

Framework Webinar Series: Webinar 4 – Prioritizing Professional Development

Christine Patton: Hello, everyone. Welcome to the fourth webinar in our Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Webinar Series. I'm Christine Patton. I'm a Senior Research Analyst at Harvard Family Research Project, one of the partners in the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And I will be moderating today's event.

Before we dive in, let's talk content. Our first webinar in this series gave us a broad look at the PFCE Framework Program Foundations. In the second and third webinars we took a closer look at two of the Program Foundations: Program Leadership and Continuous Improvement. Today we're going to focus on the third Program Foundation: Professional Development.

As a result of participating in this webinar, we hope that your knowledge, as it relates to using professional development to address your own individual goals related to PFCE, as well as program-wide goals -- learning about existing and upcoming resources from our National Center to access and develop staff capacity for systemic, integrated, and comprehensive family engagement, and learning strategies for partnering with Training and Technical Assistance providers to support family engagement through professional development.

As you can see, we have a great set of presenters with us today. The presentation will run about an hour. Presentations will be followed by a 10-minute Q-and-A and then a 15-minute peer-to-peer chat. As content-based questions arise for you, you can submit them using the Q-and-A chat box, the same chat box I told you about at the top of the hour that lives under my picture, on the right-hand side of your screen. Given that it's not a public chat you will only see your own comments and questions. Other attendees' questions and comments will not appear in your feed. Our team will be compiling these questions, and I will share them with the presenters during the Q-and-A portion of the webinar.

Our first presenter is Kiersten Beigel. Kiersten has been with the Administration for Children and Families and Health and Human Services for 10 years, and has been in her role as Family and Community Partnership Specialist at OHS for five years. Kiersten is a social worker by training, and prior to her federal work, she worked with parents and children in schools and hospitals, child welfare and mental health settings, and shelter programs. Kiersten, I'll turn it over to you.

Kiersten Beigel: Hello, everybody, welcome. Thank you, Christine. I hope you're all doing well on this Tuesday afternoon or morning, as the case may be. That picture is a little bit of a shock, because I don't quite look like that. I think I need to update my picture. I have very short hair now, and suffice it to say I'm a few pounds heavier than that since I started foster parenting. So, that's a little more about me than you probably wanted to know, but I wanted to just take a few minutes to say hello and kind of open things up this afternoon. We're really pleased that you're joining us, and we've had a really great turn out for these webinars, which will be archived; I think we've said this before. There is a web page on our landing page in the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement section of the ECLKC, where you can find these.

So, those of you who have been kind of tuning in and using some of the things we've been developing, you know that we've really been trying to focus on a more integrated approach to professional development for Parent, Family, and Community, Engagement. For those of you who have been around a long time we've tried to bring back the phrase "family engagement is everybody's business," which is something that folks were using in the 90s. We've tried to identify different angles on professional development around family engagement for different staff, so the role that teaching staff have to play, management, family services staff. And we know that many of you are prioritizing training for all staff all staff on family engagement these days. We love hearing about that and the ways that you do that. We know that the more competent all staff are in supporting and engaging families, the more effective that family engagement is on a whole.

So, as part of the integrated whole, family services work has always been and remains a critical part of the Head Start/Early Head Start services. I just want to put a plug in for that line of work for several reasons. There have been really – family services has been really prioritized, and then other periods, you know, during tight times or when budgetary cuts are happening in programs and tough decisions are made, we know that sometimes these positions get cut and so caseloads may shift. We've seen a lot of variation of that over the years.

But I did want to let you all know that we operate, as we're trying to focus on evidence-based practices and best practices for family engagement, we're kind of operating under the assumption that folks do have manageable caseloads, and so they're kind of able to prioritize some of the quality relationship building support and continuous improvement that we know makes the best difference for children and families.

So, I wanted to just acknowledge kind of the reality, on both sides, sort of what it looks like sometimes on the ground. And also what we're trying to prioritize. For many agencies that might be a very easy fit; for some it might feel harder to manage. But, that said, we know that staff with manageable caseloads do have more time to engage families and tend to stay in their positions longer and are able to address challenges in a more timely way.

I haven't really forwarded the slide here yet from this question of "Why is This Topic Important?" And this is kind of where we start our conversation on our Program Foundation of Professional Development. The way we've defined it here is that professional development gives staff members regular opportunities to come together as a community of learners and that helps find mutual support and ideas for turning training and information into action. So, we will kind of break that down a little bit more as we go along.

What I started talking about here is this idea of the integrated parent, family, and community engagement being integrated in professional development -- that those kinds of things are synonymous -- and how we can prioritize family services in Head Start and Early Head Start, particularly because we know that family services staff play a central role in supporting family well-being. All of the family progress outcomes in the PFCE Framework support children's learning and development in different ways.

So, as it says here, family well-being is actually a powerful predictor of positive child outcomes. And although school readiness has been a very big focus for programs in the past few years in some different ways and it will continue to be so, we also know that the work of home visitors and family services staff - what these folks do to support and engage families -- is really a critical part of helping children be ready for school.

So, in 2011, we put out an IM having to do with establishing some competencies for staff who work with families. We know that the positions in your programs may look different -- you may have a lot of different folks working with families: Transition coordinators, parent engagement/parent involvement staff, social service coordinators, family service workers, home visitors, etc. So, we wanted to keep the title broad and let folks find themselves in these competencies and their work. We shared a document called the "Head Start and Early Head Start Relationship-Based Competencies for Staff and Supervisors Who Work with Families."

It's a long title because we were thinking of folks, a lot of folks, and a lot of roles. The document focuses on nine competencies that you can take a scan of here if you haven't seen this document yet. They are aligned with the outcomes in the PFCE Framework. You can see some overlap as you look at the relationships -- that's number one; you can see that in the arrow of the Framework. I'm assuming you have an image in your minds right now of the Framework, but I assume it'll come up again in the PowerPoint. If you look at three -- Family Well-being and Families as Learners -- those are combining kind of two outcome areas and highlighting some competencies around supporting families' learning goals, as well as well-being.

What is unique about this document is that it highlights the knowledge, skills, and actions for both staff and supervisors. Although there have not been the kind of staff qualifications for family services staff as there are for teachers, we do have the benefit of focusing on these two areas that have been really shown to matter quite a bit to effective professional development on the teaching side. So, our focus is on competence, in combination with support or mentoring or supervision. We know that reflective supervision is critical for this workforce. We know that it leads to more effective relationship-building with families and it helps staff to manage the stress or the overwhelm that can be associated with partnering with families who face adversities, trauma, instability, and those kinds of things. Reflective supervision also can decrease burnout for staff who are engaged in these kinds of efforts. So, that is kind of our focus is really thinking about competencies and professional development. We hope that defining these competencies has been useful, and we know that different programs are using this document in different ways. So, we're going to hear more about how these competencies are brought to life in the professional development of some programs. I invite you to stay tuned, and I thank you all for joining us today.

Christine: Thank you, Kiersten. We've had a few questions come in about whether or not an archive of this is going to be posted. For those of you who weren't here for the announcement at the beginning: Yes, we will be posting an archive of the slides to ECKLC; so, I just want to alert everyone who just joined us to that fact.

So, as an audience today, you represent a range of roles. We have directors, coordinators, training managers, family support advocates, teachers, and more. For the trainers in our audience who are designing trainings, for the leaders who are researching and scheduling them, and all of you who are considering participating in them, there are four tenets of effective professional development that I want you to think about before you design, before you schedule, or before you participate in these trainings.

Those learning new techniques through professional development need to be ready to learn content, need to feel safe taking risks, as they learn new strategies; they need to have social support, have tools to track their progress, and receive ongoing feedback and recognition.

The first tenet of effective professional development is readiness. Readiness generally refers to one's past experiences with specific topics, level of stress or comfort, self-efficacy, and openness to change. Many studies have shown a positive relationship between trainees' level of readiness and their success in implementing new techniques and content. So, how does this apply to all of you? Managers and other leaders can determine how nervous staff are about interacting with families, how much prior experience they have had counseling families, what their workloads are, and how much professional stress they are experiencing. Depending on each staff's level of readiness, managers, and leaders can decide how best to push forward with a new approach. You can also assess your own readiness by asking yourself questions like: "Is the amount of current stress in my job manageable?" "Can I take on something else?" "If I can take on this new practice, and I begin to feel overwhelmed with it, will I have the support that I need?"

The second tenet of effective professional development is psychological safety. People who are being trained on a new skill or topic need to feel like they can take risks and not be judged for making mistakes or for trying outside-of-the-box techniques. One way to establish psychological safety is to practice new techniques with stand-in or virtual families through role plays and virtual simulations. The third tenet is social support. People who try new practices need to be supported by others. A few years ago I was involved in a research study on the implementation of a social-emotional intervention. During the focus groups that we conducted with teachers about the implementation of this new intervention we heard teachers saying things like: "It's really nice knowing that there are other people who are going through this with me." One teacher, in speaking about her colleagues, added "we can help each other with strategies -- our experiences are the same."

So, how does this apply to you? During training and then later during implementation, trainers and coaches can create supportive networks among trainees, by pairing up staff who are trying out the same practices. Programs can also consider forming a learning community or a community of practice for staff to share activities and have discussion about ideas, challenges and successes related to these new techniques.

Finally, the fourth tenet is progress and feedback. When people track their post-training goals and rate their use of strategies to reach those goals, it helps them keep their goals in mind in order to achieve maximum success.

Before I turn it over to our next presenter, we're going to do a quick check-in by posting a quick poll. So, please take a few minutes to let us know -- of the four tenets of Professional Development -- which do you think you'll need the most support achieving: Readiness, psychological safety social support, or progress and feedback?

[Pause]

Kiersten: Great, thank you, all, for responding. It looks like they're pretty evenly matched, and it looks like a number of you would appreciate some additional support related to each of the four tenets, which is good for you given that each of our presenters will be touching on at least one of the tenets and providing you with ideas related to achieving readiness, safety, social support, and progress and feedback. For example, Christine Anderson, in relation to progress and feedback, will be talking about reflective supervision, so, you'll get a chance to hear about some strategies and some ideas for improving and achieving practices in that area. Thank you, all, for responding.

Liz has worked with the Laguna Division of Early Childhood for 12 years in different capacities and now serves as an Administrator and a Laguna Project Launch Director. Liz, I'll turn it over to you.

Liz Martinez: Hi, this is Liz. I work with the Pueblo Laguna Division of Early Childhood, which is located in the state of New Mexico, about 45 to 50 minutes west -- or miles, rather -- west of Albuquerque. The Division of Early Childhood is made up of several early childhood programs. The preschool Head Start/ Early Head Start where we serve center-based and home-based services, our Part C early intervention -- we have wrap-around tribal childcare; we just received New Mexico home visiting program, and we are a SAMSHA Project LAUNCH grantee. (SAMSHA stands for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.) We have about 50 employees who work with us. This picture of Laguna is just -- if you were to drive past Laguna -- this is your view right off the freeway.

Now I'm going to talk to you about how our program used the Markers of Progress during staff in service time. We really took advantage of a staff opportunity to conduct a self-assessment with about 50 employees. It was great because we had everybody at the same place, at the same time. And as Head Start grantees know, we're required to conduct a self-assessment on an annual basis.

So, we chose Markers of Progress as our tool to measure how well we were working with families. And we chose to begin with the element of Program Environment. We chose to start with that because this applies across all of our service areas, regardless of how you were employed within the organization. As you can see, the ultimate goal of the exercise was to help us recognize our efforts that are in place to engage families and to make action plans to strengthen our enhanced program efforts. So, what we're going to do with our results -- we're going to use the results in our program development and planning. And maybe allow for individuals to decide how they would like to use this with their individual professional development planning. So, I will advance to the next slide.

Here's a page right out of Markers of Progress. As you can see, the elements are listed on top; so we're just looking at Program Environment. Here are the indicators. This one just shows welcoming and inviting setting. The levels are identified across the top row as "starting point," "progressing," and "innovating." Underneath each one of those are the markers. So, let's take a look at that.

What we did was we took the Markers of Progress and we placed the -- we wrote the elements, or we just looked at the element of Program Environment, rather. We identified the indicator at the top of the flip chart, and on each flip chart we had the different levels and the markers for each indicator. So, as staff walked in there were flip chart papers with the different indicators hung throughout the room.

So, I don't know if you can see here, but, of course, the top is welcoming and inviting setting, and then the first column is "starting point." So, that would be the level of starting point and there's a brief description. The next column is "progressing" and then the next column is "innovating." Below that is where the row begins with the markers. What we also did as part of this process was we use color code to provide to the staff, depending on where their working area was. Preschool Head Start center-based staff got red dots. Early Head Start center-based got yellow dots. Home-based and family advocates got blue dots. And support staff, administration, and coordinators got green dots. And through this process, we really wanted to -- we'll explain a little bit further how that was important. However, when staff rated themselves on those flip charts we were able to see what groups -- how different groups rated themselves across the different Markers of Progress.

So, we'll lead you through that, as we continue. So, each employee that we had, who came, received the Markers of Progress just for this element of Program Environment. So, what we did was we read aloud one indicator at a time from the Markers of Progress. Then, we paused after we read the indicator. Then we went around and asked each person to rate themselves, and choose their level of progress. They may have checked "starting point," "progressing," or "innovating." So, after they completed rating themselves across the entire element, we asked for staff to take their markers and to take their handouts and to place the dots on the flip chart paper that corresponded to each indicator. So, our staff placed the dots on the flip chart paper where we rated ourselves.

So, just in this example, there were, as you can see, four red dots in the first, I guess, upper left-hand box, showing that four preschool Head Start staff members identified themselves under "starting point." Then, in that box it looks like four from green, which was staff -- the administrative staff and support staff -- identified themselves as "starting point," and so forth. So, as you can see, we could see which different -- how the service areas rated themselves across the Markers of Progress. And so, with that, we were able to generate some results across each of the areas.

So, this is the example of welcoming and inviting setting. And so, as we're looking at this chart we could see that, for the most part, most of us were "progressing." Looking at preschool Head Start teachers, preschool Head Start teachers thought that they didn't see their efforts as being "innovating," but they saw most of our efforts as "progressing." And looking at Early Head Start teachers, there was a variation between rating themselves as "starting point," "progressing," and "innovating," and so forth.

Let's look at the next one: Cultural and linguistic responsiveness. Looking at this, it looks like none of us identified ourselves within "innovating." For the most part, we really saw ourselves as "progressing." But none of us saw ourselves as "innovating." So, we could also take a look at that and say, "okay, this might be where we start." I mean, we are at the Pueblo Laguna; so, we should really be thriving in those areas. So, this is going to give us an opportunity to really see how we can take a look at what we're doing and demonstrate more innovating efforts of engaging family.

Here's an example of systems of regular communication with families. As you can see, we all rated ourselves at varying degrees. For the most part we thought that we were "progressing," but in some places we thought we were starting point, and in others we thought we were innovating. So, here's an opportunity for us to go back to staff who really thought that their efforts were "innovating." We'd like for them to tell their peers about what that looks like and how they're demonstrating innovation within their service area.

So, all in all, we got some feedback from staff about using this process as part of our self-assessment. And the staff reported that as they were going through the Markers of Progress, it really helped them identify where they really need to raise the bar for themselves and maybe -- some of them even reported that through this process what they thought that they were really doing was "progressing," but looking at it they thought that they rated themselves as just being at "starting point." This helped them recognize where they might need to make changes in planning or how they interact with families, -- so the way that they can go from starting point to progressing or ultimately to innovation.

So, our next steps are to share the results of Program Environment with staff and facilitate a dialogue and help develop relevant action plans. We would like to continue doing the self-assessment process using all of the elements, but we do recognize that it was pretty time consuming -- the way we had first ran this out. So, we need to consider ways to go through the self-assessment process, but in less time. We also don't get a lot of opportunities where we're going to have all 50 employees at the same place at the same time, so we've got to be very creative. Another next step is to allow for opportunities for reflection within individual employee growth and development processes.

This is just aggregate data that we had presented. We didn't collect anyone's individual rating; so, we're going to count on the employees coming forward and identifying how they wanted to reflect this process within their growth and development if they wished. That's basically it in a nutshell. Thank you, for letting me present something that worked in our community.

Christine P.: Thank you, Liz. Thank you, so much for sharing that creative approach to using the Markers of Progress and for combining assessment and professional development. Our next presenter is Christine Anderson. Christine is the Regional Early Childhood Education Manager for Region III with ICF International. She joined Region III in July 2012 as a Delaware State Manager, and prior to that was the North Carolina Early Childhood Education State Manager in Region IV. Christine, I'll turn it over to you.

Christine Anderson: Hi, can everyone hear me well?

Christine P.: We can hear you. Thanks, Christine.

Christine A.: Oh, perfect. Thank you for having me. I actually want to say thank you, Liz, for a great activity that I may steal and facilitate in some form or another with folks that I work with here in Region III. What I'm going to talk with you about today is an example of how one of our ECE specialists used the Relationship-Based Competencies in their work with one of the Head Start programs here in Region III. So, the ECE specialist was really working with a small community action program, rural community; we'd say relatively small -- it's all relative, you know. One hundred and thirty eight Head Start children and 80 Early Head Start, and really working through a shared inquiry process between the ECE specialist and the program management to identify their TA plan.

So, the ECE specialist goes in with a plan to help the program with their goal of increasing quality interactions in the classroom. And the TA plan consisted of introducing some reflective supervision, coaching and mentoring, and some elements of professional development -- and really thinking about how to create a professional development continuum, so that it's not isolated. So, we're really working very hard to support a continuum and interconnectedness where PFCE is "everyone's business."

Through that conversation, that shared inquiry, it was really thinking about what were the needs and the concerns around what they need to do to improve their classroom quality, and thinking about what their professional development looked like. What was learned through that was sort of the way that the structure of this particular program was set up: So, each coordinator supervised both classroom staff and family advocates which really lends itself to that continuum. So, thinking through that holistic professional development approach the technical assistance goal expanded and was enhanced, to think about professional development for family advocates, as well.

As any good TA person knows, we have a plethora of resources. Thinking about what would be the most appropriate -- was the Relationship-Based Competencies. The plan turned into introducing the Relationship-Based Competencies, determining the level of comfort with those, assigning resources for staff development in specific, identified areas on the Relationship-Based Competencies. And then incorporating them, along with reflective supervision, into the program's professional development plan -- and really thinking about how to make that comprehensive.

There was a really nice parallel that came out of this; and so when we think about classroom staff, we have strong classroom observation through classroom assessment scoring systems, and curriculum implementation, monitoring and feedback, and reflective supervision for all staff. Paralleling that with the family services staff, the family advocates. You know having them and having an assessment of their skills we can get Relationship-Based Competencies going through a reflective supervision process, as well. Then start using resources to support them, as they're working with parent and families. It really turned into a nice comprehensive approach.

So, theoretically that sounded great, everyone was on board. And then it comes to, "okay, we know what to do -- let's think about how we do it," and thinking about what's the comfort level? How do folks know where to start? The ECE specialist suggested that the staff work individually to review the Relationship-Based Competencies and assess their own level of knowledge, skill, and comfort around each competency. I think that takes us back to what we heard in the beginning about having a safe place to be able to do that self-reflection. I know those weren't the exact words that were used -- "psychological safety" I think is maybe the term that was used. And really thinking about giving every individual the opportunity to do that and how could they use that -- the RBCs for that purpose?

So, this particular program director took the initiative to move that Relationship-Based Competency tool in the way that it was and develop a self-reflective tool. We have a sample of a piece of that tool. For every one of the competencies she created some columns so that each of the staff could assess their -- do some self-reflection and really think about where they were. "I have this skill; I do this well; I have some knowledge and skills that need resources and support, and I really struggle in this area," and then, some notes. Because, what we know is sometimes we do have knowledge, but we still need to hone skills in that area. And so to really get an idea of where each of the staff fell in this self-reflective process to drive the future professional development of that family advocate.

And so, then we think about where does TA fit in? Where does the ECE specialist fit into this approach? And so, the plan that they created for the next step was for the ECE specialist to work with the program to review their completed self-reflection tool -- and really any good data assessment -- figuring out what that data means after that self-assessment is completed. One wonderful resource that we know is the Fall 2 Fall Series. It's very topical, and that can help the program focus on some of the professional development of their family advocates.

The ECE specialist is going to follow in and see how they're progressing in implementing the plan. The best way to say it is we don't really necessarily have a cookie cutter approach; so a lot of this is going to depend on what the information is that's gathered from that tool and then, working with the program to identify what the next steps are with the ECE specialist -- and without.

Then thinking even broader, it kind of makes me think about "If You Give a Moose a Muffin," that little story -- how it builds and builds. If you give an ECE a tool we are going to think about how we can continue to move that forward.

So based on the exciting things that came out of utilizing the RBCs with this program, we really started thinking how we could expand that, and that was with an individual program. How could we do that with groups of programs? Possibly having clusters, regional work groups -- there are some states who have had Head Start Associations divide them up into geographical regions -- and kind of following that same approach: Introduce the Relationship-Based Competencies, then the official resources, assessing level of comfort and skills, and then developing a plan for how they're going to use those competencies. We think about this approach, as well as a couple other events, for lack of a better word, as professional opportunities for grantees -- having small groups and teams for a particular program - and thinking about introducing them to the continuum of Professional Development.

So, going back to the program and class and coaching and things for the classroom and staff -- they have the RBCs, and the Fall 2 Fall Series, and resources from family service staff, and reflective supervision for everyone. Instead of a -- the flags at the bottom kind of give you a plan to review -- type of notion there, with the observation and feedback, self-reflection, coaching and training, reflective supervision -- kind of keeping that continuum going.

So, thinking about having this in those clusters or regional sessions -- having time for some self-reflection, introducing the RBCs, and having people understand what they are, identifying where they are, and then, moving into a teamwork approach. Imagine that you would set up a training -- a group-facilitated discussion with teams of grantees -- and they're asked to discuss what they're familiar with -- and they do some self-reflection -- then asking them to discuss that framework and the resources connected around it.

Think about those teams developing a work plan for expanding their options and seeing what kind of professional development system they could develop and implement that's appropriate for their program, their size, their set up, and so forth. And then hearing their plans with each other; so, you're imagining a facilitated learning opportunity, with groups of programs coming together. And then, identifying where technical assistance and ECE specialists could fit into the plan to help make sure that those plans get implemented, bringing in the resources and shoring up those plans as best as possible. So, really taking it from an individual work that was done with one particular grantee, and thinking about how we could expand that into the larger group work. So, that is, actually, I believe our last slide for how we used the Relationship-Based Competencies in Region III and how we are brainstorming other ways that we could use it, as well.

Christine P.: Thank you, Christine, for sharing your approach to using the RBCs to support grantees' professional development and for sharing that great tool. For those of you who are interested, we will be sharing that self-reflection tool at the end of the webinar, right before we do the peer-to-peer chat, so that will be available for you all to download and use.

Before I turn it over to our next presenter, we're going to do another check-in by posting a quick poll. Liz and Christine both talked about a number of professional development strategies they, and the programs that they work with, use. Please take a few seconds to let us know which of the following professional development strategies are currently being used in your program: Observation and feedback, self-reflection, training and coaching, reflective supervision, all of the above. And, again, you can answer us right in the poll that's posted on your screen right now. We'll give everyone a few seconds to do that.

[Pause]

Christine P.: So, it looks like a number of you are using a mix of all of the strategies, and that's great. Our next presenter, Brandi, is going to talk about some of the resources that you can use to strengthen and enhance those strategies that are currently being used and those that you want to use and strengthen. So, our next presenter is Brandi Black Thacker. Brandi is the Director of Training and Technical Assistance for the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. She has served communities as an educator, case manager, advocate, director, trainer, technical assistance specialist, and consultant for over 12 years. Brandi, I'll turn it over to you.

Brandi Black Thacker: Great, Christine, thank you so much. It's an honor always to be with you guys. And, I have to say, as I was going through the participant list, I'm so thrilled to see so many familiar faces and folks that have joined this session. So, thanks so much for being with us today. What I've also noticed was the absolute diversity of roles and perspectives that the participants have. The first thing I want to start off with is just acknowledging the journey that we've been on together over this short hour with the reflection and insight that Kiersten offered from the Office of Head Start, and then Christine taking us through some of the research and those four tenets that are necessary for integrated and effective PD.

And then, of course, the exciting part that both Liz offered from her program's perspective at the Pueblo of Laguna, and then, Christine -- thank you, from the TA perspective -- for offering us such great insight from -- I have to admit this -- a program that I know and love dearly. That little bitty rural program in Virginia I actually had the honor to direct for a real short amount of time. So, I am extra proud today to be sharing time with those thoughts, ideas and the wonderful work that continues in that community and those two counties.

But before we go too much further along, I wanted to hit some of the high points of what I really appreciated in all of the presenters' notions today. I really loved where Kiersten brought us back. It's almost as going back to the basics -- all staff has to be integrated in our professional development for effective family engagement. You guys know it; we say it; we love it; you have it memorized: We believe family engagement is everybody's business. And when it's woven into every level and layer we set ourselves up for success in making those real, wonderful, intentional deposits in the relationship with each family. We ultimately know that leads to enhanced outcomes for families and children.

On top of that, we got to talk a little bit about those four tenets that Christine brought to us: The readiness, the psychological safety, the social support, the progress and feedback: How each of those tie together and weave in, so that we can set ourselves up for success as we try out some of the new things that we're hearing about. And then, as you enhance some of the places that you're looking, and like Liz shared, in terms of really taking a hard look through the self-assessment process and celebrating the places that are firmly locked in as beneficial and working and then really taking the chance to enhance any of those opportunities that you find through that kind of process.

Speaking of Liz, I was really tickled to hear how wonderfully and intensely you guys have been using the Markers of Progress. That's such an innovative way to really get down to the nitty-gritty and -- as we would say back home, the brass tacks -- of flushing out some of the folks' perspectives by role and by their own experience and really having the dialogue about where folks are and where they want to be, not only as individuals but as leaders when you track those trends and patterns. So that we can cater those discussions in the PD planning process which I thought was so great.

And then, of course, Christine, thank you so much for offering the perspective of the use of the RBCs, not only for our individual grantee friends in Virginia, but the innovation that happened with sort of thinking: "Well, where are we? What's our level of comfort? What resources do we need? How do we incorporate this into our existing PD plan approach?" And then taking that extra step of developing a tool that is actually meaningful for the group in partnership with their TA experts right on the ground is just so exciting.

So, hopefully, Christine, as you mentioned, you were thinking about stealing a little something from Liz, I'm thinking that folks may also be stealing some of the great ideas you offered, not only for that individual reflection tool, but certainly as they think about how to apply these wonderful ideas towards groups of grantees in partnership with each other.

So, as Christine said, I wanted to share a couple of different professional development resources that we have out on ECLKC right now, on our landing page, and then also take you through a few things that are coming down the pike so you can be ready for those if you're looking for other ways to continue to, of course, celebrate or enhance what you're doing. Many of these you've already heard about today: of course, the Relationship- Based Competencies, or as we call them for short the RBCs are here, right on top. You heard Christine Anderson mention a bit about that. The Markers of Progress, of course, are what Liz highlighted and gave you a real in-depth refresher on what that looks like and how you might consider using it.

Two of our other favorites that you may have seen or even used are the PFCE Simulation. That is, as Christine mentioned, I believe, part of the psychological safety piece. That's a real safe spot to go practice for all roles of staff -- interact with a virtual family. Side note, we have another one coming soon that's going to be rooted in the goal-setting process. So, many of you have loved that simulation -- and all the different ways that you've been able to use it -- that we couldn't resist bringing you something else. Stay tuned for that.

We also have a Research to Practice Series. What you see on the screen here -- these four bullets -- are all ones that are on ECKLC right now. For those of you who know our work well, you'll note all of these four phrases come right out of the blue column of the Framework and the Family Engagement Outcomes. So, if you haven't had a chance to go peep at these yet, I think you'll really appreciate what they offer, not only the root in research, but also different ideas about how folks are expanding these thoughts and supporting their families as they partner in making progress towards these outcomes.

A couple more things real quick, that we already have out there for your viewing and using pleasure. One: The Best Practice Family and Community Engagement Video Series. Some of these actually align with some of the Research to Practice papers that are out there, that I just mentioned on the previous slide. We have one on fatherhood. We have one on data. We have one on transitions. So, if you haven't seen these, go take a peep at those. We'll have some more of those coming soon for you, as well.

And, last but not least, one of our very wonderfully tenured documents, one of the first ones that we came to you with was around Family Engagement and Ongoing Assessment. This really speaks to partnering with families in specific parts of their journey with us, like transition to kindergarten.

The last thing I'll mention that's currently out there, that's on our main website page, is the Interactive Framework. This is under the "And More" category. For instance, you can go there right now and click into this element in particular -- so the Professional Development element that lives in the yellow column. You can explore research resources, and other wonderful connections from our regulations to each piece and part of our Framework. If you want to learn more about the arrow and Relationship-Based Practice we've got that. You want to know more about Program Environment in the pink column - that's there, too. All the research, resources, and regulations that you could ever want to see and learn more about. So, if you're curious about this, go visit our site. I think you'll be pleased at what you'll discover.

A couple more quick things and then I want to turn it back over to Ms. Christine. We have a few wonderful things in the hopper, as they say. We have this wonderful Professional Development Package that's actually going to be rooted, of course, in our Framework. It's going to include the resources that we have that are already out there but also the ones that we have in development. They're going to be tied together in a real integrated way. So, if you want to sort of shop off the shelf as both of the folks -- Liz and Christine -- have offered today, and really cater something to the folks right within your program, you'll be able to sort of go through this package and make some choices based on where you know there are opportunities and use information in ways that are meaningful to you and your programs. We have a Positive Goal-Oriented Relationships digital tool coming. I think you guys are really going to love this. It's rooted in the attitudes and practices that we speak about in terms of building and maintaining positive and goal-oriented relationships. You'll see that coming to an Internet connection soon near you. Also, I mentioned this -- I couldn't help it; I couldn't even help it, I had to tell you guys -- about the goal-setting simulation. This is in the hopper and actively being worked on as we speak.

And then, again, last but not least, you can see the rest of the Research to Practice Series and the videos that are coming soon. We hope any or all of these things can help as you journey more towards enhancing the Professional Development pieces of all the already wonderful things that are happening in your programs -- and for our TA colleagues, because I see so many of you are on the line with us today, as well. So, with that, let me turn in summary back over to the putting-it-all-together-piece. We know how important the systemic, integrated, comprehensive approach is to our work.

The good news is our regulations require that we have the systems and services structure that allow us to set ourselves up for the success and enhanced family and child outcomes. And the really wonderful thing is the examples that you've heard today are really rooted in each of those systems and services structures, so that it's embedded in every level and layer of program. A lot of voices inform the decisions, including our families. And then in the vein of Continuous Improvement we have the opportunity to really think about this as our families change, as our communities change and recalibrate based on what we've learned. So, I don't know about you, but I think that's one of the biggest gifts that we have within our community. Because, we're constantly able to see and celebrate the great things we've learned, but then how we can always become better in service of the children and families we have the honor to partner with every day. With that let me turn back over to Ms. Christine Patton, and we'll get some further instruction.

Christine P.: Thank you, Brandi, for bringing things together for us and for sharing some of the existing and upcoming resources from our National Center. We're now going to move into the moderated Q-and-A session. I do see a few more questions coming in, but we'll go ahead and start with those that have been submitted. The first question is for Liz. Liz, how did you introduce the Markers of Progress to your program and how familiar were your staff with the Markers of Progress before doing the activity that you shared with us?

Liz: Okay. How did I introduce this to the staff? It was just an opportunity. We had a full staff meeting, and I had just learned about the Markers of Progress and coincidentally it happened to be during our self-assessment process. I asked my fellow directors if I could take about 45 minutes out of the staff meeting to go through this process with staff. Like a couple days before the staff meeting I proposed it to the directors, and they allowed me the time to meet with their staff. So, I just saw a natural opportunity where the staff were going to convene and used about 45 minutes to come up with just one element. That was time consuming, but we got everybody's feedback. How familiar were staff before they read the Markers of Progress?

This was the first time that they had seen the document, so we need to -- we haven't introduced the other elements to them. We're looking forward to getting it back to them, but this was -- again, this was the first time that they had seen the Markers of Progress. And they were actually really -- they responded well to the Markers of Progress. We had a reflection opportunity afterwards -- I just wanted to get a pulse on how staff felt about this process. And they were excited to rate themselves. I was really surprised. They were like, "I was thrilled to see where I can raise the bar," so to speak, or they were really excited to see that, "oh, okay, that's what innovating looks like, what I've been doing looks like starting point." So, that's where we were. And I'm very thankful that our staff was receptive to that.