

Ready for Success - Diversity and Multicultural Integration in Head Start and Early Head Start GÇô Part I

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Sharon Yandian: Welcome to "Ready for Success: Diversity and Multicultural Integration in Head Start and Early Head Start (Part One)." This is part of a series of year-long professional development opportunities focused on children who are dual language learners and their families. Today's webcast encompasses, in an overarching way, all we've discussed in the previous webcasts and webinars and has an increased emphasis on being culturally and linguistically responsive and on improving service delivery to children and families who speak languages other than English.

Today, we'll be referring to the resource handbook, "Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Age's Birth to Five." We are thrilled to be able to share this handbook and to get you involved in using it long after the webcast is over. An information memorandum came out on May 13th of this year, and each center in the country should have received a copy of the handbook, and it is also downloadable from the ECLKC.

It is in both English and Spanish in the version that we sent to programs, and it's printed, as you can see, back to front. We did this to make it easier to share with your Spanish speaking staff and parents. The resource handbook contains an updated version of the multicultural principles, which are relevant for any and all Head Start programs? The resource book is formatted -- I wanted to share a little bit about that.

Each of the multicultural principles has... a summary and highlight of the original multicultural principle text; a research review that goes with the principle, including key implications; voices from the field, presenting stories from the Head Start community; and reflective questions and activities programs can engage in. I want to thank people who gave feedback during the revision of this handbook. At the Dual Language Institute, we had a session of over 150 participants giving us feedback on the draft.

The Office of Head Start staff commented, as well as participants at the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Conference and at the Birth to Three Institute, as well as the Dual Language Institute Planning Committee. I should note that in this webcast we won't be covering all 10 principles, but we will feature selected principles to highlight the wealth of material in the resource handbook for you to continue using. However, there is a one page listing of all the principles in your viewer's guide for this webcast if you'd like to refer to them.

Next I'd like to introduce the panelists. First, Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Welcome, Janet. Janet is a retired community college teacher. She was a preschool teacher and has worked with Head Start and other preschool programs, staff, and parents for many years. She is the author of the book "Diversity in Early Care and Education: Honoring Differences," now in its fifth edition, and many other articles. Next Gwen Henderson Freeman. Welcome, Gwen.

Gwen is an Early Head Start Program Specialist for Fairfax County Public Schools in Northern Virginia. She oversees center and home based programs at Clear View Elementary School, and she's very busy. We're so glad we could have her here today. Next is Bob Stechuk. Dr. Stechuk is a Research Associate in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. He has also worked with Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs in different capacities for over 25 years. Welcome, Bob.

Graciela Italiano-Thomas, you've seen on other webcasts that we've had in the series. She's an expert in early childhood education and working with dual language learners and their families, and she will serve as our facilitator again today. Welcome, Graciela.

Graciela Italiano-Thomas: Thank you, Sharon, thank you, panelists. Welcome, audience. Now we will begin Segment I: Culture and Child Development. In this segment, we will discuss the dynamic nature of culture and its influence in child development. We will highlight the importance of respecting and incorporating all families' cultures into learning environments.

This segment will also feature principles 1, 2, and 4 from the Multicultural Principles Handbook. Principle 1: Every individual is rooted in culture. Principle 2: The cultural groups represented in the communities and families of each Head Start program are the primary sources for culturally relevant programming.

Principle 4: Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices and adaptations is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice. Let's start. Principle 1: Every individual is rooted in culture. What does this really mean?

Janet Gonzalez-Mena: Well, it took me a long time to discover that I was rooted in culture. I thought other people had culture. First I should introduce myself. My roots are -- my double Spanish surname is a little deceptive.

That all belongs to my husband, who's from Mexico. I'm European-American. Sometimes I call myself Anglo, which reminds me that I had to learn to be careful not to label other people what they were but ask how they preferred to be labeled, if any labeling's necessary actually. What I discovered about myself as a cultural being is that I just thought of myself as normal, regular.

The messages I got from the society growing up, from school were that $\frac{1}{2}$ they reinforced that idea, and I knew there were other people in the world, but I thought of them having culture, not myself, which I know now is a big problem when anyone walks around thinking they don't have a culture and not acknowledging their roots.

Graciela: Great. Thank you for that great introduction.

Dr. Bob Stechuk: My example comes from my family. About 2 or 3 weeks after my son started kindergarten, he came home, and he asked me, "Dad, should I tell the kids what I like to eat?" And when he asked me that question, I knew exactly what he was talking about. My wife is originally from China, and so my children have grown up with two languages and two cultures since the day that they were born.

So my son likes to eat hamburgers and french fries, but he also loves to eat squid and octopus and jellyfish. So I said, "Well, did you tell the kids you like jellyfish?" "Yeah." "How did they respond?" "Well, they said yuck, they said gross." So I said, "Well, you have a choice to make. Do you want to deny what it is that you like just because somebody says yuck, or do you want to tell them, hey, this is what I eat, and this is what I like?" And he said, "Yeah, that's what I want to do."

And then I took it a step further, and I said, "Well, what if you see someone eating something that's unfamiliar to you? Are you going to make fun of that?" And he said, "Oh. Better not." So that was an incident that happened about 6 years ago, and we still talk about these kinds of issues around our table.

Graciela: Wow. Excellent examples. Gwen, did you have one?

Gwen Henderson-Freeman: I sure do. My first introduction, of course, to culture was through my family. They taught me how to act and respond in social settings, and they had their expectations that may have been somewhat different, but at the time as a child, I didn't know that. So when I went to school, I was introduced to other cultures, and it was quite surprising. The adults there had different expectations.

I was raised by parents who were from the south, and I was taught to say "yes, ma'am," and "Yes, sir," in response to adults, and I didn't see that happening in the kindergarten classroom. The adults there, as I said, had different expectations. So it was a learning process for me. I learned that the children weren't necessarily being disrespectful. They had learned a different way of being, and so for me, I continue to learn. I don't make assumptions, or at least I work very hard not to.

Graciela: Great example. Thank you. Sharon: That's excellent. Well, you know, again I told you my job would be to remind you that this resource handbook is useful. You know, on page 9, there are definitions of culture in the handbook, and I think programs can use this along with the reflective activities to get at that idea of what it means that

we're all rooted in culture.

Graciela: Great. So this principle brings us to yet another question. How does culture influence child development? Dr. Stechuk: There are many, many ways that culture can have an influence on child development. In the resource handbook, we've listed some bulleted examples of just some of the ways that culture can influence child development at different ages.

For example, parents may come to Head Start staff and say, "Our 3 month old child is ready to begin toilet training," or, "Our 12 month old, don't do anything special to help them begin to walk," or, "Our 4 year old, don't let them play, don't let them spend any time, waste any time playing. They should really be spending their time learning." These are just a few of the ways in which culture can have an influence on children's development.

Graciela: Great. Sharon: You know, and these examples that Bob was listing, again, are in the book. You know, they're different, but they're not different for those who practice, and I think that that's the most important thing, and as Gwen was saying, it's very difficult not to be judgmental, but we have to come to that relationship, to the sharing with families with that lens on.

Graciela: Great. Thank you.

Janet Gonzalez-Mena: One of the ways not to be judgmental and it is hard not to if you're really convinced and well-trained to believe that a particular way is a right way, and those examples are really powerful, can be very emotional. A way to set aside those judgments is to think in terms of cultural bumps instead of cultural conflicts. It's kind of like the speed bumps in the road that if you can predict they're coming, which sometimes you can, you know you need to slow down, and then you can negotiate them, and I use that as a model for me.

Some of those examples involve independence and self-help skills and the idea that children need to grow up to be independent individuals. Others involve the idea that children need to grow up knowing that they are firmly connected, firmly always part of a group, and that they should not only give help but receive help while they're growing up. So that can be a huge theme and create many cultural bumps.

Sharon: You know, I think the one thing to remember, also, is it's not -- it's definitely not always easy, and there are certain requirements in our programs that don't allow us to maneuver that cultural bump very easily, but the first thing you need to do is come to it with an open mind and realize that there may not necessarily be a right and wrong. There may be the way you were required to do things, which is sometimes rare and sometimes not, but you need to come with it with that lens.

Dr. Stechuk: Perhaps another just basic message is that because we live in the world that we do, that programs can expect cultural differences in the way that people raise their children and in the ways that Head Start staff understand and think about and act to support children's development, as well. Graciela: Great. Great.

Gwen: Well, these are all learning opportunities. In my work with CRADLE, the Culturally Responsive and Dual Language Education Project, I came to a different level of understanding and appreciation for culture and how it impacts the overall learning of the child. If we think about child development as a dance and then look at the caregivers that are involved as the dance partners, then culture becomes the rhythm.

It adds the movement and supports the growth and development of the children that are involved. It certainly has a very powerful influence on how families and other caregivers respond to each child. Sharon: You know, I like the way that you said it. We were talking prior is that if we're in a committed relationships with a family, we really do have to embrace the culture, and that notion, I think, is very important.

Graciela: Janet, did you have anything you wanted to add?

Janet: Yeah. I just wanted to say that I think it's important to recognize that adults -- most families raise their children to be part of that family and that culture, whether they are stressing self help skills or not, and so their goals or their

priorities for childrearing are determined by these particular outcomes.

And so if you understand how some of those child rearing practices that you mentioned that are on page 64 in the handbook fit into an overall plan for the child's development, that helps a lot, that helps me to understand things that are very different from what I would do with my child.

Sharon: You know, we're gonna get to it later, but it gets to the point of actually finding out from families because just as some of those examples that Bob shared may be not from your culture or strange for you, they're not for the family. So looking -- the family may find what you are introducing to them and saying as very odd.

Janet: Right. Sharon: So that's important to remember.

Dr. Stechuk: And before we go any further, we also want to make the point that although there are big and important differences in the ways that different cultural groups raise their children, not all members of the same cultural group act and think in the same way. So individual differences are important, as well as cultural differences.

Sharon: Absolutely. Graciela: Absolutely. These groups are not blocks of individuals. There are individuals within each group. On your screen you have a slide: how culture can shape adults' behaviors with children.

Janet: For example, culture can shape how adults understand, interpret, and relate to children's play; also initiate and respond to children's communication, including both speech and nonverbal behaviors; culture can shape how adults assess and address different types of conflicts, child-child, child-adult conflicts for example; and also help shape how adults carry out socialization, guidance, and discipline of the child.

Graciela: Thank you, Janet. that really gives us a summary of how important understanding culture and the cultural context is to early learning and the child, so how can program staff tap into their own cultural knowledge and that of families to develop culturally relevant practices?

Gwen: Our Early Head Start program developed a process to learn from the families and then connect that learning to the program's long range goals. In doing so, we found that it's important to listen to the specific practices that each family has and use that to help us to achieve the goals, and those goals of the program are: learning about every family's culture for one; then learning -- trying to get some understanding of the cultural practices;

Making every family feel welcome in the program and in the classroom, as well as being comfortable in their homes; and also to figure out how to integrate all of that we learned into the classroom so that the children would be able to learn about all the other cultural practices. To achieve these and other program goals, we've developed this process, and we refer to it as conversation starters.

Graciela: What an interesting name. How do you do it?

Gwen: Well, it's a process that engages parents and teachers in conversation. So the first thing to do is to develop a rapport. The teachers and the parents talk about the child, and the child is central in this process. So one example would be a teacher asking a question as to how a parent may comfort a child who is upset, and so the parent may respond by saying the language that they use when comforting their child and some of the practices, whether it's holding an infant in their arms and singing to them.

So that information is shared with the teacher, and the teacher, of course, is learning from the parent and figuring out how to incorporate this information into the child's daily routine. Graciela: Wonderful.

Gwen: So as she's learning this information, gaining a better understanding of the activities that are going on in the home, the experiences that the child is having, she's also working to figure out how to best transfer this information to her environment, the environment of the school setting.

Graciela: Great, great. So your strategy, Gwen, really brings us to Cultural Principle Two: That cultural groups

represented in the communities and families of each Head Start program are the primary sources for culturally relevant programming. Isn't that so?

Gwen: That is very true, very true, and that the parents really find that they are being valued when they're listened to and heard by the teacher because many parents value the teacher. They have this high position and high esteem for educators, and so to know that an educator is actually asking them questions as to how they're doing child rearing and questions about their culture and willing to use that information to support their child's learning is very important and very special in our program.

Graciela: That's wonderful, that's wonderful. Dr. Stechuk: I had the opportunity to visit Gwen's program two years ago to see the conversation strategies; 1/2 conversation starters strategy in action, and it was just such a pleasure. I still remember the visits.

A couple of stand out features of the strategy are that the program developed the strategy based on their self assessment. So they reviewed their prior year's work, they thought about the families that they had served, they asked themselves questions about how they could initiate and develop relationships with the family and do more than what they were already doing, and what was really neat was to hear the way that teachers described the ongoing evolution of the practice.

So at the beginning of the year, the Early Head Start teachers would ask the family, "How do you comfort your child when they're upset? What words do you use, how you act? What do you say, how do you say it? Tell me as much as you can." Then when the child would come in to Early Head Start and be upset, the teachers would use the words, use the strategies, use the communication patterns of the families, and then what was neat was to hear the teachers describe what happened when they shared the information back with the families.

So, "Mrs. So-and-so, Mr. So-and-so, your child was upset today. This is what I said. This is how I did it. Am I doing it the way you did it?" and as they shared the information that they had gained back with families, as the staff demonstrated that they were using the family information as part of the infant/toddler services, what they described was that their relationship really took off.

And when I came to Gwen's program and observed the ways that parents and staff interacted, it was clear that there was a very definite process at work, that the staff were deliberate in initiating relationships at the beginning of the year and using the conversation starters strategy to build very deep and meaningful relationships over time. All this is described in some detail in the resource handbook.

Graciela: That's wonderful. What a great example of a way to add another culture to the repertoire of families and children, as well as of Head Start staff, rather than to do this often exchange of one culture for the other. This is about adding to the repertoire so that all of us can be, you know, function in different cultures and different settings appropriately at different times.

Janet: And what I really like about your example, your process conversation starters, is the direct relationship to the principle about going to the source to learn about cultural differences. That is so important. You can read books, you can take anthropology courses, you can do a lot of things, but you may -- that family in that program is the one that you really want to understand. It's so important to go directly to the source and ask.

I have a quote that goes with that, and it says, "Learn about a pine tree from a pine tree and about a bamboo plant from a bamboo plant." But there are a couple of things -- more things that I want to say about learning from the families themselves. One is that you want to be sure that you don't generalize to everybody in that culture what you've learned from a particular family.

It may be part of a cultural pattern, or it may not be part of a cultural pattern. It's important to tune in on that family anyway and to recognize that everybody in a culture isn't alike. Well, everybody in a family isn't alike. I use my sister and myself as an example. We have very different ideas about what children need and how to raise children, but we're definitely from the same culture.

Graciela: Wonderful. Thank you.

Sharon: That's great. I think that what I take away from the conversation starters is many things, but that keeping the child central, you know, really asking the family about their child. You're not saying, "Tell me about your cultural practice around x." You are really asking about a child and you both have the best interests of the child in mind. You know, I think that this is probably a good time to talk about the elements of the Head Start Philosophy?

We do have a slide, as well, that talks about 4 elements of Head Start's overall philosophy that are particularly relevant to the task of developing and implementing culturally relevant practices and they are, as you can see on the screen:

Building trusting relationships, which is a perfect example we just heard from Gwen and Bob and Janet speaking; being sensitive to cultural practices and preferences of families, certainly that also is key; building bridges between cultures for both children and adults; and lastly, acknowledging that staff and parents are in a true partnership. Again, I think the conversation starters really embodies this philosophy.

Graciela: Great. Thank you, Sharon, for sharing those principles. This brings us to Principle 4: Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice. What does this mean?

Janet: I want to start by saying bringing in infants and toddlers because that's my particular interest, and sometimes, they get left out of discussions like this. That curriculum for infants and toddlers is about care giving routines. It's also about other things, but it really focuses on care giving routines.

I also wanted to say that why this whole subject is so important to me is that it's about belonging, and I've had enough experience now talking to people whose roots have been snipped because they've come into our institutions or because they've somehow been stripped of their culture or have stripped themselves that it's a very painful thing to lose your roots, to not be part of your family, your ancestors anymore.

So that's why I think it's extremely important, and what I've noticed, too, is that when there is not a culturally relevant curriculum that sometimes children are forced to choose between what they're learning at home and what they're learning in the program, in the environment, which is a horrible position for children to be in. "Is my teacher right, or is my mother right?"

Sharon: Yes. Janet: No one should be in that position.

Graciela: Nobody wins there. The adults are the ones who need to come into relationship, and this is what we're talking about, so that the child can be supported and protected in her or his development, and this reminds me a little bit of children with disabilities and how culturally rooted this whole concept of a child with a disability is, as well, and how differently different cultures view children with disabilities...

...and I think that's also a very important element to keep in mind from the program's staff perspective, as well as in their relationship with the families.

Sharon: Absolutely. You know, I'm thinking about what Janet is saying. Sometimes it's making sure we're pronouncing the child's name correctly. It may seem -- and greeting the family appropriately. Though that may seem simple, it's very important, and it really shouldn't be overlooked.

Janet: And that brings me to a story of something I heard from a young woman named Ana, A-n-a. I noticed her nametag, and I said, "You spell your name with one n," And she became very emotional. I made an assumption that she probably had Spanish speaking roots somewhere. I was wrong. We all make assumptions.

She went on to tell me that when she was a child she had already learned to write her name before she went to school--to preschool-- and when she got there and wrote her name for the teacher, the teacher said, "You've spelled it wrong. Ana has two n's in it." And she went home and told her mother that her mother made a mistake, and her mother said,

"That's your grandmother's name, your grandmother in Croatia."

My assumption was wrong, where she was from. And she said, "That's the way we spell it." And Ana believed her teacher, put her teacher over her mother, and it was 13 years later before she decided that it was her name and she could spell it the way it was supposed to be spelled. There were tears with this story. Just tore at my heart.

New Speaker: Hmm. Sharon: What a story. Yes. Graciela: So many people like that. Gwen, did you have a story?

Gwen: Well, I'm reminded of a story, after hearing your comments, Sharon, about names. I was in a cab in New Mexico, and the cab driver talked about himself a little bit, but the point he made was, when he entered school, the teacher couldn't pronounce his name, and so she said she was giving him another name that she could pronounce. And it was very unlike his name.

It was "David" and he not being able to communicate effectively in English to tell her not to call him that name, he went on throughout his life being called this name that was not his given name. And I was just imagining how that must have felt as a child, losing your identity, the identity that your parents had given you, because the school system was not taking into account the relevancy of your culture giving you that given name.

Dr. Stechuk: Culture has not only many and important influences on children's development, but it is of lifelong importance as well. New Speaker: Right.

Dr. Stechuk: And clearly, children come from many different cultural backgrounds. They have different experiences with adults, different ways of relating to adults, relating to other children, using materials, et cetera. So...perhaps one of the more basic takeaway messages is that children don't come to our classrooms as blank slates. They've already been exposed to culture even before they were born, and so it's incumbent upon those of us, who are interested in children's development to take on these issues, and in Segment 3, we'll be looking more in depth at ways of responding to some of these challenges.

Graciela: Great. We actually have two short clips that will sort of exemplify and illustrate some of what we've been talking about. The first one is in a rural program in Texas, and it's a home visit. The woman who has the child is part of the family, and there is an older child there. They are in a garden, and then there's a home visitor. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Child 1: You got him! Let me see! Child: [chuckling] Home Visitor: Look. A grasshopper. Child: heh heh! Yeah!

New Speaker: Oh, I had an outbreak of them this summer. You should have seen them. They ate up all my flowers. New Speaker: I don't need another. Home Visitor: See, he has wings. He has two eyes, two antennas, and he's got 1, 2, 3, 6 legs. Child: He's biting! Home Visitor: No, he doesn't bite. He doesn't eat anything but plants.

Home Visitor: You picked him up while ago. Child: Yeah. Ha! Home Visitor: See, this is a little bit of science. We got a living grasshopper. Yeah, pick him up. There you go. And people put them on their hooks to fish with. Did you know that?[Video ends]

Graciela: So what did we see there?

Dr. Stechuk: Well, we saw an awful lot, more than we can talk about in this segment, but what stands out for me is the relationships between culture and language. So as a language model, the home visitor was doing lots of really good things. She was using a real experience and bringing language to it. So she was naming the grasshopper, she was naming the parts of the grasshopper. The child was interested, and as the child's interest continued, the home visitor continued to provide language.

Graciela: Yes.

Dr. Stechuk: And just to preview our next segment, those are all great strategies when the adult and the child both

speak the same language, but in cases where teachers speak English and children speak languages other than English, those same principles are still relevant. We want children involved with real-life experiences. We want to engage children with things that they're interested in and then bring good language models to the situation. So the strategies are great if everybody speaks the same language or if teachers and children speak different languages from each other.

Graciela: Wonderful. Great. thank you, Bob. Our next clip shows a group of younger children in a classroom where there is a culture that permeates everything in this particular clip. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Teacher & Students: [singing "guantanamera" in Spanish] [Video ends]

Janet: This is a wonderful example of how, instead of teaching culture to children, culture is part of the learning context, the whole context of the environment. It's an exciting clip, watching what's going on there.

It's also interesting to me that the early childhood culture, which is a culture in itself in the Head Start culture, also shows there in the fact that the boys-- there's a boy with a skirt on, and the other fact is that instead of it being a teaching situation, it's a learning situation in which children make their own choices. And some who are not so involved with the dancing are not being pulled in to be sure that the whole group is doing the same thing.

Graciela: Right. Dr. Stechuk: What's important for me is that none of the children were being forced into the dancing. For some of the children, it may have been a very familiar song. For some of the children, it may have been exposure for the first time. So as we're continuing to think about and talk about issues of culture, the key Head Start principle of individualizing is still very important.

Sharon: Yeah. I was going to say, it was really clear, every child was in their own Zen. You know, really, there was nobody herding, there was no one directing, and they were enjoying the music as probably each of their personalities, you know. And I think this is probably a good time to show the slide, Graciela, that reminds us the elements that make up curriculum. You see--remind everyone of the acronym, GERMSS.

Again, I guess Bob mentioned it, the goals for children's development and learning we can think a lot about what those goals might have been as we were observing that clip; the experiences or activities to meet those goals; the roles of staff and parents; the materials, space, and equipment necessary for optimal development and learning; and the sound child development principles and the Head Start Program Performance Standards. G-E-R-M-S-S. You know, sometimes the first thing people jump to when they think about culture is the material, you know, when you think about curriculum is the materials.

And materials are very tangible. They're very visible. It's not to say that materials aren't important, because they're very important, but we need to use them in appropriate ways.

Graciela: That's right. And it goes much more in depth than just the materials, doesn't it? Sharon: Absolutely.

Gwen: I agree. I think that, like you Sharon, that many times when we think of culture, we think of the materials, and we may set up a environment that appears to be more like a museum. It has "do not touch" on the materials. They may be mounted in a way that they create visual interest, but they are not to be used in the learning process. And so I would categorize those types of materials as materials for display, sort of artifacts that create visual interest around the room. I think also that it's important to have other materials in the classroom, materials that are used in the learning process.

So those materials, I would qualify as materials for use. They are real materials that reflect the culture of the children and the families in the program, of the community, and these I would qualify as materials that can be actively used, hands on, and tied to the learning experiences of each child. So when we think about those more authentic materials that are real, I think about the music that's similar to the activity that we saw in the last clip, where it's music to move by.

There may be instruments for the children to actually play with, such as a talking drum, maybe, from West Africa, or a

sitar. In addition, you may have materials like perhaps newspapers from the community written in the language of the children in the classroom. And bilingual books and also math tools that represent and reflect the tools that are used in various systems in other countries.

Graciela: Wonderful. Great. It's important to have languages of the children in the classroom not just posted, is it?

Dr. Stechuk: Absolutely. It's important to have books in the classroom that reflect the languages that are spoken in the families. Both from the research literature and from my own personal experience, before children go to kindergarten, they're very capable of noticing the differences in how languages are written.

And when I visited Gwen's program, they even had examples of Arabic writing in the classroom because some of the children in her program were from families that spoke Arabic. So it's important to have books and materials that reflect the different languages of the children and families. It's also important that books and other materials reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the children enrolled in the classroom.

And the final point I want to make is probably the most subtle. In visiting Head Start classrooms around the United States, it's very common to see written language throughout the classroom. So it's very, very typical for the block area to be labeled, the science area to be labeled, for there to be a variety of examples of written language around the classroom, and often those are in English as well as the other languages of the children.

The key question for programs, though, is not simply to have the written language up on the wall, but have it in the curriculum. So do the teachers refer to the words on the wall during the course of the day? Do they integrate the written language that's posted into curriculum activities? Do they invite the children to notice changes or encourage children to suggest ways of changing the written language so that it's the written language is not simply posted and left alone, but that it's actually integrated into the ongoing daily curriculum.

Graciela: Great points.

Janet: And I'd like to add something about infants and toddlers here because of course having a print rich environment in the languages of the children is a wonderful thing to do. If you're working with infants and toddlers, that can make a really cluttered environment.

It really doesn't do much for their language development. So you want to be careful how much you put in the classroom for infants and toddlers. I also wanted to say something about books. It seems important to me to recognize that what book that may be culturally appropriate or chosen as something that relates to the culture of the children in the program, people may have different takes on that.

One person may say, "Oh, that's wonderful. I love that book. It really reflects me." And another person would say, "That book is a stereotype." So one idea that one program had was, when new books came in, before they put them in the classroom, they passed them around to the parents, and in the book were sheets of paper for comments so that they could get the view of more than one person. And then they decided whether to use it in the classroom.

Graciela: What a good example. Excellent. Sharon: Yeah. I mean, another way of doing that, also, is reading it at a parent meeting, you know, or sharing it at a parent meeting for those that prefer to hear it. Graciela: And get their feedback right there. Sharon: Exactly.

Janet: I wanted to say one more thing, too, I almost forgot, related to the language rich environment. The welcome mat that's in our handbook here -- that one program put out for the parents as they arrived and the children too with "welcome" written in all the languages that the program represented -- I think that's a lovely idea.

Graciela: Yeah, because it uses a functional object, and it doesn't make a thing out of language that is separate from the context. Excellent. Janet: You know, what's a very important part of any program that's being culturally responsive are the people, the interactions, the sensitivity, the willingness to negotiate cultural bumps, because it's been pretty easy, what we've been talking about, compared to those first examples that were serious cultural bumps.

Sharon: Yes. Graciela: Thank you very much Janet for that comment. Gwen?

Gwen: Well, I think when we mention people, it certainly brings to mind an example of conversation starters again and the interaction between a teacher and a family. In this case, an infant was coming into the classroom. So this was a transition period. And because those conversations had begun prior to the child actually coming into the classroom, it was easier to continue those conversations with the parent.

So a part of the process in our program is to have the primary caregiver talk to the parents daily about the routines and experiences that the child has had throughout the day. This particular child was having a difficult time falling asleep. And so the caregiver went on to talk about the experiences, what had occurred, and the outcomes, and that this was a period of transition, and the adjustment time that may be required. As she shared this information with the parent, she raised a question and asked the parent, "So how do you put your child to sleep at home?"

Well, the parent described how she wrapped her baby in a cloth from her country and tied her to her back. And so this started the thinking of the teacher and wondering if she could perhaps learn this process. So she asked if it would be ok to borrow a piece of fabric, learn the technique, and then incorporate this technique into the child's daily experiences. Of course, the family was very flattered and eager to share all the aspects of the process with the teacher.

The teacher believed that there would be this lingering scent of the mother in the cloth, and she figured that, along with the positioning of the child, would create this comfort zone and mirror the process that was done in the home. And so she did follow the guidance of the family, learned the process, and later found that it was very helpful in lulling the child to sleep. And in mirroring the process that was done in the home, it created a comfort level that did allow the child to go to sleep, but it also allowed the teacher to create a stronger bond with the family as well as a bond with the child.

Graciela: What a great example. I believe we have a clip now that shows a similar situation, even though in a different cultural context. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Raven: Are you ready to go take a nap? Are you ready for a nap? Narrator: Little Raven Limpy is a teacher at the Arapahoe Early Head Start center. Infant Hallie was having difficulty sleeping. In her role as partner with the family, Raven sought help from the home.

Raven: He said that he had a cradle board that was given to her by her great-grandmother and that he put her in there after a feeding, so I asked him if he would bring it in and I would put her in there so that she could have a good nap. I sang to Hallie a lullaby that was sang to me by my grandmother. The cradle board is that security and comfort and so when she's in there it's not like a restraint or anything, it's for her needs. Developmentally, she is getting the love and everything with the cradle board she is sleeping.[Video ends]

Graciela: So this parallels Gwen's example very much, huh?

Dr. Stechuk: It really does. The example is the teacher's being very intentional in the goals that she has and the practices that are related to that, and that's facilitated by the fact that the teacher is a member of the cultural group. It may be more of a challenge if the teacher is working with children who are from different cultural groups, but then, that goes back to the points that have been made earlier about learning from families about their ways of working with and caring for and relating to their children.

Graciela: Great. Thank you.

Gwen: I agree, Bob. I do think that staff need to be more intentional when they are not from the culture of the children -- of all the children in their program, but then it takes us back to the importance of conversation starters: beginning a conversation with families in a respectful way, learning about their culture, and then implementing what strategies are applicable to the curriculum, and being honest when they are not.

Graciela: Great. thank you very much, all. I think we've had a very rich conversation during Segment One. This brings us to the close of Segment One. I am going to review, as always, the takeaways from the segment. Culture influences the goals or priorities parents have for their children and their parenting behaviors. Head Start has a culture, reflecting the principles and practices of early childhood. Program staff need to reflect on their own culture and learn from families about their cultures rather than rely on other sources of information.

Being culturally responsive is less about teaching culture to children and more about teaching children in a cultural context. This concludes our Segment One. We'll be back in just a moment with Segment Two. Stay tuned "Cultural Identity and the Home Language." Thank you.

Welcome to Segment Two: "Culture, Identity, and Home Language." In this segment, we will discuss family culture and language as a source of strength in the healthy development of the child.

We will also feature multicultural principles 5 and 6. Every individual has the right to maintain his or her own identity while acquiring the skills required to function in our diverse society. And effective programs for children who speak languages other than English require continued development of the first language while the acquisition of English is facilitated. So let's jump right in. How do we support the healthy self concept of very, very young children?

Ruth: By supporting their home language. It's a very important part of identity and self-concept. Honoring home language can help prevent the loss of home language, which is a very common pattern as children come into English environment, English-speaking environment. And it's so important. If we're to have a bilingual population, a greater expansion of a bilingual population, we really need children to keep their home language.

Children are perfectly capable of learning two languages or more, and in spite of the fact that some people believe that bilingualism can cause language delay, research does not say that --support that. I also wanted to say that language learning starts before birth. Some interesting new research has -- shows or indicates that babies cry in their mother's language. Pretty interesting!

Sharon:I just wanted to -- I know we've talked about this on previous webcasts, and we're not going to be able to go into it today. But you know we have many programs watching us who serve, you know, probably Gwen's program, also 7, 8, 9 languages. When we talk about supporting the home language, I really encourage you to look back at our previous webcasts and also do your own additional research and training because there are many ways we can do that in terms of supporting home language when we don't have the speakers in our classroom able to model.

You know, if it's one of the teacher or the teacher assistant that is obviously the ideal, but wanted to remind everyone about that. Graciela: It is also language is such an integral part of culture and becoming part of your culture and belonging that if it's lost, it's not just the loss of the language, it is the loss of an entire part of the identity, as in this next clip, this Alaskan elder, clearly points out to us. Let's watch.

[Video begins] New Speaker: I think it is important because then they will understand their ancestors' subsistence way of life. Then they will understand that moose makes them survive. It gives them soup, meat, whatever, however it is prepared by a family. So if they see it taught in class, then as they grow, then they will realize that they have an identity. [Video ends]

Graciela: So what did you see? I mean, he is really very -- it's a heartfelt comment that he makes.

Sharon: Yeah. I mean, I think he's giving us a responsibility and also the program, you know, respect to entrust that this is something that is so integral to the child's makeup, really the sense of identity, and we really need to ensure that link between if at all, that's what this clip reminds me, how important it is to really support that culture. And in his case, it's around the livelihood and survival.

Graciela: Correct.

Gwen: I also think that the point he made about having this practice done in the classroom as well as in the home was very powerful. It showed that there needs to be some continuity and a connection between home and school. And we hear this not only from this particular culture, but from other cultures, too, as elders look at the loss that's being created.

Graciela: Great. So let's move straight into language. Effective programs for children who speak languages other than English require continued development of the first language while the acquisition of English is facilitated. What does this really mean? What is the role of the first language in the acquisition of English?

Janet: And I'd like to start with infants and toddlers again because it's so important for them to learn who they are and where they belong, and language plays a big part of that.

Graciela: Great. Yes. Language is the link to belonging, and as you lose it, you lose a great deal. That actually follows you, that loss, through your entire life, as you were mentioning earlier.

Dr. Stechuk: We want to talk more in detail about the importance of the home language to the child's development. And the graphic on the screen shows two sets of triangles. The yellow triangle at the bottom shows the child's home language. It's there as Janet said, really it's before the child's born but we didn't go there with the graphic. So the yellow triangle represents the child's home language. It's there at birth. And the key point to keep in mind in thinking about the yellow triangle is that there's more going on than just learning to speak that language.

So as the child acquires their home language, there are actually a number of reasons why we want to support the continued development of that language. One of those reasons has already been mentioned previously, that as the child develops their home language, they're developing their identity. So the ways that families talk to their children, the kinds of language that they use, the sayings, the "dachas" in Spanish, all those help the child to understand themselves as an individual, how they relate to other people, expectations that are current within their cultural group, and so on.

So one reason for supporting the continued development of the home language is so that we don't interrupt the child's development of their identity. So as children are developing in that yellow triangle they're not only developing the ability to speak that home language, but they're developing all kinds of conceptual knowledge as well, that the period between birth through 5 years of age is a time of rapid and very sophisticated skill development on the conceptual level.

So as the child progresses and as that yellow triangle increases, as the child is learning their home language, they're learning a variety of conceptual skills that are going to be extra important for when the child begins to learn to read.

So one of the conceptual pieces is that young children are learning to categorize. So as the child is acquiring their home language, they're learning to fit different words and ideas into logical relationships. So even 18-month-old or 2 year old children will learn that apples, pears, and bananas are examples of fruits, or that dogs and cats are examples of pets.

Later on during the preschool period, children are capable of classifying and categorizing objects in many more ways of things that are alive, things that are animals, things that are mammals, things that are at the zoo. That initial simple skill becomes much more sophisticated. Other examples of conceptual knowledge are that children learn to classify things.

So as the child is acquiring their home language, they're learning to identify significant attributes and to identify objects accordingly. Initially children learn to classify by one attribute. It's big or it's small. Later on children are able to classify according to multiple attributes.

So the green triangles are big, and the red circles are small. That's just one other example of the progression of conceptual knowledge. Children are learning about numbers and ways of working with quantities. They're learning about time. They're learning about sequence. They're learning about spatial relationships. All of these conceptual skills

are developing concurrently with the child's acquisition of the home language. So what the graphic also shows is that red triangle at the top, is that the child is being introduced to a second language somewhere around the age of 4.

Now, I should say before going further that this is not typical of all dual-language development. There are actually many pathways to dual-language development. But this is fairly typical. The child grows up with the home language, which is represented by the yellow triangle, and acquires the second language somewhere during the preschool period.

So the reason why we want to support the continued development of the home language is that we don't want those conceptual skills that have formed and have been developing in the first language to stop, to be interrupted. If you look at the size of the red triangle, you're seeing that as the child is exposed to the second language, they're making progress, but in the early stages of second language acquisition, children don't have the vocabulary in the second language to be able to work with, let alone extend the concepts that they've acquired in the first.

So the key reason -- one of the key reasons for supporting the continued development of the child's home language is that we want that variety of conceptual skills that are being developed in the home language to continue to be strengthened and to continue to develop, and that as the child acquires the second language, they can then transfer those concepts into the second language once they've developed the level of vocabulary that allows them to do so.

So in prior broadcasts, it's been mentioned the relationship between early language skills and later literacy. It's not surprising that those conceptual skills that I've mentioned are all highly correlated with later reading and literacy outcomes so rather than trying to put children in a situation where we minimize exposure to one language in order to promote the acquisition of another, what we're seeing from the research is a small but growing body of evidence that says that skills that are acquired in one language can be successfully transferred to another.

So for example, several researchers have reported that children's phonological awareness abilities in Spanish are predictive of reading in English. Other researchers have found that children's oral language proficiency, again in Spanish, is predictive of their reading scores in English. The key point to take away is that acquiring two languages doesn't involve one being acquired at the expense of the other rather, that the skills that are developed in one language can be transferred into the other.

Graciela: Great explanation. Thank you very much.

Sharon: Bob, that was an amazing summary. I mean, that is a lot to try to digest in one sitting. I mean, it's very complex. But that visual, I think, really helped us understand that. I wanted to first, again, make another commercial because that triangle is on page 49 with an explanation, probably hopefully additional to what Bob has shared. You know, and for me, when we support the home language, we're allowing immediate access to the curriculum. And I think that's this immediacy around, you know, the languages.

One other notion I wanted to get in there. The last thing is--Bob did mention it -- the last 4 webcasts have really you know, we had one on language development, literacy development, assessing progress overall, and progress towards English language development. So those are a resource for the listeners as well in addition to Bob's great explanation.

Graciela: Thank you very much. This brings to my mind a question: how can we respond when parents who don't speak English ask us to speak only English to their children, even when we can speak the same home language as the parents? Janet: I'd love to respond to that... Graciela: Wonderful.

Janet: ...Because I've been in that situation a lot. And I think my first response has to be to really understand where the parent's coming from, really listen to the parent because I'm inclined to want to just jump in and to explain what Bob just explained here, which is not really, I think, the best approach. But eventually getting that information across to the parents in ways that they can understand can be so valuable because everyone's concerned about their child doing well in school.

And you've just mentioned a key to children having a better chance to do well in school. There was one more thing I wanted to say about the risk of losing home language. I just can't bring that up enough. It's so important to recognize

there is a risk.

Graciela: Yes. It's a disconnect... Graciela: A disconnect for life. Not only learning and succeeding in school but for life. Gwen, did you want to make a comment here?

Gwen: Yes, I would like to talk about the work that we do with families. As we talk about developing this partnership with families, it's important for us to talk about the importance of keeping that home language and maintaining that and talking to your child in a language in which you feel comfortable. That is extremely important for families. And we've talked about some of the reasons why it's important.

Certainly it relates to the child's identity, their ability to connect with their family members, to talk with others in the community in their home language. Certainly those are all important. But it has been noted that in some cases families are not identifying their home language. They are identifying their home language to be English. And so we as a program will need to take that on. We need to talk with families about the importance of identifying their language for whatever it is. Whatever their language is, they need to feel comfortable enough in sharing that with programs.

And so as they do so, we need to tell them the reasons behind this. Just like we've had this discussion here today, we need to tell them about the importance and the value of maintaining their home language.

Sharon: The other thing is I think is we really need to -- number one we need to have to have a plan. I know we've talked about this in other programs. But you really need to be able to explain you know, the staff need to be able to understand and explain so that you can share with parents what is the master plan. What is the plan for kindergarten entry? What is the plan at the beginning of the year in terms of how you use home language? And for what purpose? For many purposes?

You know, if you are in a position to be introducing English or whether you have English at the beginning of your year in addition to the home language supports. So you have to be very conversant and have a deep understanding about what your approach is and why you're doing what you're doing and what you hope it's going to achieve.

Graciela: I believe we have a quote from Lily Wong Fillmore that you wanted to mention.

Gwen: Yes. There's a quote from Lily Wong Fillmore, who was a former professor at the University of California Berkeley. And she says, "Talk is a crucial link between parents and children: It is how parents impart cultures to their children... When parents lose the means for socializing and influencing their children, rifts develop and families lose the intimacy that comes from shared beliefs and understandings." This speaks to what we've been saying here and further emphasizes the importance of maintaining a home language.

Graciela: Thank you, Gwen. We've had a rich and short discussion about a very, very important topic. Unfortunately, we have to come to the close of Segment Two and these are the key concepts that we've been discussing. Home language is an integral part of children's culture, and it is the foundation for learning, including the learning of English.

Maintaining the home language supports development in all domains and connects children to their families and communities. Programs can help family's understand why they need to communicate with their children in their home language. This concludes Segment Two. Please note that all of the professional development opportunities that we've done in this series have dealt with these topics in depth. And please stay tuned because we have one more segment to do in this program.

And we'll see you shortly in Segment Three: "Developing Culturally Responsive and Diverse Programming is an Ongoing Process." Thank you.

Break ends 1:09:01.

Welcome to Segment Three: "Developing Culturally Responsive and Diverse Programming is an Ongoing Process." In this segment, we will address the importance of understanding how developing culturally responsive and diverse

programming is an ongoing process. We will also discuss key strategies to keep continuously improving the service delivery. We will highlight principles 7 and 10. Culturally relevant programming requires staff who reflect the community and families served.

And culturally relevant and diverse programming and practices are incorporated in all systems and services and are beneficial to all adults and children. So let's jump right in. Why is it important to understand that developing culturally responsive and diverse programming is an ongoing process?

Janet: Well, the first thing I'd like to say is to stress that "ongoing" factor because it's a process that you don't get to the end of. You continue learning as long as you live, if you're still open to it. I also wanted to say very strongly that the work begins here, begins with me, begins with each individual. We can talk about systems. We can talk about programs. But it's the people in the program that create the system and maintain the system.

And I also wanted to say with the focus now on culturally responsive education and environments because of the changing demographics, it feels really urgent to do this work. But this has been a diverse country from the very beginning. And for me, I think it's always been urgent work. So I'm glad it's getting wider spread attention now.

Graciela: Great.

Sharon: Yeah, you know, it really connects, I mean while we've been diverse from the very beginning, it's also important to acknowledge that Head Start programs are changing, you know, and need to be responsive and programs are doing that. When they're doing their community assessment and their community is changing, they're responsive to those families and children that live in the community. That also makes the curriculum change.

It's not the same curriculum from year to year. If the children and families are different, the curriculum changes as families. The work is different each year, depending on the families. And I think that's important. And so in that case, it is obviously ongoing, as you were saying, Janet.

Gwen: And I agree. I think that we need to be mindful of the fact that as new families enter the program who may be what we think are from the same cultural background, they may not be. And so it's important to have that relationship, that intimate relationship with the family to learn how they actually value their culture and in what ways they would like you to incorporate that into your programming. Culture's not stagnant.

Graciela: That's right. Gwen: It's always changing. And we need to always be changing so that we can be mindful of how we do business with families. Graciela: Fabulous.

Dr. Stechuk: Because individuals are rooted in one or more cultures, it's really important, as Janet said, for programs to develop a process whereby individuals can think about, talk about, reflect about, their own cultures at the same time. Because there are so many different ways that culture and home language intersect with children's development, it's equally important that programs develop systems for responding to the needs of their communities.

Gwen's example of conversation starters intersects with a number of--and perhaps possibly all of--the Head Start systems, including self assessment, planning, communication assessment, curriculum, and so on.

Graciela: Right.

Sharon: You know that I'd like to just quickly follow on because we often do sometimes compartmentalize culture and language. This is, you know, the family service worker role, the teacher role. It takes on that role. But as Bob just pointed out, it really is something that is integrated and infused throughout the organization if the program is really being culturally responsive.

Graciela: Fabulous. Let's take a look at principle 7, then. Culturally relevant programming requires staff that reflect the community and families served. So why is it important that the program staff who reflects the community and families served be there? Janet: It's important because you have real representation from the culture -- somebody who is of the

culture. And you must be careful that you don't let that one person stand for the whole culture.

Graciela: That's right. That's right. Janet: Mm-hmm.

Sharon: You know, it builds a foundation of trust. I mean, and that's just the bottom line. You know, I think that those trusting relationships, you know, as Gwen has stated, really matter a lot. You know, you need, I think, oftentimes an ambassador--you know, an ambassador family, I call them, a family that is willing. You know, as we know, it's not an easy thing to just come and, you know, bring your child and say, you know...

"My child will be safe, respected, well cared for, loved here." And I think any culture, you know, that's difficult, when you first start to work with people that you don't know. And so, you know, when you have an ambassador family who's willing to take a risk with you, I think other families will also follow suit. You know, I think one of the things that we have to do is...

...really create that capacity. We've got to look at ways if community members or family members you know, some programs do quite a good job of parent volunteering. Other programs really in response to increasing their cultural capacity to be responsive have created a more formalized parent training program, where the parents, even getting some type of a certification, and they have specific things that they do in the program that then brings them closer and closer to perhaps working in the program.

But really, that more formal manner in terms of working with parents is another way to really beef that up. I do want to acknowledge that it's not easy. I mean, it's very easy to say, you know, "It's really important." You know, "We've got to represent." You know, it's not easy but I think that where I've seen it be successful is the leadership at every level, the teacher assistant, the teacher, the parent, the director, have a vision and have an understanding of the importance. And that vision, I think, is what really gets programs moving.

Gwen: I think the reality is, is that it can be difficult work. And so when we find it to be most difficult perhaps is when we're working independently, when we're working without hearing the voices of the families, of the community, of the community agencies that bond with us to provide services. Their communities are becoming more and more diverse, too. So how are they doing it? Maybe it's time for us to kind of step back and reassess and hear their voices, invite them to join us in reworking how we do business.

Dr. Stechuk: Gwen's point speaks to a larger overarching issue, which is that dealing with issues of culture often involves risk. So there's the potential to make mistakes, there's the potential to get information wrong. At a minimum it often means that we have to operate outside of our comfort zones. So there's a risk involved in dealing with these issues. But I think the bigger risk is that we ignore issues of culture and home language.

We've been talking about these issues for the webcast, and we haven't even begun to scratch the surface. There are so many other topics that we haven't gotten to, but I think we've been able to demonstrate the many ways in which culture and home language relate to children's development. So if we ignore those things, we're really undermining our ability to really serve all children and to maximize their learning and their Head Start experience.

Graciela: Right. Thank you very much for summarizing what we've been trying to do. Let's take a look at principle 10: Culturally relevant and diverse programming and practices are incorporated in all systems and services and are beneficial to all adults and children. So how does a program ensure that an ongoing process of improvement is always happening?

Sharon: I would say for those who have seen many of the webcasts, they're probably going to say, "Oh, my goodness. Here goes Sharon again. She's going to talk about the Program Preparedness Checklist." But here I go again! I just want to mention, it is a tool if programs you are viewing, are not familiar with. And it does allow you to look at your systems and services as they relate to a lot of the areas -- the systems and services in Head Start and how we work with children and families.

It allows you to make a decision about whether you're definitely doing something, you're in progress, or you're not yet.

And as you look at this, as your program looks at, you know, yourself organizationally, kind of your own self assessment, it allows you to take stock of yourself, figure out where you are and where you need to go in terms of these areas. And I've talked with many programs who have used it and they have made some changes and they've learned some things that they really weren't, that they thought they were doing well. And then in other areas, they actually thought they had more to go.

And so I think for programs at all different levels, for some programs, they just may want to take a small piece of it and start there. The other programs may want to try the whole thing. And I believe it was downloadable for the webcast today and it's also available on the ECLKC on the DLL page. I know we don't have a whole lot of time, Graciela, to talk about it, but I just wanted to at least mention it.

Graciela: Thank you, Sharon.

Gwen: I also wanted to piggyback on something Janet had said earlier, that it starts with the individual. It's important to have individual reflection as to how you're working and how you're involved in delivering the services in a Head Start program. Also taking a look at the work that you do with the team and then looking at the bigger systems within your program, assessing those and then making necessary changes.

Graciela: Great. Thank you.

Dr. Stechuk: Yes. Many programs around the country have been able to make progress on these issues by creating teams and giving the teams some specific areas of responsibility. For example, assessing organizational capacity, asking questions about what kinds of services are being delivered, how family's are welcomed, how staff are trained and so on and then reflecting on additional ways of working and thinking and doing to make better connections with families and children.

Graciela: Great. And to that purpose we have a clip of Terry Kolhmeier, who was with us in a previous program talking about that in her agency PICA in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Let's watch.

[Video begins] Terry Kolhmeier: I think also that within our own agency if I can give this as an example we have, about 10 years ago our agency really pulled together what they called a cross cultural resource team and this cross cultural team of individuals actually recognizes the various cultures that we serve within our program.

Sharon: It's comprised of... Terry Kolhmeie: It is comprised of. So there are representatives that speak the languages of the families that we serve...

...and so the wonderful thing about this group is that they've been able to do not just translation and interpretation, but actually consult us as we do translate materials and provide interpretation for parent trainings. This cross cultural team also provides Spanish, Somali, Hmong classes for our staff so that our staff can enhance their skills and go back into the classroom or go back to the front of the building, you know, where they're greeting families, working with families, you know, greeting them and seeing them on the buses and so forth.

So that's been a wonderful opportunity for our program staff to have that resource, the cross cultural team. [Video ends]

Sharon: That's great. You know, I just wanted to -- obviously I was speaking with Terry. We did write up her cross cultural team in the "Multicultural Principles" on page 14 and 15. You can see on the slide that we've given you 4 examples of what her program actually did after they did their analysis, as Bob was talking. And the first one: Creating a 24 hour parent communication hotline. And that hotline was in 4 languages and it had daily activity, program information, upcoming events, as well as registration information and they updated it weekly.

The organizing international events and festivals, they involved families, you know, to help plan these events and to inform parents about the activities and help program staff and parents learn about one another's cultural heritage. The third one: Tape recording parents to provide children with authentic models of their home language. They played those

tapes in the classroom for individual and group readings.

And, so, again, that's a wonderful example of making that home school connection and allowing that language to come into the classroom, even if the speaker is not available, you know, to be present during the day. The last: Creating a cross language phrase book for staff use. This one I have spoken to her about this -- they started with learning the different ways to say "hello."

And over time, they expanded it into a phrase book which had many, many more phrases. I believe it was phonetically when it could be so that staff could pronounce it. These are just examples from their program. You know, these may not be ones that other programs would find useful, the context of where they are. But, again, it's an example of what comes out of an assessment when you really dig down and figure out, you know, how can we do things better and how can we be more responsive? What are those practical things?

Graciela: Well, thank you, Sharon. Thank you very much, panelists. Thank you, audience, for having participated in our conversation by listening and remembering that we have been featuring the Multicultural Principles Resource Handbook. We are now closing our program today and the key concepts in the last segment have been: Developing culturally responsive and diverse programming is an ongoing process. Ongoing improvement of services and systems involves teamwork and program self-assessment.

Hiring staff who reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the families is key to effective service delivery. Thank you very much for having joined us again today and stay tuned, come back to us for our next program, in which we will continue to feature multicultural principles with a lot more rich discussion. And thank you very much again. Good-bye.

-- End of Video --