

Meaningful Makeover: Family Child Care Learning Environment

Adriana Bernal: Hello everyone, and welcome to our first episode of “Meaningful Makeover.” I’m Adriana Bernal, and I’m with my colleague Virginia Tse. We are from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, known as DTL. We are so happy that you have joined us today to talk about overcoming challenges in the family child care learning environment.

I would also like to call your attention to the viewer’s guide. We encourage you to download the viewer’s guide and use it to follow along with us during the episode. We use the viewer’s guide to reflect on the content we are covering and to write down new strategies or ideas that might come up. We also provide some additional resources if you want to dive deeper into the topic. Now, I think that’s all for logistics. Let’s get into our topic for today. Virginia, can you help us with that?

Virginia Tse: Yes, of course. Thank you, Adriana. “Meaningful Makeover” is a webinar that highlights common challenges and solutions in the family child care learning environment. Over the past few years some of our colleague at DTL have worked with family child care providers to do meaningful makeovers on other projects. Now we’re excited to bring the project to Head Start. While we’re focusing on family child care, we welcome all education staff to join us, to learn, and to create engaging and fun learning environments for children of all ages. In this session, we want to show you some of the ways that we have worked with family child care programs to help make over their learning environment and set children on a path to learning success.

We’ve asked family child care providers what their biggest challenges were, worked together to find solutions with our makeover crew, and made over their learning environments in a way that was meaningful for the child care provider. We hope that you will find ideas that you can use in your program too. While makeovers help make the environment look appealing children and their families, the makeovers are also meaningful because the environmental changes that support children’s learning and development throughout the webinar.

We’ll show you how the changes are closely aligned with the learning goals from the ELOF or the Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Not only will family child care providers watching this webinar become more aware of the ways their learning environments can support children’s growth and development, but education manager, child development specialists, and coaches may also find ways to support their family child care partners. We want you to grab a colleague to watch along with you. Now, Adriana, do you want to share a little bit more?

Adriana: Sure. Thank you, Virginia. That’s exciting. Now we know many of you love a good makeover. All of us do. At the end of this episode, we’ll also show you some do-it-yourself projects that you can do to meaningful makeover your environments today. Let’s get made over. Before we dive into sharing the common challenges and solutions, we want to be sure you have a few key resources at hand as we share strategies for enhancing learning environments. Today, we also connect these strategies to children’s learning and development in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework known as the ELOF.

If you go to ECLCK and search for the ELOF, you'll find the interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, ages birth to 5. Click in any domain and age group to learn more about the development of the children in your care. You can also follow along by using the ELOF applications which are very convenient. We have the ELOF2Go and the ELOF@Home. As we learn more about the ELOF connections, think about ways that the changes you make to your environment can support children's development, and you can also think about ways to use these applications or the interactive website as you talk with families about their child's growth and development.

One of the many beauties of family child care programs is having children of multiple ages. It is quite a blessing and also a challenge, we know that. As they learn and grow together, many families, especially those with multiple young children, like this type of program because all of their children can be in the same place, close together, and have that extension of a home setting while learning. Furthermore, often the family child care providers, they are located close to the family, within the same neighborhoods, which contributes to this community feel. Now, Virginia, can you tell us a little bit more about the challenges of mixed-aged environments?

Virginia: Yes. Thank you, Adriana. Also we know that there are many challenges to working in environments with children of multiple age groups. One of your infants is ready for a nap, while the toddlers are ready to go outside and run off some steam, or the preschoolers are ready to make necklaces with beads. Let's take a look at how the Meaningful Makeover crew worked with several family child care providers to create safe and engaging environments that are shared by multiple age groups.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

Crystal: The last three years I had older kids. I've always had this set up for older boys, all about 5 and 6 years old. Things have changed, and now I have babies, and I just don't know what to do.

Woman 1: But then we would still create an open space because it sounds like all of the children want to use the bigger space.

Jamie Jimenez [Speaking Spanish]: Because what happens is that maybe all the children want to use the big space.

Laura [Speaking Spanish]: Yes, it would be a very good idea to distribute all the toys for all the children in all the different areas. Because this area is open to everyone, and the babies are in all the areas, so that idea would be perfect.

Jessica Deang: We're going to put it like this. It's a baby gate. It's kind of we're going to section portion of the room so that the babies can have a safe place to play and not be interrupted by the older kids or stuff like that.

Virginia: What we did here is we gated off the STEAM, science, technology, engineering, arts, and math area. The main reason we did this is because we wanted to make sure that the materials that were appropriate for older children were still accessible but not for the younger kids.

Michelle Perez: Yeah, what we have here is mainly safe toys for both toddlers and preschoolers at different levels of difficulty. What we've done is we've put the smaller fine motor materials, so the usually more difficult stuff in the STEAM area which is behind us. Then over here we have, on the bottom, the most simple fine motor materials for the young toddler who's crawling now to access and above it is a little bit more difficult stuff for the preschoolers.

Woman 2: This table is really great because it's adjustable, so if you have the little kids over here but the older kids are working on a project, they can actually stand at this table and you can make it higher. It lifts up rather easily. Let's put it back down. Great.

[Children playing and learning]

[Music ends]

[Video ends]

Adriana: Oh, my goodness. Those were excellent examples of making safe and accessible learning environments for all ages. Let's highlight down some of the things we saw. You'll also find a list of these strategies in your viewer's guide, so be sure to download that to keep it for yourself. One of the really great thing about "Meaningful Makeover" is that we get to see a variety of provider. We get then to see use similar strategies but used in ways that meet the needs of the specific environment and children that they have.

Some of the things that Makeover crew need to help family child care providers is to create spaces that were safe and engaging for multiple age groups. These include creating ample spaces for all age groups, so child care providers make sure each age group of children have enough space to independently explore without feeling too crowded. We also saw the use of low and sturdy barriers to define appropriate and safe spaces for all children. This allows for safe space while still offering social engagement for all children.

Finally, we have to consider what materials are within reach. For example, think about infant and toddler materials being on lower shelves and make sure that more challenging materials for preschoolers just – they're just a little higher and they're eye level. Think of strategies you want to try in your learning environment and write it down on your viewer's guide. Now, these strategies for mixed-age environments are not only helpful in organizing the learning environment but also affect children's learning and development, especially within the health, safety, and nutrition sub-domains of the perceptual motor and physical development domain of the ELOF.

In this sub-domain, goal 10 states that for infants and toddlers between the ages of 16 and 36 months, they learn to use safe behaviors with support from adults. This includes accepting guidance, support, and protection when facing unsafe situations as well as learning some differences between safe and unsafe play behaviors like not standing on chairs or on a table. Knowledge of these developmental progression helps us to create opportunities that allow children to safely explore in an engaging, hazard-free environment.

For preschoolers also, we look at goal 6 under the same domain and sub-domain, which states that children age 48 to 60 months are learning to demonstrate knowledge of personal safety practices and routines. They exhibit increased independence in following these practices and

routines and follow adult guidance for complex practices. We can observe these in the way older children may be aware at a safer distance from a crawling infant or follow basic safety rules like cleaning up the small blocks after playing with them. Think of the strategies you want to try in your learning environments and write them down in your viewer's guide. Virginia will now tell us a little bit about multilingual programs, which is a fascinating topic.

Virginia: Thank you. Not only does having children of multiple age groups make for engaged learning and fun, but having multiple languages represented in the learning environment is fun and beneficial and can also be one of family child care provider's biggest challenges. There are many benefits to being bilingual. For example, people who are bilingual have a greater understanding of math concepts and solving word programs; maintain stronger ties to their family, culture, and community, which are strong indicators of identity development; and show better self-control, which is related to school readiness. In fact, Head Start programs encourage providers to maintain children's home language as it is a benefit to children's growth and development.

The Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.31.B.2 focuses on recognizing bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths and using research-based teaching practices to support children's development. Some of these strategies include continuing to develop the home language while exposing infants and toddlers to English, or teaching English to preschoolers where the home language is not accessible, and ensuring that culturally and linguistically appropriate materials are available. This is a great opportunity to involve families and increase social, emotional ties to the caregiving environment.

The ECLCK is a wealth of resources for supporting children who are dual language learners. Just a few listed in your viewer's guide include the benefits of being bilingual and brilliant bilingual babies. These resources highlight the benefits of being bilingual and offer strategies to use in your learning environment. The resources are great for sharing information with staff, families, and partners, as well as discussion and reflection resources when planning learning environments. You can also download the Ready DLL app to learn strategies and to find resources for children who are dual language learners.

Thirty-nine percent of children in Head Start live in households where a language other than English is spoken. Twenty-four percent are primarily spoken to in a language other than English at home. When you use and incorporate children's home languages, you're creating a connection between home and school for the child and promote awareness of culture and language for all of the children in your care. Incorporating home languages also supports the language, social, and cognitive development of all children. Adriana, would you like to show us an example of this?

Adriana: Yeah, of course. We have a lot of exciting videos today. How the family child care providers incorporate children's home language and other languages in the learning environment, let's watch.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

Faduma [Speaking English and Somali]: Hello! Come in!

Woman 2: How are you today?

DeEtta Simmons: I noticed during my observation that the kids were really able to recognize their colors and also count in multiple languages.

Woman 3: Yeah.

DeEtta: That was really fun.

Woman 3: Mom does the Somali and does the teaching them the ABCs and kind of singing to them in Somali.

[Teacher and children singing in Somali]

Laura Coronado [Speaking Spanish]: It is very important to talk with the children about their cultures, more in this country. That they develop in their own culture. Possibly they are far away from the place where their parents were born. I think it's very important, being here doesn't necessarily have to be that they only speak English.

Woman 4: Just so that you understand that there are people like them out there, and our world is filled with a lot of different people.

Woman 5 [Speaking English and Spanish]: Having a book that's written in Spanish, it is more of the connection to the culture, more of a connection to the home culture. It's not that it's a bad thing to have the book in English and then in Spanish, because that helps them have those vocabulary words so then they know like "Brown Bear, Brown Bear," I think we can get that in English and Spanish, and then they can have some of those vocabulary words in both languages, if the purpose is for them to be learning both of the languages as opposed to having a cultural book. "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" or "Oso Pardo," right? One day you can tell the story in English. You can tell it, right? Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? Right?

Laura [Speaking Spanish]: The development of the child's brain is very important when the child speaks more than one language. Their brains are more agile, and they develop more. We have books in Spanish, in English. We have books that represent different cultures, for each child.

Soraya Ayoubi: Here we have our numbers book that's translated in Farsi. We have yek, do, se, chahâr, panj.

Woman 6: [Speaking Vietnamese]

Woman 7: OK, yeah.

Woman 6 [Speaking Vietnamese]: I also translated it to English, so you can have both Vietnamese and English versions.

Woman 7: Yeah, OK.

Woman 6 [Speaking Vietnamese]: Because I know that the children, they don't speak Vietnamese.

[Woman singing in Spanish]

[Music ends]

[Video ends]

Adriana: I just love this video. I mostly love hearing all the different languages represented from Somali to Farsi to Vietnamese and Spanish, so, so beautiful. The Meaningful Makeover crew helped these families child care providers incorporate children's home languages and other languages by using multiple languages during daily routines and activities like during meals, mealtimes, gathering time, and other caregiving routines. Using these familiar words and phrases help children and families feel comfortable and support learning through repetition.

You can ask families to share words and phrases they use at home to incorporate in your learning environment. Adding books and music from different languages, many of which can be found in your local libraries or lending library at your local child care resource and referral agency. Many libraries also have audio books and music that you can check out. Using multiple languages in your display on the walls and in the music area you share with children. This helps teach children language around the world. Think of the strategies that you'd like to try for incorporating children's home language in your programs and write them down on your viewer's guide. Virginia, could you please tell us about language and the connection with the ELOF?

Virginia: Definitely. Focusing on the use of children's home language in the learning environment helps them to communicate in ways that are comfortable for them. The ELOF sub-domain communicating and speaking in the language communication domain for infants, toddlers, and preschools highlights communication as a way for children to get their needs met. Infant-toddler language and communication goals three, four, and five say that by 36 months infants and toddlers use a combination of words and signs or gestures to communicate wants and needs and to engage in social interactions with increased complexity in each of their languages.

Preschool language and communication goal four states that preschoolers between the ages of 36 and 48 months begin to engage with conversation with their peers and adults and learn conversational rules such as turn taking. According to goal three, dual language learners by age 60 months may even switch back and forth between languages they are learning. Supporting the development of children's home languages helps prepare young children for learning English or other languages. By using appropriate and intentional language support, all children can develop strong language and literacy, social, and cognitive skills.

The Ready DLL app can be a great resource to use as it provides key words and phrases in four languages, and you can find the app by searching the Ready DLL mobile app on the ECLCK. While we're on the topic of supporting children who are multilingual, let's briefly talk about inclusion and belonging. When children feel like they are represented and part of their learning environment, they feel included and are more ready to engage and learn. Adriana, I think you have a great video to share with us.

Adriana: I sure do. Thank you, Virginia. Now, let's watch how the Meaningful Makeover crew added materials to the family child care learning environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

Julie Campos: In general, it's important in dramatic play to have a variety as opposed to just having princess dresses to dress up in.

Virginia: It's really important for kids to not only be able to see themselves and the things that they're familiar with, but it's also really good for them to see other cultures, other abilities, other genders.

Asha Warsame: It's really important for children to be able to relate to the things that they are seeing in the classroom, be able to see themselves within the dress-up materials, or even maybe the foods that they are eating or the books that may be available in dramatic play space, just so that they can understand that there are people like them out there, and, you know, our world is filled with a lot of different people.

Woman 8: I am most excited about children being able to use diversity materials. We have traditional clothes that they can try on and play and pretend that they traveled, that they communicated with people across the world.

Woman 9: One thing that I did add was artwork from different artists from different walks of life. My thinking process was just to pick artists that people didn't really know and some that they did know. I just wanted to pick different artists who are diverse in their work as well as their identity.

Jacque Rafferty: The pictures serve both as windows and mirrors for the children. They're mirrors, and they can see themselves in the pictures, so a child playing in the rain. But they also serve as windows as they can see more diverse people, representations of others that they might not see on a day-to-day basis. They're great for conversation starters and also just can be kind of nice, calming images for the kids.

Soraya: We also wanted to make sure to include new labels for the learning centers. You'll see that they're in English, they're in Hindi, and they're also in Farsi as well.

Janet Nguyen: My colleagues and I came up with the idea of printing out dishes, and behind it is the name of the dish and it also features, like, an ingredient list of how they can make it. We think it's a good idea because it's a great way of bringing diversity into the center and that way the provider can pick out dishes from different cultures of the world and just introducing like dishes that the kids aren't normally used to seeing in their own homes.

DeEtta: We definitely put up a display here that represents people of different ages and abilities, different family types, different careers. We also have a selection of dolls for kids to play with of different races. We have a variety of food options that are stored in the kitchen area. They're actually in the doors.

Iris Reano: My daughter, at home we incorporate our culture, our native ways into our home lifestyle. In the past when I've looked at child programs, child center programs and preschool programs for my daughter to get involved in I look at what the perspective of the provider and the teacher, how their approach is with the children, and how I observe their surroundings and

how they teach the kids, how do they play with the kids, and for me that helps me to determine whether that's a place that my daughter can be herself.

Woman 10: Yeah, one of our data collectors, she went and met with some of her friends and they gathered up some really great cultural materials for – to bring today.

Man: This is beautiful.

Woman 10: And she also brought these – some really beautiful dolls.

Clare: This is cute. The feel of different fabrics. Oh, look at the food. There's different selections of things that they see in their kitchen, in their homes. We can add more too.

Woman 10: That's right, some people have brought some things from their home to add in to the dramatic play food.

[Music ends]

[Video ends]

Adriana: Again, we saw how the Meaningful Makeover crew helped these family child care providers to promote inclusion and belonging in their programs by representing various races, cultures, ages, abilities, and genders in the learning materials. You can do this in your dramatic play area from, you know, adding those photographs on the walls and daily activities. Celebrate similarities and differences, seeing the clothing materials, types of food, music, et cetera.

In your viewer's guide, we added a resource about talking to children about differences and similarities. Invite families to share items from their diverse background, bring items from home to share. Think of the strategies that you'd like to try for supporting inclusion and belonging in your programs and write them down on your viewer's guide. There is an awesome webinar series on advancing racial and ethnic equity that might help you plan for anti-bias and culturally responsive learning environments. We placed the link to the series in your viewer's guide, as well, so try that. Virginia, could you please tell us about inclusion and belonging in the ELOF?

Virginia: Of course. We can find learning goals on inclusion and belonging in the identity and belonging sub-domain of the social and emotional domain in the ELOF. This sub-domain highlights that children's developing sense of belonging and understanding characteristics of themselves and others really begins as infants and toddlers as they build relationships with those that are around them. As this developing sense of identity and belonging continues to become more refined as they express confidence in their own skills and feelings about themselves as preschoolers, the learning environments that you create help to foster this belonging, and your interactions support positive sense of identity.

Let's pause and take a quick poll about how you're feeling about transition and change. We know that many of you are offering services in different ways, in person only, virtual only, or some combination of the two. We recognize that some of you may have had to even reduce the number of children you serve during this tough time. With all of that transition and change, it brings a lot of emotions, not only for you, but for the children and families too. Let us know how you are feeling right now about the transition and changes that you are facing in your programs. We know that we cannot fit every emotion into our poll, so if you select Other,

please share in the Q&A box what that is for you. Wow, it looks like we're getting a lot of different responses. That's so wonderful. Adriana, would you like to talk about social and emotional learning next?

Adriana: Sure. Thank you, Virginia. All these feelings are understandable. You might even be experiencing some or all of these in one day. Program changes can be challenging and exciting at the same time. The children in your care are likely to be feeling a lot of emotions too. Like you, they might feel just one or many emotions all at once. The family child care programs acts as an extension of home, providing children with loving and nurturing physical environment of a home while also promoting growth and development from an experienced professional. It's especially important during this time of transition that we support children's social and emotional development so the children have the opportunities to grow and learn in a safe and supportive learning environment. We added some resources to support children's social and emotional development to the viewer's guide, so take advantage of that.

Also, the last challenge that we want to highlight for family child care providers is supporting children's social and emotional development. Supporting children's social and emotional growth is always important and, in essence, is something that we always have to do. But we know as children return to full in-person services that focusing on their social and emotional needs and development will be especially important at this time. This includes meeting individuals children's needs, providing responsive care, and partnering with families to ensure children's positive social and emotional growth and development. Now, let's look at our Meaningful Makeover crew help – how they help these family child care providers with ways to do just that.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

Woman 11: All right. Tell me about this calming area.

Marsha: Well, we have a brain – dragon brain – and, you know, the pictures of him and how he calms himself down. We have pictures of different emotions. I don't normally tell the children what the words say because they see the face differently than I might see it or what it says, so that's been a very interesting experience. We have made candles to blow out and flowers to smell in here, and they all took a set home. Every once in a while I add more perfume to them.

Dawn Williams: We were inspired by one of our other previous makeovers, Marcia Riddard. She had an emotional support area, and we decided to create one here. We put up some visuals here that have different emotions on them. These are great for children to have other words and pictures to express how they're feeling, and we also added some materials to help with that. One of our favorite strategies is called dragon brain. In that strategy, children take a deep breath by smelling a flower and then blowing out a candle to help calm down. We have these visuals here, like squeeze a ball, or blow some bubbles that help you also calm down. Squeezing the ball can help you get rid of some frustration, and blowing bubbles also helps you take a deep breath, and those are here as well.

DeEtta: OK. We kind of did a double-sided cozy area. Right here is a space for privacy. This is for one child to sit and read if they want to have some time alone.

Jamie [Speaking Spanish]: We also have here different things that they can use – for example, emotions, try to teach the children different emotions, right, so that they can understand what they are feeling. Because sometimes, it has happened to me that, for example, it's hard for children to understand the difference between frustration and anger to start using words and vocabulary.

Woman 12: All right. You now have a cozy area. It's in a totally different spot.

Woman 13: And I couldn't figure out how that was going to look, but it's perfect.

Woman 12: What we did is we added a cushion and a big pillow and a couple of stuffies. We wanted to really make sure to get a substantial amount of softness. You know, kids often in early learning programs, there's a lot of hardness in the environment, and it's really great for them to have a space where they can really count on being able to relax. A really good rule for the cozy area, you can limit the number of people that can use the cozy area at one time, and you can also teach them that that's a place to play quietly because that way a child that is needing some extra space can really count on having a place to go whenever they need to.

Woman 14: I came across this breathing tool. I know deep breathing works. Take a breath. Let it out. One. Take another one. There you go. Two. Now you put the number three on there as you do your breath.

Woman 15: And then the next one?

Woman 14: OK. Number four. And your last one.

Woman 15: Number five.

Woman 14: Number five.

Woman 15: I feel so calm. Thank you.

Woman 14: It's a Zen moment.

Woman 15: It is.

[Music ends]

[Video ends]

Virginia: Those were such great ideas for teaching children social and emotional strategies. Some of the things to highlight were modeling and labeling emotions, which supports infants and toddlers by acknowledging a particular emotion that they're displaying by giving it a label and connecting it to their action. It also allows preschoolers who have the words to attempt to label their emotion first and then use that as a teachable moment to either affirm or label a particular emotion they are displaying.

We also saw using displays as visual supports. We love the flower used to take a deep breath. Pictures of children displaying emotions are also a good prompt. One of the family child care providers mentioned dragon brain pictures used to show children how to calm themselves

down, and this resource can be found on the Head Start Center for Inclusion website. This method is like Tucker the Turtle resources that you may be familiar with from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning website. Links to both of these are included in your viewer's guide.

Finally, creating a calming area with pillows, safe toys, and materials that can be easily sanitized. Be sure they are safe for the younger children. Low ceilings or low spaces also make children feel safe. Lastly, have children bring items from their home that will help make them feel secure in their learning environments. Think of the ones that you want to try in your environment and write them down in your viewer's guide.

Also, take a look at the social and emotional domain in the ELOF for guidance on ways to support children's emotional functioning. For infants and toddlers, they begin to recognize and interpret the emotions they see from others. Familiar adults help to label emotions and connect actions so that children can express care and concern for others. Adults also help infants and toddlers to practice strategies that help manage their emotions, like deep breathing and others seen in our video. Adriana, would you like to share with us about preschoolers?

Adriana: Sure, thank you. Those were great, great strategies, Virginia. If you'll notice that one of the goals on this slide is the same as the infant and toddlers goal, expressing care and concern toward others. Preschoolers continue to develop their skills, and they – around these – by consistently paying attention when others are distressed and seeking out adult support if their initial attempts to comfort do not work. Managing emotions is also similar for infants and toddlers, but preschoolers use what they have learned from supportive adults to increase their independence related to labeling and managing emotions. Familiar adults are still needed to step in and encourage them, but preschoolers are able to take those first steps toward emotional functioning on their own with a supportive environment.

Now, although the Meaningful Makeover crew would love to come to each of your programs for a makeover, we also want to empower you to try most of these things yourself and on a budget. Let's watch one last video of how the Meaningful Makeover crew repurposed materials and furniture to create engaging activities on a friendly budget.

[Video begins]

[Music begins]

DeEtta: And what we've got here is a same-and-different board, and then on the back is – You could do maybe a game with the dice where, like, each kid rolls the dice and maybe puts the number of counting bears in their slot, and then you can see who has more and who has less.

The sensory bin is a really great place to incorporate math concepts. For example, we're going to add these measuring cups so you can – kids can see how many quarter cups it takes to fill up a full cup. It's also another great place for peer interactions. Kids really love to get together around the sensory bin and engage in those math activities, and teachers also like it. It's a win-win. This one is really cool because you can fold it up and put it away easily. All of the pipes store right in the bin, and you can put the lid on when it's not in use.

Soraya: You'll see here the rocks. One set is painted black and has the numbers. Then the corresponding set, painted in white, has the dots. There's kind of a multitude of lessons within this activity. There's sorting. There's matching. There's counting, quantity.

Janet: For example, these sensory bottles, all you need is just glitter or buttons or anything small that'll just make kids excited about water, glycerin, or corn syrup. You just mix it up and make this, and then you just make sure to glue this tight so that the kiddos don't drink this by accident.

DeEtta: This is a Ziploc container with a screw-on lid.

Janet: Wow, did you glue it?

DeEtta: I glued a – This is actually, like, one of those jar open – to help you open a jar. I just hot glued it to the lid after I made a circle hole in the top for the plant and replanted it in here so the kids will be able to see the roots as it's growing.

Janet: Wow.

DeEtta: And then I used a clean old sock and used that to put around here so that the roots will grow out, and this is mint, so it's really safe for the kids, and this is a good one for toddlers. These cannot be open. They've been hot glued shut, so they will never open, and this is a magnet activity to see is it magnet –

Woman 16: Oh, wow.

DeEtta: Is it metal, or is it not? What I did was I purchased some undercabinet LED lights. I purchased a plastic bin that had a really flat top and strung the lights throughout this, and I used a piece of tissue paper and a glue stick actually to attach the tissue paper to the top of the plastic container, and that was it.

Janet: Right now, I'm in the dramatic play area. My colleagues and I came up with the idea of printing out dishes, and behind it is the name of the dish, and it also features, like, an ingredient list of how they can make it. The kids can kind of, like, find around in their dramatic play area and kind of, like, make up, and with that you kind of introduce math to them, so it's, like, dramatic play and math all in one activity.

Woman 16: Nice.

DeEtta: We covered this with felt, and this is your fun little felt fireplace. You can just get these out an, and they can play with them, and these are all sewn on, so they're safe for the toddlers. This is a converted changing table.

Man 2: That's what I was wondering. This is great.

DeEtta: Yeah.

Woman 17: Oh, my gosh.

DeEtta: Basically took out the middle shelf of the changing table, added in –

Woman 17: Oh, and then put the rod!

DeEtta: Yep. Put the rod in there.

Woman 17: Yes!

[Music ends]

[Video ends]

Virginia: Wasn't that amazing? And did you see that light table? We've included a list of the materials that the crew used so that you can try it out on your own. Think of some the ideas you want to try in your learning environments and write them down in your viewer's guide. Many of the DIY ideas in the video were preschool focused but can also be modified for infants and toddlers as well, like putting the sensory table or light table on the floor instead of the table and making sure that visual displays are low enough for infants on the floor to access. Be sure when you're doing DIY projects to keep safety in mind, like ensuring rocks or blocks are large enough not to be choking hazards and ensuring the glue gun is cooled and stored safely and that any cords like the LED cord for the light box are secure and not tripping hazards.

It's always a good idea to check your Head Start Program Performance Standards, program policies, and local licensing rules when creating DIY elements for your environment. Here are a few resources that will support you as you create inclusive learning environments for your children in the family child care programs. You can also find links to these resources in the viewer's guide.

First, we have MyPeers. MyPeers is a virtual, informal social community to exchange ideas and share resources and lend support to the early childhood community. Join us on MyPeers if you aren't there yet. You may want to check out the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership community and the Teacher Time community for any additional resources and strategies to use in your practice.

For our apps, phones, and devices, we have a couple of programs. The first is the ELOF2Go app. It gives you on-the-go access to ELOF goals for children and effective teaching practices. Next is our Ready DLL app. If you work with children who are dual language learners, this app, you can access resources, learn key words and phrases, and discover implementation strategies. Finally is our Head Start Resource app where you can search for and save all of your favorite resources. It's like having the ECLKC website on a mobile phone, and all of these apps are free and available in English and Spanish. Adriana, I think our time is up.

Adriana: Yes! We don't have never enough time to do that.

Virginia: Never.

Adriana: Yeah, it's so crazy how time passes and how almost – we are almost in the middle of August, so thank you so much. Thank you, Virginia, for being with me. Thank you for all the people that were listening to us. It's great to have you, and it's great to follow up the conversation if we can and just not leave it at this.