youngest children and what their interests are, the cues we're receiving from them, what it is they like to do, and then our job is to build on that.

We have goals for what they're currently doing, but we also through observational assessment, through conversation with families, we're adapting and changing those goals. I love the graphic you showed at

the beginning, Linda, because that's what we're doing every day that we're interacting with children. Linda: And celebrating those accomplishments, you know, and all cheer. Graciela: Right.

Great. Thank you, ladies. We've come to the end of our Segment II, and now I just want to make sure that we reinforce our key messages here... When assessing progress, staff needs to observe what children know and can do in the home language and in English.

Staff also needs to work with families to find out how the child's home environment contributes to their language and overall development. Assessment strategies need to be used that do not depend on the child's English language skills. Stay tuned for Segment III, our question and answer session, and thank you for your attention.

Graciela: Hello. Welcome to Segment III, our question and answer session. Staff, parents, and programs, what can they do? Let's start with the simplest question and the one that we get most often. What do when we don't have someone in the classroom who speaks this child's language?

Sharon: That's a really good question, Graciela, and I think the first thing we need to do is take stock and plan. We need to know what are the languages first of all that we don't have speakers for, whether they're the teacher or not, and then we really need to look to our language resources, whether they are parents, either parents of the children or not, other parents, the community, college students, churches.

There's many, many places we can look, but I think once we've -- finding them is a challenge in some communities and not in others, but then what do we do? What we need to do is be very playful about what their role is, whether they're like the teacher we saw with the flowers.

She obviously has been given something specific that they would like her to be doing in terms of here in the case of the colors and the concepts. What we don't want to do is just place somebody in the classroom or place them in a circumstance where they haven't had any preparation except for the fact that they speak the language.

We want to be able to make sure that we provide them training, whatever language resource that is, provide them training around how we would like them to read a book to children, you know, like them to pause, all of those things. So that's the first thing that comes to mind for me. Do it in a way that is

intentional. We'll talk a little bit maybe about this later, but it needs to be an intentional approach, whether it's twice a week they're able to come in at this hour, you know, once a week, but have it be intentional and planned.

Graciela: And don't parents and family members participate in there? How can we include them in our assessment practices?

Angie: I think for families the key is that we look at it as truly engaging with them and including them in the process, and again, I mentioned earlier it needs to be reciprocal and respectful, that we listen to parents and what it is that's important to them and that they understand what assessment is.

Assessment can be very scary for parents. They're saying, "Do I even understand what that word is?" and then, "Do I understand? Are you going to do something to my child, does my child have to pass something?" There is so much conversation and engaging we have to do with families, and then we can work together to support that child's development.

Dayana: And, Angie, to really get to know those families, I can remember some strategies that teachers had was to ask the parents to come into the classroom and share a song, a story, or even do a cooking activity with the family, and that really not only helped the child who was a dual language learner, but it really enriched the classroom environment, and it taught the other children how it is to be learning a different language, and so they really felt proud when they got to hear their own language in the voice of others, and that's very significant.

Linda: And I think we might be surprised at how many interested community members there are, both from the family's point of view but other community members, elders in the community, people who represent church leaders and whatnot, and my experience has been that they're very enthusiastic about supporting your program and helping the children.

We had one family that came in, and because they had been farmers in Central Valley in California, they came in and did a whole farming and a garden in the middle of our school and whatnot, and the children started to learn all about spades and digging and seeds and whatnot. If we hadn't asked and if we hadn't developed that relationship, we would have never known they had this talent and this background, and the children could benefit from it.

Sharon: Yeah. I mean, to the extent the program can articulate and prepare those and have intention about what they would like them to be doing, either them having a conversation about what is of interest that they can share. You know, we're getting a little off assessment, but still, it's part of the whole curriculum assessment.

I sometimes find that people who want to volunteer may be a little timid because they don't know what they're supposed to do, and that even ourselves in our individual lives with our own children, you know, even though you're a professional, well, "Here. I'm going to the classroom."

"What am I supposed to do here? What is my role?" Graciela: And that goes back to Angie's point of engagement, honest, genuine engagement with families, volunteers, community people and to guide them and how it is that they can help us from our vision of what we want in the classroom for the children and how we want to include and support all languages. So what supports do educational staffs need to...

...assess and individualize for children who are learning in two languages? Sharon: I mean, again, I'm just going to go back to helping them have a plan. We talked on a previous, I think it was a webinar - the literacy webinar, about a planned language approach.

For those of you who want to learn a little bit more about it, but basically, you really first need to get a handle on what is your classroom profile culturally, linguistically. Get a handle on it. Do I have 3 Somali speakers; do I have 7 Spanish speakers? First of all, you need to know that, be very clear about that. You need to then figure out, "Well, how am I going to approach the use of language, when? What is my plan truly?"

Then you need to make decisions. You know, how does that impact your curriculum, and it really is related to curriculum. This is for any curriculum. The planned language approach is just you being intentional around how you're using language, when you're using language, what your goals are, what those language resources you're bringing into your classroom or your learning environment to support the learning...

...and then when we take it to assessment and when we think about those that we bring in if we don't have the speakers and we're bringing in other language resources, you need to be very attuned to the child around what it is that you want to observe and know because then when you bring in your language resource or model, they're coming in once a week, you have something very specific you want them to work on because they need to give you information that you need to help that child.

Graciela: So that we go back to intentionality, purpose, observation, planning, and what I was saying at the beginning that all of this has to be integrated in our own self as teachers, and this is a process for us, too, and it happens over years, but we want you to be intentional about it, as well, and be self-reflective, and we don't expect it to all happen magically because you hear us today.

Sharon: And there are some programs who are setting up obviously, it goes without saying that the professional development on terms of language development in general, first and second language development, what are our -- some programs are in positions to have mentors that have this expertise, who can go into classrooms, and who work side by side.

You know, there are many things that programs can do to have a more dedicated effort to be looking at what their programs are, you know, what's happening in their classrooms for children who are dual language learners.

Dayana: And another good point is for children with disabilities, really take into consideration that it's key for the teacher to work with the IEP or IFSP team and bring in that language and that cultural piece into every meeting as much as possible.

They really need to have that present throughout the entire process and while they're providing the services. Graciela: We're already talking about this, but I want to make it a formal question that we ask, so what are some agency-wide approaches that can be undertaken to ensure that assessing the progress of children who are learning in two languages is well done?

Sharon: You know, I mean, I think the first thing to remember and I think we've talked about this prior is that, you know, just because the children are in the classrooms or the learning environments, it is not just the teacher's responsibility, and that's just by asking the question in that way, you're letting us be reminded that the leadership of the organization really needs to become involved in the total growth and the total development of the child...

...and so we did offer on previous webcasts and webinars the Program Preparedness Checklist that allows a program to take a look at where they are in terms of their systems and services, kind of like a program self-assessment, if you will, in terms of how prepared are you in the various areas, in planning, in your environment? And it's not an end-all, but it is available on the ECLKC on the Dual Language Learner's Page under our OHS resources, and that's a first step.

Again, we talked about professional development opportunities. Those need to be planned. You need to get a sense of where teachers are and what they know so that you can individualize for them in terms of what they need.

Graciela: It's a similar process for the leadership with the teachers as it is for the teachers with the children, isn't it? Linda: I would almost say I think a concluding message might be something around start small. Find a child that you want to document their progress towards your learning goals and be systematic. Make sure that you are observing continuously over time and recording that, and you can't do it with all of your children all at once tomorrow. You simply can't, and then thirdly, get help.

Find your resources and who's going to able to help you, particularly if you don't speak the language of the child, but there are small steps we can all take as we make progress -- as we make progress toward doing a better job of assessing, yeah. Dayana: All right.

Graciela: And I think this kind of concludes our question and answer period, and we want to leave you really with the fact that we just said, this really involves everyone in the program, not just the educational staff that is in the classroom with the teacher. It involves the leadership of the program, it involves the families, and it involves the community.

All of us have to come together and understand that these children need our support if they are really going to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity that coming to a Head Start program is giving them, and we hope that our conversation today has inspired you to continue growing, persevering, and I want to stress Linda's last message.

Try to be systematic about it, even if it is with one child first. Collect information, and at the classroom level, at the agency level, and at the community level, these are all circles that need to at some point intersect on behalf of children and families. So we want to leave you here.

I want to thank our panelists, thanks Sharon, thanks Linda, Angie, and Dayana for the time and the effort that they've put in preparing our webcast today, and I hope you will take advantage of this and please stay tuned and join us again for our next one, where we will be discussing assessing the progress towards English, towards the acquisition of English of children who are learning in two languages. Thank you.

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