

## **Growing Programs, Growing People-Reflective Leadership in EHS Virtual New Leaders' Meeting**

### **Track D-- Management and Professional Development**

#### **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual Birth to Three Institute**

You can find the webcast titles here: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/descriptions.html>

These are the titles of each track:

- A. Inclusive Child Development
- B. Child Health and Prenatal Services
- C. Family and Community Partnerships
- D. Management and Professional Development
- E. Home Visiting and Family Child Care

Operator: Good day everyone and welcome to the "Virtual Birth to Three Institute, Growing Programs, Growing People: Reflective Leadership in Early Head Start Virtual New Leaders" meeting. Today's call is being recorded and at this time, I would like to turn things over to Mr. Kelly Claire; please go ahead sir.

Kelly Claire: Hello, everyone. Before we get started with today's session, just want to go over a few housekeeping items. For today, we will be taking questions via the private chat. If you look down towards the lower left of your screen, you will see a public chat and a private chat; please click the private chat, choose "Leaders and Assistants" and type your questions in there. This will ensure that every--all the people in today's session will see your questions. We will answer those at the end, but please put your questions in as you think of them, so we can get to them at the end. You can also put any technical issues you are having in there and I will take care of those for you as well. So, please use the Leaders and Assistants choice under the private chat tab. And with that, I would like to turn the conference over to Angie. Angie, go ahead.

Angie: Thank you Kelly, and good afternoon everyone and welcome to today's webinar. I'm really glad that you can join us and on behalf of the Office of Head Start and Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, who's the director of the Office of Head Start, I want to welcome you to the webinar that is being provided by the Early Head Start National Resource Center.

This webinar, "Growing Programs, Growing People: Reflective Leadership in Early Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start," will explore the core principles and practices of being a successful leader in a reflective environment. Program leaders face challenges and opportunities each day in working with families and children and staff. As you think about the structure of your program and the staff you work with, how do you ensure a supportive and nurturing environment, an environment that is founded on respect for the work we do and for the people that we engage with each day. As a leader, you set the tone. How you are and what you do define the quality of services that your program can provide. The time you take to establish relationships that support staff and encourage the growth of each staff person directly impacts and influences the quality of work and the quality of services in your program.

We spend...today's webinar is another tool for supporting the successful learning and development of very young children. We all need to take time to understand that reflective, thoughtful leaders influence the quality of programs and the improved practice of staff. Your respect for an open communication with staff will lead the way in creating a collaborative and reflective environment that supports each child's learning and development. We spend a lot of time talking about learning and development, child and family outcomes and school readiness for very young children and it's important to keep that in mind as we move forward through this webinar, because it is all connected and reflective leadership plays such a valuable role. I also talk a lot about, for those of you who know me, one of the most valuable tools in implementing quality services in Early Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, the Head Start Program Performance Standards. They are a wonderful tool and they support every aspect of the work that each of us does, including reflective leadership which is today's topic.

The Standards defined regulations for the systems and services delivered in Early Head Start and Head Start including the areas of management and program operations and human resources management. The Standards require programs to work collaboratively with parents and staff and community to develop and implement quality systems and services for pregnant women, infants and toddlers. There are several Performance Standards that set requirements for staff supervision and support. I just want to refer you to a couple today for you to think about -- as you think about your own program and how to create an environment that supports positive change and success for staff and children and families. And the standards are --

The first one I want to mention about is 1304.51: Management Systems and Procedures, and then, especially, 1304.51 (a)(1) around program planning which supports the opportunity to include reflective thoughtful discussion within the program and with governing bodies in the community; also 1304.52 which is another large one--Human Resources Management, and then, specifically 1304.52 (a)(1) which supports a structure of staff supervision and support. And again, the Standards are so important and I just encourage you to embrace them as you embrace your work because they will-- they're the

guidance, often, that you need; they're the requirements, but they're also the support that you often need as you work each day. I'm really excited about today. I always think that the one thing that brings our words to life are program staff and program leaders and today, we have two seasoned directors who will be sharing their experiences with you. They have each worked in Head Start and Early Head Start for many years. They understand the joys and the challenges and the intense pressure of the work in Early Head Start and Head Start and will each be sharing their observations and reflections on the work that they engage in everyday. So, sit back and relax and join us and I'm now going to turn it over to our moderator for today, Linda Gillespie, who is the Director of Program Operations for the Early Head Start National Resource Center.

Linda: Thank you, Angie. As Angie said, I'm the director of the Program Operations for Early Head Start National Resource Center. My career has been focused on infants and toddlers and their families for the past 30 years. I'm really honored to be here today and moderate this session on reflective leadership, something that's near and dear to my heart. I want to introduce today's speakers. As Angie said, we have two very seasoned directors. First, I want to introduce Lee. Lee Turney is the director of youth early childhood development at Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in Northern Minnesota. He has worked in the early childhood field the last 19 years, starting out as the Head Start director into his current position. Leech Lake has an Early Head Start program of 60 children in 10 classrooms in a center-based setting. He also has 12 expectant moms and six children in the Early Head Start Family Child Care model. They also have 13 Head Start classrooms serving over 243 preschool children in seven different communities in and around the Reservation. So, welcome Lee and we'll be hearing from you in a little bit.

Ellen Farrar. Ellen is the Early Childhood Program Executive Director at Westchester Community Opportunity Program in Westchester County, New York. The program serves over 2000 children and families. She is certified as a New York State teacher and has been reviewing both Head Start and Early Head Start, as well as innovative federal grants for the past 25 years. Her fields of expertise are Early Head Start and Head Start, Early Head Start Research and Head Start Research and Early Childhood Education Training, Parenting and After-School Care. She brings a wealth of information.

I want to frame today's session. I think first of all, if you've been participating in Virtual Birth to Three this week, you will notice that this is an extra webinar this week and it is an extra webinar because it is part of a new leader series that is designed to affect reflective leadership as an approach to building and maintaining quality Early Head Start programs. The new leader series will include today's webinar and a video titled, "Lessons in Leadership: Lead, Learn, and Pass It On". And you'll hear a little audio clip later on in the session about that webinar to kind of spark your interest.

Now, I want to let – to give you a brief overview of what we'll be covering in today's webinar. We will begin by thinking about what does it mean to be a reflective leader and then we'll talk about what reflection is and some strategies around reflective practice. Next, we will address why reflective leadership is important as well as some information about reflective supervision. Additionally, we will address setting goals and evaluating outcomes as well as putting this into context of relationship-based organizations. And each of our presenters will share their rich experiences that will give you concrete example of what reflective leadership looks like in practice. You are in for a really good time. Please use our viewer's guide to follow along and note questions to keep on hand for the end of the session. And like Kelly said, you can type them in to the private chat session that's titled Leaders and Assistants at the bottom left hand corner of your stage -- of your screen, sorry.

So next, I wanted to take a look at objectives. It is our hope that by the end of this webinar, you will be able to describe the elements of reflective leadership, discuss the impact of reflective leadership and reflective practice can have on an organization's operations, and identify strategies to develop a safe, trusting environment where mutual goals can be reached, and quality services for expectant parents, infants, toddlers and their families are delivered.

OK. So I think our next step is a polling question. Kelly, do you have a question to share with our audience? So here's your question, you'll see up on your screen, are you a reflective leader? So, think about this in relationship to the work that you are doing and answer "yes," if you're really sure that you practice that reflective leadership in your organization, "no," if at this point, you're just not there yet, or, "maybe," which means that sometimes you do and sometimes you don't. So, let's see where people show up. So take a minute, click on the yes, no, or maybe, so that we can get a sense of our audience. We're watching closely to see what you're going to have, what results we're going to have. Kelly, have we got our results yet? Seems like people are taking a little bit of time to -- it's a lot of people, so, it always takes a little bit of time. So, here we go, they're coming in.

So, about 22 percent of you said that you are practicing being a reflective leader. So, that's wonderful and a very small percentage said no and then about 40 percent of you said maybe. So, I imagine that those 40 percent are probably in the "I'm trying to" stage. And so, there's lots of information here for all levels. So, I think you all will find information useful. So, Kelly, you can close that poll now and we'll go on to what reflection is.

So, let's think about that reflection is both a practice and a process of looking within and pausing to see what we are feeling, believing, experiences -- experiencing, and where are those feelings, beliefs, and experiences are coming from? And then, using that information and understanding to inform our responses. It is a process that helps us question underlying assumptions, values, norms and practices

that are many times defined by others like our family, our society, or our religion. And it's to ask ourselves, it gives us an opportunity to ask ourselves, "Is this true for me now?" Lee and Ellen, can either of you share an example of how you have used reflection in your own development as a leader?

Lee: Yes, good afternoon, Linda and good afternoon to everybody. I'm Lee Turney and I'm honored to be here this afternoon. In my position as a Youth and Early Childhood Development director here at Leech Lake, I practice what I commonly refer to as a simplified approach to leadership or a blended process or method. This blended method combines the reflective supervision roles along with the program's administrative responsibilities. The reflective practice you have described, Linda, allows me to maintain balance within the program which I find to be very important as we carry out our day-to-day and our monthly and annual challenges here in the program.

Linda: That's great, Lee. I really -- I'm really glad that you talked about both the blended method of leadership and looking at reflective and administrative 'cause we can't forget that there's administrative pieces to our role. I'm going to try to break this down a little bit more into a -- there's a three-step process that we use to help us be -- to help us to really practice that reflective process. The first one is self-awareness and this refers to a person's capacity to recognize his or her own reactions, thoughts, and feelings. It also includes the ability to understand where these behaviors, thoughts and feelings come from and to think about them carefully. And then the next step we talk about is careful observation. And this involves gathering up as much information to more fully understand the situation as possible. It involves us observing ourselves, others and our environment and integrating this information to understand the meaning of what is being observed. This kind of observation helps us make well-informed decisions about how to respond and also, really importantly, to be able to respond flexibly recognizing that there can always be more than one answer. And that brings us to that flexible response, which helps us to really individualize our actions based on our careful observations, and make an informed guess or a hypothesis. It's flexible 'cause we kind of test it out to see if it might be the best idea or the answer, or if we need to go back and do more careful observation, more reflecting, and to come to another decision on action and/or action.

So, these three steps are not always in this order. It's not a linear process. It's more of a circular process. Sometimes, we observe something, causes us to have a reaction, makes us have to think about where that reaction is coming from, which is the self-awareness. We observe some more and then we come back to reflective response. Do either of you want to comment on how you use this process in your work?

Ellen: Linda, I would be glad to. And hello to everybody. I see so many names on this list that I would love to say hello to privately. But I see the reflective process as one that develops overtime and it is constantly evolving. With my initial reflective supervision training which happened more than ten years ago, I recognized the need to increase my own self-awareness. I think if we are mindful, we recognize that we never fully master self-awareness but we are or should be continuing to grow and develop professionally. As I become more self-aware, it affords me the opportunity to model and share information on various processes of self-assessment along with ways to make use of the knowledge that I've gained. We're going to give you a few seconds to reflect on what's been shared so far.

[ Pause ]

Lee: Well now that they've had an opportunity to reflect a little bit, you know, I want like to add that, you know, I found the three-step process as very important and I value it a lot, as I take a look at our purposeful meaning and approach to the things that we do in our program. And I find the opportunities with the staff and with myself individually to exercise it, and I find that these times and these transition times where you're able to reflect and when you can do that in a purposeful way, you know, it lends more time to come up with a well-rounded and a better product at the end. Linda, will you explain a little bit more for us on this?

Linda: Sure, Lee. I'd be glad to. There are three types of reflection. The first two I will talk about were researched by Donald Schon back in the early '80s. So think about that, that's a long time ago. So reflection, this process of reflection has been around a really long time. Later, like 10 years or 8 years later, Todd and Killian added a reflecting for action. So, let me share with you what each of those reflections in, on and for action involve.

So we'll start with reflection-for-action. Reflection-for-action is planning what we are going to do or say before an event. We might plan for a parent conference or a home visit for example. And I think that many of you have had experiences in reflecting for action that may not have had the terminology to have it defined for you in this way and to think about what it can lead to. Reflection-on-action is the process of thinking about what happened in order to gain insight into a situation or interaction. This is a common reflection also that many people use. Something happens, it didn't go as you planned, and you talk about it with someone to gain insight as to what you might do differently next time. This is the type of reflection that Lee was sharing an example of. And it's not always that something goes wrong. Sometimes, you reflect on action just to get an insight. Every--after every webinar, we sit and we reflect on action, what we liked, what we saw, what we thought went on.

And this helps hone our ability to reflect in action. Reflection-in-action is when we think off the top of our heads. Someone asks a question or presents a situation and even though the question might take us by surprise, we are able to respond appropriately and in the moment. Research shows that those who take time to reflect on and for action are better equipped to reflect in action. And we all know that our jobs with families in Early Head Start really require us to reflect-in-action a lot. So, it's a really good skill to hone. Lee, what do you have to say about this?

Lee: You know, Linda, thank you. You know, what I found, you know, is being able to use this reflective process, you know, before an experience and have the opportunity to do that this past year with an organizational restructuring project that we did internally here within early childhood. And to be able to take a look at the on or in and the for, what's really helpful you know, for me to see what the impacts of the move were and the impact on staff and the children alike. And I also found that it's valuable to pause and reflect in the midst of that experience, just to assess that current situation. So, using these three reflection pieces is definitely an asset as you take a look at things that you do in and around your program. And so asking questions like these again really helped me gain a deeper understanding. And then talk about the question is what is happening, you know, why is this happening? What does this mean? What does this mean for me? And what can I learn from this? You know, and so these questions again, they help me gain and my team to gain a deeper understanding of both ourselves and the situation with which we're in. This process takes time and some say it's not easy to do. But it works well for me. So, however, I can see where this type of reflection in leadership is not something that is practiced at every level in an organization. As a result, I know that we've undertaken quite a few opportunities through the past few years to take this process of reflection and asking of these questions down to every level, to the teaching staff at the basic entry level and how they're working in the classroom, and how they're working with other teachers, and how that is being received by the children. And so, we incorporate reflection into our programming as another piece that helps us dig a little bit deeper into who we are and what we're doing. With us being brand new to Early Head Start and by being brand new, three years is a baby in this business.

And I can tell, you know, initially starting out, the big difference between the relationships that I had just with our staff. We had our managers, you know, in Head Start who would--who had a lot of tenure, who had been here a long time. You know, and then we had to build and come in and build a new Early Head Start program. And there were a few things that took me by surprise, they shouldn't have, but they did. You know, and I found myself initially thinking that both of these, the Head Start and Early Head Start staff, you know, should have been at the same level. And what I didn't take in consideration was the 17 previous years that I had with the Head Start and a few months that I had just with the Early Head Start folks. You know, building and cultivating that trust and shared vision piece with the Early Head Start staff, you know, who are relatively new not only to the programming but to the organization, you know, and to the new project.

So, I guess the way that I would, moving forward, like to think about my brand of leadership, it has more to do with building the capacity. I strongly believe that the leadership exists at all levels of a program or organization. And I also believe that you prepare your staff to the level that, in the case of an absence of a supervisor, that the mission or the programming and the services would continue to move forward with little or no interruption. Around that, being able to have an open door policy or a place that you can go to to ask a question and in a place where we both can approach each other with a trust where we both feel comfortable. Again, that is not only looking at the way I see the picture. It's about how they see it and so it becomes instead of an "I" picture, it becomes a "we" picture. It answers questions: Are we sharing the same vision? And then: what are we doing to get to a good place and to move us forward together. Ellen, do you want to add anything to what I've said?

Ellen: I think what you've said is so important and I am-- as opposed to add, I may just be emphasizing a couple of things, because I agree 100 percent that leading through reflection is a relationship-based process. It's a process that has to be based on openness. And there's a vulnerability that's required. You must be able to share as well as trust. And it's very important to be trustworthy. Additionally, a reflective leader is always aware of how their position of power and-- of power and position can frame or distort interaction. I think this piece is crucial in developing the working relationship from day-to-day, from day one with your staff and needs to be constantly nurtured, especially, when you're implementing new services or a new program option, like you did with your Early Head Start and I've done every time we open a new center. It's true, relationship building is an ongoing process that requires mutual trust, a common purpose and a shared vision. These all have to be components of a relationship-based organization. Linda, do you want to add a little bit more to that?

Linda: Sure, that leads us into a definition of what a relationship-based organization is. It's an organization that believes that quality relationships influence practice and work to support those relationships, through a variety of mechanisms. One of the phrases that come to mind when I think about relationship-based organization is that relationships are messy. Everything doesn't go as planned, and sometimes, actually, many times, strong feelings can surface. An organization that values relationships doesn't shy away from these messy situations. They support staff in coping with them. Let's look at a few characteristics that define--that further define relationship-based organizations. I think most of these are self-explanatory, but I'm going to just talk a little-- give you a little bit about each one of them. So first, mutual and shared goals. I think Lee and Ellen have really demonstrated and talked about how important it is to develop goals with staff and to include staff in sharing those visions and where you're going, and creating a safe environment for that to happen. In commitment to growth and change, and organizations really support and encourage growth and change at all levels, both personal and professional. They support staff in optimizing their skills and knowledge,

so that they can grow. Commitment to reflection-- I think we've talked a lot about that. Leaders model this and they make time for this to happen. Reflection doesn't happen fast. Reflection takes a space for it to happen. And as a leader, we have to be able and willing to make time to create that space. Sensitivity to context is a little bit more complex. So, it's part of paying attention to the environment both the physical environment like the temperature of a room and, you know, how bright it is, or whether somebody has a window to look out of, those kinds of things or other kinds of physical environments. But more importantly, the socio-emotional environment is important in promoting relationship-based work.

So, I'm going to give you an example of a kind of simple one. I was doing a training at a nap time in a program one time. And as I was--it was--we only had like an hour and a half and I was kind of noticing that the staff is a little anxious and people kept looking at their watches. And I thought, I'm usually pretty good at keeping people's attention. So, it was a kind of surprising that I was seeing this and it was so-- it was enough that I said, "OK, what's happening?" And somebody said, "Oh, well, our paychecks haven't come yet and the bank is closed at 3 and we're really worried, we're not going to get our checks, be able to get our check cashed." And I was like, "Oh, OK. Well, I can understand how that would be a big distraction for you paying attention so how about if we take a break about 2:15 or 2:20 so everybody can make sure that they can get their checks on time and then they could go and check-- cash their checks in like quarter to 3 if that's part of what our issues are."

So, that's sensitivity to context, took a little bit of self-awareness and observation that we talked about earlier. And it took a flexible response in order to solve. So, I think it's really important that we think about that in our work with staff. We've already had a lot said about open communication, about having an open door policy and what that means, as being open to staff suggestions. In our organization, it means our executive director or director gets lots of input from everybody. So, it's a great blessing but a great time too that it takes to be open to all those different suggestions. And high professional standard in an Early Head Start program goes without saying. We adhere to high professional standards as part of our Performance Standards and we know these standards promote high quality care and services.

So, that gives you a little bit idea of how these characteristics--I hope it's given you some idea of how these characteristics relate to relationship-based organizations so, that you can have a good--a better idea of how that is and I think that Ellen even has another example of how relationship-based organizations work in her program. Ellen?

Ellen: I do and I think you've summarized it so perfectly, Linda. You know, you talked about commitment with staff, sensitivity, open communication, and I think it's so important that we prepare ourselves so that that can happen. And one of the ways that we do that, and it's just a quick example, is that we have

what we call in our central office where all the coordinators are housed, our Head Start lunch table. And there, every coordinator who is in the office, we meet for lunch at 12 o'clock everyday. You know, we share pictures of our children and grandchildren; we share conversations, but we also share our morning experiences, what we are planning, what our concerns are. And we're giving ourselves the opportunity to really communicate in an informal setting but in a very and a-- well, let me just tell you that, we are just talking about moving our organization. And one of the things every one of the coordinators have said is, "Where are we going to put the lunch table?" So, that it is an important time for everybody.

Lee: You know, Ellen, I--

Ellen: Go ahead, Lee.

Ellen: Go ahead, you can add to that.

Lee: You know, I just wanted--I started smiling as you were talking about your lunch table there and, you know, I--in our community, you know, we have an old saying, "Feed them and they'll come." And so I thought that was only in Indian country, but it's--I'm glad to hear that, you know, that it is elsewhere also and we're not the only ones that have to feed them and they'll come but also making that a part, you know, of a get-together so staff can share. But I believe that reflective process, you know, it is all about the relationship and when you take a look at the characteristics of that or share with us there, you know, those characteristics have to be nurtured and safeguarded, you know, every day that we do come in the door and we get engaged with our work, you know, and it has to be a cognizant thing that we address on a daily basis because if we--in order to achieve better results and better outcomes, we have to make sure, you know, that we're all staying connected and that we're all communicating, you know, in a positive way. Linda?

Linda: Well, Lee, that reminds me of another really important concept that's important for relationship-based work and that's the concept of parallel process. So, the parallel process is how feelings and actions are carried from one relationship into another relationship. So, we use these--this parallel process in a relationship-based way when we intentionally treat people respectfully and kindly knowing that the relationships that we as leaders cultivate with staff can influence the quality of the relationship between staff and families, and staff and children, and relationships between all staff. But it's really, really important for staff to understand this concept. And I'll tell you, my experience with this in helping program staff understand what it means for parallel process. We all know that, especially in taking care of babies that it's a hard, hard job and that parents come with a lot of stresses and a lot of things on

their mind and staff get very attached to these very little people and that can sometimes cause conflict and sometimes it can even cause a little competition. And when I help staff understand the parallel process of what it's like to feel and be as a parent in a program when you might come in and drop a child off and the staff person doesn't greet you, doesn't say hello to you, doesn't say your name, or might even say, "Gee, how come you're so late, you're late every day." And what that feels as a parent and how those feelings of--those negative feelings might carry over into their other relationships including their relationships with their child. When I help staff understand the power of parallel process, of making a parent, and helping a parent feel good about being a parent and really helping that parent connect to the child, that seems to make a lot of difference to staff along the way. And they are able to kind of lay down their own needs in a way that I had not seen before and they can connect to parents and they can support families because they know ultimately that that's what's best for the child that the better they can make that relationship between that parent and that child, the better that child's trajectory will be all the way around. So it's really, really an important concept for staff to understand and to be intentionable about. Ellen, do you want to talk about the platinum rule?

Ellen: I certainly do. That was a very powerful story and it just has--it brought so much to my mind. I mean, we worked for a very long time with homeless children and that is such a hard thing for our staff and we have to constantly work with them because, you know, their children can just go away at any time because they--if they move from the shelter, if they go from a shelter, we constantly remind them every day that, you know, if your goal is to make that day happy for the child, that you've achieved something, make a child smile for one day, you've achieved something because they don't have often long-term goals. So your story just brought that to me. But the platinum rule in reflective leadership is do unto others as you would have others do unto others. And we have to work hard to implement this every day. Do unto others as you would have others do unto others. Linda?

Linda: That's great, Ellen. Maybe we should make a plaque for that for programs because I love that saying also. So Kelly, we're going to do a little--another little polling and this time, it's a little bit different. You're going to go to the chat at the bottom left hand corner of your screen and you're going to click on the "public." And what I want you to do is I want you to type in the first word or words that come to your mind when I say, reflective supervision. Now, don't be shy; there aren't any wrong answers, just type away and let's see what kinds of things come in to people.

So here's what I'm seeing, teamwork, it's so fast, thoughtful, responsive, guidance, golden rule, sharing, improving, responsibility, stepping back, reflecting, reciprocal, relationship, caring, communications, analysis, flexibility, serve and return, meetings time, relaxing, listening, listening, listening, communicating, nurturing relationships and problem solving, and two-way conversations, and growing. That's great. And there're still coming in, brainstorming, jumping into conclusion--jumping--not jumping to conclusions, and constructive feedback, nurturance, refraining from judging. So lots of great words,

lots of great ways of thinking about reflective supervision. So I'm going to go a little bit deeper into this in the next slide. Thank you so much. You can close that poll, Kelly.

That was really very insightful to see how many of you and I was so happy to see that all of them were positive. I didn't-- maybe I missed some, but they looked all positive to me. So it's great that you all have such a positive framework for reflective supervision. So reflective supervision uses the reflective process we just described to make informed decisions. They try to work with staff and to assist staff in gaining a better understanding of themselves and the children and families they work with. Reflective supervision is collaborative, respectful, safe, these are all words that we saw you put up. It is regular and predictable schedule. And that primary goal needs to be to provide staff members with an opportunity to learn and explore. Reflective supervision provides a model for staff to incorporate when they are working with families. You could think of reflective supervision as reflecting on and for action. So that when we work with staff as leaders, we're able to support staff in examining their own experiences and feelings and the better that they do that, the better they manage their interactions with others. Ellen, you want to add to this?

Ellen: Sure, Linda. I'll be glad to add a little bit to this conversation. I think it's done by sharing experiences, both personal and professional. Our meetings always have coffee and we've constantly recognized that what we do was hard and sometimes frustrating and that we ask a lot and we ask often too much for too little. We have to remember that relationships provide a reliable connection between the supervisor and the supervisee and it's built upon nurturance, empathy, validation and joined experience. Relation—Reflective supervision is a relationship for learning and I learn as well. I learn that the staff sometimes feel a little overwhelmed and that together, we need to discuss what solutions are viable and realistic. How can we make it work? Lee, what do you think?

Lee: Thank you, Ellen. You know, when I talk-- when we think about reflective supervision in a relationship within the programs, you know, and the opportunity to learn from each other, you know, it is--opens the world up for everybody at all different levels to--you know, to put more tools in your tool bag to develop and mature as a program coordinator, manager, and even directors have that opportunity to learn every day. And creating that environment is what's important if you want to, again, be progressive and move programing forward. You know, and what I wanted to share again was around the infant and toddler professionals, you know, on the slide, it talks about needing to have the basic appreciation that all learning takes place and the context of relationships. And, you know-- and again, according to those principles, you know, it is true for adults as it is for the infants and toddlers. And reflective supervision is just one of the ways of developing a positive, safe learning environment for both. Linda?

Linda: Thanks, Lee. That was really good. Both--Lee and Ellen, I appreciate what you've said. So I'm going to summarize here a bit. Just in the middle here a little bit to summarize. I want us to think about that reflective leaders are thoughtful, that they take the time to facilitate a climate of mutual trust and to assist all staff at all levels to step back from their work and think about how their own experiences and beliefs influence their interaction with others. This kind of self-awareness that you're cultivating in staff helps them to manage interactions which is really important for them to be able to do. They take time to observe themselves and the environment, both statistical and the socio-emotional environment, what others are saying and how they are saying it. Then after careful consideration, they can offer response, but not the response. They set goals--reflective leaders set goals and they help their staff to do the same. And all of these works in tandem with each other so that we are providing a climate of safe and a trusting relationships that parents and babies can grow in. Can either of you want to say more about these processes?

Ellen: Well, I think that you've defined it fairly well already and I might be a little repetitive, but I think it's important to say, reflective leaders encourage critical thinking and creativity. Reflective leaders are respectful of others and the key here is listening and asking questions. I saw that come up in the little survey. Again, it has to be an inclusive process, a sharing of ideas, goals, and plans. And again, we lead by making others powerful. We do this in our agency because we have [inaudible] like meetings that aren't just training, but the sharing of ideas and how we do it at our center and what we can do better and maybe you have an idea for me or I can give you an idea. Lee?

Lee: Yeah, Ellen. Thank you very much. You know, one thing that comes to mind for me is that, you know, sometimes in the fast-paced life that we have in Early Head Start and Head Start and just the early childhood community, you know, it's easy to forget the importance of your role as a reflective leader and how important it is at times to come back to the basic principles that we've been talking about. Ellen?

Linda: I think--So Lee, these are really good insights. But can either of you share how you measure if what you were doing is really working?

Ellen: OK, I would be happy to do that. I think that using reflective supervision contributes tremendously to professional growth and helps create leaders. Performance evaluation should be reflective and encourage self-knowledge. But I think it's very important to state that with reflective supervision, there should never be any surprises when it's time to get an evaluation. If you've been openly communicating daily or weekly, the performance evaluation becomes a summary of your years' discussions. Lee?

Lee: Again, measuring, you know, the outcomes, you know, and around reflective supervision leads us to, you know, another piece that's talking about, you know, achieving the goals, you know? And I think that it's important, you know, that at different times that we come back and have that reflection so that we can optimize through our process the relationships but also, you know, look at the work over all that, you know, is being done and how it all blends together, but again, how important each facet is, you know, to our existence on a daily basis.

Linda: Thanks, Lee. That's great. So, now, we're going to introduce an audio clip. Remember earlier I told you that there's a new leaders video coming out called "Lessons in Leadership: Lead, Learn, and Pass It On". And it's currently in production and it's going to be coming out this summer. So, the purpose of this series of products which is this video in today's webinar, is as Angie said, to support new leadership, by sharing lessons and key leadership messages like reflective leadership.

So, let's just take a few minutes to listen to an audio clip from this new material that will be coming out really soon.

[ Pause ]

[Audio clip begins] Male speaker: The job, but it's an important part of the job.

Female speaker: Well, it is important part. Data collection is crucial to any Head Start, Early Head Start program 'cause that's one of the ways to prove that you're meeting Performance Standards and outcomes. You have to have a strong monitoring system that encompass all areas of Head Start, at various times of the year, so that you will know what data to use to provide services to families, also, what data to use to write your grant for the next year and help you develop your goals. So, we make our decisions, based on meetings, reports, quarterly reports, monthly reports, and the system of data collection. So, we use our self-assessment; that's a tool that we do every year as well as we use any data that-- from our triannuals that we have in order to just continue to build the quality of our agency. Decision making is a group effort, 90 percent of the time. Everybody--we meet weekly, you have-- for us, meeting weekly as a management team has been very beneficial in keeping communication going and understanding what's happening in our agency and which direction are we going-- are we on the right path or are we not. [Audio clip ends]

Linda: Ellen, did you want to comment with an example from your own community assessment?

Ellen: Yes, and I think that, you know, data collection is important and it's both formal and informal. Using the knowledge about your program to make program changes that help you better serve children and families is truly what a director's and an agency's job is. And I'm going to give you--my favorite example is, many years ago, I was kind of like seeing children being picked up by people other than their parents from the Head Start program and going to places that were not necessarily the best places. We talked to the parents and they said, "Look, we have to work. We're--I'm a single parent, I need to earn money, but I need to send this child to the babysitter because you're only here for three and a half hours." So, I went to the Department of Social Services and I said, "Look, you're paying people to take care of children at home, so, why can't you pay us the same thing you pay them and we'll keep them for the afternoon, too?" Well, that's how we got our Day Care Head Start model. And then another child--one day, I was in the center and I'm seeing a child sitting waiting for a bus. And I said, "Why are you waiting for a bus?" And they said, "He had to go to a special needs program." And so I met with the state program and I said, "Why are we taking these children with tremendous needs and putting them on buses for a half hour? Why don't you give us the resources, so that we can do it in our program?" And that's how we got our integrated classrooms and our special needs classrooms. So, again, I think it's knowing the needs in your program and collecting the data of what your families need that makes a good program. Linda?

Linda: Ellen, that was really two great examples of using your data in your community assessment to make changes, which was really wonderful. So, the--I want to make sure that everybody knows that that little video--that little audio clip came from "Lessons in Leadership: Lead, Learn, and Pass It On". And again, that will be coming out this summer. Additionally, I want you to know that there's other materials on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, the ECLKC website from the National Center on Program Management and Physical Organizations-- Physical Operations. Their landing page has materials on assessment, and in it an interactive page called, "What new leaders need to know," and SOLAR which stands for Strengthening Operations for Learning And Results, a tool created to help leaders look at questions concerning program staff and skills. So, these are some important really concrete tools for programs to use. But what else do you think is really important. Ellen?

Ellen: I've always known that listening to staff was important as you know, since I've said it several times already, but--and I make regular time to meet with my directors and then have many other meetings with other staff. But about 15 years ago, I was visiting centers and working with an individual classroom teacher, when she said to me, "How come you meet with everyone except the staff?" When I asked her what she meant, she said, "You meet with parents; you meet with directors; you meet with policy council; you meet with boards; you meet with coordinators, et cetera, et cetera, but you never take time to meet with staff," and I said, "Well look, you know, there are 467 staffs and it would be real difficult to meet with each of you every month. But I'll tell you what, if you want to elect one staff person from each center and come to a monthly meeting and you bring the questions--it's going to be your meeting; I would be happy to meet with you." And we call it the Staff Association. These elected reps take this group so seriously. I just love it.

They go to every single staff person in their center and say, "Do you have any questions for WestCOP?" And then they come to the meeting. They ask their questions. Again, drink coffee and eat junks and they bring the answers back to the staff and it's been such a wonderful way to keep the communication open in a very large organization. People know what WestCOP is. I often have coordinators come in and we talk about goals that they might have. It's just a really good tool for a relationship-based organization.

Linda: Ellen that is such a great example of how you've embraced reflective leadership. Lee, you mentioned being fairly new to Early Head Start program; can you tell us a little more about your Early Head Start program and how it began and how it's progressing and your use of reflective leadership?

Lee: I'll be glad to, Linda. Thank you. You know, as you said, we had an existing Head Start program and through the ARRA funding and things we applied in, you know, the old saying: "Be careful what you ask for 'cause you may get it." That happened. And anyway, with that happening of, you know, they brought our Early Head Start program here. And, you know, we took a look at what we needed to do internally, you know, and so when we looked at programming, you know, it was important, you know, that even though we had a Head Start program that was pretty well anchored, you know, what ended up happening was the acknowledgment early on that this Early Head Start was a totally different character, you know, and that it was--it was new to all of us. And so one, you know, one of the things that we had to do was develop and brainstorm, you know, a process that we needed to incorporate that would help us move, you know, the process along, so that we could at least all be sharing of the same vision. And I think I talked about that before that through the process, you know, early on, they were looking at me for what is the answer, what is that big picture. And in turn, I was looking for them to come with what their picture and what their lens was sharing and to be able to share that with me, so that we are developing the big picture together. You know, what I found out was that we were both looking to each other, you know, for relatively the same answers. And what I found as a strength early on was the number of meetings that we had to have and have them relatively quick in very narrow time spans, so that we did stay connected. And then what I--we did over a period of time was, again, build that strength in that relationship, so that we were in fact, not having to meet so often anymore, because we had developed the we picture, the big picture that we're all working for. And so we were able to work independently, you know, in knowing that we're all moving, you know, forward in the same direction.

You know, looking back at that experience with the Early Head Start startup, you know, I found that we had built the strong relationship that centered around the--you know, a better understanding of each other. Through that, we had a better understanding of what Early Head Start was all about and then how we were going to be able to, you know, meet what the Standards were talking about for a strong Early Head Start program.

So, today, our--we're at a process where we don't have to have the—you know, the every two or three-days-getting-together type of meetings because of that, there's a foundation of trust and empowerment that was built relatively early on, you know, in our experience. And I think that by building that understanding and by giving that empowerment to each other, that allows us to continue to grow. It allows us to continue to build not only the relationship internally between ourselves and the program, but that important relationship between them and their staff, the staff and the parents, as well as the community. So, we created this large circle of care and I feel that, you know, we've taken a giant step forward in creating that circle, but also reinforcing it over time. Now, I'd like to share with everybody that the Early Head Start was definitely a challenge. But I wanted to share a piece about growing programs, because we were one of 22 programs--Head Start programs-- that got to take part in a national demonstration project called Early Head Start and Family Child Care. And before that, when we got the phone call and the offer, the first thing that I did is I went and met with my child care services manager and we talked about, not whether we wanted to do it or not; we talked about what would a program, such as this bring to our community. And you know, is this something that we, again, that collaborative effort, is that something that we could dedicate a period of time to, which was months, in developing, in designing something for implementation. And so, you know, we got into a nine-month project where we developed the model. During that nine months period, we got an opportunity to not only meet with the community here, at large, but we're able to engage the family child care providers and get to know who they are. And sometimes in our communities, we can be serving the same-age children, but in a child care environment versus an Early Head Start environment; you really don't know each other. And we found that to be so, you know, during this process.

So, we use that process and, you know, we had to empower, we had to educate, not only the community but each other on what we were and how--what impact and what services we were doing to the communities. So, that, you know, that allowed us to develop collaborative partners, not only within our organization, but it also identified collaborative partners at the state level, but it also showed us that, you know, that even from the federal standpoint, from the Office of Head Start, and the Office of Child Care, that that initiative of bringing Early Head Start into a family child care setting can be done. And what it takes is that commitment and that belief in each other and that trust, you know, that you are developing something that is going to not only give parents another source of care, but it gives them a choice on whether what type of settings, smaller setting or a larger center setting would be the best thing for their kids.

So, you know, through these opportunities and like, that program, you know, we always have a chance to grow. The one thing that we're encouraged about right now is that we're looking at a home-based-- a home visiting program this fall, because our waiting list for infants and toddlers is so big and the need is so great that we want to do more outreach. So, we're looking at implementing, you know, a home visiting program for infants and toddlers just to make sure that we are providing the resources or the services to the children in our communities that are at greatest risk. Linda?

Linda: Oh, Lee, that was so good that you were able to share so many aspects of how you've grown programs and grown people with it. There was a couple of things that really struck me in your stories about how you've integrated both Early Head Start in the family child care model. First, it was a lot of parallel process going on there and how you worked with staff and how you had staff work with each other and worked with the community and the state and the feds; I mean, that's a lot of collaborative process and a lot of parallel process. The other thing it reminded me of, when you talked about how staff kind of expected you to know things and you expected them to know things and you had these expectations of each other that maybe neither of--one of you was you meeting is my a-ha moment around reflective supervision was that I didn't need to have all the answers as the supervisor. That when you're in a reflective relationship with somebody, you are thinking about things together and then the whole idea behind that is to really slow down and think together and more importantly to help that person to think through the problem on their own and not give the answer, which so many times those of us who are in supervisory positions feel compelled to be able to have all the right answers. And I think your process that you described here really was so transparent of a process that was so collaborative and very parallel process-oriented. So, I really thank you for sharing all that. You're going to go on and tell us a little bit more of what other things that you've noticed. So, I'm going to let you continue. Thanks.

Lee: Thanks, Linda. You know, we talked about growing programs and that, you know, it's an enormous challenge. And that leads me kind of into the next slide on empowering staff, you know, and empowering staff, you want them to invest their knowledge and experience from their circle of energy and it's important, you know, for them to know that it's OK. You can do that, you know, and they need to feel that. And I think that's essential to positive growth and development, you know, and it provides them with the necessary buy-in and ownership to their organization and the program. And in that way, your reflective leadership is a vehicle for promoting your staff and your growth and also building your program. I wanted to share with you a story here that happened--and this will probably give away my age if my picture already hasn't; but anyway, I was hired on February 14th, 1994, as the Head Start director.

So, my first day at work, I come in, February 14th, Northern Minnesota—you know what the weather is. Sure enough, in our largest center where our administrative offices were, the water pipes froze in the entire center--shut down services. We were that way for three days. Finally, one--on that third day and we're working with our people in the city to try to thaw the lines out. One day, they're on the third day, one moment, one of the staff come up and said, "Well, what are you going to do so that we can get kids back in here?" You know, and I found that-- I found that like, "Wow," that was my wow moment at that point, three days in the Head Start.

So, I called a staff meeting. And being three days there, I still didn't know everybody by their first name. Well, we had a staff meeting that morning and we went around the room. And I asked them to introduce themselves, what job they do, and how many years have they been working for Head Start. And so, we went around the room and they all got an opportunity to introduce themselves and everything. So, after we got all through with that exercise, I said, "You know, I said the question was brought to me this morning about what am I going to do around bringing kids back into this program and getting services going again." I said, "I just added it up. We have 103 years of Head Start experience standing in this room versus three days. So, I want to ask you this: What are we going to do to get kids back and get services going?" From that point on, the relationship between myself and the staff, their ownership into the program-- everything changed. It was huge; I mean, there were ideas floating around where, you know, field trips here, go visit the center there. You know, it was a great amount of energy that just took over that meeting. Once they picked it up, they had me beat 103 to 3. And mine was only three days. But, you know, it's that type of empowerment of staff I think is important that they need to feel. so that they know they are valued and that they bring something to the game everyday and that none of us is greater than any of the other one. So, now, Linda that just was, you know, a reflection that I had when we talked about staff empowerment.

Linda: You know, Lee, that was a great reflection. And actually, it makes me want to go kind of pass and go to that slide that talks about how you are as important as what you do. So, I'm just going to go ahead and go to that, because I think what you just shared was so relevant and so much like what that phrase talks about, which is expressing the idea that who we are, how we are in a situation matters as much as what we know. And [inaudible] Paul coined this phrase and it's--to express the idea that, you know, the values and beliefs that we have influence our actions. And to be really effective of who we are needs to match our actions, and the how is that we do our work in a way that recognizes and purposely makes use of the way one relationship influences another. And I really think, Lee, that your example that you've shared here really stress that. And the focus of our attention and your attention too is on quality, on reflection, on diversity, certainly on growth and on learning and engagement of internal and external audiences all over. So, it is just--you're a wealth of information and those were really great examples. Ellen, do you want to talk about growing leaders?

Ellen: Certainly. Growing leaders is what reflective supervision is about. The supervisee needs to have the right to participate in developing the learning structure to which she is being exposed, to develop a contract or an agenda defining reciprocal expectations, to take the first responsibility in analyzing her own work, and to contribute meaningfully to her own evaluation. And I want to illustrate this process with a quick story, which I call learning from Amy. One of the techniques that we have used in our classrooms is videotaping, because I think nothing helps people like actually seeing themselves in action. So, an example of this is Amy. We videoed a classroom and viewed the video with the teacher. Throughout the entire videotaping, this little shy girl stood right beside the teacher and never said a word; she looked at her adoringly and she just stood beside her. But the teacher was really busy dealing with some very active children. They were quite rambunctious.

So, when I asked the teacher to view the video with me and to tell me what she saw that surprised her or what she might have done differently. She said, "Oh my, I never saw Amy," and it was true. She had been beside her the entire taping and the teacher never addressed her. We talked about classroom management and how this teacher was never going to forget the Amys anymore. I think that this was really meaningful supervision in that the teacher was able to set her own goals. She saw what I saw. She never had to be criticized or corrected. Her observations simply have to be validated. And together, we've created a plan to work with the quiet child, Lee?

Lee: You know, Ellen, that story just kind of touches you, right? You know, and it--I think it bounces back, you know, that that story in itself talks about, you know, how important the work is that we do and being able to utilize, you know, different methods to come back and just check each other or ourselves on things that that are probably so important, but sometimes just get overlooked. So, that was a great story. I sure appreciated hearing that.

[ Pause ]

Lee: And I think that takes us, I think, Ellen, and taking a look at some reflective tools and, you know what-- I would really encourage all of us, you know, as we do our work is to keep an ear open, you know, to what reflective tools are out there. You know, such as apprenticeships, maybe fellowships, mentors and coaches, you know for all staff and I think that it's equally as important, you know, for program directors; you know, there's always something that we can learn from each other and I think that that's, you know, vital to the program's success. And the more we look for the tools that encourage and support this is stronger--it strengthens our base, our foundation, and as we-- you know, we'll be better prepared then to take on the future mandates from the Office of Head Start, you know, the early childhood community and also the parents that we serve. Linda?

Linda: So, Lee, I think you've said a lot and so have you, Ellen, shared a lot about how these supportive mechanisms that you're using really support staff and encourage them to become leaders. Lee, can you tell us how you see reflective leadership impacting the work of children and families?

Lee: Yeah, Linda. Thank you. You know again, I think we see the impact as a parallel-- of the parallel process. You know, the way in which, you know, a positive supervisor-staff relationship sets up a strong, you know, foundation for a positive staff-family relationship and vice versa. The impact that this model can have on an organization is enormous. You know, you can see the level of competency rise within the larger organization and then within each program. As people get more secure in their environment, they have more ownership in the project. And the impact that it has initially on the programs is big.

Delivering quality service is something that is not in question. The fact is that delivering quality services is happening every day. We then see the impact that this work has on the relationship between the provider and the parent and how it is reinforced. Parents are getting the sense in the situation that this group, this team, this provider, is showing a lot of care for one another and also cares-- shows that care for their family. Parents are getting the sense that day that they are leaving their child in an environment where they're going to be loved and nurtured. So, this family is able to go off for work or to school, trusting they've left their children in a safe and secure environment. The families then use what they've learned through our models, through our parent education pieces to provide a safer, more secure environment at home and also then encourage others to do so, you know, within their own community.

Ellen: And I think it's so important that we have the same relationship with parents that we do with staff and at a policy council meeting, not too long ago, we had a parent who said in our sharing time, "What are you teaching our children?" And I said, "I don't understand what that means. What do you mean what are we teaching them?" And she said, "I went to hit my child." And he said, "Whoa, stop! Count to 10, take a deep breath and let's talk about it." The parent said she was laughing so hard that she didn't-- she was really not able to hit him and she talked about it and she said it made such a difference in what she was thinking about how she could handle her child. And we spent about 20 minutes talking about our program, Second Steps and the socio-emotional curriculum that we use with children and I think that the point of the story is that that parent felt comfortable enough to talk to us. She had certainly approved the socio-emotional curriculum but she really didn't know what it was in action until her child taught her something. And everybody else on the policy council. Linda?

Linda: Ellen, that is such a great ending to such a wonderful webinar on reflective supervision and so indicative of that parallel process and how it just keeps coming around and around. I want to remind the audience that if we're not able to answer all your questions, we can forward a response via email and the director's forum on the LISTSERV and/or we can share your responses on the director's workspace located on ECLKC. We will also post responses in the archive of the session, so no worries if we don't get to all your questions. But I know that we do have a few questions that are in the queue. So, do we want to start with those? OK. So Ellen, here's a kind of we think what might be a quick one. Does the staff association-- I can't read it. OK. Does the--sorry. [Inaudible] the shorthand. Does the staff association you talked about reflect a mix of staff in various positions and departments throughout the program.

Ellen: It does; it has everybody except directors and administrative staff; it's teachers; it could be a cook; it could be any of the staff. Yes, it does have many. Teacher assistants come. The administrators meet in their own meetings, but this is staff.

Linda: Thanks Ellen. OK, so for this is another one for Ellen or Lee. Partnerships are difficult to establish. What ways do you use to invite the openness that is necessary, so that a new person can be accepting of the leadership--especially since some of the new people are coming from work environments that are not using reflective leadership?

Lee: Linda, I'll take a run at that. What we found really the most successful here is that when we invite a partnership to the table, you know, we don't come with a menu already of things that they have to do. You know, or things that, you know, we require of them. You know, we like to do the meet and greet, you know, and get to talk about our programs a little bit about who and how and what we do and then bring each other up to date. And then we introduce the ideas around, you know, things that we are doing, what-- which we think would enhance if they were--you know, were a partner of ours. And so we, you know, we do the soft sell method. We find that it is...get--it garners us a lot more in the long run, rather than being, you know, authoritative and directive in our actions with them and so that--that's helped us a lot and seems to bring a lot more people to the table that way.

Ellen: I think community partnerships are what Lee said. Our community truly works as a partnership. We had a countywide committee that is the zero to six committee that has many agencies that meet together monthly to talk about what children need and we give up power, because that's what I think real partnerships are is that you allow the people who do things the best to do it, you don't need to run everything. The second thing I--and I'm not sure whether the question was a part--was partnerships with staff or with community. I kind of heard staff, but with our staff, I think partnership with staff is everything we've talked about in this webinar. It's openness; it's being able to do things together; it's like Lee said, you know what, I need your help in doing this. And appreciating people and saying, "You know, what? You really did a good job with that." We just finished our self-assessment and I did not miss one center, when I told them that, "I know how much work we have to do, but they are doing a great job." And I think that really, over and over, you know, you want people to work for as long as we give them--they need to be appreciated too.

Linda: Thanks, thanks both of you. Those were great answers. I have another question. This is from a new office manager joining the team. Not only is she new, but she's younger than the administrative assistants that she's supervising. How can she establish an atmosphere of trust and feel worthy in this relationship?

Ellen: I can try it. I mean, I think that she has to do her job and not worry about age. When I came in to this program, I will not mention how many years ago, there was not one person who hadn't been here, much like Lee said, you know, he came in, they've been there 103 years. In this program, people had been here 400 years if you added them all together. But I said, "Look, I've been put in a position where

we have to do this. Now, I'm a lot younger than you, but we have the same goal. So, let's try real hard to work it out together." An office manager has a very different job than the rest of the people in the office. And she's supervising them, but she has the skills or she wouldn't be there. She has the skills and she needs to feel good about that.

Lee: And I think that's key, Ellen; I think you're bringing in the--and when you're hiring and bringing in staff, it--it's what skill set are you looking for to do the job that you need to get done. And so I think that, you know, age is, you know--I'm indifferent to it and I think that we have a brand new office manager here that is really young, you know, but, you know, it-- it's her work ethic and it's the way that she approaches staff, all of us, you know, and so again, it's the skill set and her personality and the way that she approaches the job, I think that makes the difference at the end.

Linda: OK. I have one quick little question that I'm going to be able to answer. It's about how do we sign up for the new leader series? So, there's no sign up required. There's two parts to the new leader series, one is today's webinar and part two is going to be the video that's in production that we mentioned earlier. Each will be uploaded on the ECLKC this summer, and we'll use your email to send you a save the date notice about them coming up. So that should answer that question. And now we have closing comments by Angie Godfrey.

Angie: Thanks Linda, and I would start with a huge "thank you" to Ellen and to Lee for sharing your experiences of leadership with us. I felt nurtured and supported sitting here and listening to both of you. And I appreciate so much that you'd take that-- you took the time and you are taking the time to share with others the challenges around reflective leadership. And I do think that it's so important, because there's so much work that goes on in programs and staff do need to feel that they are empowered to make those important decisions and those little decisions that each of you shared that you make each day. So, I loved--I guess, you know, I was thinking of the things you talked about and I loved Ellen when you talked about how you developed a relationship with the 400 staff in your program and that wasn't easy, but you took the time with staff to work it out so that they felt respected and listened to and communicated. And Lee, I loved your circle of care story. I think that's--really as we talked about relationship-based environment and supporting staff so that they can support children and family, I do think that what we do is we hold them and your story was a perfect example of that and your experience about how you work together to create the circle of care and then to maintain it. So, I do want to thank you both.

There are challenges in reflective leadership. I also love that you never looked at it as an add-on or spoke of it as an add-on. I think sometimes programs feel, "I have so much to do. How do I do this?" And my response is always, "You'll have so much to do. How do you not do this?" And I think you both live that and so I just would like to close by thanking Linda, the Early Head Start, National Resource Center, all of you who joined us today and particularly heartfelt thanks to Ellen and Lee.

Ellen: Thank you.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, that does conclude today's conference. And we thank you all for joining us.