Front Porch Series:
Intentional Language Supports in the Preschool Classroom

Judi Stevenson-Garcia: Hi, everyone, and welcome to the Front Porch Series. We are so glad that you've joined us today. I'm Judi Stevenson-Garcia from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, and I'm here today with my good friend, Karen Nemeth. Hi, Karen. Karen Nemeth: Hi, Judi. Hello, everybody. We're happy to be socializing and learning with each other today.

Judi: Socializing ... How are you doing, Karen?

Karen: Well, thanks for asking. I'll tell you. I've been doing a lot more phone calls lately reaching out to people, instead of sending them a quick text message or a e-mail, and I feel like that has really ... That's something that's changed a little bit, and I feel ... It makes me feel a little happier during the day, so that's a good thing.

Judi: Well, good. I love that. Well, we know that things are maybe a little bit different for you than the last time we worked together. Maybe some of you are joining us for the first time because you have time to listen to a webinar, so we're glad that you've joined us. Karen and I work from home regularly, so we're kind of used to being at home, but I will say for me personally my husband and my children are at home here, which is not normal, so hopefully they won't come and run in and interrupt me during our time here today. So, before we get started today, we do just want to take a minute to let you know that we are thinking of you. We hope that you and your families are safe and healthy, and while we're here today to talk about supporting dual language learners, we really want to make sure that we are encouraging you to take care of yourself so that you can take care of others. And so, one way we're going to do that just really quickly here before we get started is to maybe offer you the opportunity to take a deep breath. I know I need to do that more these days than usual. And even just take a minute to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and think about kind of what you want to get out of the next hour.

We're here to talk about dual language learners and how we can support them, which is so important. But I don't know about you. I'm having trouble these days focusing, so just take a minute and breathe and just set a goal for yourself for the next hour. We're going to be here with you, and we recognize that where you are might be different from where you've every listened to a webinar, and you might even have someone sitting on your lap, a pet or a child or several children, but we're glad that you've joined us, and we're looking forward to the next hour together. So, this webinar is the second in a series of three, and we're focusing today on supporting children, the teaching practices that support children who are dual language learners. Our objectives for today and for the next hour are to help you understand some of the research around effective teaching practices for dual language learners, to help you plan for the use of first and second languages in your instructional interactions or in teaching staff instructional interactions. And then hopefully, by the end, you'll be able to describe some

specific strategies for supporting children who are dual language learners in the areas of problem-solving, experimentation, brainstorming, planning and all of the vocabulary that is related to that kind of learning. So, we're going to just jump in. I'm going to jump off my camera so you can focus on the screen. We always like to start with our definition of what a dual language learner is, so this is Head Start's definition. You can read it along with me. A dual language learner is a child who is acquiring two or more languages at the same, or a child who is learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language. The term dual language learner may encompass or overlap substantially with other terms frequently used, such as bilingual, English language learner, Limited English proficient, English learner and children who speak a language other than English. So, we have lots of ways that we refer to our dual language learners. Here at Head Start, this is our definition, and we refer to them as dual language learners.

Karen: Oh, Judi. Mind if I jump in?

Judi: Oh. Please.

Karen: Because a question we get a lot about this definition is, "Well, what if we have children who speak very well in English even if they have another language at home?" And it's really important to remember the definition means any child who does any of their learning in a language in addition to English, whether it is a lot or a little, whether they are doing well in English, whether they are doing well in their home language or any balance thereof, that any child who has two or more languages in their life is a dual language learner.

Judi: Thanks, Karen. I really appreciate that, and I do especially because that really defines my kids, who primarily throughout the day speak English, and that's what they read in, what they write in, but at home, they hear Spanish from my husband every day. He speaks to them in Spanish, so even if they don't express themselves in Spanish often, their receptive language is really strong even though most people in the outside world might not consider them or even think of them as being a dual language learner, so thank you for mentioning that. So, in our first webinar of this, the Front Porch Series here, we talked about the science of developing first and second languages, and we mentioned some examples.

Today, we're going to build on that background and give you some more detailed examples and explanations of effective strategies for supporting language development. If you haven't watched the first episode in our series, you can definitely watch it after. We'll have a link for you where you can find the previous webinar, and it might build ... It might give you some background knowledge to help you kind of understand the research behind the strategies that we're talking about today.

But just so we can get a kind of an understanding of who is in the audience, we would love for you to just tell us. I'm going to put up a poll for you. Did you watch part one of this three-part webinar series? So, could you just quickly let us know if you were here with us for the first webinar? And if not, that will definitely help us figure out kind of where we need to provide some additional information. And we already had a question in the Q&A box about how

children's brains support the development of two languages simultaneously, and our first webinar definitely ... We took some time to talk about how the brain manages learning two languages at the same time, and I'll just give you maybe 30 more seconds. Go ahead and tell us if you watched, and it looks like, to me, that a good number of you were not here, so we'll make sure that we have that link for you so you can go back and watch that webinar and get some of that brain background. OK. So, we definitely have a good majority of you who are just joining us today, so we're glad that you're here, and hopefully you'll find the strategies that we share to be really helpful, and then when you have a minute, you can definitely go back and view that other webinar.

OK, so we're going to start with strategies that support all language abilities, because that's a really important place to start. And as I mentioned, if you were with us on our first webinar, you'll remember ... You might remember this image. We discussed the way that children's brains make connections. So, when children are born, they already have the majority of the neurons or the brain cells that they'll ever have, but what's missing are the connections between the neurons, and what builds those connections is our experiences. They help to determine which connections are going to grow between the neurons and how strong those connections are. When we learn something new, we are shaping how the neurons in our brains connect and communicate. Some connections form in our brains as a result of common experiences that all typically developing children are exposed to, such as light, sound, touch and taste, those sensory experiences all children have access to. Other connections form as a result of our unique experiences, such as the languages we learn or the foods that we are exposed to. One important goal for supporting language development is to plan for intentional support that help children build those connections, especially for our young -- our youngest learners. So, we know that children are active learners. If you've been around a child, that that is -- that's how they learn, through activity. They need lots of mental and physical activity so that they can keep learning and growing and making those neural connections, and when it comes to learning language, the research shows that children need to do a lot of active learning to build a strong language foundation, and then that strong language foundation helps children succeed in these active learning experiences, so it's cyclical. It's a two-way effect. When you think about learning opportunities that include brainstorming, problem-solving, planning and experimenting, language is needed to learn in all of these different approaches to learning, and these learning opportunities will support learning ... language development, so they're going to go back and forth and support each other.

Active learning experience require teachers to use observations about what children say and what they do so that they learn about what children are interested in and what they currently understand, and so when teachers operate from this perspective, they're going to be encouraging curiosity and questioning. And teachers and children will work together to explore questions and to engage in conversations, and this encourages children to talk about what they're curious about, to ask questions, to explore and investigate and express their ideas. It's a collaborative inquiry process, so this is staff and children working together. Teachers are scaffolding learning when they strategically ask questions or provide prompts. They might add some new information or ask additional questions for children to explore, and what's really

important is for teachers to model a questioning mind. This helps children become critical thinkers and problem solvers. They are going to hear that critical thinking out loud, that thinking out loud, from their teachers. And most importantly, we want to give children time to think and respond, especially for our dual language learners, who may be trying to think how they can say what they're thinking in a language that isn't their primary language. This inquiry process is most successfully modeled when adults really don't know the answer or don't have an answer in mind. When they're truly, authentically asking questions, they may be surprised by the results. When adults don't know the answer or aren't looking for an answer, they allow the time and opportunity for children to figure things out. They are OK with faulty findings or faulty explanations as children are kind of thinking about or investigating their ideas. A great way to model a questioning mind is to use questions that begin like, "I wonder – I wonder what happens next," or, "I wonder how," or, "Why?" When my son asks me a question, he tells me that it drives him crazy, but I often respond with, "Wow. That's a really interesting question. What do you think?" And so, I'm throwing it back at him and offering him the opportunity to share his ideas with me, and they're most often really wonderful ideas and things that I would never even expect. So, it's really important to take time to focus and be patient and supporting children so that every child is able to have time to think about questions and develop their own ways of responding.

This culture of inquiry includes all learners, and by actively observing individual children, we can assess their understanding of concepts, and children who are dual language learners may understand these concepts, but they may need assistance developing the English vocabulary or their home-language vocabulary to discuss their understandings. For children who are learning a tribal language, it's important to provide the concepts in the language of the classroom and the tribe. Allowing children to speak in the language in which they feel the most comfortable is important to support their curiosity and questioning. For children who have disabilities or suspected delays, teachers might consider offering visual supports to provide the children with another way to communicate instead of only relying on verbal communication. OK, so that was a lot about strategies. Let's see this in action. We're going to watch a video of a preschool teacher supporting a diverse group of children in exploring, discovering, and expressing their ideas. So, take a minute, watch, and listen for the teaching strategies she's using to encourage these children.

[Video begins]

Woman #1: Yesterday during small group time, we went outside to look for the roly-polies. Remember?

Children: Yeah.

Woman #1: Where did we go find the roly-polies?

Child #1: In the grass!

Child #2: ... is so wet.

Woman #1: The roly-polies live in the dark, wet, moist areas. How do you know that?

Child #2: Because it lives under the dirt!

Woman #1: Because it lives under the dirt. Yes, and under where it's dark. Today, we're going to observe our roly-polies, and we're going to use our senses to find something out. We may use our eyes to look at the roly-polies, or we need to touch them to find out what it feels like. [Chatter] Oh. Here is one. That's a real roly-poly. [Chatter]

Woman #1: I'm going to pass them out. Yes.

Child #3: There's a lot of them. It tickles.

Woman #1: Does it tickle when you touch it?

Child #3: Yeah. [Laughter]

Child #4: This is a baby one! A baby!

Child #3: This one tickled me!

Woman #1: So, when you pick it up, it tickles? [Chatter]

Woman #1: Oh, it does tickle. You're right.

Child #4: My baby one, my baby!

Woman #1: How do you know that that's the baby one?

Child #4: It's white!

Woman #1: It's white. Remember when we talked about during small group time that the roly-polies that are born are white and clear? [Chatter] Are you using your magnifying glass to look at the roly-poly?

Child #5: Teacher, I found a worm!

Woman #1: Oh. Sometimes, we might find some worms inside the soil. Does the worm look like the roly-poly?

Child #5: No.

Woman #1: No? What does that worm look like?

Child #5: Wiggles.

Woman #1: It wiggles? Yours is crawling up your hand. [Video ends]

Karen: OK. We're back, and that was an interesting look at all the different ways that language is used, by seeing that video. And so, now what you're seeing on your slide is a set of blocks that show how we summarize what we saw in that video, right, that the three purposes of language are in the bottom box. We use language to express what we know and can do. We use language to receive information, right, to comprehend what's being told to us or shown to us, and we use language internally to organize our thoughts and -- and knowledge. So, those three processes were happening in that video. The children were telling the teacher what they know. They were listening to the teacher and learning new things, and then they were processing in their mind about, "What does this all mean, and how do I understand this?" Those things were important, and they were evident in that video, but what we have to think about is what happens in the learning process for children who don't speak the same language as their peers, or they don't speak the same language as their teacher, and so we're going to want to think a little bit more about the two strategies at the top of that screen. We have to find ways to support in the home language intentionally for the purpose of helping children express what they know using home language to help them understand the content that we're covering and using home language to give them the scripts they need inside their own thinking so that they can process the information that they're learning as we connect to their prior knowledge. Right? So, that's why we support home language.

And then the other side of that screen shows that we support using English also intentionally, but we have to support English in a way that helps children to express what they know and can do, use English with supports to help them comprehend the content and use English in a way that -- that gives children opportunities to process what they're learning inside as they're thinking about it so that they can make sense out of what they're learning and make connections from what they already know to the new information that they're learning. So, we say that every child needs this kind of high-quality learning experience, and it takes a little more planning and thought for teachers to use this framework that you're seeing on the screen here as a way to say, "Am I covering all of the things that my dual language learners need so that I'm using home language for these three purposes, and I'm using English for these three purposes that appear on your screen?" And one of the things that we know from the research is that small groups and individual interactions are the most effective opportunities for children to develop these skills in -- in a language in all three areas, and you could really see that in the video, that the children had opportunities to interact directly with the teacher. When we do things in a whole group where you have 20 children sitting in front of a teacher, some children may have that active learning experience but not all, and a lot of children will experience that kind of learning in a large group as a passive experience where they are not getting a chance to -- to express what they know and can do. They're not really being communicated directly from the teacher, and if they have a misunderstanding, no one knows it because there's no direct communication, so their internal connections may be off base, and they need a personalized interaction with the teacher, either in small groups like we saw in the video or individually in order to make that happen. OK.

To talk about these strategies, we're going to use two examples of children that we thought might help us bring this information to life. We think about Kai, who is a 4-year-old. His family

speaks English at home, but they want him to learn his tribal language, so he's being introduced to his tribal language at school. And we think about Ana, who's 3, and her family speaks mostly Spanish at home, and she knows some English, and when she comes to school, she's learning in both English and Spanish. So, if we think about Kai and Ana, it's going to help us give some more character to the strategies that we're talking about. So, what we want to talk about next is support in our journey of supporting language development is appropriate language modeling. What does that really mean? We say, "Adults use appropriate language modeling to help children learn new words and concepts." So, for example, Ana has a bilingual teacher who talks to her at some parts of the day using high-quality Spanish, full sentences, proper grammar, interesting vocabulary, and at other times of the day when it's time to intentionally introduce English, she will make ... The teacher will make sure she uses high-quality English, same thing, full sentences, the proper grammar, and interesting vocabulary that help Ana make those connections. And the child may mix up the two languages. We call it code switching or translanguaging, but the teacher is really going to focus on providing complete thoughts and whole pieces of information in high-quality language in one language or the other language. Now Kai's teacher may only speak English. In some tribal programs, everybody is new to learning the tribal language, and they rely on tribal elders or volunteers from the community to come in and help everyone learn the new language, and so in that case, the teacher might meet with those volunteers to talk to them about what it really means to use high-quality language modeling for young children and make sure that what -- when the teacher is handing over that responsibility, whether it's to the families, volunteers, tribal elders, that everyone knows what it means to really be ... honor the importance of high-quality language that really makes a difference in supporting how children learn. OK. I'm not clicking the right thing. There it goes. We know, for example, that children benefit from being read to. Right? But the research shows us that they benefit more when they also have the chance to talk about the books with young children ... with adults. So, we want to make sure that all of our children have those opportunities for active processing of what they're reading in books, so that means that when we're working with children who are dual language learners, we have to be able to ask them questions about the stories.

We have to be able to understand the responses that they give about the stories, so we might learn a few open-ended questions like, "How does that character feel?" or, "How did those characters solve the problem?" and learn to say those open-ended questions in each child's home language, and then they may answer very interesting answers or act things out, but we want to record their answers so that if they answer in a language that's not familiar to the adult, that that can be translated, and we can still have a record of that child's progress. OK? Now the next topic that we're going to be covering is vocabulary bridging, and this has been shown through research as a strategy that can really help children who are dual language learners in their development of language. And the idea is that we know already through research that children benefit from the time we take to intentionally explain words to them and explain the meanings of words. It's more than just sprinkling words throughout the day. It's taking the time to explain what the words mean and what the connections are for those children. And for children who are dual language learners, it helps to introduce sophisticated

words in their home language and then explain the connection to the familiar words to new words in English, bridging the two languages in obvious and explicit ways. So ...

Judi: Thanks, Karen. Oh.

Karen: OK. Go ahead. Yes.

Judi: No. I'm happy to -- I'm happy to jump in if that's OK with you.

Karen: Yeah. Yes. Yes.

Judi: OK, so these strategies and these practices, they seem to me like they really require some in-depth and sustained interactions with young children, and you'll see in the Q&A box there are a lot of questions around what to do when -- when one teacher speaks one language or if a teacher doesn't speak the child's language, and I hope as we move forward we'll answer some of these questions, but maybe while I'm chatting, you can kind of take a look and see what the questions are that are coming in. But one – one thing that we do – we do know is that teachers really need to plan ahead intentionally to use their monolingual and multilingual vocabulary when they have it and when possible, and so the other adults that are involved in working with the child and teaching the child are having conversations so that they're able to plan for that and also planning to use the materials and the curriculum that they have available. One of the most important factors in supporting the successful active learning and language development is to spend that time in small groups as you mentioned and as we saw in the video. It's really challenging to have high-quality interactions either in the child's home language or in English with children in a large group setting. And like you mentioned it's hard in a large group setting for children to stay engaged or for them to have that kind of back-and-forth conversation that they need on an individual level.

So, the next one that we're going to talk about, we're actually going to kind of kill two birds with one stone here is we'll talk about language mapping and peer-to-peer conversation supports. And so, language mapping is this practice of demonstrating the language that children can use to communicate with each other or to organize their own internal thinking and talking. Two of the recommended strategies that we use are self-talk, which is me talking about what I'm doing, or parallel talk, which is me talking about what's happening with me and someone else. And the peer-to-peer conversation supports is really a strategy to support children in learning to use language to talk with each other. It basically is what it says it is. So, we're going to look at how each of these strategies would look if we're using them with our friends, Kai and Ana. An adult who is familiar with the tribal language might interact with Kai and his friends by doing a traditional activity that is rich with the vocabulary of the tribal language. Rather than conducting a language lesson, the teacher might narrate his own actions and the actions of the children while they're doing the activity. We're going to watch a video now that shows an example that illustrates both language mapping and peer-to-peer conversation support, so pay attention as you watch to those strategies that the teacher is using to support these children's language development.

[Video begins]

Yvette: Sandcastles? We can make sandcastles.

Woman #2: Yeah.

Soyul: I make sandcastle!

Yvette: Did you want to ask somebody if they want to make a sandcastle?

Soyul: Yeah.

Yvette: Who do you want to ask?

Soyul: Laura.

Yvette: Ask Laura.

Soyul: Laura, I make sandcastle.

Yvette: You can say -- You can ask, "Do you want to join me?"

Soyul: Do you want to join me?

Laura: No.

Yvette: You're not ready? Say, "I'm not ready."

Soyul: Laura!

Laura: I'm not ready.

Yvette: All right. I think she's answered your question.

Soyul: I make castle.

Yvette: Oh. Laura, she's asking a question. Come on over. Come on over, Laura. We need to listen.

Soyul: I make a castle.

Yvette: Soyul, what did you want to ask Laura? Do you want to build sandcastles with me? Ask Laura.

Soyul: Laura, I make sandcastle.

Yvette: "Do you want to join me?"

Soyul: Do you want to join me?

Yvette: Do you want to join her in making sandcastles? OK, well, let's get your bucket so that you can make them together. Good using your words, Soyul. You and Laura can work together.

[Chatter]

Soyul: I make the ...

Laura: I'm making the airplane. See?

Soyul: I'm making airplane.

Laura: This is the airplane. This is the airplane.

Soyul: I'm making the sandcastle.

Laura: I'm making a sandcastle, too.

Karen: Wow. It's really great to see those children playing together, but you could see the value of the teacher providing some supports in the beginning, so I -- I really appreciate how you set that video up, Judi. It gives us a chance to really see the teacher's role in -- in providing a scaffold for that interaction, but she doesn't have to take over and guide the whole thing. She can then step back and – and trust that in a high-quality environment with high-quality supports that children can have high-quality interactions that build language in a peer-to-peer context as well. And so, the next thing that we're going to be talking about is another kind of support that we saw in that video and that we're going to see in the next video as well, and that is the question of nonverbal supports, and Judi mentioned earlier, we talk about this a lot, that it's important, when you have children who are dual-language learners, that we find nonverbal supports, visuals, props, actions that help children understand what everyone is learning, right? But we have to be very careful about the meaningfulness of those nonverbal supports. What do they really mean? How are the props or visuals that we're choosing? How are they really helping the child understand? So, we're showing the next video. It doesn't actually have children. It's adults pretending to be children, but it shows what it would be like if you were a child in a story time, and you did not understand the language that the teacher was using, but what we want you to look at in this next video is, how are the visuals helping? Teacher is using a picture book. There are visuals on the wall. There are displays. She's pointing to the pictures, and this just gives you a sense of how you could evaluate for yourself, "Are the visuals I'm using really helping the meaning of the story?"

[Video begins]

Woman #1: [Speaking foreign language]

Man #1: Imagine that it is your first day of school with new surroundings, new people, and a new language.

Woman #1: [Speaking foreign language] Cut.

[Video ends]

Karen: OK, so think for a minute. How did you react to that? How did you think the feelings of those children might be about their personal potential for success as a language learner? What were they getting out of it, and then in that environment when you're thinking about those feelings, you can really see the difference that better nonverbal supports like images, the pictures in the picture books that we choose, the images that are on the wall, how could props have helped, et cetera? So, those are just some of the things that we really want you to take a look at as you're considering the choices that you make. You may have traditionally used a certain story all the time, but when you have children who are dual-language learners in your class, you may have to rethink some of those stories, some of those songs, some of those props to make sure they work. OK. The one important thing that we want to add to this discussion is a careful reminder that children need to use language in order to learn it, and they need to use language at different times of the day with different experiences and materials and in different contexts. We can't just read one story and say, "We taught these words." We can't just sing one song and say, "We've taught these words," right? We need to provide children with words and knowledge that they will continue to use, right? So, you see that happen when you read a story to children, and then you see them acting it out later in the pretend play area, or you talk about words like big and tall in the block area, and then you hear them outside on the playground talking about the playground set being big and tall. We need to think about the things we provide for children as tools that they will use. If they just hear language, they are unlikely to retain it, and the success comes when they actually use the language. Judi, I'm handing ...

Judi: Thanks, Karen.

Karen: ... it over to you. Yes.

Judi: Thank you, and everything that you've said is definitely backed up by the research, and there's been a lot of research on dual-language learners. What I love is that so much of it is coming down into the very early years. That shows us how conversation is just critically important, that back-and-forth, right, using the language. It's important for all children at this age but definitely for our dual-language learners. Being given the opportunity to use language is important, and then also we don't want to forget that high-quality instructional interactions, they require those frequent back-and-forth conversations, not just a, "I'm going to tell you to sit down," or, "Go wash your hands." We're going to have high-quality interactions, and these studies make the point that young children learn language best when they're involved in these sustained, it means more than one back-and-forth, meaningful conversations, which means it's based on things that they're interested in and want to talk about.

One research study showed that preschool teacher behavior that predicted children's growth was the frequency of their sophisticated vocabularies during informal conversations so just a back-and-forth, "How was your weekend?" or "Where did you go this weekend?" The sophistication of their vocabulary was predicting children's growth, and it predicted their

kindergarten vocabulary, which also then correlated with their fourth-grade word reading, so we see that there's this long-term benefit of having these rich conversations early on, and another study found that teacher interactions that best encourage language learning include having conversations that stay on a single topic providing children opportunities to talk, so that means sometimes the teachers need to stop talking to listen to what children have to say, give them the time to say what they're thinking and then those interactions that encourage analytical thinking, giving information to children about the meanings of words and expanding on what they already understand. Now while it's a good idea to explain the meanings of new words and show children the connections between known words in their home language and bridging it to their English words, new English words, most of the time, it's important to plan opportunities when your interactions will be all in one language, in one language or the other, just to maintain that authenticity and that back-and-forth in one language and the building a vocabulary in one language. This can happen with teachers. It can happen with volunteers or other program staff, or we obviously would want to encourage this to happen in children's homes.

Remember, our Head Start Program Performance Standards, they support this emphasis on the development of a home language with children who are in early childhood, and there is an emphasis on the use of both English and home language for our preschool-age children. So, planned interactions in one language will help children build vocabulary in that language, and we've already talked about language mapping is a way to do that, describing what children are doing as they play or describing what the teacher is doing as she works and plays alongside the children. This gives children vocabulary that they might not otherwise be exposed to, and another great thing to do with preschoolers, this is great for all preschoolers, but allowing them to engage in some long-term projects or some kind of ... some ongoing themes can help to support the connections that they make in both languages because they'll have time to explore. Yeah, oh, sorry. I think, Karen, I'm tossing it back over to you.

Karen: That's right. We're so involved in talking about language that we forget to let the other person talk, right, Judi?

Judi: I know. Sorry. Here you go.

Karen: No, not at all --not at all, but really this is what we're like back at the office too because we get so excited about all this cool research and these great ideas for children. We're hoping you're getting excited too, and so a lot of questions have come in specifically about how to support the home language, and so we're going to try to answer them in our regularly scheduled slide here, and these are three key components of our focus on supporting the home language. First of all, we need to identify that children's home language and their culture is an asset. It's an important and wonderful part of who they are as people, and so we want to honor that home language no matter whether it's a familiar language to the teacher or it's not familiar to you. Still, the approach is to think of it as a strength, as a rich, wonderful part of a child's background, but in addition to that, we all want to support the development of bilingual skills because research shows that growing up bilingual can give children lots of advantages, so we

want to provide the right support so children are maintaining their home language while also learning English, but the third thing about focusing on home language is that we need to help children understand in order to learn. They have to understand what's being talked about in the classroom. We need to help them understand what stories say. We need to help them understand when they're interacting with their peers. So, it's important to use the home language also as a tool to help them understand content. So, once they understand it in their home language, it's much easier to transfer that understanding to the new language, but when the whole environment is filled with a language they don't understand, there are going to be words and concepts that they miss, and we don't want that to happen. So, we want to make sure that we focus on ways to use the home language that will meaningfully enhance what children understand and can do. So, one great example is how we use classroom languages, and many classrooms have labels now that they include in a child's home language.

When we look at an example like what's on your slide, now this might have the child's home-language word for housekeeping, but if the teacher does not know how to pronounce those characters in that language, then how is that label really being used? And the second question I would ask is, if the child doesn't hear you talking about those words, how will you help them recognize what those words mean in English or in their home language? Remember, children have to use language in order to learn it. So, think about what labels do you have in your classroom, and which labels are the ones you really use, right? Children don't often go into a housekeeping area and talk about housekeeping. They go into the housekeeping area and say, "Let's make a restaurant," or, "I'm making a hamburger," or, "I'm going to change the baby." Well, what if we put labels in English and the home languages in those areas that they will actually use in conversation or that you can use when you're talking to them? And then these labels can give you clues about how to use different languages in those contexts. So, for our examples of Ana, the teacher could have English and Spanish labels, but she might change the labels to be words that would actually be used during play or words that they already learned from a storybook, and for Kai, the teacher might ask community members to come in and help add labels to the classroom for traditional items that they often talk about in tribal stories or traditional practices so that that child can be learning not just words like the colors or the numbers but words that actually appear in stories in the community, OK? So, those are just some ideas for how you can support the home language but be thinking about meaningful ways.

It's one thing to bring in a home-language song, but if you don't use the words in the song in any other place, is it really teaching language, but if you change to a song in the home language that has words they'll use when they're playing or pretending or learning, then you've really changed the language environment, OK? So, Judi, what would you like to say?

Judi: I would like to say that we need more than an hour to do this. I know, Karen, you think we need several days, but just as a way to kind of recap, we're going to give you the opportunity to share some of your thinking. So, this is your opportunity to use that yellow ideas widget at the bottom of your screen. If you open that up, you'll have the chance to share with other participants on this webinar what is a strategy that you would like to share with one of your

colleagues to support dual-language learners in your programs, and if you'll remember back with us, we talked about appropriate language modeling, so mapping or modeling the language for children, their home language and English, vocabulary bridging so helping children make those connections between their home language and English, language mapping, the two ways we talked about that is the self-talk and the parallel talk. That really has to be intentional. It's one thing that we find that teachers like to maybe record themselves in a small group activity or during free play to pay attention to their use of that self-talk and parallel talk, and then we talked about nonverbal supports, so providing, really being intentional about what our nonverbal communication is communicating to children or language prompts and then the peer-to-peer conversation support. So, those are the strategies we very, very quickly went over today. Please take a minute in the ideas widget and share what you're going to share with your colleagues, and hopefully you'll share this webinar with them if they weren't able to join us today. Before we leave though and since so many of you weren't with us last time, I do want to make sure that you get to see some of the resources that we have to support you in this because we can't give you everything in an hour. We wouldn't even try.

The first one, if you haven't downloaded it yet, you really should. It's our Ready!DLL app, and it's free. It's designed to help teachers learn new strategies. You can see video examples. We can only show you a couple in a webinar, but this will give you the time to see some video examples, try new words in Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic and Haitian Creole, and it's set up kind of like a game, so you can earn badges and rewards for making progress. It's available on Apple and Android stores, and you can download it, share it, rate it, let us know what you think. We're always updating it. The goal of this app is to help teachers build a culturally diverse classroom that's responsive to the children, to help teaching staff learn key words in these many different languages as needed, access additional resources, and then it gives you the opportunity to see these best practices in action like the ones that we were talking about today. We do have the link for you. Our first webinar was in February. That is the one where we dug a little bit deeper into the brain science behind dual-language learning, and then also, we hope you'll join us in September when we'll be back for the third of our series. Another thing we would encourage you to do is to sign up for Text4Teachers and to download the ELOF2GO. Text4Teachers will send you two free text messages per month. It gives you information and tips. There's links to research and links to resources that will strengthen and support teaching practices, and then the ELOF2GO is an app that will support you in understanding more about the Early Learning Outcomes Framework, and it gives you on-the-go access to the ELOF goals for children. It gives you some effective teaching practices that support children's growth and development, so you can download those as well, and then finally I want to let you know about MyPeers. If you're not on MyPeers yet, you should be. I have to say, with everyone kind of working from home, MyPeers has been a great place for people to just feel connected to other teaching staff and other program staff, to talk to each other about how they're supporting children and families, and so I would encourage you to join if you haven't. It's a virtual community. We have lots of different communities. These up here are just a sample of the communities that are available for you to join. I think there's over 58 communities right now. Some of the communities that might be of interest to you: We have an Education Leaders Community. This is to help leaders connect, education managers connect with each other and other leaders across the country.

Head Start, Early Head Start and other program leaders can find peer support for leading early childhood education and supporting effective practices, and then our CLRP Community, which is Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practices, that's a great space to support implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive practices through the networking and the information that you receive there. So, please take a minute ...

Karen: Judi?

Judi: Oh, yes, go ahead.

Karen: Just want to pitch in for a second to say, we're having such a wonderful set of questions and suggestions running through the question-and-answer section and plus the ideas that were put in the idea widget. Those are perfect examples of things people could type onto the CLRP Community in MyPeers. Type your suggestions and see if anybody has a similar suggestion or type your question and let your peers pitch in their answers, and we look at those too, so we'll be in there also providing links and answers where we can. So, if you didn't have your question answered today, MyPeers is the place to go to make sure you are part of the community, and we're hearing you and able to respond to each of you however you ask your question or share your suggestion.

Judi: Yeah, I agree. There's already so much really helpful information in there, links to helpful resources and conversations that are really important, and you do hang around in that community, don't you, Karen? So ...

Karen: I do. I do.

Judi: And just full disclosure: There were a lot of questions coming in that Q&A box, and I know Jan is probably ... Her fingers are raw from typing responses, and what we might do is, we might even take some of those questions, pull them together, and then we can always post those on the MyPeers community kind of as general answers to people's questions. So, we're sorry we didn't get to all of the questions today, but hopefully our content answered some, and we will be back in September with the final in this series, the final episode in this series. So, the last thing that I want to leave with is just some new information to help you stay safe and informed in this kind of new world that we are living in. We have a role in doing our part to stay informed. We're going to let you know that, on the ECLKC, you can find a COVID information page, and the link is on this slide as well as in the resource widget, so definitely share this information with your colleagues. I know we are kind of ... I don't know about you. I'm feeling inundated with information and resources about how to manage where we are right now, but the ECLKC is going to be a good place for you to visit. Also make sure you're visiting the CDC website. That's where you're going to get the most up-to-date information on what's happening in your region. So, thank you for taking the time and bringing your focus and your really great questions today. I know we kind of went through things really quickly, but we hope you have a taste and some ideas or strategies that you want to try and then come join us in MyPeers where we can continue the conversation. We'd love to see you there. Karen and I are sitting here in our yoga pants, right? We'd be happy to join you in MyPeers.

Karen: From the waist upward, we're all dressed, OK?

Judi: No, but we really hope that you're safe and healthy where you are, and, Karen, I don't know if you have some last things that you'd like to say.

Karen: Well, I just want to say how much I appreciate the insights that people were sharing today, and they really do help us think, "What questions do you have that we can answer? What do we need to add to our next webinar?" This really is a conversation, maybe across technology, but we really appreciate the personal side that you bring to this, and we're listening, and we're going to use it in the future things we plan, so thanks, everybody.

Judi: And I don't want to throw you for a loop, Karen, but we do have just a couple of minutes. Were there some overarching themes that you saw? I know you were kind of busy presenting, but I know there were some questions that came up about communicating with families or engaging with families. That might be something.

Karen: That's a good group of questions that all came together, and so I will say something about that. The key to that is not thinking about what you're going to tell to families, but start thinking about building those relationships with families. That if ... We really encourage you to think of this as an equal educational partnership between the education staff and the families as colleagues, as collaborators in supporting the child's learning. So, whenever we're working with a child who's a dual-language learner, we wonder, "Well, where am I going to find resources in the child's home language and about the child's culture?" But every child has their own set of resources, and that's their family. So, the more we do to help families understand what is high-quality language, why is it important to have those back-and-forth conversations with their children, why should we take the time to explain words, to support children and scaffold their learning or when we talk to families about supporting their learning and then giving them the next step and then letting children learn independently, that they can do same kinds of things we do at school, the families can do at home in their home language, and that actually really makes a difference in how well they learn. So, think of a two-way partnership and let the families do some of the work for you. It's great for the children.

Judi: Yeah, and I'm thinking, like, our situation has changed here at home where my kids normally they're at school every day, and my second-grader gets a 40-minute Spanish class once a week so that's not really enough to give him really anything, but since they're at home now and my husband is at home, they're hearing so much more Spanish than they do on any given day. Normally it's, like, the beginning of the day and the end of the day, but now that he's kind of helping out while they're at home and doing school, it's been interesting to see. They were on a phone call yesterday with our grandparents, and my little one was speaking to them in Spanish, which he doesn't usually feel confident doing, so it's just been interesting just in the couple of weeks to kind of see that transition. So, it'll be interesting to see what happens when children have kind of maybe more time learning and talking in their language at home.

Karen: Right, and we've seen teachers sending text messages home to family or making those phone calls or video chatting with individual children or small groups, that those are great times

to remind everybody, "Hey, don't forget that springtime is coming. What colors of flowers have you seen outside today? And talk about those in your home language." Give families ideas of things to talk about that are in their environment. Keep that learning going and keep that relationship building between the two of you.

Judi: I love it. Well, thanks, Karen, and thanks, everyone, again, for being here. You can contact us at any time with questions, and again, we hope we see you on MyPeers, and stay safe and healthy, and we'll see you back here in the fall. Thanks, Karen.

Karen: Thank you. Thanks, everybody.