

Supporting Infant and Toddler Families Through Inclusion

Treshawn Anderson: Hi, everyone, and welcome to “Teacher Time.” I’m Treshawn Anderson.

Gail Joseph: And I’m Gail Joseph, and we are from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning or DTL for short because that’s quite a mouthful. We’re so excited to have you here with us to talk about supporting infant-toddler families through inclusion. This season we’ve been exploring the concepts inclusion and belonging where inclusion is the practice as we think about that or the things we do, like individualizing learning opportunities for infants and toddlers, providing books that represent children and families in our learning spaces, and making sure materials are accessible for all children. Belonging, as we talk about it, is a feeling. It’s a feeling that your authentic self is welcomed and celebrated, so you can thrive and be yourself and see yourself reflected in the classroom.

In our past episodes, we’ve talked about inclusion and belonging in the learning environment and making learning materials accessible. Now this month we will include families too because we understand that families are a child’s first and best teachers and that many parents are doing more with their children now, especially if they are in virtual learning. I know I am. I know you are.

Treshawn: You know I am.

Gail: Later in the episode we’ll have a very special guest expert talk with us about the ways to support our infant-toddler families, so really be sure to hang on for that. In this season, we have three episodes dedicated to infants and toddlers and three that we actually feature preschoolers. We’ve already done our first two infant-toddler and preschool episodes, so visit the “Teacher Time” community on MyPeers to see a replay of those. Our final two episodes, one today and the preschool episode next week, will focus on families, and you really don’t want to miss these final episodes.

If you’ve been with us on “Teacher Time,” you know that we encourage you to download the Viewer’s Guide and use it to follow along with us during an episode. You can use the Viewer’s Guide to reflect on the content that we’re covering and to write down any new strategies or ideas that you want to remember. What I love about the Viewer’s Guide is that there’s always a take-home activity in there that you can use in your learning environments today. We’ve also included some resources. If you want to dive deeper into the topic for today, you’re going to find a lot in that Viewer’s Guide. Let’s dive into the content of today’s episode.

Inclusive early learning environments are places where children with and without disabilities and their families experience a sense of belonging, positive social relationships, and learning to reach their full potential. Children regardless of ability have the right to fully engage in learning opportunities and typical activities and routines across home, educational, and community environments. In quality inclusive environments, educators create spaces that bring people together and promote a sense of belonging for all children, and this includes families too.

Families and educators can and actually really need to work together to create continuity across children's learning environments, think about it, from home to school or maybe from school to child care or child care to a relative's home, and to support children's development in ways that reflect and honor the child's and family's cultural beliefs and practices. As we include children of all types of abilities in our group care, partnering with families becomes increasingly more important.

Treshawn: Yes, that's so true. You know, research tells us that when parents are involved in their child's early learning program, everyone benefits. Children experience a greater opportunity for learning, both at home and at school, and even parents develop knowledge and skills and build connections and even increase their self-confidence in lots of different areas. Then early childhood programs are better able to meet the needs of children and families and the communities they serve when they have parents involved in the program too. Let's take a look at each of these individually.

When families are included and they feel like they belong in their learning environment, they may feel like they want to take more ownership over their child's learning, and that's wonderful. For example, they may check with their teacher or family child care provider or even a service provider to discuss what goals their child are working on so that they can replicate those practices at home. They may also be involved in learning activities or might share their child's interest with their teacher to ensure that their child is fully participating.

When my daughter was a toddler, she walked around with a blanket. She called it her baby. She was my little Linus kid, and that was her social-emotional security away from home. Her teachers noticed that, you know, she started biting at a certain point, and so I kind of asked what the daily routine looked like. The teacher kind of told us, you know, "We come in. We wash hands. We ask her to put her blanket away and join the children for free play, and that's when the biting happens." That also sparked my interest, and I said, "So what if I suggest having her keep her baby during free play. I understand if you want to put it away during mealtime because it's a little germ, but see what happens when she stops biting ... I mean, just see what happens." And she ended up stop biting. She stopped biting because she was able to use her baby to help regulate her emotions during free play. Because we were involved, you know, she didn't have to be pulled away from the learning activity. She didn't have to be redirected from her favorite toy that they were playing with during free play and that she could fully participate. That's a quick example of how children experience greater opportunities when their parents are involved in their learning.

Secondly, when families are included in their children's learning environments, they start to understand some of that child development language that we use to describe children's actions. What's even better is that they understand the reasons for doing certain activities like sensory play or dramatic play. I always have parents ask me like, "What are they learning from sensory play?" Well, when they're involved, they kind of understand more about what children are learning. They also get to know other parents, kind of build their networks and other families in the learning environment. They enhance their support system that way too. All of

these things really builds parents' confidence in their ability to create change and be an advocate for their child.

Then lastly, when parents are included in the planning of their infants' and toddlers' learning experiences and care routines and schedules, the program staff are better able to meet children's and families' needs. If the toddler has a hearing impairment and parents have begun using their own special signs for things like "I need a diaper" or "I want to eat" or "I want to be picked up," when parents communicate that with their teachers and their family child care providers, then those teachers can better understand and help meet that child's needs. It's wonderful things to say about parents being involved.

Gail: Absolutely, and I love that story about baby, the blanket.

Treshawn: Yeah, I know.

Gail: Great example.

Treshawn: It has turned into a sweater.

Gail: That's great, and that's such a really great example about the importance ... the necessity really of partnering with families. In addition to those positive outcomes for children when parents are involved in their early childhood program, the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children or DEC, as we like to call it, has several recommended practices in the family section that include specific outcomes for children of ... for families of children with disabilities, rather. Some of these outcomes for families include being able to identify, access, and use formal and informal sources of support. Maybe they learn about a special equipment lending library or opportunities to provide respite care. They better know and understand their rights.

We've done a lot starting with our first episode about rights. We showed that great video around that that's still available to view on MyPeers. They also learn about participating in leadership and advocacy skill building, if they're interested. There are some resources in your Viewer's Guide from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center that provides guidance, practices, guidelines, and checklists for implementing some of these recommended practices. It's really great. It provides really good examples of what it looks like in practice. Be sure to take a look at those.

Now, let's watch a video of parents as they discuss what it means to feel included in the learning environment and what it has done for them. Use your Viewer's Guide to add your reflections.

[Video begins]

Rocio Jordan: Inclusion to me means children of various needs, language ... that could be language, disability, a learning need. To me, it just means a lot. It allows them to be together and to gain understanding of one another, to build empathy, to be surrounded by other kids,

whether that's language or whatever it is. I mean, to me, the benefits are many, right, being surrounded by other cultures, being surrounded by other languages, gaining empathy for other kids, and learning how to cope with various needs.

[Video ends]

Gail: I just ... I love that video. She ... I mean, it's short, but she really describes the heart of inclusion, about that feeling of belonging that starts to build when we increase awareness and develop empathy. I just ... I think it's a beautiful video.

The NAEYC and DEC have written a joint position statement, we've talked about this before, and it's available in the resources, on early childhood and inclusion. They have stated that "The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high-quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and support." Three areas that we focus on. If you want to see the full joint position statement, click on your Viewer's Guide.

Educators provide children with access to a wide range of learning opportunities, activities, settings, and environments. Participation is where children ... is where education staff have individualized supports that allow children to participate fully in play and learning activities with their peers and meeting developmental goals. Supports at the program level include support systems for education staff to help them implement high-quality inclusive practices. These supports include resources, trainings, and other professional development opportunities. In our previous episodes, we've talked about access and participation, lots of great practical strategies in those. For this episode, we are going to focus on supports.

Treshawn: Yeah. What do we mean by supports? We can think of supports in two ways. One, support for the education staff and then two, there's supports for the families in our learning environments. Supports for the education staff at the program level might come in the form of professional development and training and coursework, trainings like today, "Teacher Time," so glad you're here. Support for education staff might also include working with a coach or working with a mentor to help ensure that your learning environment is inclusive. Support might even come from just receiving support from your administrators, you know, showing that inclusion is valued and that you have access to anything that you need to support children and families.

When we think about support for families, which we'll focus on today, we can think about that family-professional collaboration and how this collaboration builds opportunities for both relationship building and the active participation of parents and education staff in really helping children to achieve their developmental goals that are mutually agreed upon. When teachers and family child care providers work together with families, this builds the family's sense of inclusion and belonging and their capacity to support their child. It also helps education staff provide appropriate resources and supports and services that ensure inclusion of all children.

Gail: Now although it's a great idea and an evidence-based practice to include families in the conversation about their child's development, their child's interest, and incorporate ways of life

at home, sometimes teachers and family child care providers need support when talking with families, especially when it comes to sensitive topics. We have a little example here.

Let's say you notice Jax, a new child in your class, may have a delay in his language development. He's 2 years old and does not respond to his name. He has a hard time following simple one-step directions and doesn't say many understandable words. You've been documenting your observation with Jax. You would like to talk to the family about maybe providing some additional supports, but Jax's family has not mentioned having concerns about these behaviors, so you're a little bit worried about how an initial conversation would go. I know we all have some concerns around that. Luckily we've had an opportunity to interview a guest expert, Dr. Enrica Hampton from Kindering, which is here in Washington State. We asked Enrica to share some tips for teachers and family child care providers to begin this initial discussion with families on behavioral or developmental concerns that we've observed in the learning environment such as in the example we provided about Jax. Let's hear her reply.

[Video begins]

Dr. Enrica Hampton: Well, first, let me start by saying thank you so much for inviting me to join you on this topic of having sensitive conversations with families. That is a really great question for Jax's teacher and family. You know, an important job that early care and education professionals working with infants and toddlers in child care settings and family home child care programs and other early care and education settings have is communicating concerns that they have about a child's development or behavior with families. These are often not easy conversations to have. These are very sensitive conversations, you know. As your example with Jax reflects, as early care and education professionals, you might be the first one raising some questions about a child's development with the family. While you might be uncomfortable sharing your questions and concerns, it is an important part of your job to have these conversations.

I hope that some of these ideas that I share with you might help support you both in preparing for and having an initial conversation with families. Think about things such as meeting space, location, privacy, time of day that works best for the family and giving time to hold the discussion. Have your observation notes with you. It is OK to have your notes with you. That's why you took them. Try to use an approach that encourages a conversation. You might start by highlighting some strengths of the child before raising questions. You might consider using phrases such as "I've been wondering" or "I've noticed," you know, as a way to bring up the topic.

For example, you might say, "I've noticed that Jax doesn't use many words in the classroom. What are you hearing at home?" Or you might try, "I've been wondering why Jax doesn't seem to look up when I call his name. Do you think he can hear me?" It's also really important when you're having the conversation to describe the behavior that you're seeing. Avoid labels, just describe what it is that you see, and try to find out what's happening at home. Ask the family, you know, if the pediatrician or the health care provider ever expressed concerns. Discuss the

strategies that you have tried, you know, and learn what strategies are being used at home. Really try to approach this as a team.

Make sure to have resources available if you are, you know, recommending that a family consider that they have their child's, you know, their skills looked at more closely. That way when the family leaves that conversation, they are walking away knowing where to go for additional support. Finally, you know, suggest that they talk to the pediatrician or their health care provider. I do hope that this helps you in your work with children and families.

[Video ends]

Gail: I am so grateful for Dr. Hampton's insight. I could listen to her all day. We know these conversations can be difficult, but with the tips that Dr. Hampton provided, I hope you're feeling a little more comfortable and confident that you have enough information, you have resources available to you to have these kinds of conversations. I know I hear from parents all the time that it was a child care provider or an Early Head Start teacher that was the first person to raise a concern that allowed them to get some extra support for their child.

Now let's say after you've had these conversations with families, and let's say the family agrees to move forward with a process called Child Sign, which includes more evaluation. Then they learn that their child is eligible for an Individualized Family Service Plan or IFSP. We also asked Dr. Hampton to tell us a little bit about that IFSP meeting and maybe some tips on what teachers and family child care providers can do before, during, and after that meeting.

[Video begins]

Dr. Hampton: I would be happy to say a little bit about what happens if the family agrees to move forward and have their child's skills looked at more closely. Some things that you can do before and during the IFSP meeting might include, you know, before the IFSP meeting, try connecting with the family to learn more about what supports they would like for their child and share what you are hoping to get from the meeting. Before the IFSP meeting, do some reflection, really think through and come prepared to share about what you see. As the child's teacher and caregiver, how would you describe the child to the other members of the team? What do you see as working well for the child while the child is in your care? What would be helpful for you as the child's teacher in supporting the child while they are in your care? What type of information do you need or would like more of as a member of the team? Do some reflection and share that information during the team meeting.

During the IFSP meeting, ask if you can continue to receive ongoing support from the team that will be delivering the services. While the family is always the one that makes the final decision about this, you have been invited by the family to this team meeting. You, as the child's teacher, can absolutely ask this type of question and share your opinions. After the IFSP meeting, continue keeping open communication with the family. If the family has permitted, now you should also be able to connect with the service providers, share with them what you are seeing, and get ongoing feedback to support the child in your care. I know that's a lot in a

very short period of time. I hope that you have found this information helpful in your work as early care and education professionals.

[Video ends]

Gail: Well, we are so grateful that Dr. Hampton was able to be our special guest on “Teacher Time” today. It was such great information. If you want to watch the full interview with Dr. Hampton, we will post it on MyPeers.

Treshawn: Yes. It’s so amazing just listening to her talk. She’s so knowledgeable. I hope that was helpful for you guys. Let’s talk a little bit about the role of the teacher or family child care provider when it comes to supporting children with an IFSP. Education staff can provide very important information to this process of developing that IFSP. I mean, you know what the children can do in the learning environment as well as their interest. You also know what children are having difficulty with and where they may need some additional supports. Be sure to share this information with the IFSP team so that the goals that are developed for the child work for your learning environment as well and most importantly is meaningful to the child’s growth and development.

Early Head Start teachers and family child care providers can also share information about Head Start’s comprehensive services. That’s really important and all the services that the child and family will access with the IFSP ... I’m going to have the hardest time saying that ... with the IFSP team because maybe not everyone knows, you know, all the resources that there are for families. It’s great to share this information with everyone, so everyone is on one accord. Knowing all of the services and supports that the family and child may be able to access through Early Head Start will help the Part C providers be able to offer suggestions for strategies to help children and families participate in and access these kinds of services.

Also, what does the IFSP team look like? It may consist of a disabilities service coordinator who will help to coordinate the disabilities services in your program, maybe even a service coordinator from the Part C services that coordinates the whole IFSP meeting. You may have some therapists in there or specialists like a physical therapist that help design specialized instructions, maybe help problem solve and review the children’s screening or assessment data. And, of course, you, the parents, and the families are all involved in this IFSP team.

Gail: That’s right. Then next, teachers and family child care providers implement the IFSP goals and provide instructional supports to help the child make progress toward those learning goals through the daily routines and planned activities. It’s actually embedded in everything that you do, this extra instruction that you provide. Then it’s really, really, really important to document children’s growth and development on a regular basis to help the team see and understand the child’s progress and if there’s any need for some adjustments. If they’re not making expected progress, how can we adjust, et cetera. Just be sure to check the Resource widget for more information and help on that.

Now let's listen to one provider's experience during the IFSP process. As you watch, think about what feelings may come up about these meetings and ways to help parents.

[Video begins]

Maggie Diaz: We do the referral. Then after the referral, they have an appointment for evaluation. After that evaluation, they make another meeting, and then they let the family know that he qualifies ... the child qualifies or no to having those services. After that, we just partner with parents to say what the therapist say and what is your ... the object that they are going to work on. Then the parents say, "Oh, he needs more speech." Then we try to plan every week toward those objects or objectives, yeah.

[Video ends]

Gail: Well, there were a lot of steps involved. It's such a great video, so many steps involved such as referrals, meeting with parents, setting and implementing learning objectives for the child, and sharing information with the IFSP team. Check your Viewer's Guide for a resource called "IEP Basics: Tips for Teachers" on other tips and helpful resources for education staff during the IFSP meetings.

Now we understand that this resource is focused on the IEP or the Individualized Education Plan meetings which are for preschoolers and their families. But there are really many ... there are a lot of similarities, I would say, in the process along, and the tips and strategies can be applied to the IFSP meeting as well when you're thinking about infants, toddlers, and their families. We've also included a great resource for parents called "Writing the IFSP for Your Child" which explained the IFSP a little more, including what the process might look like for a parent. A parent is an integral part of that process, the most important part of that process. It's really important that we give them resources to support their participation.

Treshawn: Yeah, absolutely. Speaking of sharing information with families and the IFSP team, communication with children and families is one of the key ... five key aspects of inclusive high-quality learning environments that we've been talking about this season. So far we've covered safe and supportive physical environments and inviting materials and predictable schedules and routines and even engaging interactions. We've talked about a lot of stuff during this season. In our last episodes, we're going to be talking about connecting and communicating with all children and families.

Gail: As we know, raising a child can present many challenges, and it can really greatly affect family life ... so many rewards but so many challenges too. Parents, siblings, and education staff can work together to problem solve and build resilience. Here are some everyday actions that education staff can do to communicate with children and families in their learning environments.

For infants, assign a primary caregiver to each infant. This strategy is highlighted in the Head Start Program Performance Standards, 1302.21(b)(ii), and is one of the best ways to observe

and get to know each infant, find out their likes, their favorite materials, learn how to respond to infant's cues, and learn about any routines and activities they do at home with their families. This standard applies to toddlers too, for sure.

Primary caregiving is also a great way to learn more about children's families. There is such rapid growth that happens in those first 3 years of life that it's important to be in touch regularly with infants and toddlers and their families to stay current on their child's growth and development that's happening. If your program is remote, you also want to find out how the family best likes to communicate. I was thinking about that, like, what happens when they're remote and really finding out how families want to do that. Do they want to have a video call during the child's nap time? Or maybe they need some virtual support during mealtimes?

Treshawn: Yeah. I started out in the early childhood field doing primary caregiving, and I think that's what sold me. I was like, "I love this model," and every place I work has to have primary caregiving system. I just learned so much about the children and family, and I feel like I became a part of the family too. There's lots of benefits to the primary caregiving system.

When we think about toddlers, we can create a system to track when and how you're communicating with each child each day because it's easy for toddlers to get so wrapped up in their daily activities and their learning environments or, you know, for parents to be consumed with life at home that sometimes we miss those opportunities to connect. Having a tracking sheet of some sort will help make sure each child and family has gotten your attention in some way each day.

Gail: That's really great because you do lose focus, right? Having that tracking sheet, it's like, "I talked to them. I talked to them." It's just ... it's so wonderful. For families, think ongoing communication. When we try to communicate with families in ways that work for them, we are showing that we really value their insights and their time. Research shows that when teachers and parents communicate on a regular basis, teachers and family child care providers feel happier. They feel more competent as an educator, and parents are more likely to trust and appreciate education staff's efforts. I was thinking back to the conversations we were having with Dr. Hampton, right, that they're more receptive, I think, when you have to have those conversations that might be a little bit more sensitive if we have made these ongoing efforts.

Remember, communication is a two-way street. It is bidirectional. When education staff hear from, acknowledge, and confirm parents' points of view and take the time to learn from and with families as partners in their child's development, this also builds trust and that family-professional relationship that's so key.

Treshawn: Yeah, absolutely. We know that there are lots of ways in which we can communicate with families, especially during these times when we may see families either in person and virtually. The first and probably most important way to communicate with families is to figure out how, how they want to communicate. You know, what time of the day works best for them? Are they evening people? Are they early morning risers that you can contact them before their day starts? What method of communication do they prefer? Are they texters? I

know I'm a texter. Like, you can just ... I may not answer your call, but I'll answer your texts. Sometimes that happens with parents. That may be the one that they prefer because it's less invasive.

Or what's really important is what language do they feel the most comfortable communicating in. You might want to talk with your education manager, your disability services coordinator, or director to find ways to meet the family's needs for effective communication. Some of the ways that we can communicate with families is through a communication journal, kind of like a getting to know you book and, of course, virtually. A communication journal is a journal or a book that comes and goes with the family. They ... when they drop off, they may write in it how their infants and toddlers slept that night, what they ate before they came to school, their temperament that morning. You might take the time to read it, and it'll just inform you a little bit about what the infant-toddler might be set up for their day. It kind of keeps you up to date on what's occurring at home too.

Then you'll respond back with how the child's day went. This back-and-forth communication really helps parents be involved in the happenings of their early learning environment. I know I love to be involved, especially when you can't be there. This message is especially useful if there's limits to, you know, pickup and drop-off methods that are being put in place like limiting the number of parents or how long you spend in the classroom. Using this communication journal will really help with that.

Gail: I love that. I would say make sure that families get it when they leave your program. I actually found a communication journal from my daughter's early learning program, and I ... I'm so glad I have it.

Treshawn: That's so cool.

Gail: I mean, I think, at the time it just felt so, like ... you know, it was, like, the daily routine. But now, I'm like "Oh, my gosh." It was, like, details of every moment of her day, so it was really great. Next, another strategy is a "Getting to Know You" book, which is really similar to an "All About Me" book describing the infant and toddler's favorites except for this book ... it's a little bit more about how the child might react to certain things. It's not only, like, who I live with and all about me and my favorite things, but it might be things like, "This is what it looks like when I meet a new person" or "This is what it looks like when I'm really excited about something" and then with a blank for the child to ... for the child, those infants and toddlers ... for the families to fill out about their toddler's experience. Or you can do it in a home visit or as an interview, so you can get that information.

There also might be things in there, like, "These are things that might scare me," right? You might learn that loud noises or something is very frightening. Or "These are things that make me laugh" and that you can find all of that information out. You can customize the pages for the needs of the children and families in your program to help you meet children's individual needs, plan activities and routines that work for them, and these are so essential when the

child is beginning in your program to just really get all that information so you can really provide a great individualized experience for them.

Treshawn: I love that idea of that book, and it's more or less ... it's more about how they're reacting to things versus their favorites. Favorites is good too, but it's also good to know if you just have a quiet child, and they're just quiet natured, and nothing is wrong with them, and they're content the way they are, but it's good to know that from parents.

Lastly, you may be engaging in more virtual communication options with families nowadays. There might be some video conference calls, emails, text messages. You might be able to use these a little bit more frequently now. This includes therapy services that may be offered virtually so allowing children and families to still participate and learn new strategies by doing it virtually. Talk with your director or education manager about virtual platforms and messaging systems that all parents can access for free.

Find out from parents what access they have to technology such as their internet usage or their mobile capacity and meet the families where they are. Maybe parents would also benefit from a support group or a safe play group with other parents outside of school. This can also be done virtually too or in person as families feel comfortable.

Gail: All right. It's time for our segment called Small Changes – Big Impact where we talk about ways that you can make some modifications to a learning environment, to a tool, to a resource that can actually be something really small but actually has a big impact in the environment or for the experience of the child or the family. Today's modification moment is translating resources.

Treshawn: Yeah. First, you want to talk with families about their preferred language of communication. You can either do this, you know, by that back-and-forth communication with families, this back-and-forth journal that you have, or maybe you can do a quick survey that goes out to all parents so you can see what languages are available or what languages that your parents and families speak in the learning environments. Then work with your program leadership to have any materials that you provide to parents translated in those languages.

Many of you may be already doing this for languages. I know, like, English and Spanish, we have lots of stuff on the ECLKC in those two languages, but this may not include all the families in your learning environment. Reach out to your networks to see if someone would be willing to help out, and I'm sure they will be. For example, you have your Part C providers or your LEA partners that may have translated materials already and that they would be willing to share. You might have some materials that are already ready for you, or you may also reach out to your local child care resource and referral networks, your local cultural centers, even community colleges. They like to do translating foreign language instruct ... that the foreign language translators ... foreign language instructors love to do translations for people, so you might want to obtain some translations from there as well.

Inclusive learning environment support all families, and we want all of our families to be in the know about their children's education. Translating documents is something that's a really small change but really makes that big impact.

Gail: That is so true. I love that idea of going to foreign language instructors to do that. I had actually never really thought about that as a resource, but it makes tons of sense. One of the things I know when I was teacher is that I would make sure that kind of the big things got translated. Like, I knew to do that, but what I love about this is really that emphasis that it's also the little notes that go home and things like that making a huge effort to make sure those are translated so that ... so families get all the information, you know, the big and the small, you know, the newsletter you might be sending home, et cetera.

OK. Well, we're at our next favorite segment, "The Bookcase," one of our favorite things that we have been adding to these episodes. We know that books are a great way to engage children and families and even communicate children's needs with them and having books in the learning environment that are some family favorites or reflect the families in your learning environment. It's also important in bridging that home-school connection. If you've been with us on "Teacher Time" this season, you know that we've been exploring "The Bookcase." What that means is that we think about books, and we think about them really intentionally. We think about how the content of the books supports the specific Early Learning and Outcomes Framework goals.

We think about the connection you can make between the book and a specific goal. We think about the way that you can identify and provide children with advanced vocabulary. That's the A. Then we also think about how teachers and family child care providers can support the engagement during book readings, so what might we do to engage them further in that book. Then we think about how we can extend children's learning beyond the book, and all of that spells out case. Let's take a look at a few of the books for infants and toddlers and their families that are on our bookcase today.

Treshawn: Yes, I love this segment. First, we have the "My Face Book," not the Facebook you're used to but this face book. Babies just love looking at other babies and these little charming baby faces. Either they're smiling. Some are frowning. We've got some laughing. We've got some being silly or serious. They are sure to captivate and delight your infant's and toddler's attention. While children will enjoy looking at this book repeatedly, the great thing about this book is that it's translated in over 10 different languages for the children and families in your program. You can get this book written in Arabic, in French, in Spanish, in Tagalog, in Japanese, and so many more languages. Be sure to look this one up.

Then the second book is the "Baby Loves Sight!" There's ... these are five senses. There's "Baby Loves Sight!" There's hearing. There's touch. There's lots of different books. Babies love the five senses, and it's accurate enough for experts. This book does go into a little bit of the explanation of the eyes, but it's simple enough for the babies, and this clever board book explores the science of vision, light, and color. It's beautiful. It's visually stimulating. We're going to talk about this one a little bit more. It also addresses, you know, things like glasses and

blindness. Maybe someone in your family wears glasses. The hearing book addresses children's needs for hearing aids or cochlear implants. Love this book because it integrates science into the family system as well.

Then the last one is "Babies Around the World." This one takes a journey, and it starts on a sunny day in New York City, and it ends on a beautiful San Francisco night with stops in Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, London, Paris, Cape Town, and lots of places. These babies have gone more places than I have. These friendly babies welcome us to their cities with delightful greetings in their original language, and then there's English translations there as well. It's a simple, short narration that will appeal to any global mini-citizens, our little infants.

Let's make the case, C-A-S-E, with the "Babies Loves Sight!" When we think about connect, viewing children of various abilities in this book really helps to promote that curiosity about objects such as the use of your eyes or the use of glasses, materials, or events which support the ELOF domains from Approaches to Learning. Curiosity is a part of the Approaches to Learning ELOF domain. If you have children in your classroom who wear glasses in your learning environments, this book will help other children express care and concern for that child as well as promote a sense of identity and belonging for that child which supports their social and emotional development, and that's another ELOF goal as well.

When we think about the A, advanced vocabulary, well, this book talks a lot about science at the infant-toddler level, which is great. There will be lots of different words you can use with the children such as colors and the structure of the eye like retina and pupil and much more. You can even take a little mirror and see if you try to find your pupil inside of your eye. Then we think about supporting the engagement, that's the S. The pictures in this book are so dynamic. I wish I had the book here for you. It's actually at my local library, so you might want to check your libraries too to see if you can get this book for free and get it into your learning environments. You can just flip through this book and talk about the pictures, maybe point out how the child wears sunglasses to protect his eyes from the sun or how the child who is blind can still read their books using braille, so that's pretty awesome too.

Lastly, we have the E, and that's extending learning. This book would be great to do with some flashlight play. I kind of thought of that idea, giving children some flashlights and labeling the things that they see with their light and the things that they can't see and maybe some things they ... yeah, maybe something that they can't see. You can also put infants and toddlers in front of a mirror and have them look at their own eyes and maybe identify what color eyes that they have. Lots of learning can happen just in this little board book alone.

Gail: I love that. I love that it integrates and talks about people with disabilities too just as part of our environment, of everyone that is around us. That's such a great book. I'm going to check my local library too for that one actually. One of our last segments is "All About You" so deep breath here.

We know that we do our best caregiving, our best teaching when we feel calm and just feel well ourselves. We have a good night sleep. We had a good nourishing breakfast, and we feel loved

and supported, and we feel calm. Engaging in self-care practices really help you and help you to really be a better teacher. I feel like ... I feel like the difference between the times I had effective teaching moments and less effective teaching moments really had more to do with my own kind of health and well-being than it did anything else. Finding ways that we can kind of find our calm is really important.

Here's one quick strategy that you can use to get back into that calm space. This is one of my favorite strategies, and it is called moving your telescope. I actually keep a telescope on my desk as a little visual reminder to do this. Here's the idea. Sometimes we can get fixated on just the negative about a situation, about a conversation, about feedback, about an interaction, whatever it is. It's kind of like if you go on vacation and you ever have seen those telescopes that you can look through to see something out in the distance. Sometimes those are fixed, and you can only see one thing. This is that idea that sometimes our telescopes get fixed. We can only see the negative in that situation or that interaction, et cetera.

I always think about when I would get feedback, and sometimes my supervisor would tell me a lot of good things, but they would say one thing I needed to improve, and I would just fixate on that. Fixating on that negative piece, and when we just keep our telescopes fixed, it can cause us to fester. It can cause us to feel even more negative and unhelpful and ineffective in those ways. It doesn't really lead to anything positive or productive. It can really just make us feel increasingly upset and stressed the more we keep that telescope fixed.

The tip is when you are swimming in a stressful or negative thinking situation, it's just to think about can you move your telescope a little bit and see if there's anything positive in that situation. That example of getting feedback, I just had to move my telescope and say, "Wow, she told me lots of other great things and strengths that I could build on, and she's here to provide support for me to grow and learn." That's about moving your telescope, helps you feel a little bit better, a little bit more hopeful about that situation. What I love about it is that I've shared this with many of my colleagues, and so if I start to talk about kind of getting a little bit too negative, I always have a colleague that will say, "Telescope up, telescope up." So that's great.

Treshawn: That's awesome, and you never know what Gail is going to pull off of her desk. Today it was a telescope. That's pretty cool, but you can use that in really any life situation, which is awesome. I want to leave you with a few resources that will support you in your work doing this whole quality, inclusive learning environment work for the infants and toddlers that you work with.

First we have MyPeers, which is a virtual informal social community to exchange ideas and share resources and lend support to the early childhood community. Go ahead and join us in our "Teacher Time" community there. You may also join the Head Start Disabilities and Inclusion Network too for more tips and strategies on inclusive practices. Then as far as apps are concerned, we've got Text4Teachers which sends you two free text messages a month with information, tips, and research and resources to help strengthen and support your teaching practices. Then we have our ELOF2GO app. This gives you that on-the-go access to the ELOF

goals for children and with effective teaching practices as well, so you don't have to carry around that book with you. Then we also have our Ready DLL app, and you can use this for children who are dual language learners where you can access resources and learn some key words and phrases and discover some implementation strategies. Then finally, we have our Head Start Resources app where you can search for and save all of your favorite resources that are on the ECLKC, but it's like having the ECLKC website in a mobile app. All these apps are free and available in English and Spanish, and we encourage you to use them and download them.

Gail: Thanks for hanging out with us, guys. Take care, everyone.