Head Start Leadership Institute:
Dr. Walter Gilliam

Woman: Okay. So, I think you all know that the issue of preschool expulsions has been a pretty hot topic over the last several years in the early-childhood field. It's gained a lot of attention, and if it's an area that you've really been thinking about a lot and you have questions about, you are in for a treat this afternoon. We have Dr. Walter Gilliam joining us. And if you don't know Dr. Gilliam, he is one of our nation's -- or, if not, the world's -- leading researchers in the area of early-childhood/preschool expulsion and many other facets of early-childhood care and education. But Dr. Gilliam has been doing a lot of research recently in the field of preschool expulsion, and so he's going to share his information with us today. And then, followed by Dr. Gilliam's presentation, you'll have an opportunity to hear from a panel of grantees, your colleagues, who are going to be talking about their work that they're doing in their grantees for the most vulnerable children in their programs.

And so, it's really going to be a treat for you. So, I'd like to say a little bit more about Dr. Gilliam. And, typically, I don't like to really read from bios, but I just want to read a little bit from Dr. Gilliam's bio so you can just get a sense of how incredibly awesome he is. So, Dr. Walter S. Gilliam is the Director of the Edward Zigler Center in Child Development & Social Policy and Associate Professor of Child Psychiatry and Psychology at the Child Study Center at Yale University School of Medicine. Dr. Gilliam has conducted extensive research involving early-childhood education and intervention-policy analysis, ways to improve the quality of pre-kindergarten and childcare services, early-childhood mental-health consultation, and the impact of early-childhood education on school readiness. His scholarly writing addresses early-childhood care and education programs, school readiness, and developmental assessment of young children. So, that tells you a lot about a lot of the work that Walter has done and is doing over the years, but one of the things that I think is most incredible about what you're going to hear and what you're going to experience is that Dr. Gilliam has a way of taking research and theory and making it practical and applicable to your work. So, as you're listening, listen carefully about "What that means for me," what that means for our program, and then you have an opportunity, again, to hear from your colleagues about what that means for them, what that means for their program and the work that they're doing. So, sit back and relax and enjoy, and we hope you have a good plenary experience, and thank you all so much. I'm going to turn this over to Walter now.

[Applause]

Dr. Walter Gilliam: Well, thank you so much for that very kind, warm introduction. I have to say, it feels great to be in a room full of people who love Head Start, and it's great to be in a room full of people who love our Head Start babies. I was asked to come here today to talk to you about not just the work that we've been doing at Yale regarding children being expelled from pre-kindergarten programs, or suspended from pre-kindergarten programs, and also about the notion of implicit bias and how implicit bias might factor into some of those decisions. There's been, just as Jen had mentioned before, a lot of attention recently to this issue of children being expelled from preschool programs, being kicked out of pre-- I've heard this referred to in many different ways, and you probably have, too. I refer to it as "expelled" from preschool, because that's basically what it is, but I've also heard it referred to as, "not yet ready for school" readiness.

[Laughter]

I've heard it referred to as, "We're not the right place for you." And I've heard it described as -- and this is my favorite -- giving the child "the gift of time." Now, doesn't that -- That sounds nice, doesn't it? That's like a Hallmark version of being expelled from a program. You are given the gift of time. So, I am here to talk to you a little bit about some of the more recent work that we're doing, but I can't really get to that until I talk to you a little bit about where we are and how we got here. Right now, there's a lot of increased attention to this issue at the federal level, in terms of a joint position statement that was issued by the Department of Health & Human Services and ED, back in December of 2014, that was calling for an end to expelling children from all preschool programs of all types -- and childcare programs -- and also investing in things like early-childhood mental-health consultation as a way to be able to give teachers the supports that they might need in order to not feel they need to expel or suspend a child. The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights started collecting data on this for the first time at the preschool age level in 2011, and then they were issuing their first report by 2014, and then another report by 2016, and that, of course, got a lot of attention to the issue, too. Reauthorization of CCDBG, which is the main federal-funding stream that funds subsidized childcare in the United States. And then, they're requiring states in their state plans to have a policy or a plan around expulsion or suspension to articulate that policy or plan to parents and to consider spending some of their Quality Enhancement dollars on things like early-childhood mental-health consultation, again, as a way to be able to reduce the likelihood that a child would be expelled from these programs. Multiple states starting to get more and more interested in this. Many states investing more in early-childhood mental-health consultation as a result of the attention that has come to children being expelled from these programs and a desire to not do that anymore. Several states also passing legislation to prohibit the practice.

Connecticut was the first state to do this, in 2015, but I can tell you that there's multiple states right now that are working on very similar legislation and have it at different places in the pipeline. And then, of course, Head Start. And in Head Start, it was never part of the Head Start practice to expel children from programs, but that became particularly clear in the 2016 revisions of the Head Start Performance Standards. Now, if we were to look at the Head Start Performance Standards, some of it's about limiting children being suspended from preschool from Head Start programs. One severely limiting the use of suspension programs. Suspension being only temporary, that it has to be a last resort, that it's not the first thing that we do in a response to a challenging behavior, and that it's only done in very serious instances when there is a threat or a concern about a child's safety or somebody else's safety, and that threat can't be reduced through some kind of reasonable modifications. I won't read to you everything that's in the Performance Standards, but I do hope that you take a look at the Performance Standards there and become familiar with what's said in there regarding suspension and also regarding the outright prohibition in the Performance Standards of expelling a child.

And it basically makes it very clear that, in Head Start programs, we're not supposed to be expelling children, not supposed to be kicking children out permanently. And it says what it is that we should be doing instead. And one of the things that I liked about the Head Start Performance Standards' take on this it that it makes it very clear that if you're even thinking of expelling a child from your program, shouldn't that prompt a thorough evaluation into what's going on? And that evaluation could be and should be an evaluation regarding the needs of the individual child, but it could also -- should be, could be an evaluation of what might be the needs in that classroom or the needs for that teacher or the needs for that program or the need for the culture of that program that would give rise to a desire to expel a child from the program. Now, I started doing research on this in, uh, 2002 -- is when I first

started looking into this issue of children being expelled from preschool programs. Issued the first report in 2005. It was part of a bigger study of state-funded pre-kindergarten programs.

We randomly sampled close to 4,000 classrooms across the nation, in all the 40 states that fund pre-kindergarten programs, in a wide variety of different types of settings. Most of them were in the public schools, but quite a few of them were in Head Start. 29 percent of them were in Head Start. Of those 29 percent, about half of them were Head Start in a public school, and about half of them were Head Start not in a public school, and we had some other settings that were thrown in there too. And in the study, we asked teachers a wide variety of questions. But one of the questions we asked them was this -- Over the last 12 months, have you ever required a child to terminate permanently participation from your program because of a challenging behavior? Please don't include children who are transitioned directly from your preschool program to a therapeutic preschool program, special-ed preschool program, or some other potentially more appropriate setting. So, what we were basically asking these teachers was, in the past 12 months, have you ever had a child with a behavior problem and you told them never to come back -- and there was no other place to send them? You didn't send them anyplace else, you just said, "Just don't come back." And that's what we were asking the teachers. And when we got the results back, 10 percent of the state-funded pre-kindergarten teachers said yes.

Now, bear in mind, these are state-funded pre-kindergarten teachers. These are not childcare as best you can find it. These are the programs that are in the community that have enough resources attached to them that they can get into the state system. These are typically some of your better-resourced pre-kindergarten programs. 10 percent of the teachers said, yes, I've done this in the past 12 months. I've told a child that they can't be here anymore. And usually when they say yes, it's because of one child that they might have expelled in the last 12 months, sometimes two, sometimes three, sometimes four in 12 months. When we piloted this study, we piloted it in child care programs in Massachusetts and we found one teacher in Massachusetts who reported expelling six children out of a class of 16 in the course of 12 months.

That's almost half the class. That's a lot of kids kicked out of these programs and it's enough to make you think that when you see it like that, that it can't possibly be just about the behavior of the child. There has to be other factors that might be at play that could explain why one teacher would have six children in her classroom that she would kick out of the classroom in the course of 12 months. We did the math, and we figured out what the rate was. And so, we figured out that the rate was about seven children being expelled from these pre-kindergarten programs. Permanently kicked out, per 1,000. So, seven per 1,000 -- is that a lot? Is that a little? Is it like baby bear and it's just right? How do you understand seven per 1,000? So, we thought we needed something to compare it to. Now, bear in mind also that when you're talking about expulsion, I mean, this is pretty extreme.

Expulsion at any grade level, including preschool, is like the capital punishment of the schools. It doesn't get more extreme than saying, "Don't ever come back." So, we need still some kind of a way to be able to understand whether this was a higher number than you might expect or a lower number when you're talking about these pre-kindergarten children and we decided that we would compare it to the rate of expulsion for grades K through 12. The rate of expulsion for grades K through 12 is two per thousand, which allowed us to be able to run at that time with the headline of "Children are expelled from pre-kindergarten programs at a rate more than three times that of grades K through 12 combined. And that was our headline that we used. Now, at this time we started also finding about other studies that had

been done in child care programs. Child care programs -- they don't typically have the level of resources that public-school based pre-kindergarten programs or Head Start programs have in them, and in the child-care world the rates are much, much higher still.

Take a look at some of the rates that we have here on the slide and in particular take a look at Illinois. And at Illinois, it says 42 percent of the centers reported expelling at least one child in the past 12 months. What's unique about that study is this. That study only included infant-toddler child care centers. Now, what's the number one reason why a child might be kicked out of a child care program as a baby or a toddler? What is it? See, you sounded like you were shocked at the beginning, but you knew. You knew, you knew that it happens. Yes, biting is the number-one reason. And there's other reasons, too. I knew about a child or heard about a child who was expelled from a child care program -- she was a toddler -- because her brother bit. And the program had a policy that they accept children as a family, so then they also expel children as a family. So, if you were to plot it out, this is what expulsion rates look like for K through 12, Pre-K, and childcare. Pre-kindergarten programs, about over three times that of grades K through 12 combined, child care programs over 13 times that of grades K through 12 combined. Now, there's a lot of factors that seem to predict the likelihood of a child being expelled from a pre-kindergarten program, such as teacher-child ratio. The more children per adults in the classroom the more likely a child is to be expelled.

Does that surprise anybody? Program length of day -- the more hours a program is opened per day, the more likely a child is to be expelled. Surprise anybody? Teacher job stress -- Teachers who report high levels of job stress expel at a higher rate than teachers who report low levels of job stress. We also had the teachers complete the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale. Teachers who screen positive for depression, their own depression, expel at twice the rate of preschool teachers who screened negative for depression. Does that surprise you? And access to behavioral supports -- The more access a teacher has to somebody who can come into their classroom, work with the teacher hands on directly regarding challenging behaviors, the more access to somebody like that, the less likely that a child is to be expelled.

That probably doesn't surprise anybody either. Now, when you look at these variables, and these are some of the best predictors of the likelihood of a child being expelled from a preschool program, what jumps out at you as being in common about all these variables? What do they have in common? None of them have anything to do with a child's behavior. These are not child variables. These are program variables. These are adult variables. These are our variables. Our variables, our adult variables, are the best predictors of the likelihood of a child being expelled from a preschool program. And so, when you think about it, preschool expulsion is really not a child behavior at all. It's an adult decision. It's an adult decision that may be based in part on the behavior of the child, but because it's an adult decision it gives a lot of room, a lot of latitude for other things to factor into the decision-making process. So, who is it that's most likely to be expelled? Well, we know that in mixed-age classrooms where you have 3- or 4-year-olds together, the 4-year-olds are about 50 percent more likely than 3-year-olds to be expelled. We didn't have any hypothesis going into the study as to whether it would be the 3-year-olds or the 4-year-olds. And so when we found this finding, we pulled together some preschool teachers similar to the ones in the national study and we asked them -- "This is what we found in this national study of teachers similar to you. Why do you think they would say that? Why would the 4-year-olds be more likely than the 3s?"

And they thought about, and they discussed it among themselves, and what they basically came up with as their reasoning why this might be true was this. They said, "Well, it's one thing to have a child in your classroom that might be aggressive or have challenging behavior and the child's this big. And it's different to have a child in your classroom who's aggressive and the child is this big." And we said, "Well, why? Why does the height of the child matter so much?" And they said, "Well if the child is this big, then the child is no bigger than the other children in the classroom, but if the child is this big the child might be bigger than some of the other children, and maybe someone will get hurt." And that's where it became even more clear to us this is really an adult decision. It's not just about the behavior of the child. It's about what we make of it. It's what we think about that behavior. It's about what we think might happen as a result of that behavior, whether those imaginations that we have are accurate or not. Again, that gives a lot of room for a lot of things to cloud or to impact the way in which we view a child's behavior. Black children are expelled at twice the rate of white children, boys more than four times the rate of girls. And so when you think about it and you put all of these risk factors for expulsion together, there's three B's of risk for preschooled expulsion.

You have "big," "black," and "boy." Those are the risk factors. And the more of those that reside within a single child, the more likely that child is to be suspended or expelled from a preschool program. That doesn't mean that those are the only children. And I can tell you this -- White children in preschool are more likely to be expelled from preschool than white children are in grades K-12. Girls are more likely to be expelled in preschool than girls are to be expelled in grades K-12. You know, and so all children are more at risk in the preschool years, but especially our black boys. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights started collecting data on this. And then look specifically at the June 2016 report that they put out. Black preschoolers 3.6 times as likely to be suspended as white preschoolers. By the time they were collecting this data, which was about a decade after we were collecting it, they were finding that the racial disparities were even greater than what we reported.

We were reporting a 2-1 ratio, and they're finding close to a 4-1, at least when looking at suspension rates. So all of this raises the question of why is it that our boys, and our black children, and especially our black boys are more at risk to be expelled or suspended from preschool programs? Well, we can point our fingers at a lot of things from the science. We know that boys tend to be more susceptible to stressors. When boys and girls are experiencing similar levels of stressors, boys are more likely to show the outward expression of that in terms of acting out behaviors in classrooms. This, we know. Children of color oftentimes have more stressors in their life simply because they're more likely -- not all of them -- but more likely to be living in homes or communities that are dealing with financial challenges and economic challenges and other things that go along with that, and that creates stress. And anything that creates stress for the family creates stress for the child, too. The child carries that stress to school.

Our children of color are often more likely to attend programs of poorer quality in the preschool years. With the exception of Head Start, our children are less likely to go to preschool at all and if they do it's more likely to be a preschool program that's under the radar, that's unlicensed. We don't know what the level of quality is. Or if we do know what the level of quality is, it's nowhere near the level of quality that their more on average affluent white peers might be attending. And this is true also in elementary school and middle school and high school. But even if we add all of those things together and take them all into account, it just doesn't seem to be enough to explain the stark differences, the disparities in the rates between our black children and our white children, especially are black boys, from being expelled from preschool programs.

The rates are so huge. So, that raised the question to us, "Well, what else might account for an increased likelihood of our black children or boys and especially our black boys to be expelled?" And we started looking more at implicit bias. We know from several studies, mostly by a man named Russ Skiba, Indiana University, that in elementary school, middle school, high school, black children are more likely to be sent to the principal's office, more likely to be suspended, more likely to be expelled than their white peers even for the same exact transgressions. And so what they did was they looked at school records, and they masked all of the other information regarding who the child was and what happened with the child and had teachers rate the severity of just what was in the record. "How severe of a behavioral problem was that?" And then, when they put it back into the analysis, even when you look at similar behavior ratings -- "This is similarly severe to this other child" -- if the child is black, the child is more likely to go to the principal's office than if the child is white. If the child is black, they're more likely to be suspended. If the child is black, they're more likely to be expelled.

That's what we know from the K-12 literature. Now, there's some interesting studies, too, that looked more specifically at the issue of bias -- Goff, et all, in 2014 -- an interesting study where they were looking at stories. They provided stories of a child who may or may not have done this thing -- may or may not have broken the vase, may or may not have lost the ball. And they asked people, when they read the stories, to rate how guilty the child was. "Do you think he really did it?" And then, they randomized with the stories pictures of children. And whenever they showed a picture of a black child, the guilty ratings went up. It's the same story, folks. It is the exact same story. Everybody is reading the exact same stories, but if they pair a picture of a black child, now it just sounds more guilty, it just sounds more like the child did it. At the end of the study, they asked people to -- And the children that were in the pictures were all between the ages of about 10 and 17. They asked them to -- "Guess how old you think the children were in these picture." And on average, the respondents, adults, overestimated the age of the black children by about 4 1/2 years. It's fascinating isn't it? Remember what we said before about if you look bigger? You know, 4 1/2 years is a lot. When you're 10, 4 1/2 years is a lot. I mean, that's like half your lifetime. That makes me really, really old...

[laughter]

if you added that extra time onto my life. This is an interesting one -- the door study. This one was with children. In the door study, they had 5-year-olds, 7-year-olds, and 10-year-old children, and for these children, they taught them how to rate how much something would hurt, to rate how much pain you would feel. And they said, "Imagine you hit your head. How much would it hurt? Imagine you bit your tongue. Imagine you stubbed your toe. How much would it hurt?" And then they showed them pictures of children, some black, some white, all the same gender as the child who was answering the question. And then, they said, "This child bit his tongue. How much did it hurt? She hit her head. How much did it hurt? He stubbed his toe. How much did it hurt?" And when the children were 5, no real differences, but by the time the children were 7 years old, whenever the picture of a black child was shown, especially a black boy, the child who was answering it felt that that child felt less pain, less pain than the other children, less pain than they would feel for the same thing.

And by the time the children were 10 years old, there was a very strong finding that the black children, especially the black boys, were seen as feeling less pain. And when you think about it, this really isn't a study about pain at all, is it? This is a study about something else. This is a study about empathy really, right, you know and how much empathy do we have? And how much am I willing to give to people? And

if I only have so much, how do I ration it? And how much do I decide to give to you, and how much do I decide to give to you? And are there some children that we withhold this from? And there's a lot of things that we need to know about the early childhood workforce. But one thing that I know for positive about our early childhood workforce in the United States -- All of our teachers are older than 7, every one of them.

[Laughter]

Oh, shifting standards -- This is an interesting one. So, it's a complicated theory, and I could try to explain it, but it's hard for me to even remember how to say it, so I typically just kind of try to describe it to people. So imagine you're at a co-educational softball game, and you have boys and girls playing softball. You're the audience. You're the audience. And I come up to plate, and I'm a boy. And I come up to plate, and I'm getting ready to accept the pitch. And the pitch comes in and...

[Clicks tongue]

And I get a standard base hit. Run to first base. And everybody politely applauds. Yeah. And then -- And he's on first base. And then, up comes the girl. The girl comes up to bat, and she's up there. And she's ready to go at the plate. And the pitch comes in and...

[Clicks tongue]

She gets a standard base hit, runs to first base, and everybody jumps out of their seats in a roaring ovation.

[Imitates crowd cheering]

And it may feel like it's kind of the girl. It may feel like it's being nice to the girl, but what it's really doing is it's showing an underlying stereotype bias. The boy did exactly what he was supposed to do. The girl did not. She violated expectations -- in a positive way in this case. And we can violate stereotype expectations in positive ways. We can violate stereotype expectations in negative ways. That's the idea behind shifting standards. We shift our standards based on whatever kind of underlying stereotype bias we have. And if we have an underlying stereotype bias, we'll shift our standards in response to that. Now, let me tell you about a study by Harber and see what you think of this. Harber did a study with only white middle school English teachers. And in the study, Harber had an essay that they had written to look like a poorly written middle school essay. Looked like C-minus, D-plus kind of work. Some people call it "the poorly written essay study." And they gave the teachers this essay, and they said that -- they told them a fib. And they said the purpose of the study is we want to see what kind of factors go into teachers' letter grades. So we want you to mark it up with an ink pen and then put a letter grade on it. Okay, makes sense. But what the teachers also didn't know is the researchers altered the name on top of the essay to either look like it was written by a black child, a Latino child, or a white child. Now, who do you think got the highest grades? Yeah? I'm hearing a few people saying it. It's a good guess, but by a long shot, the kids who got the highest grades were the black children and the Latino children. Why? Because of shifting standards.

When we read it, when the teachers read it, "You know, this doesn't look all that bad" -- 'cause remember, it's a poorly written essay -- "this doesn't look all that bad for a black kid." "Well, this doesn't look all that bad for a Latino." Or, "Uh, I really thought Emily would have done better." You know, and

that's the way in which -- Sometimes shifting standards works in ways that we don't really necessarily think that it would. And usually in non-zero sum appraisals, where everybody can get a good grade or everybody can get praise or everybody can get, you know, that's the way in which it works. But once it becomes a zero sum kind of game, like there's only so many slots in the AP class, there's only so much room in the gifted and talented, then the biases tend to flip, going the other direction.

Can you imagine the whiplash that must feel like to many of our children to be told how great and terrific they are because of our expectations for them and then when it comes for AP class they're not in it. You know, when it's time for the gifted and talented classes, that's the way in which shifting standards works. Now, we were interested in doing a study of these kind of things with preschool teachers, and there hadn't really, as far as we could tell, been a study like this looking at and examining implicit bias in preschool teachers. And so we got money from the Kellogg Foundation in 2015. We'd been asking and looking around for someone who'd be interested in studying implicit bias in preschool teachers. And it's not easy to find somebody willing or interested to fund that, so we were really happy that the Kellogg Foundation decided to fund a study like this. So please, please, please eat lots of cereal.

[Laughter]

Just, however. If you could find a box of cereal, just eat as much of it as you can. November 2015, we collected the data at a large national conference of preschool teachers. I don't name it, but you could probably figure it out. So it was one that had about 7,000 preschool teachers at it. And we have expensive equipment, and we didn't want to have to fly it all over the country. So, what we did was we rented a booth in the exhibitors hall and instead of selling sock puppets and books, we recruited people into our study as they walked by. So that's how we got our national sample. We released the report in 2016 at a meeting hosted by the Administration for Children and Families. And so that's the timeline of the study. This gives you a little bit of information about who was in the study. Most of them, of course, were women. You can see about two-thirds white. 22 percent of the teachers were black.

They had a fair amount of years in the classroom. Most of them were teachers, a few student teaches thrown in. Some of them directors, some support staff. Lots of different types of centers that they represented and teachers from pretty much every region of the country was in the study. The first part of the study was an eye tracking study. Now, this is where it gets a little interesting. So, in the eye tracking study, we have a video for them to watch of preschool children in a preschool classroom. And there's an eye tracker on this screen that bounces a little beam off the eye and can tell us down to the pixel and down to the millisecond exactly where the teacher's looking. Exactly. Right down to the millisecond. So we have them watch this video and they have the head phones on and then they receive these instructions. "Now you're ready to view a series of video clips lasting six minutes. We are interesting in learning about how teachers detect challenging behaviors in the classroom. Sometimes this involves seeing behavior before it becomes problematic. The video segments you are about to view are of preschoolers engaging in various activities. Some clips may or may not contain challenging behavior. Your job is to press the enter key on this external key pad every time you see a behavior that could become a potential challenge." And the experimenter would show them exactly how to push it. "Please press the key pad as often as needed." So, you can see from this, what we told the teachers, this is a study to see how quickly you can find behavior problems. Hit this button every time you see something that could turn into a behavior.

Maybe you won't see behavior problems in every single one of the clips. But, if you see something, then hit this button. That's what we told them. Well, the parts that we didn't tell them were this -- there are no challenging behaviors in any of the video clips. The children are all child actors. They're not even in a real preschool. They're in a preschool classroom, but they're not in a preschool classroom with other children in it. We literally have a table -- it's a round table a little smaller than one of the round tables here -- and we have four children -- one black boy, one black girl, one white boy, one white girl -- and nobody misbehaves. They just play with their Play-Doh. And the question becomes this -- if a teacher is led to believe or feels that a child might misbehave, who do they look at? Who do they spend the most time looking at? Even if the child doesn't misbehave, who do they go back to and look at? Kind of like if you were studying mall security cops. You know, who do you follow in the mall when you think somebody might be up to something? That's basically what we were doing here with this study. Does that make sense? And so we had some background noise, and so we had the teaches with the headphones on and they could hear background sounds. The background sounds we purchased from Amazon. You could literally go to Amazon and purchase something called "Typical Preschool Noises." And you can get an audio track.

[Laughter]

Who would have thunk? Who would've thunk? And we found this, and then we just overlaid it on to it so that it seems and feels like you're in a real preschool classroom. Do you want to see what one of the videos looks like? Okay, so, this is one of the clips right here. This is a 15-second clip. When we have the clips and we're showing them to the teachers, the camera is coming from different angles. Sometimes the camera angle will be up here, sometimes from over this side, sometimes this side. And the reason why is when we tend to look at different things, we tend to look from left to right -- Why? Because we lead read from left to right in Western cultures and we tend to look more at foreground and then background. And so what we do is we alter the camera angle from different places so that each child appears in different locations. Make sense? So, this is a 15-second clip. The rest of the clips are similar to this, but taken from different angles. John, can cue that clip up for us?

[Children playing]

Did you see the misbehavior? Did you see any behavior problems? Well, that's what the teachers were seeing. To give you a sense of what it actually looks like in real life, after we did the study, we did the study again in a local childcare program near Yale, and then we asked some teachers if they would participate in it in part because, after it was over, we wanted to interview them about it and ask them questions about it because we weren't able to do that when we were collecting the data, because if we asked people questions about it, we'd blow our cover. We didn't want to do that. The other reason too is we wanted to actually video film them taking this so that I could show you what it actually looks like. So, John, if you could cue that up, you'll see a teacher here on the left. And there's another teacher, and there's another teacher. And they're looking at the screen. You see the little black bar at the bottom of the screen? See it right there? That's the eye tracker. Now, that's Maria. Maria is a research assistant for us. And she's looking at her monitor. Do you see the yellow dot?

That's where the teacher is looking. Now the teacher just sees the video clip, but Maria sees the same video clip with the yellow dot. And the reason why is so that Maria can know that, in fact, it seems to be tracking the teacher appropriately. All make sense so far? So the most challenging part of the study was this -- We had to trace each child individually. We knew going into the study that children in the

preschool years move around a lot. But if you want to know exactly how much children move around a lot, trace children frame by frame in a video and that will give you a real good sense of just how much they actually move. And can see that most of the clips, at the top left, were at the table. We did have a few free-play clips that were thrown in there too and we'd have a couple of other children just kind of wander through and then wander back out of the video. At the very end of this, the screen would go black and then we would show the four children and their faces. And it would say on the screen "Please remember the letter of the child you believe required the most of your attention."

And there was an A, B, C, D next to the child. We were tracking the teachers' eyes even then. And then the screen would go blank, and then we would say, "Please enter the letter of the child you feel you had to watch the most." Now, we don't need to ask preschool teachers who they were looking at the most. We know who they were looking at down to the millisecond. I know who they were looking at better than they could possibly know who they were looking at because we were tracking it. What we were really interested in is this -- three questions. The first part when you're looking at the videos, when you think your child is going to misbehave, who do you decide to watch the most? And then, when you see those four pictures, are you aware that you did that? And when the screen goes blank and you have to enter the letter, are you willing to admit it? That's what we are looking for. Is there a bias, are you aware the bias, at some level, of the bias that's there, and are you willing to admit it? Sometimes when I explain this to folks, they might say, "Well, you know, maybe certain groups of kids maybe certain genders of kids are more likely to misbehave."

What is interesting about this and setting it up in this kind of a way is this -- these teachers had never met any of these children. This is like a video from the first day of school when all the children come in and you don't have any -- you don't maybe know everything about these children. And so what we're basically asking the teachers to do is look for challenging behaviors, so we're gonna see who they look at the most. And assuming there's some kind of an underlying stereotype bias and you're looking more at one particular child than another, it's probably not because of that child. It's because of who you think that child is representing. Who you think that child represents to you. So, in terms of the results, what we basically found was this. The top-left corner is a visual representation of it. That's a spotlight analysis. The lighter the area on that particular frame, the more teachers were looking right there. Bottom-left is a pinpoint analysis. Every little dot is a teacher looking right there at that particular frame.

See how it works? And then, of course, because we knew, frame by frame, where the teachers were looking, we could divide it out and figure out what percentage of time the teachers were looking at one child versus another child We can even control for the size of the child and how much of the frame the child was taking up. What we found was this -- teachers look more -- When they're expecting a challenging behavior, they look more at the black children, especially the black boy. And that was true for our teachers across teacher race. It was true for our white teachers and also true for our black teachers. When led to believe that a child might misbehave, spend more time looking at black children in general, especially the black boy. When we asked the teachers at the end, "Who do you think you looked at the most," what they told us is they thought they looked more at boys, but especially the black boy. So, in other words, what we were finding is evidence in real life in term of who you're really looking at of an underlying race bias. Expecting more challenging behaviors out of the black child, especially the black boy. But the teachers thought that they had a boy bias. Especially the black boy. Either way, the black boy is getting the short end of the stick, right?

More time spent watching the black boy, expecting him to misbehave, and the teachers are even aware of it. Even aware of it. We had a second part of the study. And I won't go into a whole lot of detail on this, but the second part of the study was one where we wanted to know whether there's ways to reduce the bias. So in this part of the study, what we did was -- with the same teachers, we gave them a vignette. We gave them a story of a child with a challenging behavior. A child who has lots of behavioral problems. Gets in a lot of challenges and difficulties. A child who hits other children. Sometimes leaves scratches or marks on other children. Sometimes hits the teacher. Doesn't go down to nap pretty easily. Has strange outbursts that the teacher doesn't understand in the middle of the day. And then we asked the teacher to pretend this child is in your classroom and rate how severe the behavior is. How severe is something like that? And we altered the name in the story, and we used the name several times throughout the story, to either imply a black boy, black girl, white boy, or white girl.

Now, the standard technique that people use for this is we wanted these children to be 4 years old. This was a 4-year-old story. So you'd go back in time in the census records four years earlier, and then you'd find a name that is very common, or at least, reasonably common within that racial gender group but almost never used outside of that racial gender group. And those become stereotype names. These names that you see here -- DeShawn, Latoya, Jake, Emily -- these are names that are oftentimes used in these kinds of studies when people do these things. Even résumé studies. You know about the résumé studies. You know, when they send -- these are common names. Now, the place where it gets interesting is this -- the teachers also, unbeknownst to them, either received or didn't receive a second paragraph. In the second paragraph, it describes what the home life was like. It describes the moms working three jobs to make ends meet and really not making ends meet very well. She seems to be depressed, but she doesn't seem to have the means or the resources to be able to seek and receive treatment.

[Coughs]

Excuse me. On top of all of that -- On top of all of that, dad is not around much. When he is around, lots of fighting between mom and dad. Lots of challenges.

[Coughing]

Oh, I have water. Thank you. Thank you. I'm getting over a cold, and every once in awhile, it just kind of pops right back in. You know you're among Head Start people when you got somebody wanting to give you water and Peter is coming over here to give you a mint.

[Laughter]

Your karma?

Peter: My karma.

Dr. Gilliam: Your karma to do this for you? So, in other words, you're gonna give me this in hopes that you'll get something in return?

[Laughter]

Okay, Peter. I'm not sure how to get that thing out of there. Oh, look. Well, that's strange tasting.

[Laughter]

What is that? Is it ginger? Oh, that's supposed to be good for you, right? Okay. I'll let it work for a second. Okay. So in the second paragraph, you have all the things that I mentioned and also on top of all of that -- Hey, it's working!

[Laughter]

On top of all of that, the part about the -- the father. The father who isn't in the child's

[coughs]

Well, it was working.

[Coughs]

The father who isn't in the child's life much, and when the child does see the father and the mother together, they sometimes fight, sometimes the child witnesses the fight, sometimes it turns physical. But what we were really looking for is this. If the teachers got a second paragraph that explained what the home life was like for the child in ways that might be explanatory of why a child might have a challenging behavior, is it possible that that second paragraph would reduce the bias that was found? In other words, is it possible that at least a partial remedy for bias is empathy? A partial remedy for bias might be to know or to feel something about the child's family, to feel like you know them. I have been saying oftentimes that, even though I didn't have data for this, I would say I just know from first-hand accounts, I've seen a lot of cases of children being expelled and suspended from a preschool program, but I have never seen a child expelled or suspended from a preschool program when the parent and the teacher knew and liked each other. That I haven't seen. So what we want to do is we want to test it out. I can't make them like this parent, but I can make them know them a little better by giving them some information about the home life. All make sense?

So, what we basically found was this. When we looked at the results, the second paragraph worked, but only kind of. It worked in terms of reducing how severe the behavioral problem seemed, but only if the teacher was of the same race of what the teacher thought was the race of the child. If the teacher was of the same race as what she thought the race of the child was, having that second paragraph and knowing the family made the problems seem not so bad after all. I can work with this. I can understand this. But if the race of the teacher was the opposite or different than the race of the child, it tended to make the teacher feel that the problems were worse. They seemed even more insurmountable and that is what led us to believe that it maybe isn't just as easy as making sure that all of our parents are able to tell their stories to the teachers.

If the teachers don't have a cultural frame by which to understand that story, and if they don't a cultural frame by which to understand that story to relate to it, it's possible that knowing more about their families might actually be overwhelming to the teacher and that it's probably not as easy as what we had hoped and that it's about our teachers getting to know our families better but also having a way to be able to understand that knowledge, to be able to relate to that. And that means thinking about how you do that and creating new training programs around that. If you're interested in hearing more about this study, you can go and listen to it on NPR. NPR did a great piece for us on this back in September.

It's a four and a half minute bit on it. As I said before, we videotaped the teachers. And then after they were doing the experiment, we took them to another room in their childcare program that we set up as

a studio, as a recording studio. And then we asked them, you know, "Now that you have done this eye-tracking experiment, who do you think you were looking at more, and why were you looking more at that child?" And then we came clean with the teachers, and we said, "Well, what if I told you that all of these children were actors and that none of the children have behavior problems? Why now do you feel you look more at that child?" And then we asked them questions about race and about bias and gender.

And we asked them about things that they may have felt like they've done and things maybe they've seen other teachers do too, and we put together a two-minute montage of what real-life teachers said when thinking about and reflecting, perhaps for the first time, on implicit bias and how that might impact the way in which they see challenging behaviors in their classrooms. John, can you roll this one for us? Oh, you have to go back and then roll the video. You're giving away all my punch lines, John.

[Laughter]

Woman: There was one particular child that stood out who was playing Play-Doh. And each time, he was just grabbing instead of using his words or asking for turns. Really just, I could foresee that being a problem with other children eventually.

Woman Number 2: In my head, while I was watching it, I was like, "Oh, maybe the teachers said, 'Oh, he can just stay over here, because if I say you need to go to a different area, then he might throw a chair or flip out,' so they said, 'Oh, you can just stay at this table.'"

Woman Number 3: Boys are more active. Girls are acclimated. Girls like to sit in the kitchen area or dramatic play and rock the babies and be helpful. Where as boys at 3, 4, and 5, like, that rough and tough and tumble.

And in a classroom, you can't do rough and tumble, so boys tend to get called out more than the girls.

Woman Number 4: I'd say, you know, that situation with those kids, taking away the toys, who's to say later on down the road a couple of months from now he's going to start getting aggressive if the kids don't give him the toys back or something like that, do you know what I mean? If they were to take the Play-Doh and the kid doesn't want to give it back. So what happens if he becomes aggressive because he's not getting his way anymore?

Woman Number 2: If you knew a family that had struggles as you, then you might be able to relate to them more. But if you don't, then you might just blame it on their race or something different. Just say, "Oh." Woman Number 3: Well, think about our society. They fear black men, so boys get labeled, especially younger black boys. And you learn that at a young age and they grow up with that, and it follows through all their schooling.

Dr. Gilliam: It's interesting, isn't it, to listen to the way in which the teachers were thinking about this. And in some cases, some very vivid thoughts about, well, maybe he was sitting at this particular table because he might do this, and then this will -- Have you ever read the book "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie"? Yeah, it's kind of like that. You know what I mean? Then he would do this and then he'll do this and then, before you know it, you know, he's in jail and...

[Laughter]

And that's not to knock preschool teachers. We all do that. We all do that. We spin stories in our heads. And your story in your head usually has good guys that look one way and bad guys that look another way and that might impact the way in which we view the children in our classrooms. Remember that one last teacher that was on there? She was talking about what kind of impact this might have on the children themselves and that they feel this and carry it with them all the way through. There was a study done not too long ago. I think it came out in December of 2016, so very recent. Andy Meltzoff and colleagues at the University of Washington. And what they did was they were studying is it possible for preschool children to "catch" biases from adults? And so what they did in their study was they had adults in the videos. They made videos. And then they had an adult wearing a certain colored shirt and then another adult came in and talked to the adult. Followed a script, talked to the adult. Was kind to the person, introduced themselves. Gave the person a toy to have.

And then they would do the same thing again with another person and changed the color shirt the person had and they had the same person come in and talk to this person in the same kind of way, the same kind of words, but in the first case, the person was leaning in toward them and smiling and maybe touched them on the shoulder. In the second video, the person saying the same things, but they were keeping a distance and leaning back a little bit and kind of scowling a little bit. And then they asked at the end -- because the children were randomized to either get the first version of the story or the second version of the story -- and they asked them to rate how nice the person here with the different color shirt was. How nice they were, how much you'd like to play with them, how much of a good person this is, how much you trust them. And if the adult showed positive nonverbal queues, little subtle things, the children rated that person more nice, more friendly, more "I would like to play with you."

But if other adult had negative interactions with them, then they rated them more negatively. And then beyond that, what they found was when they didn't show pictures of other people that weren't in any of the videos but just happened to have the same color shirt on as the other person, they generalized it. So, if I looked at somebody who was being ill treated and happened to have a green shirt on, the next time the children were seeing somebody with a green shirt on, they thought they were pretty bad too. Interesting, isn't it? It's basically a study of is it possible that the biases we have we're not even aware of can be taught, transmitted to children when we're not even thinking about it. You know, this is serious stuff, folks. We have to really get our heads wrapped around this because there's always the potential to do lots of damage. Why is it that we should care so much about disparities and early expulsion? How many people here have heard of the Perry Preschool Study? Wow.

A lot of people. Abecedarian Study? Chicago Child-Parent Centers. These are the three most widely cited studies in the field of early care and education. They're the studies we use to make the case for why we should be investing in early care and education in the first place. Those three studies in that order. A lot of people know a lot about these studies. Oh, and they also allow us to say things like every dollar that's spent on early care and education yields back $7.14 in societal savings by the time the children are 27 years old or $17 by the time the children are 45 years old. But what a lot of folks don't know about these studies is this -- The Ypsilanti Preschool Perry Preschool Study. Ypsilanti, Michigan, 123 children, and every single one of the children were black. The Abecedarian Study in North Carolina, 98 percent black.

The Chicago Child-Parent Center Study, the number-three most cited study that makes the whole case for early care and education, 93 percent black. 100 percent, 98 percent, 93 percent.

What we're basically doing is we've taken data that belonged to our black children and families and communities, used it to create a program for all of our children, and when no one is paying attention, we kick out the back door the children that gave us the data in the first place. That's basically what we're doing. And that's another reason for us, I think, to really embrace trying to understand this more. What is interesting about our study that we did, at the end, 'cause we told a fib to the teachers -- we told them this is a study of looking at how quickly you can find behavioral problems -- at the end of the study, we contacted the teachers and we we came clean. We said this was really not a study to see how quickly you can find behavior problems. None of the children had behavior problems. It was really a study of bias and your bias. And because we didn't tell you the truth, we're going to give you the opportunity to withdraw your data and pull your data out. And out of 135 teaches that we put through the study, only one teacher withdrew her data. Isn't that interesting? We have a field that actually embraces and wants to look at this. We have a field with a national organization that let us do a study like this at their conference and teachers who, when they find out about it, they still want to participate.

We have a field where the people in our field, our work force loves their babies more than they love their egos, and that's a lot to work with. The issue we have in front of us is daunting, but we have a lot that we can work with. We love our Head Start teachers. You'll see this cartoon here. "Your heart is slightly larger than normal, but that's because you're a Head Start teacher," the doctor says. Implicit biases are normal. We all have them. Everybody has biases in them. The question basically is how do you become aware of your bias? How do you know if you maybe got a little bit of bias stuck between your teeth? There's really only two ways to know. You either look in the mirror a lot. That's reflective practices. Or you have somebody else that you can trust who can say, "You know, I think you may have a little bias stuck between your teeth." And what we have going for us in the early care and education field is this -- as opposed to elementary school teachers, where they're typically the only teacher in the classroom, in Head Start and in Early Head Start and in pre-K programs, they're typically not the only teacher in the classroom. There's a team.

And that gives the possibility for team reflectiveness. How can we use that? How can we teach members of our teaching team to be reflective about what the other person on the team is doing and to be brave enough to share that, for the other person to be brave enough to be able to hear that and to use it? We know that the more behavioral supports you give to teachers, the more likely they are to be able to deal with children's challenging behaviors, less likely they are to expel a child. We have a program in Connecticut of early childhood mental health consultation that's available to every single program in the entire state of Connecticut, public or private, and we've conducted statewide random control trials. This is not what early childhood mental health consultation looks like. Instead, what it looks like is a consultant coming into the classroom and working directly with the teacher as a coach, as a consultant, helping the teacher help the child. And in Connecticut, we've done random control trials of it, and we know for a fact that when we study it, it's effective. In as little as three months, you can reduce the degree to which the teacher feels this child has a challenging behavior.

And in part, it might be because we've improved the child's behaviors, and in part, it might be because we just helped the teacher feel like they can handle it so it doesn't seem that bad after all. Either way, I'll take it. Either way, I'll take it, 'cause children don't get expelled because of behaviors. They get expelled

because of how an adult feels about those behaviors. And if we can impact the way the adult feels, that's positive gains too. If you want to hear more about that, NPR's got a story for you there too. So just Google this up on NPR. And lastly, we have also been working on a new measure that tries to measure in very subtle ways the ways in which teachers and children interact and work together in classrooms. Paying close attention to the way the teacher interacts and works with every single child in the classroom. Not just the majority of the children, but every single child, looking at verbal cues and overt cues, but also really subtle cues that might be the cues that implicit bias might be in play in terms of the way in which the teacher's thinking about these children and the way in which the teacher's working with these children. I used to believe that, in education, or early education, that we measure the things that we value. But the more I've learned, the more I've learned that it's really the other way around. We just value whatever we measure. And if you want to change the way in which people value things, change their tools.

Once you start changing their tools and their measurements, then thought processes typically go along pretty quickly. I'm going to tell you a real quick story before I jump off the stage. This is Ed Zigler, my mentor. Many people refer to him as the Father of Head Start. Edward Zigler was on the Head Start planning committee that created Head Start, which began in the summer of 1965. He is the last living member of the Head Start planning committee. He is the only person alive today that can tell us what it was like when Head Start was created, why it was created, how it's sustained, why it's still here. And he was raised poor. And he went to a settlement home and received lots of comprehensive services through that. When it was time for him to start think about what Head Start should look like, largely recreated what he received through those settlement homes. Now, Ed Zigler, about three years ago, he fell, and he broke the part of his leg that joins into the hip socket right here, and he needed surgery. So he went to the hospital, Yale New Haven Hospital, and he was there with his two anesthesiologists. And the only people in the room were his two anesthesiologists and, of course, Ed Zigler, and his wife, Bernice, who just recently passed away, and me. Those were the only people in the room. And Ed was laying there, and he was becoming groggy from the anesthesia. And he was saying, "Walter. Walter." He motioned for me, and I'd come over there, and I'd say, "Yes, sir?" And he's like, "What's going on with Head Start reauthorization?"

[Laughter]

You know, and he would ask all of these questions about Head Start and how Head Start is doing and all the things that are important to him. And it really felt a little bit like he was just thinking about the things that were important to him when he was becoming groggy. And another part of it was he just seemed like he was giving me marching orders just in case. "I want you to know about these things." And one of the anesthesiologists came over to me, and he said, "Is he talking about Head Start, the preschool program for poor kids?" That's his words. And I said, "Yes, your patient there, many people refer to him as the Father of Head Start." And he said, "So he ran Head Start in New Haven, Connecticut?" And I said, "No, no, no, no," and I told him the whole story. And he listened to it, and he walked over to Ed Zigler, he knelt down next to him at his bed, and he said, "Thank you, sir. I was a Head Start kid. My mother always told me that I turned out differently than many of the other kids in the neighborhood because I had such a great start to school." And Ed looked over at him, and he says, "What was you Head Start teacher's name?"

[Laughter]

As if Ed Zigler knows the name of every Head Start teacher in America. Which he doesn't, but the anesthesiaologist did. He knew his Head Start teacher's name. And we later on found out that the Head Start teacher also was raised quite poor living in the basement of a church, attending the Head Start program, and now an assistant professor at Yale just like Ed was when Ed was on the Head Start planning committee. And in case you want the proof of the story, there they are. And the anethsetiologist that I'm talking about is the one on the left. That's the anethsetiologist. Dr. Kim. And you know what's interesting about this story to me -- I mean, there's a lot of things that were interesting and it was really just very touching to even be there when all of this happened. What I love about this story is this -- it highlights the fact that there is no way that Ed Zigler could have possibly known when he was on the Head Start planning committee that someday he's gonna have to put his life in the hands of one of his Head Start babies. But that is exactly what happened. He had to put his own life in the hands of one of his Head Start babies. How is it that we can all learn to look and think about everyone of our Head Start kids as if -- regardless of what they look like -- as perhaps one day I may have to put my life in that child's hands? I remember when we first brought Ed to the Head Start birthday party when it was turning 50 years old two years ago. And Ed sat down with Dr. Kim. First time he'd seen him since the surgery. And he says, "You know, I didn't have any problem putting my hands in the life of one my Head Start babies." You know, just such a touching thing to think about. You know, how do we cultivate that? How do we make sure that exists within all of us that work with young children? I'll leave you with this. Ed Zigler sends his love and his best. If you want to read more about any of this work, please visit our website, or I'm now tweeting, so if you want to follow me on Twitter, then please feel free to do that too. You've been very lovely. Thank you so much for your kind attention.

[Applause]

Colleen

Rathgeb: Am I on? Hi. Thank you very much, Walter. That was just absolutely -- Gave us so much to think about. And we're now going to move into a panel discussion with some leaders from Head Start grantees -- want to sit right here? -- here in Region V and Walter. So, I'm Colleen Rathgeb I'm the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood at ACF, and I am really, really happy to be here. So, that was some tough stuff. So I think it is really provocative, and I think it is really important, and we really look forward to the discussion we're gonna have with the leaders here and give an opportunity to hear questions and dialogue with folks both streaming and in the room. But I think one of the biggest takeaways and kind of hopeful pieces of some really tough stuff is kind of where we started when we were talking about Head Start as a leader. So, when Walter first started talking about the problems of expulsion and suspension in preschools, one of the things was, you know, Head Start, this has always really been not who we are, that we've really been able to be at the forefront of saying this isn't what we want for young children, to have failure as their first thing in school and that we've really been able to -- Well, we've had to toughen things up a little bit and make sure everyone's crystal clear about it, we really have been able to be a leader.

So I'm really hopeful that this is a beginning of a discussion about how Head Start can also be a leader in this issue of identifying implicit bias, seeing how it's impacting our classrooms and what we can do about it, because it is hard and it's uncomfortable, but it's really important. I am here to introduce the folks that are going to pick up this conversation with us. So we first have -- from Genesee County Community Action Resource Department, we've got Kelli Webb, the project director, and Kim Lyons, their education

coordinator. And from the Next Door Foundation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, we have Dr. Felicia Saffold, the director of education services, and Dr. Tanya Johnson, one of the center directors. And from the Toledo Public High School -- Public School Head Start in Toledo, Ohio, we have Dr. Hope Bland, the Head Start director, and Nicole Shutterfly, the family partnership coordinator.

Nicole Shetterly:

[Laughs]

Colleen: Shetterly. I'm sorry. My own handwriting. I can't read well enough, right? So, we'd like to start first with the folks from Genesee County, just for each of you to give some comments about reactions to the presentation, what you heard, or talking about ways that your program is addressing these issues right now.

Kim Lyons: Okay, well, I thought it was a very, very powerful speech. It brought a lot of different thoughts to my mind. When you mentioned about giving the gift of time, I remembered -- my son now is 22, but I remembered we took him to a program to go to kindergarten, and the first thing they did was an entrance exam. And then he finished, and they brought him out and they said, "You know, I think maybe that he needs a gift of time." And so I just stood there just kind of shocked and said, "Oh, okay. Well, what does that mean exactly?" So for me as a parent, I didn't know how to handle that. I didn't know what to do. And they said, "Well, he's just not kind of ready yet academically I think you need to give him another year. Bring him back, and then we'll see where he is at then. We'll test him again." And I said, "Okay." I went home and I took him to my husband. I said, "They said he needs the gift of time. Another year." And he's like, "No way. No, he's going now. He's ready. We're going to take him." So he went to school, and my son was a gifted student in AP classes all the time and graduated with high honors. So I'm just not sure, you know, as a parent, I think all of our parents would probably -- when we talk to them about the child's having difficulties, they're struggling -- I think we always need to be cognizant of the fact that we're talking about somebody's child, and I think we just need to be respectful of that and try to put ourselves in their place, too.

Kelli Webb: One of the things that I thought was interesting is I was actually kind of hopeful that, with the new performance standards, encouragement of the first home visiting occurring prior to the child beginning in the programming, I thought, "Well, this will be really great, 'cause this will let us know exactly where they're coming from and kind of their perspective," so the research that that can kind of do the opposite was very interesting to me as well.

Colleen: Tanya, Felicia, from Next Door, do you want -- any opening comments?

Felicia Saffold: There was a lot. I think, all of us, we wear many hats. And so, when I think about the parent hat that I wear and I think about raising two African-American boys who are school age, it touches you in deep ways. I think about all that I'm able to provide for my kids, but they still wear that black skin. So the challenges that they face every day at school in a school where there are few minorities, reality of it all. So the teacher-educator hat and the director of education hat says "How do we begin to make it okay for teachers to admit or to realize and acknowledge that they have these biases?" And the safe places for that to happen. I know we started doing a little bit of that at Next Door on a small scale with anti-bias curriculum. And again, you know, right away, teachers -- we don't have -- We accept all parents and all kids. And then right away, when you do an initial activity where you're

looking at pictures of dads with three different outfits on and talking about when these dads come through your door, which one would you feel more comfortable approaching?

And there's a dad with a tie, shirt and tie, the dad with a sweater and the dress pants, and the dad who has a more popular culture outfit. And for all of the staff to talk about how they'd be more intimidated with the popular cultural dad and what that means in daily practice and really having teachers admit that, yeah, I guess all dads, as much as we say we want more involvement, but when certain dads come through the door, the way they look is kind of standoffish. And so, really just looking at the work we need to do and how to make that work safe to do in our agency.

Tanya Johnson: I found it very validating to way our fathers feel in our programs. They shared with the fatherhood specialists that they did not feel welcomed in the program. And so one of the things that we did, we started an initiative with the father "Read With Me," where we have fathers come in every month to read to the children. And we wanted to make them feel welcomed, so we had a special area for them that they met in and we had books that they could choose from before going to the classrooms. Because we wanted to see more fathers in the programs and we wanted to start with something that would make them feel comfortable.

Colleen: Hope or Nicole, anything to start off with?

Nicole: Sure, sure.

Hope Bland: I believe it was very powerful today, very powerful information. And implicit bias runs very deep, and that it can often, if it's not -- if we're not addressing it, can be harmful and has been very harmful to our children and our society. As we reflect on implicit bias even within our own program, we are doing some really great things to address it We are, you know, taking a really deep look at where our teachers are in terms of what they're reflections are on themselves, but we've got some programs going on right now with research and looking at implicit bias We're also digging a little bit deeper into our data. Some of our data is reflecting where we're showing a little paradigm shift where we're seeing more African-American boys are doing a lot better, kind of filling -- in our program, they're filling that achievement gap and we thought that was pretty amazing. With our kindergarten readiness assessment, we're actually showing that our African-American boys did exceed our white boys. We thought that was interesting. But we also want to look at the gap between black boys and white boys.

So we want to see where that gap -- or why that gap exists. But we're also showing in our data too that our white girls are exceeding achievement wise. So that kind of reflects a little bit of what you were sharing that teachers tend to look at black boys in terms of behavior, as opposed to looking at white girls. White girls do not seem to show much behavior issues according to teachers within your data. And so we're seeing that too in our data. So we're going to dig a little bit deeper to see what we can do with that data as well.

Nicole: Yeah, we do have a fatherhood program as well. We do two annual events. A sweetheart dance in February and basketball event in March for March Madness. And they have gone the last couple of years really, really well. All the dads for the sweetheart dance come in, and, you know, they dress up, they bring their kids, they dance, they participate. It's a wonderful event. We have a lot of dads that participate in the parent-teacher conferences, so we have seen a rise in that in the last couple years. But we're doing something new with our data, which I find really exciting. We just started it, so we're going

to look into it a little bit sooner in the fall, but we're identifying the children that are displaying behavioral issues in the classroom and we're pulling those children. Right now we have 19 that we're looking at. And we're making a dashboard, you know? And we're identifying which site and which teacher and then going across and doing the demographics -- you know, their age, their race, their gender -- looking at their health, looking at their assessment scores, TSG. We're looking at the family services. So across the board, we're looking at the child in the big picture and looking to see if we need to do more professional development with certain teachers and certain sites. That's something new we're doing, which I think is really exciting.

Colleen: Great I both heard about some of the anti-bias curriculum that Next Door talked about and some of the data work that you're talking out of Toledo. I'd be interested if other people had other strategies about how to use data or other types of professional development or anti-bias work your doing in the professional development training side.

Hope: Yeah, it's mandatory annually that we are offering the diversity trainings for all of our staff. We're hoping that we can offer this also to our board members from the top down, 'cause we know that these are people that make decisions for these programs, so we feel that, as these decisions are made, that they are fully aware also of implicit biases even within those decisions. But one of the things that we can do and control is off making sure that our staff receives the diversity and inclusion kinds of trainings and that those trainings are also imbedded constantly throughout the program in other professional development trainings. So that is one thing that is really a true focus on us for our program.

Kelli: We do diversity trainings, as well, annually, but I think, with this research in general, it would be important to share. And just an awareness for all of our staff to understand that everyone has implicit biases just because we all come from very different backgrounds and experiences and that it's inherent in what we know and how react to things, and just to be understanding of that and to not be afraid to delve into it and do that "do I have the spinach stuck in my teeth?" kind of thing. I think that's something that we'll be definitely looking at in how to be more mindful about our practices.

Kim: And we were very fortunate to be able to participate in supporting school readiness in African-American boys training, and now we're in part of the cohort for Region V. And as part of that, our entire program has taken a comprehensive look at all of our service areas from nutrition to health and oral health to fiscal to HR to administration to our education, to family service, and looking at everything. Not just African-American boys, but to our special ed, to -- we have some families who are deaf, some that are blind, some of our families have low literacy. We have homeless families. And of course we're experiencing the Flint water crisis, so we have additional resources that we're providing to those families. So we want to make sure that, in all areas, that we are not being biased to any of our families, that we're making sure that we provide excellent services like we always do in Head Start. I think Head Start is amazing that we can provide comprehensive services to our families.

Felicia: I just like how they mentioned about being more intentional in terms of the things that you're doing at your agency. I think one of the things that we have a tendency to do is try to fix the teachers or to try to fix the kids without us really taking a close look at what are the tools, what are the strategies, what comprehensive things are we doing to better prepare our staff to work with these challenging situations? And I know one of the things that we've discovered is that we've kind of allowed in some cases for teachers to have a way out instead of giving them tools and strategies to deal with challenging behaviors. So when you have someone who's going to remove the child -- That's why I thought it was

interesting at the beginning how you talked about the different definitions of expulsion. So, in a way, we do our in-house expulsion because we have teachers or floaters who can take kids for a little while, but that's not helping the teacher to help the kids to stay in the classroom. That's why I like how you talk about looking at it more comprehensively and what we can do to help to allow the staff to better work with our children and families.

Nicole: You know, we talk about a lot of staff health and wellness, you know, making sure that they are, you know, able to teach. So we do a family survey of the top three stressors and we also do a staff survey of top three stressors because a lot of our staff are dealing with financial issues themselves or depression, as you mentioned. So we want to make sure that we have enough -- our district does offer health and wellness programs, so we want to make sure that staff are getting connected to that.

Colleen: Are there things that you, from the presentation today and things you heard, things you think might -- how you would approach talking with this about your staff or kind of levels of your program or things that might make you revisit some of the approaches that you have been taking or looking at something slightly differently?

Hope: Most definitely. We do know that this discussion and these kind of topics are very challenging and oftentimes will result with resistance, so it's not something that you can tread very lightly. As we think about it, we do know even in our own program -- and we're with a public school system -- so we're surrounded by teachers, and we would hope that our children, as they move on from preschool, that they would attend the schools within our district. So this is, again, on an intentional level, we would hope, too, that our district adopts what we are talking about, because it truly has to be a very conscientious and intentional effort. So it's not just -- doesn't just stop at Head Start within our district. So we're hoping to take what we have and what we're offering and have the dialogue and conversation within our program and being able to share it out so that eventually, at some point, even within our own program, we were hoping in the future to be able to even hire a diversity and inclusion liaison that would work with our staff and then even perhaps work with our district. Because we know that it is, its a very challenging and difficult conversation to have.

Tanya: I would agree that we would have to be intentional in our efforts. Making staff aware and having that crucial conversation, but also looking to revise and implement cultural policies so that we have something in place with policies and procedures. 'Cause it does need to start at the top and trickle down.

Hope: Yes.

Kim: And I just loved your last slide, that you might have a little bias in your teeth, because we're providing that training every year of course, but this year, we're trying to look at it a little bit differently. Like, how can we provide a strength-based culturally respective practice, as many of you probably are? This yea, what can we do or what can we do differently, and how can we present it differently? Because what we want to do is not say "you're doing something wrong in your classroom" or just have teachers sitting there listening to us talk at them. We want them to maybe actually participate or listen or reflect on what is in their classroom and maybe make a change. And so we have been throwing out different ideas of role playing or having them really think about or reflect on what's happening in their classroom and how can they be brave about saying, "Yeah, maybe I might be slight biased to this child or that child

or this gender or this culture." So I thought that was really powerful. So, hopefully we can maybe steal your slide.

Dr. Gilliam: Absolutely. I'm like a Grateful Dead concert. Once you play the music, it's yours.

[Laughter]

So please do. I like using the slide, and my hope with the slide was that it would get us to think about, you know, what will it take for us to get to the point to where somebody's saying, "You know, I think there was a little bias in the way in which you're dealing." What would it take for that to be as normal as telling somebody they got something stuck between their teeth or that their's something stuck on their shoe? You know what I mean? And I think maybe the difference between it is that when you say somebody's got something stuck in their teeth or there's something stuck on your shoe, it's not typically heard or delivered as if it's evidence that that's a bad person.

Nicole: Right.

Dr. Gilliam: You know, and I worry that maybe it will be hard for us to get to that point until we get to the point where we all recognize we all have biases. And it's not evidence that you're a bad person. It's evidence that, one, your brain works the same way other human beings' brains work and, two, that we're all subject to the exact same cultural media stimulation that we all get. You know? And if we normalize it, maybe it will help us get to the point where we can talk about it. 'Cause if we can't talk about it, we're to gonna get much farther.

Hope: Mm-hmm.

Colleen: I thought it was really interesting when we were talking about the opportunities we have in the Head Start and the preschool because we have that teaching team and so that you have that. But how you really foster that trust and the ability to address that head on, I think, really is a challenge for all the leaders in the room. Are there things that you guys would like to say? What you'd be interested in more research telling us or would we have the ear of Walter here and others, and are there things that you wish you could get more information about or there would be more research about to help you address this in programs? Or, Walter, are there things you wish you knew? What would be helpful to -- What do you think would be helpful to programs or you think that are some of the next steps in this work? Hope, you look like you have something to say. .

Dr. Gilliam: Please.

Hope: Well, no. I was going to ask -- the studies are excellent. What is it that we can take back to our staff that would be very helpful but at the same time very... not as challenging, but to get the wheel running that we can -- that they're not as challenging... Would you suggest research that we share them or do we take tools back that would begin to test bias? I mean, what would be your recommendation?

Dr. Gilliam: See, these are the kind of conversations I love because it really helps me be able to think about how can we do research that's actually real and useful and beneficial and not just things for researchers to write in journals that only other researchers read. How do you make something that can be...?

Hope: How do you make it happen?

Dr. Gilliam: Yeah. How do you make it happen? That's what we were attempting to do with this study. But I can't do it without these kind of dialogues, you know, without hearing as much as I possibly can from folks who are right in the field. What we're trying to do right now I think is try to understand a little bit better about how are these kind of biases as they relate to classrooms wired in people's heads, 'cause it seems like whatever we've been attempting to do in the past is not working very well. And maybe the problem is we're trying to create interventions like "cultural sensitivity training" without knowing much about, well, exactly how is bias wired? And if you try to diffuse a bomb but you don't know what the red wire or yellow wire goes to, its going to blow up in your hands, you know? So what we're trying to do now is try and understand a little bit about it. Like when we got the surprise finding, that the second paragraph did make teachers seem more empathic to the child and reduced how severe the behavior problems, but only if the teacher and the child were the same race. If we don't know that, we're going to go into creating an intervention that might actually backfire in our hands. And so what we're trying to do right now is trying to to learn as much as we can. We're reading other people's research, conducting research when there's gaps in it, in order to to be able to create interventions that could actually be easily used and usable in the preschool classrooms. But then I would have to rely on you folks to tell me things like does this seem to be working? Is it palatable enough that people will even do this? Or is this just too complicated? Or is this just too -- You know, it might work, but nobody's gonna ever do it. And try to get to that kind of a point. I was struck by what a few of you said earlier, when you said that many of the teachers and the parents -- they might not be very comfortable. Or at least -- maybe you didn't say this exactly, but it seemed to imply that they might not be used to and very comfortable talking to each other. And so what things have we tried in Head Start classrooms to help teachers feel more comfortable and more skilled at talking to parents? I would love to hear more about that.

Tanya: One of the things that we tried at our program was the touch point training. The touch point training really helped teachers to focus on their interactions with parents. And one teacher that was a part of the African-American School Readiness Committee, she focused on that and was intentional by standing by her door every morning and engaging with parents to make them feel comfortable, especially the fathers. And from that, she noticed an increase in her in kind returns from in kind and parent conferences. So I think that touch point training helped her to focus a little bit better and to be intentional in engaging with fathers as they came into her classroom.

Hope: And I can say in our program, I speak of the paradigm shift because we have an enormous number of fathers that show up. They show up, they come out. And I think the stigma's been that Dads aren't -- particularly African-American dads aren't involved and that they're not around, that they're in jail, and we're not seeing that in our program. Our data is showing something very different. But while that is happening, because we are seeing such an influx of dads coming into the classroom, showing up and showing out in a very positive way, it also means that our teachers are. Also, if there are biases there, they may not necessarily receive it in such a positive manner if those biases are there. So we need to really begin to address, and although we see this as a positive shift, we're going to have to continue to work with our teachers and our staff in receiving these dads and receiving the families as they're becoming very involved. So sometimes in the programs, although that looks positive, they may not necessarily be received as positive. And I think that's what we're sharing here a little bit, too.

Colleen: Are there any other -- We'll want to open it up for folks in the virtual streaming as well as in the room for questions, but is there any other really particular positive things that we can give the group

about things you have been able to address in your programs that you feel like has really helped and can kind of get you on the way to addressing some of these concerns that we haven't mentioned yet?

Tanya: The father survey -- one of the things that we did informally was, from the Cultural Proficiency Manual for leaders, we informally did the survey on there to see where the staffs' interactions were on the continuum. And it's separated by unhealthy interactions and healthy, and we find ourselves in the area where we on need to improve on some of those healthy behaviors. So that was something to get us started, to kind of look through a different lens and try and be intentional in some of the things that we're going to implement.

Colleen: And I think another example of where you're really using data to understand what is going on and then have actions to be able to respond to what you're learning about your programs. Should we go ahead and see if there are folks -- There are mics throughout the room if people have questions for the panel, for Dr. Gilliam, we invite you to come up and come to one of the mics and then we can also go to the folks that are getting questions through the stream. We have one question right over here on our right.

Woman: Didn't mean for that to come out. I really appreciate all of your comments and your feedback on implicit bias. I also want to pose the word that no one's said yet but racism. Racism is still real. There's individual and systemic and historical racism in our communities. And a lot of the Head Start families and children are in our programs and are dealing with poverty due to this historical racism. So because of that, I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on ways that Head Start organizations locally and nationally can kind of advocate and push for racially equitable programs and services.

Kim: Well, I think we need to continue to encourage our families to be part of the Parent Policy Council. My spoke, actually -- we have a "wagon wheel" kind of administration, and a lot of my families on my spoke are actually on the Parent Policy Council. And I think it's an amazing way for them to learn to be advocates for their children, and then they actually get to go to conferences like this and learn to advocate for themselves and advocate for their children and sometimes they get to go places like Washington and other places where they actually get to meet their legislators. I think it's an amazing opportunity for them to get out and experience different things, different cultures, different communities, meet other families, and have other experiences. But they also get to learn to be an advocate for their child.

Hope: I think that was a very good question. I think what needs to happen, as well, with national programs such as Head Start is we need to probably have more trainings and workshops that center around racism and implicit bias. I'm not necessarily seeing a lot of that within Head Start, although I know that it very much focuses on it at our local level, but maybe at the national level, we need to focus and intentionally have these work shops. And so where both parents and professionals can attend. And, again, it needs to be very intentional. And the more we talk about it, the more we dialogue, I think the more we can make progress.

Dr. Gilliam: I'm going to give you the name of somebody that you might want to look up. His name is Howard Stevenson, and he's at University of Penn. And he's pretty much the name in racial literacy in schools. And he has been mentoring me and helping me understand more about this issue from perspectives that I can't fully understand. I can try to appreciate, but I can't fully understand, so he's been mentoring me on this, and I've been trying to convince him to come over to the baby world. And

so that's been our relationship so far, but his work is very focused on how do you have conversations about race in schools, and then even in preschools and Head Start. How do you get people comfortable enough to talk about something that's this sensitive, that's this painful and hurtful to some people and that's shameful and embarrassing to others. And how do we get to the point to where we're able to talk about those sorts of things? And much of his work, honestly, it's kind of like racial therapy. And I've seen him now do this several times in relatively mid-size audiences and also large size audiences, and it's exceedingly powerful stuff. But you have to kind of know what you're doing to make people feel comfortable enough to have these kind of conversations, but once you get people feeling comfortable about it, it's amazing what people will say. Because it's just so salient and powerful for them. I do hope you look up his name, and if you want to find more information, please just send me an e-mail and I'll send some to you.

Woman: Thank you. And one thing I want to share with everyone is the Racial Equity Institute. RacialEquityInstitute.org has amazing racial equity and undoing racism trainings, so I strongly urge everyone to go. Thank you.

Dr. Gilliam: That's a good recommendation.

Woman: So, Walter, I have a question for you. You asked about what kind of research would be helpful for the Head Start community and the larger early childhood community. And the one thing I think about as you were all talking, we have become very sensitive to understanding how attendance impacts. If children are chronically absent, that the impact it has later on in life, and I think it makes us more intentional about insuring the kids that are chronically absent really come to school more often and we do things for their families to get that support going. But I wonder about the child who is suspended at age 4. If we understood, because I think we're such a sympathetic, empathetic community, if we really understood what that decision of suspending or expelling that child had at age 4 on that same child when he's 17, is there any research that tells us how detrimental an expulsion or suspension can be at that age?

Dr. Gilliam: Great, that's a great question. We don't have a whole lot with preschoolers, and the reason why is there's just not a lot of us looking at this kind of an issue with preschoolers. Only a few people are looking at it in K through 12. We can extrapolate, though, from what we know in K through 12 to know this. If expulsion or suspension at any grade level is supposed to be an intervention, it is a really, really bad one. Because the number one predictor of a child being suspended is whether the child has been suspended before. And so if it's supposed to be somehow changing the child's behavior or sending a strong message to parents, it ain't working. Because it keeps happening over and over again for the same children, that much we know. I think there's other parts of it, too, that while we're waiting on the research to look more at those kind of things, there's some things that we can just sort of hopefully describe as common sense to folks. And I think sometimes we look to research to tell us things that really kind of common sense tells us. Like, I was talking to some folks at a foundation once, and they were playing devil's advocate -- which I don't even like that term much 'cause I'm quite convinced the devil doesn't need any more advocates. But he was playing the devil's advocate, and he said, "Well, aren't you concerned about all the other children in the classroom whose behaviors this child's behaviors is causing them to not be able to learn? Or maybe it's harmful to them." And he said this to sort of challenge and to push back against this notion that we should be trying to stop children from

being expelled. And I said, "At about 6 months old, children gain the sense of object permanence. If you hide an object, then the baby knows to pick the wash cloth up and --

[Gasps]

-- there's the toy." Somewhere between six months old and becoming a preschool administrator, we lose our sense of object permanence. And we seem to think that if we no longer see the child, the child ceases to exist. The reality is this. If you expel a child from one preschool setting, he doesn't cease to exist, he shows up in another one. And then why? Because the parents need work. They need childcare for work. So you expel him here, and he just shows up here. And then you expel him here, and he shows up here. And then I said, "Well, and that being the case, well, yes, I'm concerned about the other kids in the classroom, but why aren't you concerned about all the other kids in all these other classrooms this child's going to be in?" The other push back that we get sometimes is push back along the line of, "Well, of course, some professor at Yale would say don't do anything and let the kids run amok and let them do whatever they want." And I think the common sense push back that we have to have for that is something along the lines of, "No, expelling is doing nothing." What we're advocating for is doing something. Give teachers access to a behavioral consultant, mental health consultants, so I don't care what you call this person, but if the person can come into the classroom and work with the teacher and be able to give that teacher the skills and the objectivity and the confidence to be able to work differently with children, a lot of these kids can be maintained in the setting that they're in. And if we can help teachers feel more confident, we will take away places for bias to live. The more stress and strain and feelings of incompetence that teachers have, the more room we give for the effects of bias to take place. And I'd like to make bias homeless. I'd like to make it homeless by helping our teachers feel more confident and competent in their skill, so that they blame less on other factors and helping our teachers and our families have stronger connections, so that we can't see each other in dehumanized ways.

Colleen: Great, we've got three more questions. This very patient woman over here could please...

Woman: Yes. What this caused in me was sadness. I feel that to see, to hear that this is still happening, is very sad, that our black, African-American boys are still seen with these biases that reinforce the reality, reinforcing the pipeline from cradle to jail that many of our black, African-American and Latino men of color face. So that was a strong reaction on my part. I felt really sad. I want to ask Dr. Gilliam if you have done any research with Latino children on expulsions. And how the challenges that they have to face with perhaps not understanding the language at some point or the biases in the minds of the teachers, how can that affect their behavior and the rate at which they are expelled.

Dr. Gilliam: Yeah, it's a great question. When we first did our first studies back in 2005, and this was in state-funded pre-K programs that are in all kinds of different types of settings, the rates were much higher for black children than white children, but Latino children were about the same as white children. And we didn't find much higher rates for Latino children than we did for white children, and that may be in part due to some factors that are specific about state-funded pre-K programs. Most, maybe not most, but a large proportion of the Latino children in our sample were living in border states, and those border states tended to locate more of their programs in public schools. And the public schools and Head Starts had the lowest expulsion rates. In our 2005 study, this is K through 12 expulsion rates, and then this is Head Start and pre-K expulsion rates -- pretty similar. And then when you get into childcare programs and nonprofit agencies and faith-affiliated programs, the expulsion rates were much, much, much

higher. And many of the Latino children that were in study were attending programs that were either public schools or Head Starts, where the rates just tended to naturally be lower. And so it's possible that we were just finding that the Latino children weren't being expelled very much because they were actually more likely to be attending the types of programs that don't expel. It's something that I'd look more at more closely, but I think it's one of those things where we'd have to do the sneaky kind of studies, like what I described before and present teachers with pictures and things like that and try to get at it that way. Great question.

Colleen: One more question here in the room.

Woman: Yeah, nobody has any questions online?

Colleen: Is there any on the live stream questions?

Woman: Hi. We have a few people in our virtual community who would like to know more about the three-question survey for staff and families, as well as the results.

Nicole: Okay, so it all stemmed from the first webinar, one of the first webinars for the School Readiness for African-American boys. And the first question that I saw was, you answer while it's happening, was, "What are the top three stressors of your African-American families?" And I said, "I can't answer that because I don't know." So what we decided was to create a survey so that we can find that information out. And we also adopted that same survey for our staff. We don't have the data collected right now. That is just being aggregated, so I can't tell you what. But briefly, when I looked at the surveys as they were being returned, for our families, the one that I saw the most was health. It was the top stressor. But that was just glancing through the results. So I haven't gotten the actual data for that.

Colleen: Actually, I think we have time for one more question, and then Ann Linehan's going to close us out.

Woman: So I'm just wondering if we perpetuate implicit bias by calling behavior "challenging." So I have a really, really good friend that works in a Head Start program in Vancouver, Washington, and they don't use the word "challenging behavior" in their program. They use "behavior that makes us wonder." And because you said it in the beginning, the behavior is challenging the adult. It's not the child that's having the challenge with their behavior. They're trying to tell us something. And so I just wonder if we used a more strength based-way to talk about our children, if it would actually help. I realize it does not get to the root of racism. The fact that racism has dehumanized every one of us. But it does change the way we talk about children. And I work a lot with parents, and I don't call parents challenging either. And so it's been bothering me how much we focus on what may not be real, but just may be a child trying to tell us they need something different.

[Applause]

Dr. Gilliam: It's a great comment. And I wish I had a great answer for it. Language is tricky. This is a phrase that a lot of people use for it. It's probably better than most phrases I've heard in the past, which doesn't make it a good phrase. Yeah, that's it. It is certainly a tricky issue to find exactly how you want to term things. When the woman who actually runs Connecticut's Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Systems, when she was interviewed for the NPR article, she said something that was just so

lovely and beautiful that the NPR reporter played it twice. He said, "This was probably the 7 most important words in this entire piece, so I'll play it again." And he played it again. What she said was -- what did she say? She said, "Behavior is the language of the child." And what she was basically saying with that is basically exactly what you were saying. It's the things that are designed to communicate to us, and we would be wise if we wondered about it and used it as a symptom. If a child is engaging in behaviors that we don't really like, and that's happening a lot in our classrooms, at what point do we step back and we start to think about this as being like a canary in a coal mine? That this is symptomatic of something much deeper that's underlying the way in which we're interacting with our children, and instead of trying to punish the canary for dying... How do we see these kind of behaviors that we might wonder about as symptoms of something and a message to us that would be good for us to heed?

Colleen: I think that's a great way of kind of challenging the way we talk about and the way we see things and the way we work with all of our staffs. So I know people have planes to catch and homes to get to, and so I really would like to thank Walter and to thank our panel. This has been a really great discussion, and I'd like to...

[Applause]

Walter, can you give Ann the mic? And just let our our acting director, Ann Linehan, send everybody off with hope and enthusiasm. Ann

Linehan: Is it on?

Dr. Gilliam: It is now.

Ann: Can you hear me? I think we're so quiet because this was so powerful. You need to sort of let all the things that you share with us ruminate. But I think it speaks to the responsibility we all have. The conference is ending. I want to say it's ending way too soon. I feel like we're just getting our mojo and getting our traction. But I think your programs obviously felt it was important for you to be here, and I think we all go home with the responsibility. How do we take those feelings of sadness and say, "Let's turn them into action"? And I think from all the sessions you've been at, you got to go back and spread the word so that this conference not only impacts you, but it impacts the folks back at home. So we send you, from the office of Head Start and ACF, Colleen and I wish you the best as you travel home. And as Walter said, Head Start is the best. So thank you so much.

[Applause]