

Addressing Environmental Challenges in Family Child Care Programs

Virginia Tse: Hi everyone. Welcome to this episode of Meaningful Makeover: Family Child Care edition. I'm Virginia Tse and I'm joined today by my colleague Becky Sughrim. We are from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. We're so happy that you have joined us today to talk about addressing environmental challenges in family child care learning settings.

I would also like to call your attention to the viewer's guide. You'll find it in the resource widget. We encourage you to download the viewer's guide and use it to follow along with us during the episode. We use the viewer's guide to reflect on the content we're covering and to write down new strategies or ideas. We also provide some additional resources if you want to dive deeper into the topic. Okay I think that's all for logistics. Let's get into our topic for today.

Becky Sughrim: Meaningful Makeover is a web series that highlights common challenges and solutions in early learning environments. Meaningful Makeover: Family Child Care edition is especially designed for family child care providers and their environments. Let's watch a short video that introduces what meaningful makeover is all about.

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Narrator: Meaningful Makeover is a makeover of early learning environments. Teachers don't often have the opportunity to see how other environments are designed. Meaningful Makeover is a chance to see just that. Each episode features a different teacher in their early learning space. You'll see how our environmental experts makeover different areas. Why they're making those changes and how the design promotes learning opportunities.

The show is full of tips and ideas for making affordable small changes that have big impact. Welcome to Meaningful Makeover.

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[Video ends]

Becky: In today's episode we will show you how we have worked together with family child care providers to make changes to their spaces, that help foster children's learning and development. The Meaningful Makeover process begins with gathering information from child care providers on what their challenges are and conducting an environmental assessment. Then working together with the family child care provider to come up with solutions and finally making the changes in the learning environment in a meaningful way. We hope that you will find some ideas that will be helpful to you and your program.

In addition to makeovers giving the environment a new look and feel, makeovers are meaningful because the environmental changes support children's learning and development through the promotion of access to materials, which can help increase children's participation and learning activities. And support children's learning and development through the goals from the ELOF.

Throughout this webinar we will make connections to how the environmental changes are connected to the goals in the Early Learning Outcomes Framework or the ELOF. While we are focusing on family child care settings, educators and other settings or roles such as coaches, education managers, child development specialists and disability service coordinators may also gain ideas of ways to support the family child care providers they work with.

Virginia: Last time we talked about how the unique make up of family child care learning environments have so many benefits. We also talked about potential challenges and solutions related to having a mixed age environment. Having children and families that speak multiple languages. Supporting inclusion and belonging and supporting social and emotional development for all children. We also shared some ideas and tips for DIY projects that allow you to create your own materials with low or no cost.

On this second episode we'll discuss a few more common challenges that we've heard from all of you. Today we're going to talk about these five challenges in family child care settings. Room arrangement, spaces for infants and toddlers, incorporating STEAM, using books for literacy and beyond and setting up an outdoor environment. As we watch and discuss how the makeover crew addressed each challenge, we'll also make connections to how changes for each challenge are connected to the goals in the Early Learning Outcomes Framework or ELOF for infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers.

You can learn more about ELOF by going to the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center or ECLKC and search for the ELOF. You'll find the interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, ages birth through 5. You can click on any domain and see the associated subdomains, goals, developmental progressions and indicators. You can also follow along with our ELOF apps, ELOF2Go or ELOF@Home. And as we look at the connections to the ELOF, think about how changes you make in the environment support children's learning and development.

You can also think about how you can use these apps with families to talk about their children's growth and development. We're curious to know what topic are you most excited to hear about today? We're going to do a poll. Let us know which topic you're most excited to hear about, room arrangement, infants and toddler, STEAM learning, books for literacy and beyond or setting up an outdoor environment. Let's take a look.

Well thank you – oh we see infants and toddlers. A close second is STEAM and setting up an outdoor environment. Well thank you so much for letting us know. One of the beauties of family child care is that they're homey and provide a unique sense of comfort. Children and families can even become an extension of the provider's family. Family child care settings allow children of multiple ages to be in the same environment, and sometimes the child care provider is located in their own neighborhood. Thereby contributing to a tightknit community feel.

We also know that there can be some challenges associated with the space and family child care settings. The first challenge we're going to touch on today is related to room arrangement. Specifically, how to arrange an engaging environment with safe and well-defined spaces for all age groups. Some particular challenges related to the arrangement of space could be making use of available space, maximizing small spaces, planning for mixed use areas like we see in this

photo and ensuring that supervision is addressed. Let's watch how the Meaningful Makeover crew works with family child care providers to address their room arrangement challenges. Please note that these videos are from a particular state, so remember to follow your own state guidelines when thinking about health and safety, and other environmental regulations.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

Woman 1: My main concern is to get the best of the space, because I do believe that I do have a good space. But it's just the setting. I just want to maybe have like math station, science station or a STEM place. Just kind of divide them separately because right now all the activities they're just concentrated.

Woman 2: What I'm hearing is that instead of having to bring the kids together at a table for an activity, you want to set up activities and interest centers throughout the room so the kids can choose for themselves. And then you can maybe offer a special activity that they can come to if they want. But they have many other options.

Woman 3: I think that one of the things we've talked in coaching is about that need to have a dedicated space where the building can take place in the block center. There's some space, and the kids make do, but what I think is a challenge for a lot of the different learning centers is that it would be hard for more than two people to play together.

Woman 4: If I'm someplace else, normally there – that kitchen spot is right here. Then I can't see over here. We had that problem today.

Woman 5: Okay.

Woman 4: Kieran was over here playing, and I was over there supervising water. I couldn't see him on the floor over here. Supervision is always a really big problem.

Woman 6: She has a great space already, but her and her coach have been hoping to make some changes since she has a new group of little ones. She had some older children that were preschoolers, that moved on to kindergarten. Now she needs to revamp her space for the little ones. Then we'll take the infant cozy area, since the toys will be here, the noisier more active play will have to decide to put the cozy area over in that corner, which is not what we thought we were going to do. But I think that's going to work. Do you guys think that seems like a good plan?

Woman 7: Yes, that's great because then the loud area will be in the same space and the cozy area will be far away.

[Music]

Woman 6: I want to make the shelves sticking out to make more defined learning spaces. But I'm also nervous because it's going to be a crawling baby, and I kind of feel like keeping it open and maybe just using rugs, like in the dramatic play area, put a little rug on the floor to define it. But keep the materials kind of against the wall.

[Music]

Woman 5: We got your block area out here. We got the dramatic play, you got the cozy area, reading area far away from the blocks and other noisy materials.

Woman 8: Doing child care for over 30 years. It was really nice of the makeover crew to come in and help me re-emphasize my philosophy and my care for children. And helping of the families and by giving me areas that define my play with the kids.

[Speaking Spanish]

[Music]

[Video ends]

Virginia: Wasn't that a great video? I love how the makeover team tailored the changes for the different needs of each family child care provider in their unique setting. I love the tip about defining the learning space, so that different activities or interest areas can be set up. This allows environment to be a third teacher by naturally helping children access specific materials and having a dedicated space to engage in a particular kind of play.

For example, having a sensory table with the accessible toys nearby, guide children in scooping, pouring or measuring. For spaces that are smaller that might not allow as big or maybe as many interest areas, mini centers can also be used. For example, your art center could be smaller, and maybe allow for just one or two children instead of a larger group. It's also helpful to hear how rugs can be used to define space while allowing for supervision to occur, especially for infants and toddlers. Rugs are also great because they help children focus by being a defined space for individual play, activity or learning.

Some of the other tips were to include using low shelves so that infants and toddlers can easily reach materials and allowing space between loud and quiet areas if possible. And thinking about which areas might need a little more space, such as the block area. Think of some of the ideas you'd like to try related to room arrangement and write those down in your viewer's guide.

Arranging your space and having a well-defined areas are related to multiple domains in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. For example, we can make a connection to the domain of approaches to learning and the subdomain of initiative and curiosity.

Goal six for infants and toddlers states that the child demonstrates emerging initiative and interactions, experiences and exploration. Having low shelves, as suggested in the video helps children see and reach materials, which provide opportunities for experiences in exploration. Goal number 11 for preschoolers is related to the child showing interest in and curiosity about the world around them, having defined spaces for different learning areas as mentioned in the video can help preschoolers become curious about the world around them.

For example, a designated area for block building can help them explore ideas related to shapes, balance, or measurement. We've listed a few other connections between room arrangement and the ELOF in your viewer's guide. Feel free to list other ELOF goals you notice that are related to room arrangement. Next, we're going to talk about infants and toddlers.

Becky: Thanks so much Virginia. I'm excited to talk about infants and toddlers as well as many of the participants today. Including infants and toddlers into a mixed age group has many benefits for all children. Preschool aged children develop empathy by seeing how the educator provides care for the infants. Infants and toddlers get to learn from and watch the older children engage in complex tasks, play and interactions. Like we see in this picture on the left. Creating a safe space for infants and toddlers to engage in, learn and explore can be challenging since they are very dependent on the adult to meet their needs, and keep them safe.

Today we're going to look at creating a developmentally appropriate and safe space for infants and toddlers. Some specific challenges we're going to think about are first making sure the materials we put out for infants and toddlers are safe. Like the materials we see in this photo. Also providing appropriate learning opportunities. And that the area we create for infants and toddlers can grow with them as they grow and develop new skills. Let's watch how the Meaningful Makeover team works with family child care providers to create developmentally appropriate engaging and safe spaces for infants and toddlers. Please note again that these videos are from a particular state, so remember to follow your own state guidelines when thinking about health, safety and other environmental regulations.

[Video begins]

[Music]

[Women singing]

Woman 1: Baby safe music toys down here, so that she can have access to those really easily. We put your scarves and I know they love these so I wanted to make sure those were still out. We put the music materials that might not be so great for the baby up on the top shelf.

[Music]

Woman 2: Half the day I'm down here on the floor with my babies.

Woman 1: You have the little guy that just started crawling.

Woman 2: Crawling, and my infants. We're down here pretty much all day.

[Music]

Woman 1: How is your toddler area or infant area working for you?

Woman 3: It's kind of growing right now as she's growing.

Woman 1: We'll really be keeping her in mind specifically and trying to see what we can do to make everything down low accessible and safe for her. And get some type of set up so that the older children aren't challenged by her and the younger ones.

Michelle Perez: Then over here we have on the bottom the most simple fine motor materials for the young toddler who is crawling now. To access above it is a little bit more difficult stuff for the preschoolers.

[Music]

Officially for the age group of infant and toddlers, fine motor is very important because it helps them develop their skills, their use of hands or pushing. Also flipping for example.

Woman 1: We added some new labels to the individual bins and there's like several different types of material in each one, because I know that's how you had it before. That's about it for the infant toddler.

[Music]

Also we moved your cozy area over here so we could separate the cribs. They're all 36 inches apart.

I think we put anything chokable in the STEAM area. Everything else should be okay for the infant and for the toddlers, and infants to get access to. That might mean being creative about which materials we put into each area. I'm going to put the paperclips in this container. Then I'm going to glue the lid on it, so that nobody can get it open. Toddler proof.

Girl 1: This is how we test if things can be choking hazards or not. This you just put it in here and if it sticks out that means it can't go into a toddlers mouth all the way and that they cannot choke on it. Things like marker caps that fit all the way in are choking hazards and should not be in a toddler classroom.

[Music]

[Video ends]

Becky: This video really warms my heart. I love the really big smile the toddler gave in the beginning when the provider finished the song. I also love the tips of making choking hazards safe with gluing the Tupperware lids. The Meaningful Makeover crew helped the providers in this video create an engaging environment for infants and toddlers by making connections with songs and soft touches, which help support social/emotional development by helping infants and toddlers feel calm and know that their needs are going to be met.

Music is also a great way to support language development by helping infants and toddlers hear and learn new words. Having materials that are safe on low open shelves, helps infants and toddlers access materials to explore, practice initiative while also keeps materials for older children out of reach. Having limited materials on shelves can also help prevent that clearing or dumping of materials while an infant or toddler is looking for an item of interest. Then having visual at children's levels, such as the pictures on the wall, helps infants and toddler easily see the displays and make connections.

Finally promoting responsive caregiving with soft mats and low seating, which helps family child care providers meet the individual needs of infants and toddlers. We invite you to think of strategies you'd like to try related to the environment for infants and toddlers and write them down in your viewer's guide.

The focus on creating a developmentally appropriate and safe space for infants and toddlers helps them grow and develop in ways that align with many goals in the ELOF. For example, in the relationships with adults subdomain of social/emotional development, goal one states that the child develops expectations of consistent positive interactions through secure relationships

with familiar adults. Some tips from the Meaningful Makeover team that will help you develop secure relationships with infants and toddlers are to have low adult seating options. You can be close to the infants and toddlers. Offer a soft touch to let them know you are there and provide responsive care.

Now let's take a look at STEAM learning. Providing opportunities for all children to engage with science, technology, engineering, art and math experience is beneficial to all areas of a child's development. STEAM supports creativity, curiosity, problem solving, scientific reasoning, numeracy development and much, much more. STEAM isn't just limited to preschool children. Infants and toddlers benefit from STEAM as well. Like we see in these pictures and like we saw in the last Meaningful Makeover video. For more information about providing STEAM learning for infants and toddlers, check out the Little Scientist Teacher Time season and the Research on the Go podcast. Both resources are linked in your viewers guide, and both resources can be found on the ECLKC website.

Today we're going to focus on creating a developmentally appropriate STEAM learning environment for all children. The challenges we're going to be thinking about are making sure there are appropriate materials for all children you care for. What that might look like when you're caring for a mixed age group. The organization of materials and finally safety and how to set up the materials so older children are challenged, while younger children are safe. Let's watch how the Meaningful Makeover team works with family child care providers to create a STEAM learning environment.

[Video begins]

[Music]

Woman 1: We're going to have to make sure that always a challenge with STEM stations in mixed age groups is making sure that the materials are challenging enough for the older children, but still safe for the little ones.

Woman 2: Right.

Woman 1: That's going to be my challenge.

Woman 2: Okay.

[Music]

Woman 1: You want to have the materials inaccessible to the younger guys but easy for you to access and bring out kind of for the little guys to use.

Woman 3: Yeah.

Woman 1: Okay.

Woman 3: Yes.

Woman 2: I just want to maybe have like math station, science station, or a STEM place. Just kind of divide them separately because right now all the activities they're just concentrated at this table. Whatever we do is just right here.

Kelli Heikkila: Then we're creating a STEAM area, Science Technology, Art and Math area for them. Really what I'm doing is looking through all of her materials. She's got some really great stuff. Just kind of reorganizing it in a better way for her. A way that the children can see the materials and use them more easily. We're putting some things out on trays here, so that they're able to see the materials and use them a little bit more easily as well.

[Music]

Woman 4: Laura had a lot of non-fiction books and what we did was organize them so that we can incorporate them into the STEM area. For instance, we do have a book about rock hunting, and we do have rocks up there. One of the activities we have here for the STEM table is the children observing the rocks and using the scale to do balancing, measurements.

[Music]

Another addition we have here to the STEM area is our little friend here. Say hello.

Woman 5: Come over here and make it snow, look I'm a scientist. You don't have to know what to do with them. You can just start kind of poking around with them. they're all colorful and they look inviting.

Virginia: We kind of made all the art materials live here. The science and math materials more over here. One of the games that we came up with are these file folder games. It's really easy for kids to grab and it's very child self-sufficient. They know that they take one of the shapes off and they attach it with the Velcro.

Woman 1: The idea here would be to encourage the kids to use these measuring tapes, to measure the different materials and they can jot down what they found out, either on the clipboard or in a notebook.

[Music]

Woman 1: You've been using that gate strategy off and on. We decided to block in the STEAM area, so that you would have a permanent place where you could put anything that you don't want the younger children to choke on or to be using. That way the older kids have a place where they can count on playing without interruption with those smaller materials such as the tangram activity.

This is kind of the first piece of the STEM area. We found a lot of materials that you already had of course for STEM. We added some measuring cups, measuring spoons actually. With the numbers written on them. This sensory table actually has a ruler on it. If kids want to see how big something is like maybe they find a bug in there and you're doing a measuring activity. They can look up here and it has all of those questions. Like what did you see or hear? What's happening? What do you notice about that? It kind of gives you those prompts. I always find when I'm teaching that that's helpful because it really helps kind of prompt me to remember. I'm like what do I want to say now about this? I can always look over at this.

Woman 7: Okay.

Woman 1: And help them observe, predict and experiment.

[Music]

[Video ends]

Becky: Another great video clip filled with so many great tips. As we saw, organization is really important when setting up a STEAM learning environment. One thing you can do to support independence and initiative in using STEAM materials is to put items out on trays for older children, so they can clearly see what the activity is about. It is also helpful to organize the material from most simple to challenging or easiest to hardest. The simple materials that are safe for infants and toddlers are on low open shelves, and easy for them to access. The more challenging items are higher up on the shelves for the older children to use.

Another great idea is to repurpose materials you already have, including items like measuring cups or spoons, books you already have that focus on STEAM, collecting rocks outside or adding in rulers and various art supplies. This is also a way to include open ended science materials, like we saw in the video. That allow for children to engage in STEAM learning in any way they can imagine. Since there are so many possibilities with open ended materials. They are helpful to have in a mixed age group. Of course, safety is always our top priority. It can be beneficial to use a low gate or barrier around a STEAM area that you have set up for older children. This will allow for the older children to be challenged with the materials. And the infants and toddlers to stay safe and away from items that are choking hazards.

Finally, what a great idea to add a list of open-ended questions for the adults to ask the children while they're engaged in STEAM learning. Not only does this support language development, it also supports children's curiosity, creativity, problem solving and active engagement. Don't forget to check out the resources in your viewer's guide related to STEAM learning for children of all ages. STEAM learning connects to multiple domains in the ELOF. One of the connections we're going to highlight is in the creativity subdomain of approaches to learning. STEAM learning supports infants and toddlers to use creativity to increase understanding and learning and supports preschool children to express creativity and thinking and communication. There are so many ways children can engage in creative thinking when STEM materials are available. We invite you to use your viewer's guide to add in other ELOF connections you see. There are so many.

Virginia: Next we're going to be talking about books for literacy and beyond. The benefits of books are endless. Books help children of all ages attend to and understand language, communicate and speak their ideas, learn and use new vocabulary, development emergent reading skills, grow their phonological awareness, expand their print and alphabet knowledge, enhance their comprehension of text and introduce them to new ideas, and expands their imagination. Some of the challenges related to books could be defining a warm and inviting area that makes books accessible. Displaying the books so that they can be easily seen, like we see in this photo. The next one is providing a thoughtful variety and then minimizing, storing and rotating. Let's watch how Meaningful Makeover crew help addresses some of these challenges.

[Video begins]

[Music]

Man 1: One of the problems we have here is that books are not very accessible. If they want to get a book from the bottom, all the books fall out. That's not working out that well for us.

Woman 1: Tell me about how the book area, cozy area is working for you? I really love how you built the bookshelf into the fireplace.

Man 1: We would like to fix it up and make it look a little more complete and finished. But they love the books. They can grab a book and they can come sit down over here. But again it seems to be a common theme here; the display isn't as great as it could be. You can't see the books. There's no reason to come over here and grab a book because they don't know what it is.

Woman 1: All right, well we'll definitely think about that.

Kelli: I'm just looking through each of the books and trying to decide, are they more appropriate for infants and toddlers or for the preschoolers? Then I'm separating out ones we're going to use in the space versus ones we might put in storage and rotate.

Woman 2: This is a bookcase that helps delineate some of the space – there's a white board on the back and it's a bookcase where you can actually read the book that are in front [inaudible] as well. They're more visually accessible to the children. This is before. Then you'll see it with all the books in there.

Woman 3: We've went through all of the books and now we're putting them back in one central spot for the children.

Samira Mohamud: They have a lot of books in this area. One of the things we're trying to do is make it more accessible and just organize them. Oh this book is in English and Somali. This would be great to have here. Look here's a horse, zebra is [Speaking Somali] did you know that?

Woman 4: I did not know that.

Woman 5: She has a great selection of books. But they were all mixed in together.

Woman 6: Basically Crystal expressed that she was having a lot of trouble finding books, when she when she was looking for some for a lesson plan for the kiddos. Really what we were trying to do is streamline how she organizes the books and make it as efficient as possible. When she's looking for a book, it's not like she has to dig through a huge pile. But she can instead – we organized it according to themes. She'll be able to look here and say she's looking for a numbers activity for the kids. She'll be able to come here and look at all the numbers books and be able to pick whichever one that she wants from it.

[Music]

Woman 1: Here is the library, cozy area. We brought in a new bookshelf because the books on the shelf are kind of hard-to-get access to. Especially for the toddlers. Then we gathered all the books – you had books all over and we pulled them altogether and put them on this one shelf.

Woman 1: Really struggled to kind of decide what to do about the book area here, because the kids had a hard time and the books were falling on the ground. But we couldn't find something just perfect to fit right here. Last minute we came up with the idea to put some books along the bottom.

Man 1: I think that's a great idea.

Woman 1: Do you think that's going to be good Lolli? There's also an extra basket of them there.

Man 1: Perfect.

Woman 1: And we made sure to keep that special book that I know is really popular, right there. And I know the other photo books should be here somewhere as well.

[Music]

[Video ends]

Virginia: What another great video. I love the suggestion about going through the books and deciding which ones to use in the space now and which ones can go into storage for later use or rotation. In addition, the tip about organizing books by themes and adding labels can help children and adults find the books that they're looking for. Another great tip was about defining the reading area with shelves or rugs to help delineate the space and provide a comfortable area for children to enjoy the books.

Lastly the tip about making books accessible by perhaps changing the way the books are displayed so that children, especially infants and toddlers can easily see and reach the books that they're interested in. Displaying the books where the cover is front facing, also helps prevent all books from being pulled out, because children can easily see and take the one that they want. There are certainly language and literacy goals in the early learning outcomes framework that are related to books. For example, all of the goals in language and literacy domain. However, the books in your environment can also help children meet other goals in the ELOF.

For example, goal number three for infants and toddlers within the cognition domain is related to children recognizing differences between familiar and unfamiliar people, objects, actions or events. Books can help infants and toddlers meet this goal by providing them opportunities to see and hear about familiar experiences and introduce them to new ones. Goal number two for preschoolers within the scientific reasoning subdomain states that the child engages in scientific talk. This can be met when preschoolers engage with books and encourage them to describe what they observe, or ask them to compare and contrast, predict or reflect.

Think of some other domains or subdomains within the ELOF you see that are related to books. We're going to get into our last topic for today, which is setting up an outdoor environment.

Becky: Thank you so much Virginia. Spending time outdoors is beneficial for all children and adults. Getting outside can spark creativity, help with attention and focus and boost mental well-being among many other benefits. It can be challenging to get outside if there isn't an environment set up for the children that are safe, that safe and engaging. I don't think we can say it enough, getting outside really benefits everyone.

Today we're going to focus on a few challenges of setting up the outdoor environment. The first is getting outside as much as possible. This might be challenging when educators or children don't have weather appropriate clothing. Weather appropriate clothing might be a rain suit and

rain boots, like we see in this picture. Or sun protective clothing or a warm jacket and snow boots.

The second challenge we're going to focus on is providing engaging materials outdoors and having access to a handwashing sink if your program spends a majority of the day outside. Finally, safety and ensuring that children are as safe as possible while engaging in the environment.

Let's watch how some family child care providers address these challenges and how our Meaningful Makeover crew helped create access to handwashing. Now this makeover video is a little different because we conducted the makeovers virtually due to the pandemic, and not being able to go into family child care providers homes. As we watch the video, remember to follow your own state guidelines when thinking about health and safety and other environmental regulations.

[Video begins]

[Music]

Woman 1: What are your hopes for this makeover? What do you want to see?

Woman 2: An outdoor classroom. Everything outside. At the old house we used to have the kiddos run laps first before we sat down to try to do any type of preschool, because that's what they needed. I have one little guy before he even comes in, he goes out front and we run a little bit. Then it's okay to come inside. But if we do not do that first, it's a really rough day.

[Music]

Woman 2: We're very big on ... I do not have the families purchase anything. I purchase the rain boots, I purchase the muddy gear. All of the families have now realized how amazing it is if their child grows out of something, to bring it and we just distribute it through the families or we keep extra sweatshirts here, extra rain boots and things like that. I guess it's built a tighter knit community in our little daycare family.

Woman 1: By providing that to everybody it's an equity support, because you're making sure everybody has access to the same materials and everybody can stay dry and comfortable.

Woman 3: On that rock wall, what kind of bug did you find?

[Music]

Woman 1: We could potentially provide or get some type of handwashing station outside, acceptable for licensing for just outdoor whatever. Because you'd be able to clean off any dirt and then you can use hand sanitizer if you needed to.

Woman 2: Then we're trying to figure out where we should put the handwashing station in this area.

Woman 1: Do you have a spot where they're going to eat snack and stuff?

Woman 2: Oh that's a good idea.

Woman 1: How is the risk management thing going? Like I think people when you think about outdoor play, a lot of times people go oh my gosh, are they climbing trees?

Woman 4: Yes. Sometimes. Yeah sometimes children are climbing trees. There's definitely ways to manage that safely. We encourage providers to have policies and procedures in place before children get started with those type of activities. They know, all the adults know that the rules are that children need to have three points touching at all times. They know that children are not to be picked up and placed into trees. It really is if a child can physically get themselves there, then they are more likely to have the physical skills to get themselves down safely or to stay up there safely. Having good discussions about safety among the adults and then between adults and children, is a really important part about the risk management.

Woman 1: Is there a point where you do need somebody with special training to be with you?

Woman 4: Yes. From the beginning. One of the licensing standards is that we teachers and directors, assistant directors, supervisors, whoever it is that's in charge of the oversight, all have some professional development. I think we're looking at like a 10-hour PD course. But yes, you do, you need to have extra training.

[Music]

[Video ends]

Becky: What another great video, with so many great tips. I really enjoyed watching the toddlers playing in the rain and seeing all of the puddle jumping that was happening. Our first tip, our first video highlight is having weather appropriate clothing for everyone can make getting outside a little bit easier. As we heard from one of the family child care providers, try asking the community for weather appropriate clothing and gear.

Another way to engage children outside is to utilize the natural materials that are already available to you. Looking for bugs, collecting rocks or inspecting grass popping through the cement can all spark curiosity in children and adults. Try taking activities you normally do inside. Like painting or reading books or circle time, outside. If your program spends a majority of the day outside, getting to the sink can be challenging. You could consider adding in an outdoor sink like the one we saw in this video clip.

Finally, safety is our top priority and creating safety policies for outdoor play. You want to talk about what safety means with the children. Take the necessary safety training based on your local licensing regulations. Of course, engage in active supervision at all times.

Since there are so many benefits to getting outdoors, there are multiple connections to the ELOF. The one we're going to highlight today is in the initiative and curiosity subdomain of approaches to learning. Getting outside can spark everyone's curiosity. The environment is a great place to wonder, question and think together. Being outside can support infants and toddlers and showing interest and curiosity about objects, materials or events. It can also support preschool children to show interest in and curiosity about the world around them.

We want to know in the Q&A how does the environment spark your curiosity? As you're typing in your responses don't forget to use your viewer's guide to add in more connections to the ELOF and check out all the resources about getting outside.

Virginia: Those are such great videos Becky, and yes I'm just kind of seeing if we have any ideas about the outdoor environment.

As you're also typing those in, we got to see so, so many tips today from the Meaningful Makeover team to support room arrangement, infants and toddlers, STEAM learning, books for literacy beyond and setting up outdoor environment. Before we do a close check, let's check out what some of you all are saying. Kimberly saying ... Talking about all the cause-and-effect textures. Roxanne is talking about she likes the outdoor sink. Yes, I love that too. I didn't even know that they made one like that.

Becky: Talking about each environment is unique. That the videos and ideas you share are very helpful to spark ideas. I love sparking adults curiosity as well as children's.

Virginia: Definitely. Absolutely. Oh good, Dominique is feeling so inspired. I love it. But I'm going to go ahead and launch this pulse check. Let's see how people are feeling. Are you feeling inspired to make a change in your environment? It doesn't matter how big, how small, give us a thumbs up. But if you're feeling just not ready yet, you can give a thumbs down and let's check it out.

I'm seeing lots of thumbs up. That's so amazing. Thank you. I'm so excited to see all of this. Now we have just a little bit of time for a few questions. Enter any questions you have into the Q&A box, and we'll pick a couple that we can answer live here. But don't worry if we haven't gotten to all of the questions in the Q&A. We will collect them all and answer them on MyPeers. Great ideas and information.

Any other questions?

Dominique is saying this has been great. So many ideas to try to implement in the family child care environment. These videos are available. Will be available both on this webinar. Once this is over you can watch it. I will share that in a moment. Kim, the ELOF stands for the Early Learning Outcomes Framework. You can access that by visiting the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center or ECLKC, you can just Google that.

Any other ones you see Becky?

Becky: Let's see, there's so many wonderful ones coming in. Is there any guideline we can follow as providers to set up our rooms or to connect with your local agencies and licensing regulations about that. Excited to share information is what's coming in.

So many – I'm having a hard time keeping up. Thanks for giving me patience and grace. It feels like a lot of inspiration.

Virginia: Yes. Thank you. Well also just so you all know. That MyPeers community, that you can continue to ask questions and engage in conversation is a social network where early childhood professionals can brainstorm, exchange ideas and share resources with colleagues from across the country. Members can join communities and work groups in the MyCares network.

If you missed a webinar, like I sometimes do, don't worry. We have you covered. We launched a new streaming platform called PUSHPLAY DTL on demand. Where you can view recently aired webinars just like this one, at your own convenience. Webinar episodes can be found here until

they're posted onto the ECLKC, and we've made it easy to find exactly what you're looking for. The more views you have, the more customized the experience will be.

One more thing, we're including a certificate of completion. Check out PUSHPLAY DTL on demand. Jennifer is asking if there is a specific FCC group. Yes, I believe there is a family child care group on that.

Becky: I saw another question from Monica about can you send us more ideas for implementing STEAM? There are a ton of resources in your viewers guide, at the very end. If you scroll down to the bottom there's a Little Scientist Teacher Time season. There's also Research on the Go podcast, which talks about each letter of STEAM specifically to infants and toddlers. We also encourage you to go to the ECLKC website. There's so many resources.

Virginia: Awesome.

Well we just really want to take the time to say thank you so much for joining us today. Please take a moment after this webinar has ended to complete that evaluation. You can access this in the widgets below or in the evaluation link that will be sent to you via email. Thank you so much for joining us. We'll see you later.