

Teacher Time Series: Supporting Children and Families When Programs Are Closed

Treshawn Anderson: Hi, everyone and welcome to "Teacher Time." It's so good to be back with you guys for this special episode of "Teacher Time." I'm Treshawn Anderson, and I'm with the National Center on Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning. And I'm really excited about today's topic: Supporting Children and Families when Programs Are Closed. It definitely applies to me and my life right now, so I hope it's a good one for you too. I'm with my good friend, Judi Stevenson-Garcia. Hi, Judi.

Judi Stevenson-Garcia: Hi, Treshawn. How are you today? And hi, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us. We're so glad that you're here today. And before we get started with our topic, I just want to take a minute. Treshawn and I know that the circumstances that have brought us here today for this special episode ... We've been at home with our families for a few months now, and we've been balancing work and trying to maintain some school with our kids and all of the other challenges that have come with having to stay at home, and while we see maybe some glimmers of hope ahead of us, we think it still might be a while before things start to feel kind of normal again. So, we do just want to say that we hope you and your families are safe and that you're healthy and that you've managed to find some balance. We are just here with you. We want to say that we are with you in solidarity. We understand teachers and family childcare providers and the families and children that you work with are all part of your day, and we're all struggling to balance the need to get connected. and then also managing the requirements to stay physically apart. So, we're here with you. We understand. We appreciate all that you're doing.

Treshawn: Yeah, that's so important. We've learned that through this time, it's really important to take care of yourself so that you can take care of others, and sometimes we learn that the hard way. So, to prevent that, we're going to take a minute just to take a few deep breaths together and commit to focusing on this next hour and half together. I've done this breathing exercise before on another "Teacher Time" episode, but I really enjoy doing it. It's called the Take Five. So, what you're going to do is hold five fingers up and with your pointer finger on the other hand, start down at the bottom where your thumb is and then you're going to trace your finger as you breathe in and then as you go down, breathe out. And so, do it with me. So, breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. Think about one thing that you'd like to take away from this time together today as your breathing in and out, and then try to turn off all the thoughts that you have running through your head as you breathe out. So refreshing.

Judi: Thanks, Treshawn. I needed that just right now after a stressful day that I've had with my kid. Thanks for that minute. I'm going to remember that and try to do that more often. It's so helpful to just remember to just take a minute to breathe throughout the day, so I'm going to try to build that in a little bit more in my daily routine and even do it with my kids sometimes too.

Judi: For today's episode, for those of you who have been with us on our previous "Teacher Time" episodes, you know that in our Q&A box, that's where you can go to ask your questions related to our topic or related to any tech problems that you have, but in there supporting us is Jan Greenberg. She's our Q&A facilitator. She'll be there to answer any questions that you have during the episode. And also, just so you know, we have a little bit of an extra-large episode today. Normally we're an hour, but we're extending our time so that at the end, we'll take a few minutes to answer your questions live. So, throughout the episode, feel free to ask questions and at the end, you'll have a chance to ask questions through our Q&A widget and we'll be able to answer them for you right here. So, we'll try to get to all of your questions as well as we can, but please remember that we'll take some time at the end to answer some of your questions as well. So, we're going to dive into our topic for today, Supporting Children and Families at Home, but the first thing we're going to do is we're just going to get started with a poll to check in with you about your experiences so far being at home while your programs are closed in supporting children and families. We want to know where you've had success, so we're going to give you a poll to look at and you'll have several options. So, take a minute to read through the different options. You can choose up to three, so scroll through. You can scroll down to see additional answers, and just click three of the things that you – or places where you found success, if you've had three. Hopefully, you've had three successes. And just let us know how it's been going for you now that you've been at home for a few months.

Treshawn: As you can see, we've got some people that have been successful at communicating with their families, supporting children's learning, they've been good at, using some technology. That's wonderful, being able to send some technology out. And then supportive of their work. We have some support up there, so that's great. So, we're going to move on to ... It's another poll actually, and so this time, we want you to see what has been your greatest challenge related to supporting children and families while programs are closed because we know there has been some challenges. So, again, you can choose up to three challenges. So, go ahead and fill that out when you see it. See what people are saying.

Judi: Oh, keeping up with communication.

Treshawn: Yeah, and families not being able to use technology as a communication method.

Judi: Yeah, wow. That's a challenge.

Treshawn: Yeah, that is. Some language barriers. Yeah, that can be challenging if things that you're trying to communicate people are not understanding. So, great. Well, you know what? You guys are in the right place at the right time because hopefully we'll have some suggestions for you that can help you with some of these challenges and then make you feel a little bit more successful as you're working with families.

Judi: Exactly. We're going to hit on a bunch of these things and hopefully give you some strategies to continue to support as you continue to support children when they're at home with their families. So, today, we're going to talk really about supporting their continued learning, and I see that some of ... Quite a few of you responded that one of your challenges is

keeping track of children's learning development. And I can understand how when you're used to seeing them on a daily basis and kind of paying attention and observing the way they respond and the way they express themselves, to not be able to do that could be really challenging. I assume at this point you've probably learned a lot. I see from your successes that you've really been doing some great work, so hopefully you can share with us some of the strategies that you've used in response to some of the strategies we're sharing, and then also we'll share together – we'll talk together about strategies that we can use to support children and families and maybe you'll get some tips for working with children that you have at home. So, hopefully, that'll help you in the next hour.

Treshawn: That's right. So, we are going to start where we always start and that's with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework, which is the ELOF as we like to call it, and this is where we find goals for children's learning and development. And although you use the ELOF in your practice, when you use the ELOF when talking about families, you can use it to figure out how you can continue to support them while they're at home with their children, and when talking with families, you can highlight some important things. So, it's important to remember first that children develop skills at their own pace and you can reiterate that to families in case they're worried about their child's development and learning. And then helping parents understand that their child is unique and that these progressions are just here to help us understand how children are developing, and it's not a test that children have to follow. So, we can ease a little bit of the burden that way. Also, the ELOF is a tool to inform your practice but while some of you may not be practicing it from the classroom right now, we can help families to use this tool to support learning in their daily routines that they do with children at home. So, you'll find some handouts in the green resources widget that will help you to help parents understand how to use everyday activities to encourage children's learning, so be sure to check that resource out.

Judi: That's right. And we're going to talk in just a little bit about some other ideas for using every day activities and routines at home to support learning. So, today, we're going to really highlight four main strategies. These are not the only strategies, but ones that you can use to connect with and support parents as they're supporting their children's continued growth and development. So, we'll start with a focus on the importance of learning through everyday activities and routines just like we mentioned. How can you help parents understand where that learning happens every day? I'm sure this is information that you shared with families before, but even now, it's even more important. We'll talk about some strategies to help parents understand and focus on the importance of their daily interactions with their children. These strategies will also help you in your own home when thinking about your own interactions with your own children and as you try to balance life and work. And we'll share a little bit about how you can use technology to support families and children's learning and support families in understanding how to use that technology as well. And we're sure you've figured out some strategies now just by trial and error, but hopefully we'll give you some additional ideas that you can use and think about. And then finally, we will spend a little bit of time just to help you think about setting time aside to take care of yourselves so that you can care for others.

Treshawn: That's right, Judi. But first, we're going to start with this whole relationship and that everything starts with the relationship. Young children experience their whole world as an environment of relationships and it could be relationships with people, relationships with their favorite lovie or toy, even relationships with the environment. Some kids like the rain. Some people are fascinated with the snow. Some kids don't like being out in the sun, but these relationships affect virtually all aspects of child development and the single most common factor for children who develop resilience, and we need some resilience right now, is having at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult. And these relationships provide that individualized responsiveness. We talk about that a lot through our "Teacher Time" season. Some scaffolding. It offers security that really helps children feel safe and we all know that when children feel safe, they're better able to explore and learn in their environment, and for now, it's their home environment. But first, it's important to encourage parents just to not stress so much about planning all these educational opportunities for children and that's probably what they're worried about right now. The teaching and learning can happen within everyday experiences, every moment of the day, and we know that parents are managing a lot right now. I know I'm home schooling a second grader and a preschooler, so supporting learning from a distance means that we're helping families to first understand how important relationships are to learning rather than focusing on these rote teaching opportunities and on learning concepts and things of that nature.

Judi: Yeah, I think one thing that I found to be really interesting is how much that my kids now are able to participate in the things that we do every day where we might have rushed through them previously because we're so busy. We now have time to take care of the house together. We do our laundry together. We take time taking a bath because we have time, and so it's been a great opportunity for us to build our relationship in a way that we haven't before. So, having a regular and predictable daily routine such as when you get up and brush your teeth, when you have breakfast, when you get dressed, when it's time to read or to go outside and play, all of those things really help create a sense of trust and continuity for children and it builds that positive adult-child relationship that we really want to have with our kids. Daily routines involve regular household tasks, like I said, laundry or cooking or sweeping. My boys fight over sweeping, which I'm happy to let them fight over sweeping if they can do it whenever they want. And then also things like diaper changing or toileting or snack and meal times. I think we don't have to be connecting all the time all day, but finding those moments to make those connections through our daily routines really provides a level of safety and security for our children. You can think about outside if you're able to go outside. There might be opportunities to work in the garden together. My son and I went on a plant hunt yesterday that his teacher had suggested that we go out and look around for some plants that we could find. These are all ways for us to kind of enjoy our time together and build our relationship. So, if you have the opportunity to talk with your families about being able to include children in everyday routines, they may not see it as the learning opportunity that it is, but it's a great opportunity for you to help them plan and then think about what learning takes place during those moments where they're working together.

Treshawn: Yeah, absolutely. So, we are going to watch a video, because we all like to watch video examples, of a mother and a child engaged in an everyday activity, which is hand-washing, and we're probably doing much more of that nowadays before they're having their snacks. So, as you watch, look for the ways that she supports her child's language development, and in your viewer's guide in box 1A, you can write down some notes about what you observe. And again, you can find that viewer's guide down in the green resource area. So, let's watch this video and tell me what you learn.

[Video begins]

Woman 1: Can you wash your hands? Water. Wash, wash, wash. Wash your hands. Good. Cold water. Can you rub your hands together? Yeah. Clean. Yeah.

Girl: [Inaudible]

Woman 2: Mm hmm. Cold.

Woman 1: Clean.

Girl: Clean.

Woman 1: Clean. You do it. Yeah. Wash your hands. Wash, wash.

Woman 2: [Inaudible]

Woman 1: I'm working on it. [Laughter] There you go. Clean. Good job. Wash your hands. Uh-oh. Yeah. Can you rub your hands together? Mm hmm. [Laughter] It's nice and cool.

Woman 2: Wash your hands.

Woman 1: Turn the water off. Shake, shake, shake. Oop. Dry, dry. Good girl. Can you wash your hands?

[Video ends]

Treshawn: I just love that video. There's lots of strategies that this parent is using with her child to encourage her language development. Some things we saw were talking. She was talking about vocabulary, like clean, warm, and cool. She asked some questions, like, "Is the water cool?" and, "Are your hands clean?" She was holding her, so building that relationship with the child. All of those are important. In box 1B of your viewer's guide, you can write down a few things that you would suggest to this mother or other routines that's he can use to enhance her child's language development. Like, you might think of maybe tooth brushing. Exploring the different textures of toothpaste and the taste of toothpaste. My kids don't like it went it's too spicy. That's what they call minty. And then, hair brushing. I mean, I know we're combing a lot of hair nowadays, sometimes multiple times a day, or maybe you're not brushing hair. That's fine, but brushing hair can lead to some enhanced receptive language, talking about curly and

soft and long and short and tangled and even bath time. Just some things that we can do to help encourage children's language development. It's going to be helpful.

Judi: Yeah, my boys have very curly hair, but they've taken to brushing their hair. They love to brush it and now it's getting super huge and poufy, and so that's become part of their daily routine, so we all brush our hair together. So, it's fun to just kind of think about how we can support learning. They're interested because my hair is not quite as curly and they both have different textures of hair, so they talk about the differences in their curls as well, so lots of opportunities. I think especially it's so important to remember that even with infants and toddlers, you can still have those moments of learning just through something as simple as washing your hands, growing their language, talking about what they're feeling. She talked about the cold water. I think it's just a great way to think about the importance of interactions. So, let's take a minute to think about daily routines. Hopefully, one of the things that you establish in your programs is a daily routine. Know how important it is. And I know even as a parent, that's something that I struggle with, especially when I'm working and also trying to support my kids' learning, so you can offer support to parents. If they haven't already established a daily routine, they might really be ready for one now to kind of help make things easier. Planning and having something even written down can make it easier to do or to follow and depending on the child's age, they can follow or help their parents plan the routine and follow it. My kids are a little older. They're in kindergarten and second grade and we have pictures that show the different times of our day and what happens on each day. It helps kind of keep us all together and headed in the same direction.

One thing that we do is we do start with a morning meeting and that might sound familiar to you. You're probably used to having morning meetings when you're with your kids in your programs. So, we have like a little, what I would call like a "Circle Time," just the four of us: my husband and my two kids, and you could encourage your families to start the day this way as well. Again, it goes back to establishing those relationships. It's a nice time for us to get together and just bond. You can sing a song together or listen to some music or read a story together. My older son likes to read a story to my younger son, and then we make a plan for the day because even though we're at home, our days do look different each day depending on who has a meeting with who, who has a call, and so we kind of just say, "Here is what's going to happen." We also talk about the weather. Are we going to get to go outside and play today? Do we need to put sunscreen on? Now these days we're putting sunscreen on pretty much every day. We talk about when it's going to be somebody's birthday, a friend's birthday or if we're going to get to call my parents and have a chat with them. So, we just sit and make a plan together. Every day isn't always like this. Some days, it's a 3-minute meeting. Some days it's a little bit longer. We plan what food we're going to eat, maybe what we're going to have for snack, who wants to help to make lunch. The whole family can benefit from starting their day together whenever possible, if possible. Give older siblings responsible for younger siblings, decide who's going to do what jobs. It just helps us start our day feeling connected and it helps my kids kind of know what to expect from their day, and it kind of serves the same purpose that your morning meeting would serve if you were in a program. So, if you've given your parents suggestions around creating a routine, you might also offer this opportunity or offer them the

thought or the idea that starting their morning off in kind of regular, predictable way could also really support their children in managing the day.

Treshawn: Yeah, so I know we have a routine, and I really kind of stick to this routine because it helps me work and it helps her make sure she's getting her work done throughout the day, so I know that's really helpful. So, we've included in our resource list a Family Staycation Toolkit, and I love a good stay-cation. But although none of us feel like we are on vacation right now, that's OK. The tool kit is really a great way to help families plan their routine or establish a routine if they need one. And for children with suspected delays or identified disabilities, encourage families to support their children's development during their daily home activities, and they may focus on one or two small goals that are easily embedded into everyday routines like meal time or maybe reading a story because having this one to two goals per day or per week will ease the burden on families who may feel the need to plan like this whole lesson at home. So, take a look at that Family Staycation Tool Kit. It seems pretty helpful.

We also know that families sometimes worry that they don't have the right materials available at home, like they don't have all the learning, the blocks, and the markers, and everything that we have in the programs when they do go to school, but you know household materials and objects allow children to explore and learn in the context of their home environment, and they see you using materials every day and children oftentimes want to replicate what you do, so why not give them something? Communicate with your families that learning takes place within each moment of each day, so you don't need those education materials. You can use things at home. And so, I brought cups with me, and our cups have different sizes. These are all plastic, but we have glass. We wouldn't use glass with our children though. But we've got small, medium, large. We talk about what's the same and what's different, which one is going to hold more water. My son likes to use this cup, and he knows to fill the water up just to this notch for our dog so that it doesn't overflow the water bowl. So, it's lots of learning opportunities with just the use of cups, and it just alleviates that needing to buy something to help children learn. Let families know how their daily routines and activities support children's learning and development across the ELOF domain.

Here in this picture, you can see a mom with her children playing with empty food containers, and they're playing house together. You can learn lots of things like reading the labels, figuring out which foods are sweet and salty. There's just a plethora of things that you can do while you're playing. Speaking of playing, children also learn through play, and I know we're probably preaching to the choir here, but this is something to really reiterate to parents is that when children are playing, they are learning, and they're exploring, and as they interact with the materials and objects and trusted adults, it just adds on even more to their learning. Play, especially play with everyday materials at home creates some creativity, allows children to foster that creativity. You tend to focus more on what you're playing rather than what you're playing with, and then like I said, it helps to alleviate this expense of having toys to play with.

Judi: That's great, and I think also sometimes we just need to play, and I think sometimes parents might feel guilty letting their kids play, like maybe they're not learning if they're not

doing school work, but kids need to play, especially young kids. That is their main way of learning, so we want to make sure that while we might want to support families in thinking about how children are learning through routines and play that we also emphasize that the play is where the learning is happening. So, there's a great example. We use crayons in our house. We have piles of crayons. They can be objects for counting or sorting by color. My son was using them today in an activity to create patterns. Older preschoolers can be encouraged to line them up from the shortest crayon to the longest. They can be used to draw shapes or to draw pictures of things that you've observed on a nature walk. You can draw a face to say how you're feeling that day, and even infants and toddlers love kind of just the process of making marks on a paper, so even using a crayon to make marks on a paper teaches them some things about early writing skills, also learning about cause and effect. What happens when I bang this crayon on a paper? So, you can use crayons for lots of different things, more than just coloring. You can use them to teach children and support their learning and development in all of the ELOF domains.

Treshawn: That's right. Crayons have been a fan favorite in our household and since I have an older child, she has been melting crayons to make like a rainbow crayon. So, they even add a nice arts and crafts touch for older kids as well. So, for those who have been with us for our regular "Teacher Time" season, you know that we spent this year how you can support STEAM thinking with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Well, we brought one of our favorite guest experts back, Dawson Nichols from I-LABS because he showed us how we can use everyday materials to support mathematical thinking at home. So, as you watch this video, use box two in your viewer's guide to write down some ideas that you would like to share with families. So, let's take a watch.

[Video begins]

Dawson Nichols: Here we have some Play-Doh. Lots of different kinds of Play-Doh here. I've got a big, purple blob here, and I'm concentrating on numbers one day, I can say, well look at that, I have one piece of purple Play-Doh, and when I take it apart, it's two. One, two pieces. Wow. Now, the other describing words that I have, they don't change, right? This is purple. It's always going to be purple. It's squishy. It's going to stay squishy, but just by separating it, now I have one and two, and if I do it again, I have three.

Those are pretty difficult concepts, and I'm going to need to practice with them over and over again. But as we heard earlier in the webinar, children as young as 14 months old are beginning to understand numbers, which is why if I say, "This, this, this," that really isn't as helpful to a child as if I say, "One, two, three." And they may not be able to use those words. They may not be able to share those with me right now, but it is starting the process in their brains of making these connects and helping them understand number. That's how it works. And if I worked on number one day with Play-Doh, maybe the next day, I want to work on shape. And so, I've got some pink Play-Doh here. This is a nice ring and inside is a circle and I've made a cube over here, and notice I can talk about the surfaces and how it's flat on the side. I could count the sides if I want, too, but today I'm going to concentrate on shapes. I've made a sphere, a ball,

and again, simply by drawing the children's attention to different aspects of the world, you can make what is essentially one activity new from one day to the next. And that will make it enjoyable for you, but it will also make it really enjoyable and really helpful for the children in your care as well. I like to use big gross motor skills, and so, sometimes, what I like to do is I get painter's tape. This is blue, but it also comes in purple and green, and what's good about it is that it is sticky, but it's not super sticky, so I can put this down on the floor. I can put on a rug. I can put it anywhere and I don't need to worry about it doing any damage to the surface. But I can make patterns, and then I can ask the children to explore the patterns with their bodies. I could make a square and ask them to stand in one square and now find a circle to stand in. I can make a line and ask them to follow the line, and as we are playing, we are learning these really basic mathematical principals, and the more you can incorporate it into play, the better because play is, of course, the way children learn. That's their mechanism for learning. And I wanted to share one final idea with you and that is people sell pattern blocks of all different kinds, and they're great, but I like to point out to people that you can make your own even just with a simple piece of paper. You take the paper and you cut off one corner to make a triangle and then you cut off another corner to make another triangle. And then let's do it one more time, and what I have done is I have made myself a very interesting little puzzle. And I like to put it on another sheet of paper just so that I can see it a little better, and now what I can do is I can take this triangle, and I can do all sorts of things with it. I can count the sides. I can rotate it. I can talk about the shape. We can do a treasure hunt and look for other triangles in the world, but I could also say, "OK, how does this fit in? Triangles are different sizes." Now I'm talking about sizes. I'm talking about flipping it over. I'm talking about rotation. Lots of mathematical principals in something as simple as this, and it doesn't need to be expensive. It doesn't need to be complex.

Again, math is everywhere, and you might have a book that doesn't have mathematical principals as its subject, but I guarantee there's things in there that you can count. There are different shapes. There are patterns that you can discern, and you can talk about children with it when you're playing with books, when you're doing tummy time and looking around the room. In so many different ways, so many different times during the day, there are opportunities to share mathematical principles with infants and toddlers.

[Video ends]

Judi: Well, that was just a small clip of our friend Dawson from I-LABS, and we love Dawson. We know everyone loves Dawson. If you want to watch that video again or share it with others, we have it available on our Teacher Time community and MyPeers. And Dawson joined us for a couple of our infant and toddler episodes for Teacher Time this season. So, you could find those in MyPeers, in our Teacher Time community, and we're also working to get them up on the ECLKC. And then finally, in the green resources widget, there are some handouts for parents that will help support them in thinking about helping their children learn math and science ideas at home.

Treshawn: Yeah, Judi, we love Dawson. He's just a ball of fun and has some great information, so join us on MyPeer so you can look at those other videos if you haven't seen them already. But in addition to helping parents understand how to support learning through everyday routines and activities, it's also important to emphasize the importance of their daily interactions with children. And so, we want to encourage parents to use language throughout the day as they're interacting with their children listening to them, responding to what they say and do, and they may be talking quite a bit nowadays, but listening and responding is going to be really helpful. Some parents might need some support and understanding just how to use, continue a conversation, especially with very young children. But they can do things like just repeating the sounds and words that their children say and labeling objects as they're playing, or just talking about what's happening and what you're doing " I'm going to cook some lunch right now. We're going to pull out the bread first, and then get some peanut butter and some jelly out of the refrigerator." Just kind of talking through that process with them. Narrating what's going on. Also using gestures to connect language to what they're talking about. So, if a child brings you a really big ball, you know, say, "Wow, that's a really big ball." Or if they bring you a really small doll or something, say, "Oh, that's a tiny doll." You can even change your voice, but using gestures also helps. And then also reading. I mean, read, read, read. You know, we have 20 minutes of reading time in our house throughout the day. Sometimes several times a day because it's a nice, quiet activity. She can do it on her own if she wants to, but reading is so essential.

Judi: Yeah, I think reading is one of the silver linings that we've had in our house, where we really ... We actually take some time in the morning to read together, and it's one of those things where some of those ... We would skip it sometimes, or we would just get to bed too late and not have time to read. We've really had time to slow down and read together, and my boys ask now, regularly, to read, which I love. And remember, especially with your little ones, they are going to want to read the same book over and over and over. And that's how they learn. They learn the language, they learn to predict what happens next, they are comfortable with it, and so, even if you've memorized the book by now, if they ask you to read it again, just know that that's really – that's them telling you that they want to learn more from that book. We also know, from research, that in addition to just – to talking to children and filling their world with language, one of the things that's really important for language development is what's called serve and return, or this back-and-forth between adult and a child or a child and another child. These interactions, these back-and-forth conversations are the things that build that connection in their brains. And it also builds resiliency or strength within their minds and within their relationships. And that's something that we can all benefit from during these challenging times. In the resources widget – I know we keep sending you there – but we really did want to give you lots of resources that you can use for yourself and with families. There are handouts in English and in Spanish in that widget that explain to parents what the five steps are of serve and return. So, you can not only just talk to them about it, but then you also have a resource that you can share with them. There are lots of opportunities to promote children's language and to use language strategies through play and their daily interactions as children, and families just kind of hang out together. So, remind them how important it is to talk, read,

write, sing with their children in their home language to build that foundation for their future learning.

Treshawn: Yeah, and one way that we've been connecting with parents is through the use of technology. And some Head Start families and staff might be connecting via computers using video chatting or maybe just their mobile device. For others, it might be just a simple phone call. Don't forget that simple phone calls are important and can really make a world of a difference. Like, when's the last time you actually talked to someone on the phone instead of just texting or responding to a post or something. Ongoing communication is going to be critical for keeping parents and families informed about program and school-related information, and it can also serve as a virtual support to help ease the stress of feeling alone and feeling isolated during this period, just having another adult to talk to and to bounce things and ideas off of. Parents and families who have a child with a disability may have some additional concerns and questions about their children's learning and development during this time, so it's important to connect them with, the people and the resources that you have available to support their children at home as they transition back to school or back into their programs. Whatever form of technology you're using to stay in touch with families, it can be incredibly useful for your ability to really just maintain connections, first and foremost to maintain connections with the families and children, but also to maintain connections with children's learning, and that's going to be really important.

Judi: Yeah, I think what we've ... The teachers that support my kids have found and they've told me that they really had to kind of individualize with each family to find the way to connect with them that works with the family. So, in some cases, it is texting because one of the main points of contact is at work all the time and can't take a phone call. And other families, they have found opportunities to talk on the phone or send an e-mail, so I think it's important to figure out what's easiest for families to respond to maintain that connection. Now, we acknowledge that we are in a whole new world related to technology. We've never experienced this before. For some of you, you may be learning the world of webinars for the first time. It's really important though, that we do highlight some general guidelines for the use of technology with young children. And I know some of you have been asking in the Q&A box, like, "What do we do to support families who are struggling with kind of managing their kids access to and use of technology?" So, we're going to give you some guidelines. You can share them with families while also recognizing that, not every day is going to be perfect. There are some days where I'm like, "Yeah, my kids have watched too much TV today because I've just been trying to balance things." So, we recognize that, but here, just for some guidance, these are the general recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics. They've given us some really great insight to how to think about the ways that we can use technology with young children. It's important to talk with families about it without putting pressure on them or making them feel guilty. We don't want families to feel like they're doing something wrong by letting their kids maybe watch more TV or be on a screen for longer than we should, but then we also want to make sure that they understand that the adults who are home with children are the ones who are really going to be providing that learning opportunity through their daily interactions, and we want to make sure that there is a balance there, and if at all possible, to plan for the screen

time so that children know what to expect so there's not a fight at the end, offering older children the opportunity to say you have this time limit, and then when it's up we're going to do something else. And getting into that routine can really be helpful with that. Yeah, and interesting enough, and I'm sure parents would like to hear this too, when it comes to these younger infants and toddlers, they can learn, but it's when video chatting is done with someone that they know along with the parent on the side because they get this individualized, timely feedback to their expressions, language, and gestures. I know I love FaceTime. It helps me feel like I'm really connecting with people, which I am, but it's a different way. This can also help with relationship building skills because video chat is a little different than, watching cartoons or just watching videos. Infants and toddlers are engaging with a familiar adult, along with their parent, when they're using video chat, and so they can learn things like language, and they can even learn some behaviors when participating in video chatting. So, with that said, it's OK to have those virtual check-ins. Actually, for those young infants, it's actually a great idea to do it. You know, think FaceTime and Zoom, and anything that they can see your face and hear you and interact because this type of interactive, responsive experience in real time via video chat can support young children's learning with their language in development as well. When it comes to parents of 18- to 24-month-old children and you want to introduce some digital media or wanting to choose high-quality programming, and we're going to give you some ideas about what that involves, but high-quality programming and watching it with children so that you can help them understand what they're seeing. So, this is a reminder that it's important to watch programs that are high quality, but whenever possible have their parents with the child so that the parent can help the child kind of understand the things that they are seeing.

Judi: Yeah, that ongoing conversation. There's been a lot of interesting research about what a child learns from a show or a video that they're watching, when they're watching it on their own or when there's a parent talking to them about it, and you probably wouldn't be surprised to find that it's having an adult talking about the show that really makes a difference. Also, shows that support, kind of that interactivity or that back-and-forth, there are lots of shows out there now where the character will stop and turn and say, "What color should I choose?" or "What should I do next?" and so the child has the opportunity to respond, and that type of programming is more active and engaging, as opposed to passive where the child is just kind of sitting and watching colorful images go by. So, when you have the opportunity for young children to engage in those kinds of opportunities, if you're going to do screen time, that's kind of the one that you want to do. There is some research that looked at video chat with children, and there was a study with young children ages 12 to 25 months, where they were given the opportunity to engage in a real FaceTime conversation, and then some children were given the opportunity to see a pre-recorded video with adults to see which one they would develop relationships with better, and so not surprisingly, the children in the FaceTime group, they not only learned more from their interaction with the adult, but afterwards they preferred and they recognized that adult who they had interacted with. So, this highlights the importance of that relationship component. If you can do a live screen chat with someone, if you can do it with the children who you work with, or if they have another adult who they can do that with regularly, that's the kind of screen time where we know that children will be engaged and potentially learning from. So, for children ages 2 to 5, as it gets older, it gets, I think, more complicated.

The recommendation is to limit screen time to 1 hour per day. Not, like, one hour straight, but maybe 20 minutes here, 30 minutes here. That is an ideal world. I'll tell you I've broken that rule many times. But, again, if we can get to some of that high-quality screen time where parents are watching along with the children ... I've actually found some kids shows that I actually really enjoy watching. I try to convince my kids to watch with me like, "Can we watch that show?" because I actually really enjoy it, and we do have conversations about them together. It is hard, I'll admit, because I'm balancing work and life, right, sometimes I have my phone or I'm checking e-mails or sending people messages while my kids are just watching, and thank goodness they're just sitting and watching so I can get some work done, and that's OK. But if we can have some moments where we can engage together, whether it's around a game that they're playing or an app that they're using or a show that they're watching, it helps to build their knowledge, right? And think about what they're seeing and what they're paying attention to might apply in terms of the real world when they're not on screens.

Treshawn: [Laughter] That's right. I have to say, I do have a couple favorite cartoons that, you know, we watch. And I tend to ask questions because I'm not sure what happened. Like, I stepped away to do something. So, I do ask questions, but, you know, I count it as recall. Like, I'm asking the children to recall what they just saw, so I think that's helpful. Here on this screen, you'll see a joint position statement by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media, and it provides guidance to early childhood educators that may be also useful to families, and it really just highlights that the use of technology and interactive media is an effective tool when used intentionally. And so, education staff can help parents select and intentionally use interactive technology to promote children's development across all learning domains. So, technology and the use of it is not all lost.

Judi: Right, and that's a great spot to just start from, and I think that can help inform your decisions as you start back to your programs to really think about children's continued use of technology at home, but then also how you incorporate the use of technology in your programs. Now, another center, the Center for Early Learning, has given us a few things to think about when we talk with families about using technology in the home, when we think about families' access, and actually the first thing is access. So, it's important to understand what access families have to technology, to Wi-Fi, to data plans because some of our suggestions, FaceTime, well, if FaceTime is using up a data plan, then maybe that is not the best way of communicating with a family. Or, like Treshawn and I had said, we have limited technology, so we need to use our technology for work, but sometimes we need to use it to support our kids. And so, I think understanding what technology your families have access to is a great starting point. When we all started staying at home, we got a survey from our school district on what technology we have access to so that our district would be aware of, what the general availability was across the district and the access that they had. I saw something recently about a school district where they're driving buses around to different neighborhoods that are enabled with Wi-Fi so that families can make connections. Lots of times, families have relied on libraries to access computers or printers, or even the Internet, and without that access, sometimes families are left struggling. So, if you're wondering why you haven't heard from a family in a while or you

haven't been able to connect with them, those are good questions to ask. Maybe they're having challenges related to access. Also, you want to think about the resources that you provide, and are they available in multiple languages? I know a lot of you in the community box have asked about whether resources are available in Spanish or in other languages, and anywhere we give a resource, if it is available in Spanish, we provided that for you as well. But thinking about what access families have and what their language access is to the resources is going to impact our ability to engage with the technology. Also, the higher need for resources ... There is a higher need for resources to help parents and us as educators to think about what is developmentally appropriate and how to use technology in appropriate ways, and we've given you some ideas about that. And then finally, we want to make sure, this goes along with access, that if children or families need assistive technology, that is a way to create equitable access. So, if you look into special recommendations for children with disabilities or suspected delays, consider the children who depend on technology. I know there is lots of children who depend on, maybe, a tablet, to communicate or to – to understand their daily routine. And then there's also children who may have adverse reactions to lots of exposure to technology, and so we want to make sure that we're thinking about and considering all of the children and their individual needs.

Treshawn: Right, so how do we then help families choose developmentally appropriate technology for their children? And I've got a couple of ways to think about. First, when we think about technology, we want to make sure that there's some kind of two-way interaction going on. Sometimes I know when my kids are watching videos, they're just, like, zoned out, and they don't blink, you know? So, sometimes, like, looking for tools that invite a two-way communication between the tool and the child or between the tool and the parent. Like, for example, some technology may ask children to provide feedback or type in the right answer or, you know, touch the square. Those are all good, or it may suggest some further activities to the parent, so looking for that two-way interaction is going to be useful. We also want to customize the technology that we're giving to parents to make sure that it matches the child's age and it's developmentally appropriate for where they are at that level of development, so some tools adjust to parent feedback on how well the activity matches the child's ability, and that's great. And some apps don't, and some technologies don't, so we want to be mindful that we're giving parents access to materials that their children can do successfully. Then also, we want to consider language in culture. And some tools offer content in multiple languages, and that's great, but many do not, and so you want to check whether the images, the languages, translations, the activities are going to be responsive and respectful to cultural values and support children's home language use as well. And then lastly, we want to balance the tool with interaction. So, like I said before, some media and technology, kids are just kind of zoned out, but, you know, we want to find a tool that doesn't get in the way of this important parent-child interaction because, like we mentioned before, interactions and relationships are going to be, first and foremost, when we're thinking about children's learning from a distance.

Judi: Yeah, I think that's really helpful. And I think one of the questions that we've seen popping up a little bit in the community box is how to help families figure out what is good technology and maybe what they would want to avoid. So, credible technology is going to be technology that supports children's learning at home. We have a list of credible, or technology resources in

the resource widget. They're suggestions. You can feel free to explore them to see if it meets needs of your children and families. But here's some questions that you just want to keep in mind as you think about supporting families and their use of technology. So, as Treshawn just said, where is the child and the developmental progression? What are they ready for? Maybe, what is going to be a little bit too challenging for them? What do they need to learn? If you have older preschoolers who are starting to read, then having them on an ABC or letter app may not be challenging enough for them, so they can get bored easily. So, finding that space where they're going to be challenged but not overwhelmed is challenging, and that's a place where you can really help parents think about what they're hoping for their children to learn. You can use the ELOF and help parents understand where some games or apps or shows may be supporting growth and development and some of the learning domains and some may not. The context ... So, are there opportunities for that back-and-forth interaction or for the child to interact with the program or the game? Do they fit within the daily routine? That's a great question. Sometimes it fits, sometimes it doesn't. Are there hands-on activities that you can use? I know some of the things that my kids are provided with say, "OK, watch this video. Now, at home, see if you can build a robot out of the things that are in your house," or something like that. That's always a fun way to connect what they're learning on a video with what they have at home.

We want them to be interesting, engaging, and fun. This will help the children feel empowered and will also make these connections between what's virtual and then what's happening at home. And then finally, the content. So, again, is it interesting? Is it fun? Is it appropriate? Does it scaffold children's learning? Does it meet their developmental goals? One thing that you could encourage families to look for and that you would want to look for is that adaptive programming. So, especially with apps and games, if the program can respond to what the child does and then what they offer the child next is responsive to what the child is able to do, that allows the child to grow. So, the program is built to say, "Oh, you got that answer wrong. We're going to give you something a little bit easier." Or, "Oh, you got that right. You figured it out and now we're going to give you something a little bit more challenging." And that takes the work out of it for the parents. They can trust that the program is going to be supporting children's learning in several of those areas. So, please ask questions if you have questions about technology. I know some of you are already asking questions, but use the Q&A, and we will take the time at the end of the webinar to answer some of your tech questions.

Treshawn: Absolutely, we want to help you find some good, credible sources. So, finally, it's important to remember yourself. Take time for you. As you can see, I'm, like, the self-care person here. It's important to make time for yourself and model, that self-care for families, telling them and showing them that it's important. I think many parents out there, many of the caregivers, all of us know that when we're feeling significant stress and anxiety and unease and maybe even some depression about what's going on around the world around you, and that you don't have as much energy to be on your best game, you know, when you don't feel all that well and in particular, this crisis. It's very important for people to understand that it's OK. It's OK to feel these things, and it's important for adults to have a little bit of downtime every now and then and pay attention to their own needs. It's all a matter of balance. And so, we all know that

when you're on an airplane, when we fly safely, we know that the statement the flight attendant makes in the beginning, she's like, "You must put your mask on before helping other people." And this is just what we're saying. Just like this quote. We're all living in a time of uncertainty, just like the families and the children that we work with, but in order to support those who need us, we need to be sure that we are mentally and physically prepared. That's why we did that breathing exercise in the beginning, just so that you can kind of reset and zone in to the "Teacher Time" episode today. We all have worries, whether it be about loss of income, and it may be health of our family members, and how empty or full our refrigerators are, how many snacks our kids are eating every day and then balancing between being a working parent and a full-time teacher, but this is all why self-care is important, and this is why we must model and support this for our families. And the best way for any of us to care for others is to really take care of ourselves first.

Judi: Yeah, I think it's really key to kind of do our best to take care of ourselves, especially when we are in the business of supporting others, and wellness is important. Our wellness matters to our own quality of life, and it doesn't necessarily mean taking a bubble bath or getting a massage. It's not like I have time or even the availability of any of those things these days, but it's really about keeping our physical and mental health in balance. And it matters because everything that we do and every emotion that we feel relates to our well-being. And you'll feel it, right? Some day you feel like you're on and you've got this figured out, and the next day it's just a mess. Having that balance behind you to support you while you manage those different types of days. And our well-being affects our actions and our emotions, and our availability to our families that we're supporting and the children, and also to our own families and our own children. It's a circle. It's a cycle. It's really important for us to focus on being the best that we can be in this moment to help us alleviate stress, to reduce the risk of illness, and to make sure that we have the most positive relationship-building interactions that we can have on a daily basis.

Treshawn: That's right. And so, if you see on this screen, there's a couple of tips here, and while none of these tips are new, they're a really helpful reminder to just take a look, you know, at this list. And some of these approaches to wellness are going to be really useful during this stressful time, so which ones do you use? I know we walk outside all the time, or on our bikes, doing something outside just to, get away from being indoors. Do you encourage families to do the same? Get outside and get some exercise and get some fresh air? Are you taking daily walks? Share how your walk went with your family so that maybe that will encourage them to do the same. Or maybe even do a virtual recipe share. Healthy foods, of course, but get online and share some recipes or look for some recipes. I know we're kind of running out of things – new things to eat, so looking online for some new things. If that relaxes you, that's helpful. Ask what is on their "When I have the time" list, and maybe figure out ways to help the check off that list so that they can feel some success in that.

Judi: Yeah, I think maybe even not a, "When I have the time" list, but I've found an "I need to make the time" list, right? Because I love to run. It's one of my stress relievers, and every day I'm like, "Oh, I didn't have time to run," and I realize I didn't make the time to run. I know it's a

privilege to be able to get out and run, but I do have to make the time, and when I don't, I feel it, so I want to make sure that I do that for my own wellness. In your viewer's guide, there is a space for you to write down three things that you're doing to help manage your physical and emotional health. Hopefully, you can write at least three things down to think about how you're managing these times and your work-life balance. Focusing on wellness in our lives helps us build resilience, and it enables us to thrive when we're faced with challenges like we have today. We know that, as teachers and family childcare providers, you have strong relationships with the children that you work with and the families that you've been communicating with, and we want to help you have what you need in the form of resources or other supports that we can offer here at DTL to help you maintain those relationships during this time where things are still not quite clear.

Treshawn: Yeah, awesome. So, we're going to take some time to answer your questions, and I'm so glad we have some questions rolling in. It's going to be really fun towards the end of the webinar today. But before we do that, we want to remind you about some helpful resources. So, first is MyPeers, and MyPeers is a virtual, informal social community where you can exchange some ideas and share resources. Lots of you have joined us in MyPeers already, and that's awesome, but if you haven't joined MyPeers, you can do so. It's free, and you can do it via the ECLKC. There's a link in your viewer's guide, as well, to join there, and you'll find us in our Teacher Time community, and we're going to be posting more videos and sharing some strategies related to supporting children and families at home. We're going to be posting all summer long, so we hope you join us there and get some helpful tips as you're supporting families during the summertime.

Judi: Yeah, that's great. We hope we'll see you in MyPeers. Join us in there. We also have the ELOF2GO app, if you haven't downloaded it yet. It's fabulous. It's available in English and in Spanish. It helps you learn more about the ELOF, and it gives you quick access to the ELOF goals for children and some examples of effective teaching practices that you could even modify and share with your families if they're looking for opportunities to support their children's learning and development. We've also included a link to an ECLKC page that has lots of additional resources to help you address concerns that are related to our current situation, so please check that site often. If you are working in a Head Start program, this is where you're going to find a lot of the answers related to what's happening right now.

Treshawn: Yes, and then as we're talking about apps, there's the Text4Teachers, and that sends you two free text messages each month with information and tips and research and resources to help strengthen and support your teaching practices, so sign up for that. And then if you work with children who are dual language learners, the Ready DLL app provides ideas for, you know, weekly activities and resources, and even some videos to help you learn more about effective teaching practices, and there are multiple languages on this app, you know, from Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Haitian, Creole, I mean, you name it. So, go ahead and check that out when you have some time.

Judi: Perfect. OK, so I think we gave you just about every resource we possibly could. We're going to take a few minutes to talk about some of your questions. So, if you have a question and you haven't used that Q&A widget, go to the bottom, you can open up the Q&A, you can type in a question. Jan Greenberg is our Q&A facilitator. She's been sharing some questions with us as we've been going through the episode. But we just want to take a few minutes and hear from you. What your concerns are, what's going on with you with your community, with the families that you're supporting and see if we can offer you some help. So, I see that we have a question, and I feel – I feel this one in my soul, how to help families who feel overwhelmed with school activities. [Laughter] I don't know how you feel, Treshawn, but I definitely... Today I was overwhelmed. My kids had meetings with their teachers, and we had schoolwork we had to finish. I think we've said a little bit about that during the episode, but definitely I think what's key is to engage in activities over time to find that balance between something that you might see as like a school activity and then also time for play. Remember where that learning happens in play, building that train track together. There is so much learning opportunity. Going for a bike ride, that's building your gross motor skills. You can have conversations about what you see on your bike ride, so I think finding that balance, when possible between what's assigned for school or what school activities have to be there, have to be done and then also, I think, providing the space for parents to say, "This is too much. I can't handle this right now. I feel like I'm failing all the time. I have multiple kids who have multiple assignments, and we have one computer, so what do I do?" And I think giving parents the freedom to just feel OK, especially with preschoolers and infants and toddlers, to just say, "It didn't happen today," or maybe, "Let's get a plan into place, a schedule where we know what's happening." I had a friend who told me just this week that she has two grandchildren, one who's 4 and one who's 8, and her son said, "Mom, can you just get on Facetime with my 4-year-old for like half an hour so that I can do science with my 8-year-old?" and so I think families are getting really creative in terms of reaching out to others, finding ways to balance and manage the workload that they have and the school requirements, so I would say give parents space and offer support when you can, and let them know that it's OK to be not OK, you know, and just, I think, to be real and realize that nobody has ever done this before. We're all figuring this out together.

Treshawn: Yeah, I have a friend, and she's got four little ones all under the age of 8, and I think by 2 weeks in of the stay-home order, she's like, "I'm done. Like, I can't do this anymore," but she has been posting things that they're doing every day like going on walks and playing in the creek, by her house or teaching ... Two of her children are learning how to ride a bike. She's teaching the third child how to tie his shoes, so I think she's like finding ways, and it doesn't have to be, the curriculum ways or following the curriculum that programs are using, but children are learning these life skills and socio-emotional skills and things, and so that's going to be useful as well, if they can't get to the curriculum, but another question that I saw was, a child is kind of socially isolated. They're missing their friends, and they don't have any other children to play with, and we do have a lot of children in our neighborhood, but some of them don't go to, my children's home school or things of that nature, so we have implemented a social hour, every so often throughout our day where the kids can call a family member. They can call a friend. I've texted the parents and said, "Hey. Can, you know, can we chat and video chat?" and

the kids will get online to video chat, and we talked a little bit about that today during the American Academy, the AAP section, where letting children do the interactive media, and I think that has been such a lifesaver because, although we can't necessarily play together as much as they want to, they can still get on and FaceTime, and they can go around the house and showing them things that they've made, and they kind of look forward to having that time, and I know it's only an hour out of our day that, they're socializing with another friend, but it's better than nothing, for one, but it also kind of makes up for not being at school and being with friends, so that has been useful.

Judi: I saw we had a couple questions, and I think this is ... Well, this is probably true for birth to 5, but I think especially with toddlers who might be at home alone without other children to interact with, and I know that some of our participants here are feeling anxious about it with their own children, and then also some families are wondering, like, "Well, we're losing out on this opportunity to play with other children," and I think that it's – I think it's important to, yes, acknowledge that this is definitely a new circumstance that we never expected. I think opportunities to engage virtually is great, but it doesn't replace figuring out how to share when you both want the same block, but I think some of what we mentioned today can be helpful in terms of really supporting families and making sure that they had those moments of engaging, sitting on the floor, playing together. That kind of interactivity, it doesn't substitute playing with another child, but it does ... It can build the child's language skills or social-emotional skills or self-regulation skills. If we are focused on what we're hoping for them to learn and be able to do, we can support that as families, and this is temporary, and so I think doing the best that we can in the moment that we're in is ... We're all doing the best that we can and then hope that ... And this is another question that came up as well, how do we support children as we transition back into our programs opening up again? And for every one of you, the answer is going to be different, I think, because your programs are all going to be opening at different times, in different ways, in different capacities, and so I would say it's just really key to do your very best to maintain communication with families that you've been working with at home to really support them in whatever way your program is opening to help them and their children kind of transition back, and you're going to be transitioning back, too. Your kids will be transitioning back, so we're all going to go through that transition together, as well, I think, so maintaining those open lines of communication whenever possible is really important, and then on top of that, I've seen a lot of questions about how to communicate or what to do when families are just not responding or you send out an e-mail and you don't hear back or you ask them to do this activity, and you don't get a response, or there might be parents who you just really haven't had communication with in several weeks, if at all, and I'm sure that can be really frustrating and really heartbreaking, right, especially if these are children that you're used to seeing every day, and now you don't know how they're doing, and you feel like you don't have access to their parents, and you have no way of reaching out or finding out how you can support them, and so I just want to validate your efforts even if it feels kind of defeating to not get a response. I kind of feel a responsibility to tell my teachers that I appreciate what they're sending me, and I try to do everything that they ask me to do, but I know that they're on the other side of it getting pressure from our school district to make sure that they are providing us with these kinds of lessons and activities, so it's a big cycle. If you have the opportunity to stop

by someone's house in a safe way, pull into someone's driveway and ask them from the door if they're doing OK, could be an option. Think about the strategies we offer for the finding out the different ways of communication. Maybe the way that your program has set up communication or that you've found to be successful with most parents not working for several of your parents for some reason. They could be going through, some struggles of their own. I know one of my son's friends, she just moved to a different town to live with her grandmother until this is all over because both of her parents are essential workers, so we have those kinds of situations happening everywhere, and I think, you know, again, being kind to yourself and then being kind with your families and doing the best that you can is all you can do.

Treshawn: Yeah. It's like you can't really control, what's going on the other end. All you can do is be the best teacher that you can be for the students and hope that they're getting something out of it, but, you know, one thing, because my husband also works from home, and he works with families, and so whenever he gets into that situation where he can't reach a family or things like that, sometimes it's the mode of communication, that they're using. They may not be able to download Zoom, or they don't have an iPhone, so they can't FaceTime, so he just asks. He's like, "What is the best way for me to contact you?" you know, and just hear from parents and be open to, so if they say, "You know what? Phone calls during the day really don't work for me. Maybe you should call, at night when the kids are in bed," or offer some times and flexible times to reach families when they're not so busy or things like that or depending on what type of technology they have. They may not be able to download certain apps, so just brainstorming with the family, figuring out ways that they can access the materials and that you can feel successful on your end, I think, just like Judi said, the open lines of communication is going to be super important at this time.

Judi: Yeah. I think one of the questions related to this is, a lot of families feel like it's summertime, and I know a lot of schools are out. My school, we're still in session for almost another month here, so it's not summertime yet, but I know a lot of schools are out, and so families might not be interested in getting an e-mail every day saying, "Here's something for you to do." I would say, like, check out the resources in the resource widget because so many of those resources are, here's how to support children's learning and development through what you do every day, and it's not necessarily, like, a school activity, so even if they are like, "We're kind of done with doing schoolwork. We just want to have summer," fine. If you're going to go outside and, you know, play kickball, what can you learn or think about? If you're going to take the morning off and just, like, play board games, what kind of things can children learn through playing board games, or like we mentioned, during your daily routines, where can that learning happen? And I think also we've had some questions about supporting families who have children with challenging behaviors or behaviors that are challenging. My kids have behaviors that are challenging to me. I think we all ... We've all found out the ways that our kids can be challenging in different ways. We do have some resources. I don't know that they're in the resource widget, and I don't know if we can add them in there, but if you go to the ECLKC, we do have resources on the ECLKC. There's a 15-minute In-service meet on supporting children with behaviors that challenge us. There's some resources in there that you can use to support families, and some of the resources that we put in the resource widget will do that as well.

There's one that we have in there. It's called "Help Us Have a Good Day." It's strategies that families can use that really create that positive relationship that can set the day off in a good way so that you're ready for success, and, again, you know, it's a relationship, and so children's behaviors ... As an adult, I'm responsible for my response to that behavior, and when I'm stressed and overwhelmed, it's challenging for me, so even helping families think about how adults can support their own well-being so that they're better able to respond to those behaviors can be a great strategy as well.

Treshawn: Yeah. We had another question saying that children like to be on technology or using technology all day, watching videos, and playing games, and I think summer brain is starting to kick in a little bit, so we want to offer families a little bit of grace with that, but you can remind them of, the different things or the different ways that we select technology. Is it interactive? Is it engaging? Are parents sitting next to the child as they're playing games? So, thinking about some of those suggestions that we said and then also thinking about that Family Staycation Toolkit, that resource because maybe you just need a little bit ... Maybe parents just need a little bit more of a routine so that children know when they can use technology and when it's time for something else, and so that's also going to help them transition back into programs, like having that routine instead of like being off of a routine for a while, but check out that resource, and then for older children, maybe having them plan some time that they want to do something during the day so that they feel responsible for their schedule as well, and then you can easily remind them, "Right now, it's quiet time, but at 2:30, when you get up from your quiet time, you can have some technology time," so just really incorporating their routine, I think, is going to be helpful for children that want to use technology all day.

Judi: Well, and I've been told straight-up by my 6-year-old that I'm modeling poor behavior, right, because I'm saying that you can't be on a screen day, but what he sees is, even if I'm not literally sitting in front of my computer screen, I'm either sitting in front of a TV screen or sitting in front of my phone screen, so he'll say, "It's not fair. You're on yours all day." Like, "When I grow up, I can be on my, you know, be on the screen whenever I want," so I think modeling that, it's important for my own well-being to just cut out and let go of technology and being connected virtually and really connect with my kids has been important, so I want to model, this is what it's like to not be connected to technology and to enjoy laying on the floor and playing a board game or doing a puzzle or drawing together, even. We've really started enjoying ... My son and I are writing comic books together. He loves to write comics, so he'll ask me to draw a picture, and then he'll draw a picture, so modeling that disconnection, I think, is important for families, and I think when we ask families for things, remembering that they might be hitting a virtual overload as well. My son's teacher, every weekend, she sends us a message on Friday, and she says, "I hope you take the time to just disconnect and go outside or be with each other and cook in the kitchen and take some time to be together as a family," because I think we are getting overwhelmed, and I know we're here on a webinar overwhelming you [Laughter] with virtual stuff, but we'll get off soon, and you can maybe disconnect a little bit and take some time to be together with the people that you love and care for, but I think that making sure that children understand, that technology is something we can

use for work, for entertainment but that we also need to balance that with the other activities that we have each day.

Treshawn: Yeah. We had another question, too, about whether we want to give parents video instructions on the curriculum and activities or implementing a physical curriculum from teachers using e-mails and other fliers and things. And you know what? It really ... I say both. It depends on what works for the family, and this is where you want to have that open line of communication. Some parents are going to be all bit more tech savvy, so they'll know how to use some of the technology. Some people are just ... They like the paper and pencil, and they just want that to be sent home or mailed to their home or however you're sending information out, so I think it'd be just important to talk with families about what's going to work best for them, and, like, I know for "Teacher Time", we did a... Well, for the ON24 webinar, since we're all, you know, doing things mostly virtual, we had a little bit more supported videos on how to use ON24 and how to disable your pop-up blocker and things of that nature, and so, some families may need some guidance with these things, and that would be nice to record a little video for them, but they feel like you have the handle on it or you talk to them and they want another form of communication, then by all means, respect that. So, yeah, do both. Really just do what works for the family, and also do the best that you can too.

Judi: I think we have time for one last question, and I just want to thank you all for asking these questions. It's really kind of fun to hear what's going on with you and where your challenges are and where your successes are, but I see that someone asked if maybe telling parents some of the daily routines you did in your center would be a good idea, like bathroom time or the schedule or lunchtime, and I think ... I am a schedule fanatic. I mean, the first thing that we did when we got stuck at home was to create a schedule, and we've changed it quite a bit, and my kids had some input into it, and we found out what worked and what didn't, but at this point, we really do. They kind of know what to expect, and even if it's not, like, the same time every day, they know what's next. We have our morning meeting, and then they do schoolwork, and I'm with them, and then I go to do my work while my husband makes them lunch, and then they go outside, so even if the time isn't the same every day, they kind of know what to expect. Having a bedtime routine ... I know that's not something you do at your center, but you do have a quiet time routine, right, so having those expectations in place, even having a quiet time in the middle of the day for everyone to just kind of maybe have some time apart.

Treshawn: Quiet time?

Judi: Quiet time. I still do it. My kids are 6 and 8, and we still have quiet time just to kind of chill out and relax a little bit, but helping kids know what to expect is important for very young kids, even your preschoolers. Having a picture schedule can be really important. Being able to ... If you want to use, like, sticky notes or something to say, "Oh, we did this already. We're going to move it here," or if you have a whiteboard, you can cross off what you did already or erase it so that children kind of know what's coming next. Oh, so we, we just ate lunch, so we're going to clean up lunch, and then we're going to have our, our quiet time, or we're going to read a book, and then we'll have quiet time so that they get to know that routine, and I think at a center,

that a schedule is mandatory. It's really important when you're managing maybe 20 kids or 18 kids, but it can be helpful at home if you have one child, if you have five children. Definitely sharing that schedule I think would be ... I think parents would really appreciate that. So, Treshawn, and I don't know if you have anything else that's come up, but I think we're getting close to our time, so ...

Treshawn: Yeah. We are coming close to our time, and that was really fun to answer your questions live. Thank you for participating in that and not leaving us hanging on the Q&A section. But before we go, we just want to send our best wishes to you from all of us here at "Teacher Time," thank you so much for all that you're doing and continue to do as you're caring for children and families. I see it. I see work coming home. I see teachers really striving to make things fun for children, having virtual spirit days and all that good stuff, so hats off to you for sticking it in there. We hope that you and your families stay safe and healthy during this time, and please remember to take care of your mental health, take some time each day to take some deep breaths or stretch or take a walk, listen to music, do something fun, but really just take that time for yourself.

Judi: Yeah. That's so important. Please make that time for yourself. And we know some of you have mentioned you're already starting to shift toward thinking about your programs opening up, some of you, and head-start programs might be offering summer learning for some of your children who are going to be transitioning into kindergarten, so we'd love to keep this conversation going with you. Treshawn and I are in MyPeers. Our friend, Jan Greenberg, is in MyPeers all the time. If you have questions, if you want to share strategies, we didn't get to all of your questions, please join us in the "Teacher Time" community. Ask those questions, and honestly, like, we might be able to help, but that community is there to help you. They can say, "This is what has worked for us. This is what we're experiencing. This is what we've tried, and this is how it worked." That community is there for you to support you in what you're doing, and so when you're on screen time, take a little time, go to MyPeers, and join us there. We'd love to see you there this summer. We hope that you have a wonderful and safe and healthy summer or end of your academic year, if you're still in it, and a successful transition to whatever is coming next, and we really appreciated the time that we've had with you this season on "Teacher Time," and we'll look forward to seeing you again in the fall when we start our next series, so thank you, and before we go, I feel like this is like the Oscars. I do want to say thank you to our "Teacher Time" team who has supported us, Stephanie and Jan, and thank you to everyone who's been helping us behind the scenes today and throughout the season. We definitely would not at all have been able to do this without you, so thank you, and we'll see you next time.

Treshawn: Absolutely. Bye.

Judi: Bye.