

The Regional Office Role: Ensuring Relationship-Based Family Engagements for School Success

Amanda: Great. Thank you so much, Kelly, and hello out there. As the training specialist here at the Early Head Start National Resource Center, I really want to welcome you all to our webinar today. I am thrilled to be moderating here today. And I'm so glad that all of you have joined us here for this discussion. We know that you are very busy responding to questions from programs about all kinds of things that are going on right now – school readiness, the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, 1307, and ultimately, the question may come to what does this all have to do with my work with infants and toddlers and their families.

We can't address all of those questions that come to you in today's 90-minute webinar, but we hope we can help by offering some information about the intersection here. So how program specialists can work with programs who serve families with the very youngest children around school readiness, really focusing here on the context of the family engagement that programs offer in keeping with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. That's one of my favorite topics. And to do that we have a few speakers for you all today. So we have Sarah Merrill and Kiersten Beigel from the central office at OHS. And we also have Dr. John Hornstein from the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And we're going to begin here with Sarah, an infant-toddler program specialist at the Office of Head Start. Go ahead, Sarah.

Sarah Merrill: Thanks Amanda, and this is really just to give me an opportunity to welcome you on behalf of the central office. We really appreciate you taking time out of your busy day and joining us today. As Amanda mentioned, we know you've been spending a lot of time and attention with grantees focused on school readiness. And you know, school readiness support for all, all children, but most especially for infants and toddlers is provided through caring relationship in family members who are the primary caring adults for children. So it's crucial that grantees work well with family to ensure emotional security and nurturing trusting relationships for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. And we have to do that by engaging with their families in meaningful ways. But meaning well and doing well are two different things which is why grantees are asked to have program goal system, implementation and assessment plans. And all of this ensures that each grantee is able to enhance program quality and ensure positive child growth and development and learning. And as ways to support you and your ongoing conversations and work with grantees, the Office of Head Start has asked the Early Head Start National Resource Center to host web-based events on school readiness. Next slide. So a few weeks ago we taped a webcast on the four school readiness action steps with the focus on infants and toddlers. That webcast will be coming to you in the regional offices soon through DVDs, and it will be posted on the ECLKC in the near future. So today's webinar is focused on the use of the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework as a way to support grantees in implementing family engagement strategies and ultimately, helping them achieve their school readiness goals and the grantee's school readiness goals with infants and toddlers. So I'm really happy to have my colleague Kiersten here to help us unpack all of this. So thanks, Amanda. I appreciate the opportunity to say hello.

Amanda: Great, and with that in mind, in this webinar we're going to move towards the following three objectives. So we're going to ask Kiersten and Sarah to really work with us to clarify how family engagement and school readiness relates for infants and toddlers. And I know that question is coming to you all from the field. We're going to discuss why and how true family engagement impacts these school readiness outcomes for the very youngest children. And how in your role, program specialist, can identify and support that understanding in program. And finally, we're going to offer some information, strategies and resources for you and your conversations with grantees about the critical role of families in assessment and planning as a piece of moving towards compliance with 1307 and the rest of the Standards. I want to say just a short word about this slide. We wanted to give you as much context as we could in this PowerPoint. But we may not be able to get as detailed in our conversations. So just know that we might not get to every point there but we wanted to leave them there for your reference. I'm going to turn it over now to Kiersten, the family and community partnership specialist at the central office here to get us rolling toward our objectives. Kiersten.

Kiersten Beigel: Hi regional colleagues and other folks who I see who have joined the call from the centers and whatnot. It's good to be here with you, virtually. And before we get into this I just want to say up front that I challenge all of us to try to name a school readiness strategy that does not have some kind of complementary strategy or a set of strategies for supporting family engagement. So, say we're going to talk about some very specific school readiness strategies, particularly as they relate to 1307, and our Performance Standards, and the role of family engagement in that. But really, let's not forget that the sky is really the limit on this topic. So let's start with the definition for family engagement to kind of ground us on that. Family engagement refers to ongoing goal-directed relationships between staff and families that are mutually culturally responsive. So they are mutual, they are culturally responsive, and they support what is best for children and families both as individuals and then collectively as a family. So, staff and families really share responsibilities for the learning and development of children and the progress toward outcomes for children and families and for parent engagement in the program. This is a definition by the way, let me just point out, that is part of a – is on a handout that we shared with all regional office staff a couple months ago. It's called Family Engagement as Parent Involvement 2.0. So if you don't recognize that as I'm talking about it, you should just email me and I'd be glad to send you that document. I know some of you have talked about finding it really valuable to help programs understand the difference between this sort of evolution in our language and OHS and Head Start around parent involvement to family engagement. So briefly, I want to just talk about the Framework. Everybody probably knows about the Framework by now. We're like a year into this now, almost. It really offers us a structure for understanding and tracking and evaluating the work kind of associated with the Performance Standards in the CP Family and Community Partnership work. And I think the best way to think about it is it's really a way to maximize the effects of family engagement to boost school readiness. So we know from the research that optimal family engagement makes a difference in so many different ways. And I will let you know that our national center is in the process of developing a series of research to practice brief on each of the family outcomes, which I think would be useful and helpful to regional program specialists 'cause sometimes you're wondering how to make the case to your grantees about the importance of family engagement or family outcomes in some of these different ways. So those are forthcoming. Those will be out on the

next couple of months. But the Framework really offers a way to think about how to maximize a program's efforts across the program foundations as you see here in the yellow column and the impact areas in the pink column. And to achieve the kinds of family engagement outcomes that makes the best difference for families of course but obviously, also, for the ultimate goal which is children's learning and development. So the Framework should really be something that programs feel like they can locally tailor, that strategies that they implement should be culturally sensitive, and linguistically appropriate. And if programs feel like or if programs are feeling like family should be making progress in all of these outcomes, then they actually really have the wrong idea about the purpose of the Framework. So like in my grantee's regional Head Start programs, for example, we expect a lot of families to be dealing with some basic survival kinds of needs that really focus on their health and safety perhaps in the short term way. This doesn't mean that other goals may not be layered across the Framework with these families and parents. But it's just really about, you know, thinking about individualizing for families just in the way we talk about it with children and recognizing that we want to meet families where they're at. So let's talk a little bit more about the connection between family engagement and school readiness, since that's the thrust of this whole webinar. It's really an important objective. And we'll take a look at the Frameworks in a side by side way a bit to think about those connections a little bit more. Oh, maybe we won't do that. So if you think about the types of family engagement goals that are not required in 1307 – or I should say needed these types of family engagement goals that are not required in . It seems to be missing a little piece here. But what I was going to talk about was that with the Early Head Start Pyramid Framework and the PFCE Framework, there's a lot of commonalities. And those commonalities really have a lot to do with the family engagement teeth. So if you were to look at the, at the pyramid kind of up the middle you'd see the focus on families on the bottom and the focus on the parent-child relationship, family development activities, all the way up the pyramid to children's confidence. And when you look at this Family Engagement Framework you can see some very similar things across but particularly looking at that family, a positive parent-child relationship outcome and how it leads also to children's confidence.

[Pause]

So I think, Amanda, I'm going to pass it over to you now.

Amanda: Great, and so on this slide here we talked, you talked a little bit about program goals, Kiersten, and the family engagement goals and we know that those can be found here at 1304.51. And so we just wanted to make that available for reference. Kiersten, one of the things that you said is that a lot of the Family Engagement Framework then informs what happens in school readiness. And I was wondering if you could offer an example here that might help program specialists make this link between the Framework and school readiness in a really practical kind of way.

Kiersten: Sure. So, for example, the program might be concerned about homelessness because that was identified as a concern in their community assessment and its impact on the family well-being and children's school readiness. So a program may plan to do, say, some specific work across systems and services to alleviate the impact of homelessness. So they may want to train staff around the impact of homelessness, include reflective supervisory support on what it is like for teachers and staff to work

with children in short term ways. They may establish some community partnerships with local McKinney-Vento liaisons, housing authority shelters, that kind of thing. They may also want to have some additional mental health and health supports to parents who are struggling with homelessness. And maybe prepare some transitional records for families in anticipation of the high mobility of families who are struggling with homelessness. So, all of these strategies may be geared to the outcome of family well-being, right? But they are also an important step in supporting the parent-child relationship which is really important for school readiness for the infant and toddler. So, some of the outcomes in the PFCE Framework may speak to you in a one to one kind of way about school readiness, such as family engagement and transition, for example. But the fact is as programs are working toward all of these outcomes and of course the related Performance Standards, they are both directly and indirectly add something to the school readiness. And we'll talk more about that in a second. And so many of you in your calls with your grantees have also learned about programs that are including and linking family engagement goals with their school readiness goals. Both Head Start and Early Head Start programs are doing this. And I think, you know, this is really logical and good practice. So as we think about the PFCE Framework as we were looking at it, remember that purple arrow across the top that emphasizes the importance of relationships. And this emphasis on relationships is echoed throughout the Standards. So as Sarah said and you can see the Standards 1304.40, of course, and see that relationship-based piece there. So as Sarah said, we're thinking about school readiness in the context of EHS and Migrant and Seasonal with these youngest children. It is important to acknowledge the role of relationships at all levels so the parent in the level of the parent-child of course and parent-staff relationships. And even relationships between sort of you federal staff and your grantees. So, parallel processes can really reinforce our outcomes when we're all working in sync. So to think about it a different way, how does a parent listen and attune to a child, how does the staff person listen and attune to a family member, and how do you all listen and attune to your grantees.

Amanda: Yeah, the programs that I've worked with that's certainly mention to me over the years how important, how critical that relationship with their program specialist is to them, particularly as they are learning and managing some new regulations, some new tasks. So let's bring school readiness in here as it applies to infants and toddlers. Sarah, how would you define school readiness for this group?

Sarah: Okay. We would describe much in the same way as we described school readiness for all children. It's defining what children possess, the skills, the knowledge and attitudes that they need to possess, necessary to be successful in school and for later learning in life. I just want to take a minute to note the pictures of this young toddler, probably about two years old, who's practicing and working on reading and writing skills. But being able to read and write and being successful in school is much broader than those two skills. It's about being able to regulate emotions in one's body so a child can focus and attend to tasks. It's about being able to communicate and relate with adults and peers. It's about being curious and willing to persist their problems. And this is just a few, few examples. And this is why we're requiring programs to have a holistic approach. Oops. I'm sorry about that, if you can go back to that? A holistic understanding of successful learning and why grantees are required to establish school readiness goals across the five domains of child development and early learning at the bare minimum. So we want the school readiness goals to articulate the grantees' expectations of children's developmental progress and

their status. And what the grantees think will improve their children's ability to be successful when they enter their local kindergarten. So grantees may have asked you what does this – what does being ready for kindergarten mean for babies and toddlers? And I think you'd give them great comfort if you could reassure them that it means understanding and intentionally supporting for the varying ages and stages of developmental progression. So in other words, grantees establish and support school readiness by helping children achieve tasks and goals so that when they're newborns they can grow into healthy, robust babies. And then they can develop into hearty toddlers who then become competent preschoolers, who then are ready and able to succeed when they finally enter kindergarten at age five or six. So how do grantees do this? If we go to the next slide, thank you, and this is the pyramid that Kiersten referenced. We were holding it out as a spoiler alert for you, Kiersten. I apologize for that. And this structure was designed when Early Head Start was first being put into place in the 1995, '96. And it provides a structure much like the Family Engagement Framework where grantees can think about what they put into their management systems affects what they put into the program services. And this impacts how children and families progress. So what they get from being enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start, in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. So in other words, grantees can support optimal health, child development and early learning – code word school readiness – by having well managed and integrated systems which is the blue bar at the bottom that focus on the four cornerstones which is the purple bar at the very bottom and Kiersten alluded to having child and family at the center part of this pyramid that suave up through their management systems and their services. So this structure highlights the central importance of families here. And it complements the Framework that Kiersten highlighted. If we turn to the next slide we know that families – babies don't come into the program alone. They cannot exist alone. And they need to develop and be supported in relationships with caring adults, primarily their families. And programs can really support this in occurring. Now you may have heard from grantees who are having difficulties separating infant-toddler school readiness from the context of the parental role. And this makes complete sense, especially for infants and toddlers. We know supporting individual growth and development occurs through this primary relationship and in the nest of their family. And I think you as program specialist can be very helpful in clarifying for grantees that school readiness goals are framed around the child development. And family engagement goals are framed around the adult and family development, and this includes parenting skills and enhancing the parent-child bond. And clearly, these are interconnected and work well with one another. Thanks, Amanda.

Amanda: And we know that very young children are in a network of many relationships with many adults. We have an opportunity today to talk about the unique and important role at the heart of that Framework that families have with infants and toddlers in hopes of really offering you all some solid background information to support your conversation with grantees around these very young children family engagement and school readiness. And we'll think about that in terms of 1307 and the regulations that you support those families, those programs around. Kiersten, one item that certainly comes out of 1307 here is that school readiness goals are developed in consultation with families. And when you and I discussed this, you thought that program specialists are working with programs to do this in lots of different ways. And there doesn't seem to be a lot of question about how this is happening. But there do seem to be some questions about how school readiness and family

engagement relates and how program specialists can support that relationship. I think a lot of that can happen in conversation and discussion with programs around these five essential domains. So let's look at those here. And I think you all are very familiar with those. I've heard you say, Sarah, that as we look at these domains, all five of them, that social and emotional development hold a really special place for infants and toddlers. What do you see is the key points to highlight here?

Sarah: Oh, I just say relationships, relationships, relationships. You know, we've already alluded to the importance of these relationships for babies and toddlers. And it's really through these caring, nurturing interactions and trusting relationships that babies and toddlers learn. They learn about themselves and they learn about the world around them. And the relationship between the child and the parent is truly critical because it's the baby's primary, long-lasting, and most influential relationship that begins at birth and lasts a lifetime. So, for babies and toddlers, the social-emotional domain, particularly the element of developing relationships with caring adults, plays a huge role and impacts on their development across domains. So that when they feel secure and are soothed or regulated through their parents and these relationships, the young children are better able to interact with people, explore the world, attend to tasks and this impacts the way they communicate, and how they crawl and pull up to stand, and hold items, and this impacts to understanding about general knowledge and concepts of the world around them so it's typical [inaudible] and primary.

Now, the Child Development in Early Learning Framework's pie image that you're all pretty aware of and grantees are very familiar with it, are formatted to be included all the domains for the preschool element. And we have it here, so it shows more of an – it's right there, it's more about the elements related to preschool children and you can see cognitive and general knowledge is a little bit larger and you might expect that programs that are working and focusing in on infants and toddlers that this pie, the proportion of this pie wedges would be a little bit different, so the social-emotional might be a little bit larger, physical development and health may be a little bit larger, and the cognition and general knowledge may be a little bit smaller. But we may – we want them all to still focus on all of the five domains and it just wants you to relieve your burden and their burden to know that they can prioritize the primary focus. So getting back to parents and families, it's through the relationship with the child. They are key in providing rich experiences to support the children's growth and development and are also key in knowing and understanding each child's unique strengths and needs which is vital information that the grantee needs to use in pro– and they use that in providing individualized services and intentional supports, both individually and program wide. So it's really, really crucial that the school readiness and the Family Engagement Frameworks link together.

Amanda: So, I just want to recognize here with this slide that we have inadvertently put in an additional pie slides there for physical development and health that I think that comes back a little bit to what Sarah was saying in terms of some of the flexibility around the sizes of those pie wedges, perhaps. So as we're talking about goals that appropriately reflect the ages of the children served as it states in the regulation, I think we need to talk about attachment as a piece of that. So to do that, I want to introduce Dr. John Hornstein from the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. Thank you so much for being here, John. John brings with him a wealth of expertise. I think a lot of the language that programs are hearing and that will likely enter into conversations that you all are having with them

around this piece. John, will you talk briefly about attachment and the importance of that early attachment of a baby to primary adult, especially family members?

Dr. John Hornstein: Okay. Well, thanks Amanda and it's great to be here with the VISTA Resource Center, and with Kiersten and Sarah. It's hard to talk briefly about attachment and its importance to all of development because it is kind of the basis upon which everything else is built. So, Sarah was describing the, you know, the pie and all those pieces. Well, I think that if you look at the research you can see how each piece of that pie kind of rests on the foundation of early relationships and we've said it over and over again. But I think it's important to take that apart a little bit. Yes, it's the emotional tie that children and caregivers have with each other and it gives children the security to actually reach out into the world. In fact, I like to think of it as two sides of the same coin that there's the attachment relationship and then there's the capacity to learn and to do things and the two are intimately related, but I think it's more than attachment as well, it's attachment and interaction. What do interactions between parents and children look like? How do programs support those? How do people make sense out of what they're seeing when a parent and a child comes in and how do you as essentially consultant to the program see programs doing this. So it's not just making a quick judgment as to whether a parent and a child love each other. I mean, you certainly want to see that and we have ways of kind of thinking about that, but it's also how they interact. It's the way that the parent and child do things together that is also of interest. And we know from research on fathers that the attachment, what predicts a good secure relationship with fathers and some other caregivers is that it's not necessarily the security, the, you know, the safety seeking on the part of the child, but it's how they play with them. How they interact in a meaningful way and explore the world. So attachment is a pretty complex subject, but I think it's a very foundational thing. And the next slide basically lists the outcomes of secure attachments for later development. Healthy relationships, independent behavior, curiosity. Research really demonstrates this, the kids that have secure attachments, and this is true with fathers as well as mothers, have greater confidence, they do better in school. When you have a secure base to work from, you're more able to problem solve and be persistent, and cope with stress and frustration and communicate. Again, it's the foundation for all of these skills.

Amanda: Great, thank you so much, John, and I think what we hear and what we see sort of in this slide is how incredibly important we know that those secure attachments can be for later school readiness and I love to see that there. We certainly know we're talking with programs about that, we certainly know that program specialists and others will see evidence of that in programs for folks who are really paying attention to those relationships and working towards that secure attachment piece. Kiersten, as I look at this information around attachment, it just brings me back, again, to that parent-child relationship outcome on the Framework.

[Pause]

Kiersten: Yup. Here it is again as a family outcome, on this next slide. Here's the side by side I was referencing earlier. And we've already talked quite a bit about positive parent-child relationship. So both these, theories or change or logic models, have been really working to honor this parent-child relationship. And we get a lot of questions about how these frameworks relate, which is why we've kind

of been talking about it a little bit. And I was thinking a nice bridge between the PFCE Framework and the Early Head Start Framework might be to really think in terms of the goals what goals programs might have for all stuff around professional development and family engagement. What goals for children might be associated with their relationships with caregivers and parents? What goals might a program have for families around engagement? And here, you might of course reference the different family outcomes. And then looking, you know, still on looking at the bottom of the pyramid, what goals might a program have for family engagement around community partnerships. So there's a lot of connections there. And of course, there's multiple places in the Performance Standards. I won't go through them all, but you can see them here, that really emphasize and talk about recognizing and strengthening the relationship between parents and their children.

Amanda: Thank you, Kiersten. It can be really helpful as program specialists are working with programs who have concerns about this school readiness work, I think, as I've been talking to programs, that they kind of help them reframe what they're already doing in compliance with the Standards in terms of school readiness, so that's very helpful. We know that really related to attachment is self-regulation. This term is all over the information programs we're getting on school readiness for infants and toddlers. And program specialists, again, might well hear it in their work around these schools with those programs. John, what is self-regulation and why is it so important to school readiness for infants and toddlers, and finally, how does it involve family?

Dr. Hornstein: Okay. So, for me self-regulation is like the number two thing on the list for infants and toddlers and school readiness. First is, again the relationship, that foundation, but coming from that relationship is, the relationship between the parent and child, is the child's increasing capacity to manage emotions, behavior, attention, and states. States being alert, drowsy, you know, paying attention, including hunger and a sense of fullness. So self-regulation is what happens over time when a child – a baby is hungry and cries and becomes dysregulated, gets really upset. "I need food. "I need food. I need somebody to come take care of me. I'm uncomfortable." The parent comes in. The caregiver comes in and feeds the baby or comforts the baby and the baby learns how to calm down. That's an important part of the infant's developmental agenda. In toddlerhood it's, "boy, the world isn't quite the way I want it to be. This baby's arm, this doll's arm doesn't move like my arm or my mother's arm. And I'm going to get real pissed off and have temper tantrum about that." I think kids need to have temper tantrums in order to kind of realize what the limits of their emotional capacities are. So the child has a temp. The child loses control. And there's an adult there saying, you know, eventually, it's going to be okay, I'm going to keep you safe. So the child internalizes that sense of security and capacity to regulate and says, okay, next time, the arm doesn't move, maybe I won't flip about it badly. Maybe I'll understand things because I was mutually regulated.

So self-regulation is kind of managing the emotions and the capacity to pay attention when things aren't going quite right. Well, we know that, in terms of school readiness, that executive functions which preschool teachers are talking about a lot now are very predictive of school performance. Oh, thank you, for advancing the slide. And executive function is frontal lobe, frontal brain activity that helps you plan, organize, pay attention. Actually, to do the things you need to do in school. Well, all these executive function skills actually develop out of an infant and toddler's capacity to self-regulate, to organize the

world, to manage impulses, to pay attention to the things that other people are expecting you to pay attention to. So this, this, this lifelong process of self-regulation coupled with mutual regulation to executive function is essential for success in school. And we know now from the research that executive function skills, in fact, predict school success more than intelligence actually does. So this is something that I think programs, infant-toddler programs, can, can focus on with families. And this is where family engagement really plays a role on school readiness because it's in the context of those intimate relationships in the family that the self-regulation actually builds.

Amanda: Absolutely. So again, it would be really logical to be hearing about self-regulation as folks are out there working with programs around school readiness. John, you talked about the importance of families in really helping children develop this capacity to self-regulate. Sarah, self-regulation is also already a part of what program staff support in compliance with the standard, yes?

Sarah: That would be true. And before I go on to that, if you go back one slide, I just can't help to take a minute to link the items listed on the executive brain functioning to what we're really asking manage – grantees and their management to sort of think about in really rowing and striving toward improving school readiness. We want them to plan. We want them to organize. We want them to pay attention to details and imagine the possibilities so, a little side bar there. I guess getting back to your Head Start Performance Standard question. And I think as you're in discussion with grantees, I think they would take great comfort that they're doing a lot support for self-regulation and school readiness and what they already know and do in the Performance Standards. And we have one up here about providing an environment that encourage development of self-awareness, autonomy and self-expression which would be a perfect environment for that toddler that John was describing who the world is not the way the child wants it and really needs a supporting environment to help sort of contain those very large feelings.

And of course, there's some other Standards and John had mentioned sort of needing to regulate through food, and these are Standards that you know when you can ask your grantees. So grantees are expected to feed very young children on demand. They're expected to learn from and share with families about how children eat, what they eat, and when they eat and how they avoid their systems, and learning how to independently use the toilet. So, when their bodies feel sated and comfortable they're able to focus and attend on all of the domains of learning. And of course, we want grantees and we expect grantees to provide parents and families with opportunities to increase their observation skills and this is crucial for the parent-child relationship, but crucial to the curricular development plans that we need their information to really individualize at child level, but then also to provide program's continuous improvement as well. So, parents and families are key in helping grantees understand the cues and patterns of their individual child and their children as a group. So as you talk with grantees, it can be really helpful to them to think about the existing strategies that they already use which are shaped by the Standards and supporting all school readiness goals, but particularly, attachment and self-regulation and how they work in partnership with family to develop programmatic strategies and plans. So thanks, Amanda.

Amanda: Sure. So both of these pieces, I think, not to put too fine a point on it, but self-regulation and attachment have such a huge part then of this social-emotional domain for infants and toddlers that has such a clear connection that specialists can help programs make through family engagement. So we can see how a true family engagement here impacts outcomes for children as we're looking at those slides that John shared. We can have the next slide then. The truth is, as we look at all of these essential domains, families have a key role in all of them. And as program specialists are talking with programs about school readiness and helping to make this link between family engagement and school readiness, John, I know you want to talk a little bit about integrated learning and development here.

Dr. Hornstein: Right, yeah. I don't think the child experiences the pie the way it looks on this slide. The lines are very fuzzy between these areas. When a nine-month-old is looking at where a caregiver is pointing and move towards that, there's a social-emotional connection there. There's a physical movement. There's an idea in the child's head that actually is reflected in the adult's head. If the adults are saying something, and they're working on language and literacy, and a lot of learning is going on. So it's really, you know, it's – I think the way the child experiences it is really – especially in infancy and toddlerhood is as a real mix bag. And so, there's like a – there's a coherency, or I don't know if coherency is the best word. But it has to fit together for the child. And I think this is essential in terms of what programs are doing with families, that, that there is good communication about what's going on with the child, that the program staff and the parent sees the same child, that they have a conversation in which the language around what the child is doing makes sense to both sides and particularly, to the child. The research, again, because I was introduced as a doctor, I guess I have to refer to the research. But the research really shows that when the people who work with the family and the family communicate well with each other, that the child benefits. The child benefits in all of these areas. So, I think in a multi-cultural society with a lot of different values out there, it's essential that these areas of development are kind of – make sense to the child in relation to how the adults in the child's life communicate. So this – I think for me the message here is talk about the same thing, be on the wavelength, try to get on the same wavelength, even if it seems like it doesn't make sense from the program person's cultural perspective, that for the child to experience it, it has to fit together. And there are people that would maintain that more important even than attachment is that the child has a coherent child rearing – cultural child rearing package to grow up in. That it makes sense.

Amanda: So John, a lot of what you're talking about is reflected too in the Standards around all of the communication that happens between children and fam– or between families and staff in terms of routines, what's happening in the home, and what's happening at the center base if it's a person in group care and the family child care environment. So there's a lot of communication that happens that's really essential to this school readiness piece and that program specialists can really look for. As you're describing that, John, can you offer us a few examples of how this integrated development works for infants and toddlers so that folks on the line can really support with that understanding and program?

Dr. Hornstein: Sure, let's do that. Oops, let's go back to the previous slide. Okay, so let's look at this picture. There is a mother feeding a child, and we know that there's a relationship here. We can see it in the mother's face. We can see the relationship. Actually, even though it's a still photograph we can see the relationship building and forming here. The baby is feeding. The mother looks like she is talking to

the baby in a soft voice. She's looking at the baby. The baby hopefully is looking up occasionally to see the mother's face. So there's a pattern being set here. There's a script playing out. And the baby's brain is taking in this pattern, saying, "Oh, this feels pretty good. I know this person." And it happens over and over again. In fact, one of my colleagues here in Boston, Ed Tronick, says that in the first three years of life, there are on average , of these micro interactions that take place through feeding, through changing and discipline, whatever, you know, whatever, through play. So these interactions become ingrained in the child's brain. And the child says, "Hmm," you know, "this is the way the world works." So there's a lot more going on here than attachment. There is learning going on. And this is how it relates to school readiness. When the baby stops feeding for a moment, the mother probably will jiggle the baby a little bit. And then, the baby feeds a little bit more again and then stops. And the mother jiggles the baby again. And in the process they're taking turns. Then, you might ask, okay, who's in control of this interaction? Is it the baby or the mother? And the fact is, it's a dyad, it's a relationship. And so, the baby is learning a great deal about taking turns here and being, sharing an emotional and literally an intellectual space with another human being, because there's further research that shows that this pattern of first pause, you know, taking turns in feeding bouts at three months actually is reflected in the early conversations in toddlerhood between mothers and their toddlers. So there's a lot going on that builds a readiness for learning. And –

Amanda: Great.

Dr. Hornstein: You – okay.

Amanda: Oh I'm sorry, go ahead.

Dr. Hornstein: Well, I was going to move to toddlerhood now. May I do that?

Amanda: Perfect, please.

Dr. Hornstein: Okay.

Amanda: Another example.

Dr. Hornstein: Another example. So here we have a toddler who is a fireman. And he might think that he really is a fireman, you know, in his mind. He is and I – if you notice in the background of the picture, it looks like his father is there. So not only is he a fireman solving problems, putting out fires, saving lives, acting symbolically using his imagination to do things, okay? He's using his imagination to do things. He's supported by a caring adult in that process. He's making sense out of the world. We know from the research that rich traumatic play leads to very strong literacy skills. Those kids that are super dramatic players tend to be the best readers in third grade. So this is great stuff. When you think about it, the dramatic play and the communication that goes on in dramatic play, whether it's with this caring adult or whether it's with other kids. At this point it's probably more likely with this caring adult than with other kids. That making pretend is not a lot different than pretending that the black and white marks on a piece of paper are words and you have to make sense out of them. So I think there's a very clear link between this early making pretend and being joined in the process of making sense out of a story with

the beginning and middle and end with an adult to going to reading in third grade. There's a clear link between those things. So school readiness for toddlers is in fact making pretend and having adults that care about the child kind of get involved in thinking, you know, what's going on in the make pretend.

Amanda: John, as you're describing that, you're really describing pieces of language or describing pieces of cognitive development— excuse me, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, all of those important domains. Certainly, physical well-being, we know that if this toddler is not feeling well, he's not as likely to be doing all of that incredible stuff.

Dr. Hornstein: And playing outside, dramatic play outside is really great. So physical well-being, you're right, fits in very well with this too, because we know that, you know, that the kind of the wide open spaces playing outside and make pretend also has great benefits for kids later on.

Amanda: Yeah, so I think what you described really helps us consider, all of us consider, the importance of all of the comprehensive services to school readiness so they all tie in and weave together nutrition health, mental health, all of it, really, to, right, to the school readiness piece. So, Sarah, as John described that, what does that tell program specialists about what they might be looking for as they're visiting with programs or talking with programs about school readiness?

Sarah: Thanks and I like to take – oh good, I'm glad the photo is still up 'cause I just don't want to take my eyes off of the babies and toddlers, 'cause they're really central to our work and thinking. So it's always good to keep them in mind. So as program specialists work with programs or see them in action, you really want to make sure that the goals are related to each of the five domains. But that they can articulate and understand the graphic changes that happen from that newborn baby in the mother's arm, all the way up to that robust dramatic playing fireman toddler we have in that, in the picture on the right hand side. And I love that John spoke about the holistic development that occurs. So we want to see environments that are allowing children to go through those varying stages that they're nurturing, that the caregivers are able to be on the floor with the children and that the caregivers and home visitors are talking with parents about, boy, when you talk with your child, you're able to develop a relationship and that you are – when you are diapering the child, you are helping them with their fine motor skills. If you hand them the diaper maybe they'll try to open it up. There are a lot of little strategies that mean a lot and have a big impact for both the family and particularly for the child in their development. They want to hear about strategies or witness them in their group setting or home visits. You want to see these planned experiences that are really intentional for that child or a group of children. You want to see engaging adults who are interactive and can support multiple domains in one experience perhaps. And it's more than just what curriculum is the grantee using. It's how they're using that curriculum making it come to life and making it really meaningful for infants and toddlers. So it's a lot about learning experiences for babies, particularly occur during the routines such as feeding and diapering and helping babies sleep and wake up, and of course, through the playful moments and interaction. And we know – we've already talked about how parents who are fully engaged and involved in this process really have a strong impact for the program as a whole and for that particular individual child. So you're going to talk them about how is the grantee working with parents to move that baby forward to school readiness and then how is the grantee using all the information that they're gathering

from the families to move their program along to supporting all the children. So you really want them to understand how their school readiness goals impact their curriculum, their planning, and how they're understanding their children or attaining progress and growth.

Amanda: But we know, Sarah – don't turn your microphone off. We know that school readiness goals are focused on those child outcomes. So how can program specialists think with the program about writing goals that are focused on child outcomes but also include families?

Sarah: So when the webcast comes at you, Sandy Peterson talked a lot about this or some about this in the webcast. We want goals that focus on child development. And many of them, particularly language, we move to the next slide. They can write the goal broadly enough, but we understand that language occurs – language development and communication occurs with somebody else. And it's extremely important that somebody else is a caring and familiar grownup. So they write this broad goal, but then they might want to have and using their curriculum and their assessment tools understand what they're looking for as the child ages in stages. So if we turn to the next slide, examples of that are for very young infants. And you'll notice that part of the indicators have that caring adult wrapped right around it, so watching for the child to take turn with that caring adult. For an older infant, if we move to the next slide, you see that they want to have them have conversations and make verbalizations and gestures with another person whether it's a peer or an adult. And again, that happens again as a child ages into toddler, that they're playing and conversing with their friends and as they're moving a little bit more autonomously away from their caring relationships with adult, you know the adults are nearby making sure that they're creating strong relationships with their new peers as they're managing to share spaces and playing with similar toys. So, this is just one example of how goals incorporate the adult but we want the outcome, what they're looking for is what the child is demonstrating. So, another way that programs can include families is thinking about some of their family development goals such as Kiersten has described through the Family Engagement Framework as well.

Amanda: So, let's take Kiersten back in here for a moment. Kiersten, what would you add here?

Kiersten: So, I mean, I was thinking as you all are thinking about systems of continuous improvements and thinking about family engagement from, you know, a systemic and integrated approach, you might wonder how your programs are linking these types of goals around school readiness outcomes to program goals related to family outcomes. So, for example, we just talked about the language and literacy outcome and, you know, which is closely aligned with the outcome and that the PFCE Framework around families as lifelong educators. So, thinking back a little bit further, what are all the program strategies that a program might be using to work towards this outcome? You know, most programs has something they're doing, right, towards this outcome so they're maybe reading programs, or they're maybe community partnerships with libraries, or particular program environment strategies that have like lending libraries, some programs might be doing some dialogic reading initiative. So, the next question would be, well, how do they know these things or if it's just one thing, how do they know it's effective, and how do they look at the picture of that effectiveness of program-wide strategies in making progress towards the outcome? So, again, I think it's about understanding how a program is maximizing what it's doing to make progress around family engagement and school readiness goals. We

want to support programs not to be random in all of these but to connect the dots and really harness the things they are already doing that may contribute to further boosting children's progress. So, on the example Sarah gave, you have the teacher working with the, you know, the infants, the toddler, very young infant, around those particular goals. And then you'll have the strategies that may also be, you know, maybe the literacy strategies would be varied, but you have some different things going on there. So, how can a program kind of maximize what it's doing to support children's learning and development.

Amanda: So that sounds like it's on a program level and on an individual level. Program specialists can let those family partnership agreements to identify how programs are linking family engagement and school readiness, is that right?

Kiersten: Well, that's actually I think another good example of connecting the dots. You know, the learning and literacy goal may be something that a family services staff or a home visitor would want to explore with families. So, to maybe think about ways to reinforce what the teachers or visitors are doing, you know, with the child so maybe something around adult learning or parenting, or reading [inaudible]. You know, these would be obviously suggestions, sort of things that were co-explored with families based on what their interests and needs were. But it makes sense, right? If you're working from the program level and then in the classroom center or in the home, it's home-based, that, you know, you want to sort of look for those opportunities to further reinforce that with some maybe potential goal setting with the family specifically. And again, I think, you know, as you're thinking about how programs are conducting their management and professional development kinds of systems in integrating family engagement in these areas. There's some questions here on this side that you can kind of think about that you might want to explore with them and for example, how do teachers, care providers, and home visitors work collaboratively with families to support children's learning and development, school readiness, how do family workers and teachers regularly share information back and forth about how children are doing and how families are doing. Do teaching staff have opportunities for professional development around working with families? Do family services staff have opportunity to learn more about school readiness goals, so thinking about some of those cross systems kinds of things. And by the way, those questions I just— I guess they're on the slide that was just [inaudible] 39. They are part of a tool that the Family Engagement 360 workgroup is developing for regional office staff to use that at your discretion really. It's basically meant to support any kinds of deeper conversations that you want to be having with your grantees around family engagement and those were some questions that we're really thinking about some of that cross services don't work.

Amanda: Thank you, Kiersten. So, Sarah, what are some other ways that program specialists can help programs think about the link between family engagement and child focus school readiness outcomes?

Sarah: I think one way is to help programs – help them remember that they should really utilize their management systems. Kiersten began to speak about this but the management systems, if you think about the pyramid, are really the basis of program design and implementation and if they can think about all of these ways and with lenses of both child development and early learning and the lens of family engagement with the focus of child development, I think it can really help them focus a little bit more on the program planning and their communication and how they are using their program

governments to really guide their programmatic school readiness goals and their strategies. And I think reassure them, take a look at what's already existing and then build upon that as the chance to refine at what they're already doing. We've talked about that. We're already using the Head Start Performance Standards and that they should be pretty familiar with these management systems. So, I think that comfort level will just sort of give a sigh of relief to our grantees. We know that management systems influence and impacts services. So, if their systems are intentional, focused, and strategic that can model the kinds of services you want to have implemented with children and families. So again, just keep referencing them back to the pyramid and the Family Engagement Framework and that is about relationships between child and parents, how can the best – how can the program really think about supporting child development through the parent relationship is probably a good place to start. So, thank you.

Amanda: Great. And one of the systems that certainly comes up often with programs is the importance of real attention to human resources, we put that on a different slide here. So, who's working with those children and families? What should program specialists be looking for, Sarah, if they're considering human resources with programs?

Sarah: Absolutely, we want proficient staff working throughout the program. So, I think when you're talking with programs or when you're on site you're looking at grant application as really how well intended are their plans for hiring staff and ensuring that they understand child development, and then toddler development, and working – not just working with parents but really engaging parents as the primary teacher for that child, and being able to build working supportive partnerships with them. So, we want it to be intimate and in harmony so that child has that continuity of care between home life and program life. So, you might want to notice dollars and resources that are devoted to staff development, for professional development plans. Training plans that are supporting, understanding about their own programs, school readiness goals and what their role is in the process, maybe about school readiness in general, and early childhood development. Do they have orientation plans, because we know turnover occurs and even in the best programs and how do they bring program new staff in and help them understand what their school readiness program agenda is, and what their role is in it, and who do they report to, and how do you make this curriculum come to life, and how do you engage with families. So, there's a whole bunch of pieces in it but I think one thing that I'd really like to highlight here is supervision. You want to manage staff but you also want to supervise them because it's hard work as we all know of being intimate with young children and understanding their rapid growth and development and understanding how families want their child supported. So, it's real intimate work and program staff need to have a colleague who has their back and can help them think about school readiness in their work and how they implement curriculum, how they assist children, what's their role, and sort of the aggregation part of it. There are a lot of pieces and it can be overwhelming.

Amanda: Great. So, Kiersten, Sarah talks about staff development there. Do you want to say a word or two about the new relationship-based competencies and how they might play a role here?

Kiersten: Yeah, as you can see on this slide, this is a cover of the document, the resource that Amanda is speaking about and we issued this in June through an IM and its intention was to redevelop it to try to

assist programs in their planning and professional development activities. And the document is basically – talks about the knowledge, and skills, and actions that are geared towards family services staff, and home visitors, and supervisors, but there are competencies and if that our teacher focus to and we'll probably draw those out at a later point. For now, we are developing training around this resource for family service workers and supervisors who just did some with the ECEs in Chicago and will be in Region II in New York in a couple of weeks. Well we're really wanting to give this workforce some long overdue attention, and I think if you take – if you have a chance to take a look at this and just get a feel for it, it has – it's a tool that programs can use to develop training and to track how their staff and supervisors are doing some of this work, the family engagement work which is kind of complex, and the competencies are visually linked to the PFCE Framework so that programs can see how different competencies really to parts of the Framework and it identifies, again, not only the skills that staff develop in the work but also the skills that supervisors use as they support some of their work. And I think that from a traditional stand point, people think like family services, case managers, social support, right? But this document really tries to draw the connection between school readiness and family well-being, and supporting parent-child relationships and family well-being. So, so as you take a look you'll see that it's – there's just a lot more overlap, I think, than how we've traditionally thought about the role. And the idea behind that is really just wanting to, again, bring teachers into the fold of developing relationships with families, bring family services staff in the fold seeing how the work that they do has a really important connection to school readiness.

Amanda: Absolutely. Thank you so much. So at this point, let's go back to 1307, so we can go back to some of those other pieces that are there in terms of data and assessment. Sarah, can you talk for a few minutes about the way families are represented in these parts, the 1307.3?

Sarah: Sure.

Amanda: Okay.

Sarah: Okay. Thank you, appreciate that. Well, we know – this is probably the newest part of the school readiness regulation that grantees and as well as all of us, it's really how we're unpacked [inaudible]. How do we aggregate How do we analyze, and how do we understand the data that programs are collecting, and this regulation also says that this aggregated information should be shared and used with parents and community members. And it really is a chance to have families help grantees make sense of what the data means for them. So, I think if we go back to the two logic models and structures and just remind programs set at the very basis of the management system, so they can think about their program governance and maybe ways of using program governance, and Policy Council, and parent committees about sort of looking at the data and unpacking and it's not just the program sharing out but getting some communication and feedback loop of what might this makes – how does this make sense to you, what might the story be, and then of course we want programs to use that in their decision-making and continuous improvement. The next slide, and again, it's about aggregating and analyzing individual data. I think grantees are probably the most familiar with this part of the legislation because they're used to providing individual child level process. And that always has been in tandem with parents' inputs and again, we want parents to be intricately involved of everything we've talked

about and John was so eloquent about describing all the nuances to infant-toddler development and programs and grantees would certainly miss a lot without having the voice of parents involved in making the curriculum individualized for that particular child in that particularly family and in that particularly – particular home. I'm adding extra syllables to my word. I apologize for that. And that's the way programs can make their services culturally and linguistically relevant. So, it's the crux of Head Start and Early Head Start.

Amanda: Yeah. So, and we hear now for how the regulation here link families in at both the program level and the individual level which is really nice. Kiersten, what would you want to add here?

Kiersten: I think the Head Start Performance Standards say more about this. So, certainly, in 1304.21, programs have been doing this for a long time, right? Under family engagement, families are an integral part of assessment and curriculum, and weighing in on curriculum selection and planning for that. And then also, I'm thinking about 1304.51 through shared governance and the continuous improvement of the program, as well. So, and I think, you know, in the same way that we expect programs to aggregate and analyze assessment and information for groupings of infants and toddlers, we can also, you know, broach the subject to encourage the topic of conversation. So programs sort of think about aggregating information from, say, family partnership processes or other parent engagement types of interventions that they're doing, and maybe even some activities to consider what, you know, what difference the program is making for families. It's not sort of a requirement in the way that in a search, you know, happens spells out around aggregation and assessment, child assessment or, yeah, aggregation of child assessment data but it's that sort of continuous improvement thinking and that idea around maximizing what you're doing and trying to take a good analytical look at the difference things they're making.

Amanda: Yeah, I think as we sort of go back to the infant-toddler piece and how infants and toddlers in their families are sort of brought in here and what might be a little difference there is folks that are working with Early Head Start or Migrate and Seasonal Head Start program. One thing that comes up for me here [inaudible] is that families at all ages have so much to teach us but new families in many cultures can really feel hesitant sometimes about their expertise at first, or might take a while to warm up to this role. So program specialists might notice, for example, more parent training called for these families of these younger children on this topic, more resources dedicated here, those kinds of pieces. I think the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement offers a really lovely document about family engagement and ongoing child assessment. John, would you talk just briefly about this resource? I think it can be really helpful when a specialist can share with programs.

Dr. Hornstein: Sure. I think this document very specifically addresses what Sarah and Kiersten have been talking about in terms of the requirement to involve parents or actually engage parents, excuse me – engage parents in talking about their children and how their children are doing, and sharing, literally, sharing data. So, to me this is the nuts and bolts of it. So how do staff actually do this on the ground. What do you see them doing that shows you that they're doing this well. And in the document that Amanda just referenced, there is a set of ideas about how this is done well. And here they are listed on this slide. First of all, do staff start with the parent's perspective, you know, what is a child doing? I think this actually goes well beyond sharing data. I think it goes to some of the parallel process that Kiersten was talking about. I think in every human interaction trying to understand the other person's

perspective, truly listening, you know, the change process for everybody starts with where they are, not where you want them to be. So, starting with the parent's perspective when it comes to information about the child can be very effective. Being positive, you know, so many of the parents that we deal with in Head Start hear negative things, they're faced with a system that, you know, basically involves them because they have some challenge that they're dealing with, and so starting with what you actually see and children's development in all cases gives us something positive to look at, especially if you're specific about what you see which leads to the next bullet. Being descriptive in sharing information. Be descriptive. Are staff descriptive about the child or are they simply kind of making generalizations about how a child is doing at this level on this scale rather than actually turning to the child and describing what the child is doing and the staff person sees the same thing, they see the same child. The staff person displays an understanding of the child when they're descriptive of what they actually see. It's not that hard. You don't need to internalize a lot of developmental measures since we describe what a child is doing and seeing what a parent thinks about what the child is doing. Focusing on the relationship. In this wonderful example with a Head Start teacher recently on a phone call who described how he described a child who was tying her shoes to the mother. So he's saying, you know, "Have you noticed that, you know, she's tying her shoes but she's talking to herself. She's talking to herself as she's tying her shoes. And you know what? She's saying what you told her when you were tying her shoes." So she's, you know, so just describing that to that parent is supporting the parent-child relationship. You can imagine what the mother is thinking when the teacher is actually saying that. So, it's not just describing the child, noticing those things can actually have implications through the parent-child relationship. In the process you're supporting parental confidence. It's not just praising parents. It's not just saying, "Oh, you're doing a great job," which, you know, it doesn't hurt to do that but it probably supports confidence a lot more by joining with the parent in solving problems, in addressing the descriptive things about the child, and working together to address, you know, whatever challenges there are and to support the positive development that's going on. This last one is probably one of the hardest on the list which is opening up the parent's emotions, both positive and negative. You want a connection with the parent, you want to accept the negative emotions about the child. In fact, sometimes the fear, the anger, the frustration that a parent shows and of course, program people want to defend the program, of course, the regulation says, "We should do it this way", you know, that's the way it is. Instead of saying, yeah, I understand that you're frustrated or angry and seeing and working with that emotion whether it's positive or negative has emotional energy for the child, a very effective way to form a partnership with another person. Now this kind of comes back to what Sarah said earlier. One of the bullets that she referred to and she highlighted was a staff need to be supervised. If staff are going to do these things, they're going to follow this list of kind of tools for working with families, then supervision – good supervision is probably essential because if you're kind of walking on the ground of parents' inner lives and their emotions about their children which is what engagement is asking staff to do, then they need to be well-supervised.

Amanda: Thank you so much, John. So much to think about there and to think about it from our entire session together with folks. We're coming to our question and answer time. And we want to give folks some time to send in some questions. We know that Kelly gave you some of that information on how to do that early in the program. We already have one question here from a program specialist and

Kiersten, this one is for you. This person is saying that she's getting a lot of questions from programs about measuring family engagement so I want to throw that to you. What would you say to her?

Kiersten: Getting a lot of questions about measuring family engagement, is that what you said?

Amanda: Yeah.

Kiersten: Okay. So that's such a good question. I'm hearing that a lot too from some of you and I think we probably need to put together something because this could be a long conversation and so I'm going to give you a short answer, but I'd like to follow up. And if a lot of you feel like you want more on this then you email me that you do, that would also help to get things going as well, just to know to then get us on some of the interest in that topic. But I think the first thing that you could ask a program is, well, what is it you want to know, because that's where it starts. It's what do you want to know about engagement or what do you want to know about what is it you're talking about? You want to measure progress on a particular family outcome related to what? So first of all, it's what do they want to better understand? That's the first question. And then I think, you know, there's a couple of angles to look at this from. You can think about the measurement that would be associated with progress that's kind of more of an evidence-based, right? So maybe a tool around measuring change from a parenting support group or class, or perhaps, you know, you could. But there's, I think, a much wider range of things that program do around trying to understand progress and change from a continuous improvement type of lens which I think involve surveying parents around their experiences. You know, how do you know a family is making progress around a particular goal, right, in a program? Perhaps how many and then if you think about it from an aggregation standpoint, how many family partnership goals can you roll up in a program to see how families are doing in a particular area, how many goals in common? There's a lot of different ways to think about this. So again, it really just needs to come back to really simple questions back to a program. Well, what is it you'd like to know? It isn't that they need to go through every outcome and understand how to, you know, measure how a family, you know, I'm assuming programs are using, you know, looking at these things kind of picking one outcome at a time or looking at a particular area on the Framework. I think that's what I'm hearing in terms of feedback. So what is it you want to learn? What is it you want to understand? The other thing I would just point people towards is the section in the Framework that obvious— isn't often looked at or discussed but under each of the outcome areas, there is an example of progress in parent and family perspective. And these are things that, you know, came from parents and researchers about, you know, what a program might see as change for a family around an outcome, like what might change look like? And that's something that programs can use to think about measuring progress over time. And I think the last thing I would say about this is I think we just need to be really careful when we're talking about what progress is, right, because we know that for a lot of families, in Head Start and Early Head Start program, we're – they're really struggling with some really serious and frightening circumstances in many cases that's really stressful. And so we're looking – and sometimes progress can take a curvy path, it can go forward and back, and up and down, and sometimes we need to kind of think about our work as long term, you know, having more left-term effects.

Amanda: Thank you.

Kiersten: But one other thing I will say is we are working on a – we have invested in a measure that we're developing for like a relationship, quality relationship measure that programs will be able to use to kind of assess the quality of their relationship with families. And that's in its third year of work and it's got another year, but that's something that, you know, OHS is invested in. We want to be able to better support. Since that's such a central part of the work and what we do with families, we really want to figure out better ways to understand the quality of our relationship to the families.

Amanda: Thank you, Kiersten. If folks have additional questions, please send them in through the web or you can also send them in by telephone. I'm going to invite our operator to come on and give us some instructions for how to do that via the phone.

Kelly: Absolutely. If you would like to ask a question over the phone line, please press Star One. If you are using a speaker phone, please make sure your mute button is turned off to allow your signal to reach our equipment. Please be aware that a voice prompt on your phone line will indicate when your line is open. At that point, please state your name along with your question. Once again, Star One.

Amanda: Thank you. There is a question that came in related to pregnant women. And I'm going to throw this to Sarah. So the question is, what about pregnant women and school readiness?

Sarah: Good question. And as far as what program specialists should know is that grantees are not required to have school readiness goals written for pregnant women but when you talk with them, you want to – you know, they probably will have a clear understanding of how their prenatal services impacts positive birth outcomes and that's an opportunity to start engaging with the expectant family in building the attachment process as they work with that program staff about the dreams and hopes that they have for their soon-to-be newborn infant. And of course, through the comprehensive health and mental health, and oral health services that are provided to the mom, provides, again, another opportunity to support a healthy outcome for the growing baby. But just to clarify, school readiness goals are focused on the child where services to pregnant women are focused on the mom. They do interrelate but the goals are two different domains, if you will, or two different program strategies.

Amanda: Great. Thank you, Sarah. We had a couple of pieces come in about folks wanting the PowerPoint. We would be happy to send that to folks via email and we'll do that for sure. And then, another point – another question was on the resource on slide 48 which I believe is the resource from the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And that's certainly available on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center.

Kiersten: On the family engagement section, yeah.

Amanda: I'm sorry?

Kiersten: On the family engagement page.

Amanda: Yeah. We can also send the link when we send out that email to folks. Are there other questions that have come in?

Kelly: At this time, there are no questions over the phone line.

Amanda: Okay. Well, hearing none, I think what we'll do is just clear out. I want to thank everyone for their participation today and particularly our faculty. John, thank you so much for being here with us and of course, Sarah and Kiersten, thank you so much for being a part of this call and offering this conversation and all the information to us today. I'm going to turn it over to Sarah to end for us today. Thanks so much.

Sarah: Thanks, Amanda, and I just wanted to take a moment. I want to reiterate the thanks to John and Kiersten. It's just been lovely to be able to understand family engagement a little bit more clearly. I think the beauty of working with infants and toddlers through Early Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs. You'll probably find your grantees sort of have these understanding that of course, it's interrelated and of course it makes sense but they want to make sense from it from a Head Start performance and compliance way. So I think just reassuring them that sticking to the Standards and using these structures and frameworks that are out there will really help guide their thinking. We also appreciate the opportunity to have – to talk with our colleagues out in the regions. We know you're doing such daily work with grantees and they really are seeking your guidance and we appreciate you taking time to get a better understanding about family engagement and school readiness. And lastly, I'd like to thank the Early Head Start National Resource Center for posting this. I really appreciate Amanda guiding us through the day and Tamisa, and Gwen, and Sarah for helping us with the planning and implementation. We just couldn't do it without you. And it just kind of connects that there are a lot of systems out there supporting babies and toddlers and their families and we really appreciate that. Thanks so much.

Amanda: Have a great afternoon, thank you. Kelly: This does conclude today's conference. We thank you for your participation.