

Enhancing Parent-Child Relationships During Virtual Learning and Transitions

Brandi Black Thacker: Hello, everybody, and welcome! Come on in, get settled, and kick up your legs. [Laughter] We have the distinct honor and pleasure to hang out with you for about the next 90 minutes. If you're on the East Coast, that would be 3 to 4:30 p.m. For those of you dialing in a little bit early, we are not getting started.

We do, however, since we're the relationship people, we want to pose a couple of questions so we can start chatting right away. You know what you signed up for. We're talking about transitions today. That could look and sound a lot of ways, in where we find ourselves in this moment in time, so we want to prime a little bit where we might take our discussion together.

What I'd love for you to do is tell us a little bit about what you see here. Talk to us about a personal or professional transition that you've had to make, what barriers there were, but also what made it successful.

Now, you're going to see, on the bottom left-hand side of your screen, a little portion of the web setup that says Q&A. That's where you're going to talk to us all afternoon. Anything that you want to say, even if it's "Hello, I'm dialing in from Michigan. The weather is rainy today." We'd love to hear from you, so feel free to do that in the Q&A portion of your web platform that should be in the bottom left-hand side.

Some of you might have to scroll to get there, but usually it's pretty visible. Tell us a little bit, in that Q&A portion, about a transition that you've had to make. It could be personal or professional. We want to know a little bit about what kinds of things did you run into and what kinds of things made that transition successful.

I'm going to pause for a little bit and see what kinds of goodies come in the chat because I know they are often gifts to each of us as facilitators. Even more importantly, to each of you as you compare notes about the roads that you've traveled as of late and where we're going to be going together.

As you're coming in and getting settled, tell us where you're dialing in from. Tell us what transitions you've faced lately. I see Maria in Michigan. Hey, Marina in El Paso. Several of you are already mentioning, of course, COVID-19 and the transitions that we've had to undertake together there.

It looks like Katie is saying she started in the Family Service Worker position last year, from the paraeducator position. It took her a little over a year to acclimate. Her supervisor was amazing – give a little round of applause for that – and so supportive. Believed in her when her self-confidence lacked. Katie, I can totally relate to what you're saying here. This is something that I've been through also. To have that arm around you of support and guidance and encouragement in the moments that you need it the most is just so important. Thank you for sharing that with us.

Let's see what else is coming in. A few folks are offering transitions from different organizations into new ones. Yolanda is offering, "The only barrier was that I actually loved my job and didn't want to leave," but she was forced out due to early retirement. The only barrier to the new job,

of course – this is a big one, Yolanda, a huge priority – for the health benefits. That waiting process can certainly be a nerve-wracking one, especially in recent times.

My goodness. We need to get Kiera’s comment. She says her name ... She says “Aloha” from Hawaii. Her name is Miss Kiki from Maui. She said – and I want to see how many of you resonate with this – “The transition from in-person teaching to virtual.” I’m guessing that really connects with many of us in what we’ve been doing as we’ve shifted from being together all the time, face-to-face, to figuring out new ways to connect virtually and how we keep those connections alive, well, and even stronger than they were before. This is what you guys have been telling us. We’re excited to unpack that.

With all of that, please do keep entering your thoughts and ideas about transitions that you’ve faced, either personal or professional. We’ll probably come back to those throughout the entire time we have together today. Feel free to put those in as you will. For those of you that are just joining us, you can talk to us in any way, shape, or form down in that Q&A portion of your web platform, which is on the bottom left-hand side of your screen. Use it often. We love hearing from you, and we’ll check in on you from time to time.

With all of that, I want to bring you in to where we are going to begin and what kind of things we’re going to be thinking about today. The title of our discussion today is “Enhancing Parent-Child Relationships During Virtual Learning and Transitions.”

We know what’s going on out there in the world. Many of you are in this moment where you are making decisions about what your program options are right now, what they might look like, how that might stay the same, how that might change, and what in the world does all this look like as we’re trying to walk alongside families of our partners and certainly in service of their littlest ones. This is where we’re going today.

Before we get too far into the discussion, we certainly want to welcome you and thank you so much for spending your time with us this day. I want you to meet a couple of my favorite folks who you’re going to be hearing from throughout the course of this discussion.

But first, let me introduce myself. If you don’t recognize the Appalachian accent before you, my name is Brandi Black Thacker. I’m the Director of Integrated Services for the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I will be a little bit of your tour guide for the discussion today. I might throw in a little bit of content here and there, but I’m excited that you’re going to get the honor and pleasure to hear from the two women pictured beside me. I want to turn it over to Katie quickly so she can say “hello” as well.

Katie Miller: Hello. I am Katie Miller, and I am a Senior Content Specialist with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. I’ve been partnering on this transition topic with our colleagues at PFCE, and it’s been a lot of fun and really just a great experience. I’ll pass it over to Jennifer.

Dr. Jennifer Olson: Hello, everybody! This is Jennifer Olson. I’m the T/TA Implementation Lead at the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I feel Katie’s sentiment. We’re really excited about being here today. We’ve put a lot of good slides together for you, and looking forward to hearing all your chat in the Q&A section. Back to you, Brandi.

Brandi: Thank you, Katie and Jennifer. I want to also make sure you have ... Speaking of the transitions that you guys have been mentioning in the chat, so much of them touched this notion of living in a virtual space. Since we're going to do that together again today, let me acclimate you to this platform so you can see a little bit about how it's set up.

You'll notice that, as promised, there is a box to the bottom left-hand side for you that says, "Ask a Question." We want all of your good bits. If you're willing to share, we are willing to receive. You can put anything in there that you'd like to share with us, and we will be tracking along over on this side.

We'll be lifting up some of those questions, not only as we go along. If you guys have been with us before in webinars, you know that we always save at least 15 minutes at the end for what we call "After chat," because we get a lot of great questions and dialogue that we want to lift up for the greater good of this whole group. We'll be lifting up some of your ideas and questions along the way and certainly holding some time at the end so we can address those all in one fell swoop.

The other thing that you have are some resources. Your favorite question to ask of all time is, "Will I have the PowerPoint?" And the answer is absolutely, yes. It's going to be down there for you. There is an "Event Resources" section right under the "Ask a Question," also to the bottom left-hand side. You'll be able to download all that you need right there in that spot. As always, if you have any questions about any of those things, you just let us know in the "Ask a Question" area, and we'll be happy to help you find your way as we go forward.

In terms of what we want to tackle today together, we have some learning objectives for you to consider. You'll see those here. The first one that we really want to think about is how to discuss best practices that support those positive parent-child relationships. You guys know this is one of the areas where we really shine because we know how we do what we do – as professionals in the capacity of our Head Start programming alongside families – absolutely influences what they end up doing with their littlest ones.

This whole connection that we have is such a catapult and a confirming, really, opportunity for how families are with their kids. We're going to stay in that space for a little bit. We're going to talk a little bit about how some of the tools that we've discovered in this time can be supportive of parent-child relationships. We're also going to think together about virtual strategies for families to support children in their learning and development at home, and importantly, during transitions.

Then, certainly, we want to let families know that it's not only their child that we're thinking about. I don't know about you guys, but if you've ever had a little one make any kind of transition – whether that's from Early Head Start to Head Start, whether it's from Head Start to kindergarten and a receiving school, whether it's as a new momma and family into an Early Head Start program – those are big deals, and sometimes they're a bit harder on the grownups than they are the littlest ones. We want to make sure families feel wrapped up in this discussion and certainly in our collective strategies alongside them as well.

Given all of that, we want to show you ... This is one of my favorite slides. I love this image, and I think a lot of reasons why this resonates with me ... As part of what's been happening over the

last year plus, we wanted to make sure to not only, of course, honor the children and the families, but we're also thinking about you. Any time we go to engage in responsive transitions – that's really about readiness, that's how to read that – we need to reflect on how we feel about our own readiness.

If we have any upcoming transitions – like helping families come back in, or helping families if they choose to still stay in a virtual space – we're there to really support them. We need to be ready, our own selves, and we have to take a moment to acknowledge and name what we're feeling too. Honestly, that's a gift. But I'm going to tell you – and this is my own humble musing, and you all have to tell me if you agree in the Q&A – I don't think we give ourselves enough permission to do that. We're called to serve in a specific way, within the construct of how we do what we do, and sometimes, we put our own selves on the back burner.

What I want to do is encourage you today to think about your own self, your own readiness. I want you to tell us a little bit in the chat – and I'll pull some of these out for us – how you control your emotions in moments when you might feel overcome? Or how do you regulate or self-soothe? I want to think together about what that looks like for you and where you've found success in your own transitions because we're often asked to put those in context with and alongside our families.

Let's see what you guys have to say about self-soothing and what you do when you're in a place of overwhelm. I love what Catalina says. She says, "Transitions can be hard, and we all adjust every day." This is something that I think has been most interesting. Just when you think you have a thing figured out, you have to be fluid all over again. You know, you have to recalibrate and you're constantly in that space of leaning in and leaning out.

Samantha takes a walk. I know one of the things that I love, a little known fact – well, maybe more a known fact today – my dream job was to be a music therapist. I don't know if anybody else resonates with that, but music is extremely therapeutic for me. Healing almost. Sonia agrees. She beat me to it. She said, "Playing music. Playing music, deep breathing, meditation."

I see, "Reaching out to co-workers to communicate." "Going outside. Laughter." Jodie, tell me about laughter. I continue to say that humor and laughter is some of the most healing things that we can do for each other. Wylene sings and goes to pray. Vicki has a list where she jots down ideas to evaluate and decide what's important and what deserves her attention. My goodness, Vickie, this prioritization is critical, especially when we're in these fluid times.

"Deep breaths. Walk your dogs. Take time to reflect. Bubble bath." Laurel, I see you with your bubble bath. Well, these are excellent. I'm going to keep referring back to these because I think the greatest gift that we can offer as the vehicle for this conversation is really allowing you guys to share what's really worked for you so that we can all learn from what's been helpful. This far in, it's great to have new and exciting ideas as we continue to make our own transitions.

As we think about that, one of the things that I would love to do, at this moment in time, is turn it over to Dr. Jennifer Olson to take you through the next little bit of our conversation.

Jennifer: Thank you, Miss Brandi. It's always a pleasure to be on these screen calls with you. We're really going to talk today about what is a high-quality, responsive transition. We want to talk about what really makes that happen.

We wouldn't be anywhere in any presentation if we didn't, of course, look at the framework. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework is a road map, as we all know, for progress in achieving the kinds of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families.

Here you see the "Family Outcomes" columns highlighted. "Family Engagement in Transitions" is located there. You can see it. Remember that Families as Advocates and Leaders is another family outcome that is very, very relevant to transitions. As families begin to navigate their transition to public school or another program, they need to be supported in their advocacy for their children's learning and development.

Moving the slide forward, we know that transitions can be joyful or they can be uncertain. But children experience many and small transitions in their early years. You know, we remember that they are always transitioning from cleanup to handwashing to snack time to nap time. But the big transitions might include more, from moving home to Early Head Start or Head Start.

Of all the transitions these young children are involved with, the transition to kindergarten is one of the biggest. This is a major event in the lives of children and families and the pivotal point for establishing the kinds of practices that can help sustain gains that children made in early learning settings.

The transition to kindergarten can be a time of great excitement and joy for everybody involved. However, transitions that were expected to be joyful may now be filled with a little bit of uncertainty and perhaps hesitation and fear due to the virus. COVID-19 creates additional uncertainty and the sense of the unknown. Will classrooms be open? Will services be hybrid or virtual? How will families accomplish pick-ups and drop-offs? Will temperatures still be taken? Will they be wearing masks? Transitions might also trigger feelings of loss of the loved ones that we've lost to COVID-19, and their memories may be highlighted during this transition.

Throughout any transition, particularly those in uncertain times, it's critical to maintain open communication and collaboration between families and staff, staff and receiving schools, and staff and community partners. We might want to think about how are our connections going during and after COVID-19 with our community partners? Do we have new community partners? Do we need to re-establish the relationships that we had with our partners from before?

There's lots to think about there as we think about the community as well. Maybe, are there going to be clinics open to families who are planning for kindergarten? Will they be able to receive vaccinations and health checkups? A lot to think about as far as that whole achieving a successful and seamless transition.

All transitions involve change for children and families, and every transition presents opportunities and challenges. Each family is unique and will experience transitions in their own way. Some may have had a negative experience themselves in going to school. They may have

those conversations that they want to have with you about their deep feelings about transitioning to a place that might not have been a positive experience for them. Early childhood professional can partner with the individual families to determine what supports and strategies will be the most effective and reassuring before, during, and after their child's transition.

During these times of reopening, families might find benefits in being able to choose a hybrid virtual model, or a more typical classroom setting, because those choices might help them move through the transition. In particular, we want to think about children who have an IFSP or an IEP. Are critical records being transferred? Are families engaged in the planning of the learning objectives for the new setting? Are family service providers helping families review their thoughts and helping them plan for future meetings with the receiving school?

We know the research. It's incredible. We know what makes a successful transition. Effective transitions begin early in the whole year prior to kindergarten. That's been one of the most astonishing things, or one of the many things that we've had to deal with with COVID-19. We've been sometimes very present with families about the needs or the issues that they're facing right now. Maybe transition to kindergarten has been put on the back burner a little bit because we've been dealing with the day-to-day concerns around family well-being.

We know that transitions are made so much more effective when teachers, families, and community members come together to create opportunities for sharing information and creating systems of support.

Brandi, I think I'm going to have you now talk about what creates successful adjustments.

Brandi: Miss Jennifer, I'm so excited to think about this [Inaudible] with everybody. This is actually one of my very favorites, and you can see here that we're going to give a little bit of a precursor to where Jennifer and Katie are both going to take us to really expand this discussion.

For those of you that are familiar with our colleagues at the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, which is where Katie works, you may have heard some of these terms: relationships, information, and alignment. What we really want to do today is go deep in this with not only how we know what we know – Jennifer, I heard you allude to the research that happens in days when we can be together, face-to-face – but we've got a whole new thing to think about here with how we transition in virtual spaces.

We know you guys have been thinking about it a lot. We've heard about it from you over and over recently, and, of course, over the past several months. We know how to facilitate effective transitions. Guys, if you feel anything when you leave this webinar today, you should feel some puffed-uppery because we know how to facilitate these transitions. We do it every day.

The transition – you guys mentioned a lot of it in the chat earlier – that you've had to make as an adult – new jobs, new careers, getting married, having children, moving, retiring ... All these things can be wrapped under the umbrella of these three ingredients of relationships, information, and alignment. I recall the conversation brought forward by the new family service worker a little earlier, about how her supervisor made all the difference. That connections through relationship was critical. She brought it up as the very first thing here.

These kinds of things help us create those successful adjustments, and they also can be parallel-processed right on down to the littlest ones, and vice versa. We often say, “The things and the ways that we are with our children are certainly effective and work on adults too.” Try it out. It actually is a thing.

The other thing that I want to notice here with you guys, Jennifer and Katie, is that a lot of times we’re in a place to have a role of influence and partnership alongside the children and families as they manage these changes. Imagine if we can stand in the place of a connection through relationship, offering information so that we’re almost predicting, we’re giving a little anticipatory guidance through information, how much that really helps the family and the child feel soothed and a bit more at ease with what’s about to happen. Then if we can work to wherever they’re transitioning to, to align some familiarity based on what we do in Head Start, and let’s say it’s a receiving school, a kindergarten, so that there are familiarities across, into the new environment ... That just really seals the deal.

Let’s look a little bit here at ... I feel a little vulnerable, I have to say, because when I see Katie do this slide, it just always brings it on home with a huge light bulb moment. You’ll see here what our colleagues at DTL have created with what they call the Three Key Practices. These are really related to successful adjustment and transitions. You’ll notice that relationships are first and foremost. I think we could all agree with that. I almost think this is a snap moment. Relationships are the core. They are the springboard. They are the thing that makes the difference. Certainly, the information that we share along the way, as I mentioned on the left side, and the alignment that happens between and betwixt the two environments as folks transition are key.

I want to add an image for you here. I want to see what you guys think about this. As we were preparing for this event together, we were picturing how we all come into this conversation, and how our access points may be different. If Katie’s talking about this slide, and she’s thinking about our education experts and walking alongside families over top of this bridge together to the other side, to wherever their transition may be, that’s a huge contribution. But we got so excited and inspired to think about how the rest of us – like our family service colleagues, leaders, other folks in the context of the program – can also be part of this incredible experience, and where we might fit in on the bridge.

We kicked around ideas, like “Should we be the foundation? Should we be under the bridge holding it steady so families and our education colleagues can transition together? Should we be stepping-stones along the side so if folks need support as they cross the water, as you see in this image. Could that work?”

What we got was this notion of a suspension bridge. Walk with me. Walk with me for a second. The suspension bridge, if you can see it in your mind, it has the cables that come up over the whole bridge that strengthen it from blowing in the wind, that hold it steady as whatever is crossing by, that are up in the light as critical partners and concrete strength to support the entire process. What we were thinking is, “Wow! We really have this opportunity to contribute in a way that is really meaningful, that allows all of us to be part of that transition.”

You guys know how we do. Anybody that can make a deposit in the relationship with a child or a family really gets them toward engagement, growth, and development in a quicker kind of way. If we can hold hands to do this across all of our silos, from our comprehensive service structure, and really work together to do that, especially in times like this where folks may be doing it a few different ways – face-to-face, virtually, and maybe a hybrid of sorts – then we know that we will be successful in helping families and their children transition from us to their next stopping spot.

Jennifer and Katie, please feel free to add to the suspension bridge imagery. [Laughter] I know I'm handing it over to Jennifer right now, and Katie, to kind of bring it together with some real-life examples to make it come alive.

Katie: Thanks so much, Brandi. I just love the image, when we started talking about it, that builds upon this initial idea of this bridge that we've created. I think the suspension bridge really brings that home when you also think about the idea that all of the pieces have to work together for the bridge to be really successful. I really like adding that idea to our conversation.

What we're going to go through now is, as Brandi mentioned, we're going to dive a little bit deeper into what those three key practices look like. One of the things that we were super excited about when we started working together was this idea that the National Centers, we love to hear perspectives from our different lenses that we each share. When we wanted to talk to you all about this, we thought it would be helpful if we could give you examples from some of those different perspectives.

We're going to go through all of these three planks. If you think of ideas yourself, we'd love to have you throw those in the chat, the Q&A section as well, because you all are incredibly knowledgeable partners in this session today.

The first plank in our bridge is Relationships. Responsive relationships are really critical to responsive transitions because we know all of the staff and Head Start programs build those relationships by getting to know the unique strengths of each other and the families that we serve. Building positive relationships with families and children really does help ensure that families are confident and ready to transition from Head Start to their new program, whether that's a different program or kindergarten. But whatever the transition might be, those relationships are really that core.

Staff and administrators also create positive relationships with the receiving setting or elementary school, to which the parents and children are transitioning. "Multiple hands across that bridge" is how I like to envision that. Building positive relationships among and with staff creates a supportive environment, which allows us to be successful.

Let's take a look at the roles of some of our participants here. I will share from the DTL lens that classroom staff might invite the new teacher to visit the Head Start classroom in person or virtually. Either one of those two ways can work, no matter what your current context is. You could also ask the receiving teacher to do a short video or to create social stories about the transition. The thing that I really love about those two options are that they can be replayed or reused by staff multiple times to really increase and strengthen that bond between the children, the staff, and their new teachers.

Jennifer, how about we hear a little bit about what the family service staff might [Inaudible].

Jennifer: Thanks, Katie. Absolutely. I'm envisioning our suspension bridge and thinking about how family service staff and others really help to hold that bridge up. I loved Brandi's image of it being in the light and strengthening everything. Family service workers might connect families to each other. We're all going to go to the same school. I love that idea. It's that peer-to-peer connection, so they may be able to get some virtual interactions going between families who may end up leaving the Head Start program and going to the same kindergarten or other transition opportunity.

They also may share data, observations, IEPs, like I mentioned earlier, and health data with the family and talk about how that family is going to share that with the new teacher – there are those opportunities to do so – and make sure that all of those things are packaged together carefully so that the family has them, and they know that the receiving school has them as well.

It can encourage continued leadership and advocacy among parents for their child and for themselves. We're going to have to help parents sometimes think about what it would be like – we've been holding them in our warm embrace in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs – and when they go to the receiving school it may be, "Oh, hey. Hi. We'll see you in a month at the open house." We may have to really help families prepare themselves for that little bit of change, maybe big change for some of our families, and align with them that they can still advocate and be very involved in school activities and school policies.

Katie, back to you.

Katie: Thank you so much, Jennifer. The question for you all is, "How do you build relationships to support transitions? In your role, whatever that role might be, how do you build those relationships?" If you want to just reflect on that, that's fine. If you want to pop an answer into the Q&A box, the chat box, that would be wonderful too. I'm going to give you a couple of seconds to think on that.

Getting some good answers in chat: "Inviting a past Head Start child from the previous year to come and share about kindergarten." I adore that idea. For one reason, that children ... Who better to know than a child what they experienced in kindergarten, to relate and to share that perspective? That's wonderful. Yeah. Doing routines. Two-way conversations. Great. I would love to hear all of those ideas. OK. Let's keep moving here.

While we are discussing these activities under the umbrella of relationships, there is a lot of overlap between relationships and sharing information, as well, which is our next plank. If you're interested, you can also see some of this information in the video series on the ECLKC, the Building Bridges Series, on the Transition to Kindergarten page. Observational data coming from parents are really helpful to enhance the virtual assessments of children. That's just one of the ways that we support sharing of information across our settings.

The second plank of our transition bridge really focuses our attention on how sharing information leads to responsive transitions. Educators and family service staff share information about transitions by preparing children and families for what to expect. Communicating with families in their home languages and sharing data with families and the

receiving setting or elementary school. As with building relationships, preparing children and their families for what to expect really helps children to move from their Head Start program to their next setting, including kindergarten, confident and really ready for the transition.

Once again, let's take a look at what some of those examples might be from some of those different roles' perspectives. Education staff could share data with both families and the receiving setting or elementary school to help sustain the learning gains children have made in their Head Start program. They can also share observations, IEPs, and IFSPs with the receiving teacher. You'll notice that sounds familiar because Jennifer talked about that in an earlier section – a lot of really wonderful strategies that benefit both sharing information and building relationships.

Jennifer, do you want to talk to us a little bit about what family service staff might do?

Jennifer: Yes, Katie. Thank you so much. This is where we talk about ... We had an idea when we were planning this, and we were thinking about we might not have those three data points that we would typically have from our assessment over here as our children begin to transition. One of the ideas that we bounced around, Katie and I, was that family service staff could schedule a virtual meeting to complete the ASQ and/or the ASQ:SE with the family to talk about what those developmental milestones mean and how they might link to what's going to be happening in those first few months and on into the whole year of kindergarten.

It also may help parents really realize the enormous gains their children have made. It might help them identify some of the concerns that they had been having, wondering about, will now have a little bit more data. It's just something we thought we might suggest to you in these times created by the pandemic.

They also might schedule a warm handoff between the parent and the McKinney-Vento liaison. We always want to remember our families who are experiencing homelessness. Although we're now experiencing housing and securities because of the COVID-19, so there's an opportunity for us to remember to schedule that warm hand-off, not just between the teacher and the parent, but also maybe our liaison from McKinney-Vento.

Back to you, Katie.

Katie: Thank you so much, Jennifer. We're going to give you another couple of seconds to think about how, in your role, you could share information to support those effective and responsive transitions. I love some of the ideas that I'm seeing coming through in our chat as well. I also love that you can see there is some connection between that Relationships and Information planks already. Wonderful. OK.

Let's look at our third plank. The third plank in our transition bridge relates to the alignment of settings. I would like to acknowledge that that has an extra complexity this year as we have programs who are virtual, who have some combination of virtual or in-person, so there's a little bit extra in terms of what we're trying to align. Those strategies that we might use in what we might previously have called a typical year – but what is typical, really? – they're going to look a little bit different probably from here on out. We really want to think about "How can we align settings when our children are currently in a variety of changing situations?"

I'll start with our education staff ideas. We can align with the receiving program or elementary school by participating in some joint professional development. They can do partnering around transition activities, ensuring their curricula and assessment support readiness, also ensuring that families are partners in the development of plans in the reviewing of that curricula and the assessment tools as well. Hopefully you hear in that real multiple perspectives working together to support that transition to align together.

Also, education staff can make sure to include families in observations that they have themselves made of their children and encourage them to share those findings with the staff. That can be formally, as Jennifer mentioned, with the ASQ and ASQ:SE assessment tools, or it can be informally in those more common conversations that you might have on a regular basis.

Then, finally, education staff can participate in transition activities. For example, virtual visits of receiving schools, virtual conversations with receiving staff, and then virtual dialogue with other families, or in-person, of course. I'm seeing a lot of people thinking of that already in their chat examples as well. That's wonderful.

Jennifer, let's talk about family support staff.

Jennifer: Thank you, Katie. They can assist the family in talking to the child about the changes they may encounter in transportation, lunch routines, classroom expectations. We have a wonderful tool to share with you in a few minutes about what those three weeks, two weeks, and one week might look like when families are talking to parents, grandparents are talking to the child about this exciting transition that's coming up and some of the things that might be a little bit fearful and how to deal with that.

They might want families and children to know what to expect by actually practicing some kindergarten routines, like getting up in the morning, getting our clock set differently, thinking about how we're going to pick up and drop off. Going through the day, the kindergarten day. It's lunchtime. You're going to be having lunch with your friends. You might be sitting three or four feet apart, but you'll still be able to smile and share food with one another. Not really.

Helping parents know what might look different. I mentioned earlier, Head Start programs want to talk to families all the time. We're wanting to engage them and bring them in and talk about what's happening. Even in these virtual times, we're always reaching out, always listening, always looking for two-way conversations. That might not be as readily available in kindergarten, but parents can certainly request it and certainly really be happy when they do receive that teacher connection and reinforce that teacher for continuing to communicate with them.

Also, I wanted to mention that, if it's not too much, family service workers might want to think about chatting with parents after the first few weeks to determine how things are going and if any additional support for the transition would be helpful. I know that might be a lot to expect because the beginning of the year is a really busy time in our Head Start program as well. But it's just a thought you might have. If you have a parent that you knew the transition was going to be difficult, a family service worker might reach out with a quick email, a quick virtual chat to say, "How are things going?" That might make all the difference in the world. Back to you, Katie.

Katie: Oh, I guess it's me. [Inaudible] I turned the page and there I was. OK. Let's talk about four ways programs in schools can encourage that family engagement that we've been talking about. You know, we always remember, creating family-friendly and welcoming environments, that is just absolutely so critical. How do we do that in virtual times?

Well, one of the things we might be able to think about, if you're able to, at least, have a quiet place ... I don't know. Some of us might not be able to have a quiet corner in our homes with everything going on right now. But if you could, have a quiet place where you can put posters or information behind you, or something that is so family friendly that really lets parents know that we're trying to set up a welcoming environment. You might have some of those photos and art that you would find in the Head Start location that demonstrates that welcoming environment. Being able to have quiet time. Again, I don't know if this is possible, but some of us might be allowed back into our buildings to be there and set up a situation where we might really create a welcoming environment when we're on a virtual connection with families.

Promote home-school connections to foster parent engagement in learning and classroom experiences. Families have been living in a world where they're helping their young children develop the skills related to later school success. They've been doing that every day for the past year. I know that, in some cases, our families are coming back or have been in school and then out of school, but the constant thread is that they're responsible for early language, literacy, attention, self-regulation, and all of those other skills that we need to help children get ready for kindergarten, and you've been their guide by the side in that process. Their role as the primary teacher of their children has been really emphasized this past year.

We've really learned how to become skilled in increasing virtual examples of targeted activities that can reinforce curricular goals at the home and set a foundation for that future continuity between home and school.

We want to also always remember to engage our parents as leaders. As families prepare for transition to their receiving school, family service providers and other staff can promote discussions around parent leadership and advocacy. When parents feel that they have, and know that they have, a real role in decision-making, they know they can make a difference, and their leadership grows and their confidence grows. Continuity around parent leadership activities from Head Start to kindergarten can foster parents' social capital.

For support, we want to think about, during these challenging times, families need to have to connect to a wider variety of services in the community. These critical connections contribute to a family's well-being, which, in turn, will contribute to their ability to successfully transition to kindergarten. I mentioned earlier that our comprehensive services may have changed. They may have broadened. They may have narrowed over the last year. It's a good thing to reflect and look back at our community partners that we typically see when we think about our five-year plan, and really renew those relationships with our community partners.

Should we stop and take a peek at the chat, Brandi? Are there key concepts that you wanted to share? We know all of our wonderful friends are entering things into the Q&A. Is this the time you wanted to maybe share some things?

Brandi: Yeah, Miss Jennifer. There are so many exciting things over in the chat, both in support of children and their respective grownups. [Laughter] All kinds of wonderful things about how Head Start programs walk alongside and do kindergarten visits. There's a kindergarten round-up that happens with families and their kids. There's specific consideration for children with disabilities and what that looks like, even through the IEP process as a vehicle and a connector.

We have things being shared, like how programs, to the alignment notion, really work together to make sure that, for instance, the children have things in a classroom space that are very real and recognizable for them. The wonderful things continue to fly in. We'll revisit some of those as we go on too.

I wanted to mention one more before we take a question because it was a really good one, and I think Katie's going to help us answer this one. We also had – Judy Wilson mention that transitioning – we give each transitioning family a kindergarten transition packet. It includes the school phone numbers, lunch information, how to register. Family service staff add in all the things that we collect around immunization records, copies of physicals, and on and on. In terms of the information that's gifted to the receiving school, and also to the family, that is such an ease of support given that they don't have to chase all those things down again after we've done it in the Head Start context.

I want to pause here and take a quick question before we go into the other portions of our time together. Katie, I want to pose this one to you. What types of tips or resources are available to share with families to prepare them in transitioning their children into school, into those settings, considering the CDC guidelines per state? What comes up for you, Katie, when you hear that?

Katie: That's a wonderful question, and I think that for a lot of people that's something that they are probably asking. The nice thing is, over the last year, we've been able to create several resources that are flexible in helping you find answers to your questions. One of the ways that we can find those resources is ... If you go to the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, or ECLKC, and just type in the keyword "COVID-19," it will actually bring up a whole host of resources. It might feel a little bit overwhelming at first, but they're titled really well to help you find the exact type of information that you need.

I'll tell you just a few of the things that come up. The first one is about COVID-19 vaccines and tips for talking to Head Start families and staff about the COVID-19 vaccines. Frequently asked questions, providing meal and nutrition services during COVID-19, responding to food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing and early care and education whether it's feasible or impossible, supporting home safety, keeping our children well ... Just as important, helping parents manage stress.

As you can see, there's a real variety of tips and strategies. Other keywords, if you're thinking about how to make the most of your current situation: distance learning, social distancing, stress resilience and trauma. We will also show a selection of resources before we close today that really get at some of those key points as well. I'll hand that back to you.

Brandi: Well, with that, Katie, let's look at the next part of what we're going to do together, which is what you guys see here, "Applying the Elements for Successful Transitions With

Families in Current Times.” This is the place where we really want to lean in with both of you. I think, Katie, you’re going to take it from here to think with us about how this relates to where we are right now.

Katie: Absolutely. We’ve talked about that collaborative approach to transitions and some of those high-quality transition practices. Now, we really want to dig a little deeper into why and how to engage families in this process considering our complex, sometimes virtual world where these transitions might be happening and bringing us some new challenges. We want to consider some of the specific factors relating to transitions that are impacted by our challenging times.

COVID-19 times really do make the usual transition challenges even greater. For example, children might feel a sense of fear returning to a program due to what they’ve heard their parents say or what they’ve heard on the news. Families might even have data that reassures them children will be safe, but they may not have shared their sense of reassurance with the child.

Family members may have had a difficult time with transitions as a child themselves or have faced difficulties due to language barriers. They might be reluctant to have their child experience the same discrimination. Families might also not be familiar with their public school system and be worried about the new systems for transportation, meal times, possibilities of homework, etc..

We do want to remember that, for all transitions at any age, parents and children often have a very different response to the same transition. Families’ expectations of care and learning settings might vary. Families’ past experiences with transitions might affect the current transition. Transitions impact children, parents, but also the professionals in our early childhood settings. Families’ transition experiences might be influenced by their cultures, language, and background. The age and level of development also influence how a child experiences transitions.

Of course, we understand that settings might differ and create new demands on the child and family. We really want to be conscious of that as we are making our plans to support them through this process.

One really fun way that we had shared with us was this idea of using a single-page introduction document. It’s a really great way to include a few high-level, important pieces of information, such as how to help them through emotional regulations, children’s health and safety notes, the best ways to reach families, and more. This type of form could be adapted to include an area for family support staff to enter their thoughts as well. Also, the family support staff might be a resource in assisting families in the completion of this form. This is again one of those opportunities for partnership, something that an education staff, the family support staff, and the family would all take pieces of filling out and passing on, sharing that information with their new setting.

OK. As we continue, we really want to stop and reflect on “Where do families need the most support right now?” When we’re thinking about those last slides or listening to what families

share, it's important to consider the experiences, strengths, and challenges that they might be facing.

Families may share mental health challenges and stress the pandemic has brought to their attention, but staff might also share that they notice parental stress through the interactions they have with their children and families as they experience stress themselves. Families might also share that they are experiencing challenges with resources and the time to support their child's learning. I feel like that's probably going to be a very common thing that we will hear from families.

During the day, children might be under the care of others, such as grandparents, older siblings, or other relatives when parents are essential workers. Limited access to technology at home might also limit children's engagement in online learning events. Parents might feel that they are juggling multiple responsibilities as they try to address the needs of their children and family. All of these challenges might leave little time for families to support their child's learning.

In particular, families of children with disabilities might express concerns about their child's skill regression during this time. Families understand the need to engage their children in learning right now, but they might tell us that many of their interactions with their educators right now have shifted to parent coaching, which is something new and for some might be uncomfortable.

This is really important information to have, since working with families to determine their priorities is such an important part of our partnership process. As we learn from families, we might want to focus our support on meeting their biggest needs and the stressors that families are experiencing right now. I'm going to hand this back to Jennifer as she talks to us about some of the strategies that families might consider in COVID-19 times.

Jennifer: Thanks, Katie. I am so excited about this resource that you can find on ECLKC under our resources for Parent, Family, Community Engagements, National Center. This one is "Strategies That Families May Consider in COVID-19 Times." They said that timeliness of the preparation is important to foster positive parent-child relationships during this transition. As we talked before, transitions occur over time. We're thinking now, maybe, at that last three weeks before the child is to transition. Let's look at some of the things that a parent might do to build that relationship with their child and prepare for transition.

Let's look at some examples on the screen. Continue to practice everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs, such as washing your hands and using a tissue or sneezing into your elbow. A parent might read books or share stories with their child to help them manage their feelings and emotions. We've been talking about how we, ourselves, self-soothe at the beginning with music, taking walks, relaxing, humor. The parent may find a way to interact with their child to help them manage their fears as well through reading stories, talking about fear of going to school, meeting a new teacher, or making new friends.

They may want to ask their child what they're looking forward to doing in that new school and ask if they're excited about playing outdoors, being with their friends again, reading stories and other activities. They can go back and think about what they liked best about Head Start when

they were there and how that might transfer over to the new setting. They may want to check in with their doctor about specific safety precautions if there's a specific health care need. That's all three weeks before.

Two weeks before – you can see the list on the screen – contact the program or public school to ask questions about changes. Will there be screening requirements? How will meals be served? What are the hours of operation? What does drop-off and pick-up look like? Will masks be worn? What are they going to do if the child or someone in the family is sick? Here, you're given very specific examples for families to do in that two weeks before the big transition happens.

Then, finally, we're going down to one week before, I think. Here it is. Sorry. My goodness. My thing wants to jump around. OK. All right. I'm going to go slowly and get to one week before. There we go.

One week before, a parent might want to talk with their child about returning to a classroom. Is the child excited, anxious? Continue to practice wearing a mask. If you've heard from your school that that's going to be a requirement, you might want to be wearing a mask around the house.

Talk with your child about clothes and supplies for the first day that we always do, and it used to be so much fun to get the crayons and the new things for school. That's still going to happen with transitions, even in COVID times. Continue reading. Review the family schedule. Who will take your child to the school, and who will pick them up? If you haven't already been thinking about it, work towards an early bedtime. That's this wonderful resource that you can hand out to families and give them to hang on the refrigerator and prepare for those last three weeks before transition.

Moving back to Brandi to talk about what's happening on our chat or Q&A.

Brandi: Thank you, Miss Jennifer. I don't know about you guys, but my mind is full and inspired with all of the things I'm learning and picking up here. I'm hearing from a lot of you guys in the chat that you're excited about the resources, and you're wondering about the PowerPoint, and you're doing your own contributions, which we're going to lift up in a little bit as we go along.

I want to remind you of a couple of things. We are staying afterwards to do a little bit of what we love to call "After Chat," which will be the last 15 minutes of our time together. Go ahead and put in your questions in the question pod that's off to the bottom left-hand side. You also do have some resources there. There is a resource list, and you should have a copy of the PowerPoint, for those of you that are excited to have it to take it back to your neck of the woods. Those things are there and available when you are ready to go get them.

We'll keep collecting your questions and be reading them throughout, and certainly save some time at the end so we can address them specifically. Let me turn it back to you guys to take us through the "Supporting Transitions" portion of our discussion, "A Collaborative Approach."

Katie: Thanks so much, Brandi. We've discussed now the foundations of that high quality, some of the responsive transitions, and the situations that we're currently facing. But we want to talk right now about a very specific way and approach, a collaborative approach, that we can use to

support staff, children, and families throughout transitions. All right. Make sure all my clicks are right too. Perfect.

The program leadership, education staff, family service staff, home visitors, and families are all really striving for that same goal: to provide effective support for all children during transitions. Leaders, staff, and families each have a particular role in creating that really important web of support. It's not just one. It's all of us. Again, if you want to think about that suspension bridge again, here we are again, everyone supporting that same goal.

The time that we invest in fostering collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships will really provide that foundation on which to develop and work toward that shared vision for what a smooth transition really looks like, whether that's going back to a program or into another class or kindergarten. The first step we have in supporting children during transitions is each other. This support will provide a foundation that leaves all of us better prepared and able to support and partner with families to facilitate those smooth transitions for children.

This visual, this collaborative approach, is for staff and families to use a "Learn, Share, Plan" frame for smooth transitions. It comes from a document, a resource that we'll also provide, called "Supporting Transitions: Early Educators Partnering with Families." This brief discusses how program leaders, educators, family support staff, and others, including home visitors, can use the approach to support each other, families, and young children through those transitions.

Let's take a closer look at each of those pieces. When preparing families for transition, preparing children for transition, we want to listen and understand the experiences, strengths, and the needs of staff, families, and children. We want to think about the types and forms of information that would benefit each group most. Then we want to gather strategies and a group of resources to share.

Here are some of the strategies for program leaders to use to learn from staff about how they are feeling. Staff can then, in turn, use these strategies with families. They want to develop open-ended questions and want to really listen to understand the experiences, the concerns, fears, or worries about transitions, including reopening programs. Very importantly, they also want to ask about the hopes and dreams for the changes in their work with children and families; or for families, the hopes and dreams that they hold for their children. I really want to emphasize this part so we're not only addressing those fears, those concerns, those worries, but we're really leaning into those strengths and those hopes for the future.

Our next component is the section focused on sharing. Based on what we learned from staff and families in our learn step, we'll be able to identify the resources that are relevant to the staff experiences, concerns, and needs as well as the families' experiences, concerns, and needs.

There are a lot of resources available, some of which we've talked about already. If the transition is from a virtual Head Start to an in-person kindergarten, we also want to consider that families might be concerned about how the school can ensure their child's health and safety after reopening. To respond to these concerns, we might want to talk to the receiving school and then share information on any policies and procedures related to the virus and how the school has prepared.

One little reminder, though. Providing too much information can be overwhelming. Program leaders and staff might want to tailor the amount of information and the methods of sharing. Think about what's known about your staff and families, and the best way to share the information. For example, some might prefer information presented in different formats, like a video, an email, a bulleted list, etc., especially in languages other than English. We want to use the information gathered to carefully select a manageable number of resources to share and how we want to share them. Find the best way available – whether that's through a virtual meeting, phone, in-person if it's available – and then share that information.

The third component of [Inaudible] is partnering to plan for support during transitions. In particular, program leaders might have multiple levels of planning to do. Let's take a moment and use the chat box to share some of our ideas on how we'll support staff – or staff, how you will support families with the transition – and how we're supporting children through the transition. Take a moment and, if you would, add your thoughts in chat about what strategies you can use, whether that's something you're already doing or something you'd like to do more of. I'll give you just a moment to put your thoughts in.

Brandi: Katie, [Inaudible]. I was getting a little echo, so I wanted to call to make sure that it wasn't happening for everybody else. We're excited to not only see what you have to bring forward here, in terms of this planning piece, and as Katie asked you to think about both for the child and the family, but also, we're still collecting your questions. We're going to answer a few questions also at the very end about how you get your evaluation and your certificate so that you'll have everything you need for your professional development files.

For those of you that are looking for your place to type in, it's in the bottom left-hand corner of your platform, and I believe it says, "Q&A" or "Questions." You just talk to us in any way you want to in that portion of your platform. All right, Katie. What are you seeing over there?

Katie: A lot of great ideas. "Using emails to communicate with parents." "Being transparent." "Being available for the families and providing options." I really love that idea to provide options, so if you have families that prefer different types of communications, they have different ways to receive the information. "Using videos." "Inviting families, specifically, to participate in family engagement meetings." "Creating forms." Lots of great ideas coming through.

I think something that I'm hearing a lot of is that, again, that idea of collaborations. We really support and lift up those practices that involve planning together, thinking about those specific supports, and then communicating ways that work for the families. I love that those come through so strongly.

All right. To sum up and wrap up some of these ideas. Support for smooth transitions is really key at multiple levels. Staff, families, as well as children, are in transition. Well-planned practices can really help make transitions a positive experience for staff, families, and children. This collaborative approach of learning, sharing, and planning is really useful for all people involved, and as leaders that use the approach with staff, and staff can use it with families. It works in our entire web of support that we've talked about. All right. I will transition back to Jennifer to talk about some of these specific resources.

Jennifer: Thank you, Katie. I'm so excited to be coming to the end and looking forward to having some conversations with you from your concerns and ideas in the chat box. Let's just look at a couple of resources as we close out this section of our webinar. We are so excited to have a list of those for you that you can download, but I'm just going to highlight a couple.

Maybe some of you aren't aware that we have created a third simulation. This actually explores applying strengths-based attitudes in relationships. It's between a Head Start coordinator and a receiving school special education team leader. We're really excited about this simulation and invite you to go to ECLKC and take a look at that simulation.

We also have "Family Engagement in Transitions." This was part of our Research to Practice series. A lot of the information that we've been talking about today is contained in that resource. We have another one, "Early Childhood Transitions: Supporting Children and Families," for early childhood professionals this time. It offers support and guidance to help families feel secure and ready to make the move to a new setting. It really emphasizes strong relationships between professionals and families that will help with that transition experience.

Some of the things we talked about there are communication and collaboration, continuity, and family leadership and advocacy. There's another resource for you to consider. Then we want to look at some content from our DTL friends and partners, education practices for successful transitions to kindergarten. It's a wonderful tool that you'll find in your list. It's also on the ECLKC.

Last but not least, "Leadership Practices for Successful Transitions to Kindergarten." Again, another DTL resource that we'd love to highlight here in this presentation. Finally, Brandi, do you want to talk a little bit about MyPeers as we get ready to transition into the next part of our session?

Brandi: Sure, Miss Jennifer. I would love to. Many of you have found us in this space already. If you haven't, come on over. The water is fine. [Laughter] On the MyPeers platform, we have a space called "PFCE Deepening Practice Community," and I hope what you've noticed with what Katie and Jennifer have gifted us with today is this awesome illustration of coming together in service of both our children and families.

You guys know how it goes. I was the Head Start director once. I'd like to say not so long ago, but you know, the more gray hairs I get [Laughter], the more I have to convince myself, maybe it was a little longer than I'd like to admit. One of the things that we constantly worked on together over time is this notion of breaking down the silos so that we very cohesively and seamlessly are able to lean into these relationships with families and their children in a way that is seamless. That's what we love about the partnership with Katie and her team at DTL is they've allowed us into the space, with some of the resources that Miss Jennifer showed, to think about how we support the transition for children as their beneficiaries.

At PFCE, we've been thinking about the same thing with and for families, as evidenced today. All I've got to say is that this is a topic that can live also in the PFCE Deepening Practice Community. I know that it's active in a lot of the spaces that are open communities over there, but come on over. Join us. There are lots of things that you guys are sharing together, especially in this moment in time where we're wondering, "What will this look like? What kinds of

questions will parents have? Are we ready? What do we need to have? Do we need to have a hybrid option?"

You guys have been sharing so prolifically over there in the MyPeers community to support each other as we go through this large transition with each other and really take steps through it together. That's what I love about our Head Start community. It is together. When we have each other, we are going to make it.

I'm seeing a couple of things in the chat that I want to lift up. I see some folks saying – and I think I'm going to go back, if it's OK with everybody, and just click on these as I see them. We have several comments about how folks love the simulations. If you guys have never seen these before, we have five of them now.

This one is the most recent one. It is completely in service of the conversations that we've shared together today. It's so cool because, if you're gray haired like me, as I've already admitted, you might remember those "Choose Your Own Adventure" books where you "Turn to page 34 to jump down the rabbit hole." This is the new-age version.

You get to choose what the dialogue is between these two folks. For the first time, we actually have our Head Start colleague talking to a school leader. You can see here on the slide, a Special Education Team Leader. We're applying these same concepts, strengths, and amazing skills that we have within the Head Start community over into how our receiving schools and community partners can benefit from the same thing.

I'm seeing over in chat before we transition to the real-time Q&A, as we promised, so keep your questions coming because we're going to create some space to zoom in on those in particular. We're also seeing things in the chat, like how you guys are getting ready for this transition. I see from Judy here – Hi Judy! – she's saying, "We're preparing a survey regarding return to in-person services, and we've talked about maybe having a Zoom meeting for parents, prior to returning to in-person, so they can express concerns and ask questions, etc."

This has been a strategy that has been incredibly powerful. I don't know if any of you guys have gone through it with your own family, but I have an eight-year-old son. Many of you know this. I mention him often. When he transitioned back, I had all the questions. I mean all of them. It was great because I had the opportunity, in this feedback loop space, to really think together about, so I could prepare him. "When we pull up, they're going to open the door. They're going to take your temperature. They're going to spray your bags and your shoes." Whatever that looks like for how you guys are doing it in your communities. It was so helpful because he knew not to launch out the side door, like he already does.

It was really helpful for us too because as a family we needed to be at work fairly quickly. We certainly needed to have a planful space to do that in a way that aligned with the time that was necessary. Thank you, guys, for that feedback.

I'm going to tell you a couple more logistical bits before we transition to the questions. A couple of things. This webinar is always available to you. As soon as it ends, it will be available on-demand. You'll be able to access it through that registration link at any point. Bring your friends. You guys can always come in. It's always archived, so you can come out and give it a

peek if you didn't get to stay the whole time today. I know a lot of folks are going to be looking back at it. It will be there for you.

We have the PowerPoint available for you down on the left-hand side of your screen under the resources arrow. You can download it there. The other thing that I think you're going to be excited about is the resources that you've been showcased during this discussion today are all embedded with hyperlinks for you in one document that lives, actually, in the same place as the PowerPoint, down off to the left-hand side, so that you can download it also. And you can access the resources that have been highlighted here without having to do a whole bunch of clicking. We put them in one space there.

I would be remiss if I didn't say this part straight away about the certificates because we know this is something that is really important to you guys. Here's what we're going to do. Don't leave yet. Don't leave us yet. What happens at the very end is, your browser, once we completely come to a full close of the discussion after the Q&A, your browser will close on its own, and we need you to let it close on its own. Because when you let it close on its own, you automatically get an email, a little later today, that has an evaluation link embedded for you.

When you click on that link and complete the evaluation, you automatically get your certificate for your professional development files. I will repeat that again before we leave each other so you know what to do, so it comes to you easily and you don't have to go digging. I just wanted to confirm that you will have the certificate through the evaluation via email when you let your browser close on its own at the very end. [Laughter]

OK. Let's look now, together. We want to hang out for about 15 more minutes, at least, so that we can talk together about what kinds of things have come up for you. We are still collecting questions. Please add them on into the Q&A pod or the questions pod that you see off to the bottom left-hand side. We'll lift a few of those up and go from there.

Let me peruse some questions. I see a few things coming up here. Let me bring out some comments first. I want to acknowledge and honor Nancy's comment. She said that they're attending collaborative meetings with their local school district to obtain information that parents need for successful transitions. Actually, some school districts have even posted videos on what going back to school will look like.

You know, Nancy, this has come up for us over and over because we've often been thinking together about, "What does it look like if you're transitioning from a virtual space to a virtual space, or a virtual space to an in-person space? How do we have that, 'warm hand-off' when we might not be able to hold hands yet in some places across the country?" That's been an excellent question. Videos have often been a real way that we can help that visualizing happen so that not only families can take that in and absorb it in the way that they need to, but also share it with their littlest ones so they have the same connection.

Let's go ahead and take a question. We'll still be taking the comments, as well, but keep them coming. Katie, I wonder if you would like to approach this one. We have it coming in from Carla who asks, "Are there any webinars, tips, strategies, etc. for Head Start and Early Head Start teachers to bridge the communication gap regarding children who are transitioning from Early

Head Start to Head Start or who may have behavioral issues or not yet be potty trained?" What comes to mind for you, Katie?

Katie: We actually just had a really wonderful series. It's hosted within the Inclusion Webinar Series. They focused on specifically transitions. Because this is an Inclusion Series, it covers a variety of different contexts, and one of those contexts is children with behaviors that challenge teachers, whether that's diagnosed or not.

Within those webinars, they have answered some of those questions. If you were not able to attend that webinar, you can go onto the MyPeers, Inclusion, Head Start, Disabilities and Inclusion Community, and you should be able to find links to that webinar. There are [Inaudible] information about transitions, big and small, which cover a little bit more of a general approach. It's not as specific as the Disabilities Services information that you might get through the inclusion webinars. Jennifer or Brandi, any other ideas for specific names that can be searched for that information?

Brandi: Let me see if I can make a connection to another question that we got about any other webinars for Early Head Start and Head Start that could be useful. I would just say to you guys, I mean, Katie led you to a very specific location on the ECLKC. I want to pause there for a second because if there's one thing I've learned about our Head Start community, it's that we have a lot of alphabet soup. If you're new to Head Start, we have what I lovingly call "The Head Start Hip-Hop Happening Hot Spot," which is lovingly called, too, dependent on your geography, it's referred to as "The ECLKC," "E-Click" or "Eh-Click." If you just google "E-C-L-K-C," it will take you right there. My goodness, could you get lost over there for days because there is such incredible information.

Certainly, from our National Center, Katie's National Center, all of the sister centers, it's there for you for free at any given time. You can search keywords. If you want to search "Inclusion," as Katie recommended, you absolutely can, and there's a whole page that illustrates different kinds of resources. There may be videos. There may be webinars that you can look at.

I think, for us, one of the things that's been most exciting in this time for PFCE is thinking about not only how we supported families virtually, as they thought about how to be the epitome of what we always said, which has been confirmed, by the way, that parents really are the first and forever teachers. They've really shown what they can do and the incredible competence and confidence that they've gained in these times when we had to be physically distanced.

We also have been excited to think about the benefits that have come up, which we've been hearing more and more in these transitions, as you guys continue to be the heartbeat of each of these communities and really serve in a way that's meaningful, based on how you've individualized. Katie, I want to come back to you because I know you guys often have a couple of other places where you have incredibly valuable resources that we should lift up here too.

Katie: There's a couple other things that come immediately to mind. We have, on our alphabet soup ... Thank you, Brandi, for clarifying what the ECLKC was. We do get a little bit into that unfortunate habit of using acronyms. We have a "Transition to Kindergarten" page, and within the Transition to Kindergarten page, the resources are grouped by "Gathering Information," "Seeing It," which is a series of videos, and "Applying It."

Those are those application-based documents and calendars and other ways that you can apply information about high-quality transitions, including what I mentioned, the Building Bridges Series. That has, from the perspective of leaders, educators, and families, how you can engage in wonderful transition processes.

We also have a series, if you haven't heard of it, a Teacher Time Series, then Home Visiting Series as well. For those who like a different way of engaging, we also have our apps, such as the Ready DLL app. That's wonderful, especially for working, of course, with families of children who are dual-language learners. Our ELOF and ELOF2GO apps that are early-learning outcomes framework. Definitely a few more apps making their way in.

If you haven't explored it yet, we have a relatively new microlearning experience for the Individualized Professional Development. That is known as the iPD, and it's a way to get little pieces of professional development or specific topics of information in one spot. It's one of my favorites, as well.

Within the Transition to Kindergarten page, there are specific sections also dedicated to supporting families, and one is within the Leaders in School Readiness area about how to engage families as leaders, and how to make sure that families feel supported throughout the process. I think that's a lot of resources all at once. Brandi, is there anything else you would add or any clarification you'd like me to make?

Brandi: I love what you offered, Katie. It's true. I mean, as acknowledged about ECLKC, all of these things that you mentioned live there, and you could go over there and just get lost forever. The great news is ... I can remember sitting at the table as a Head Start Director, and way back then, we didn't have this kind of point-and-click opportunity to search a word to bring forward Teacher Time and the gift that those videos are, and they're bite-size, which is what I love. You know, so many of those are not only extremely helpful and useful, but they're in chunks that we can really lean into because they don't last incredibly long. We have time to fit them in.

The other thing that I would like to mention really quickly ... If you guys have other questions, please feel free to bring those. We had a couple of comments about acknowledging the real ... Our families live in rural areas. Sometimes they might not have access to the internet to make these virtual connections. I just have to say – I think on every one of these webinars, I've said this again and again – but I couldn't be more proud to be part of our Head Start community because you guys have taught us things, not only like you've been referring families to resources like Lifeline, which can help families pay for internet access. It helps them access through different kinds of equipment.

We've learned over time that you've done things like park a bus in a community that doesn't have internet, and you've put a wireless router – like it would live on an airplane – in that space, and you've given your Head Start families the password so that they could access, through a tablet or through other equipment that they have available, so that you've taken that barrier away.

We're still learning and getting excited about the innovations that we're going to have and that we'll continue to think about as we support families in not only accessing what they need

through these virtual interactions, but certainly, as we've talked about this time, about how they transition to their next space.

Jennifer: Brandi, I'm seeing, in the chat, that Jamora mentioned that ECLKC also has some great stories, actually from programs calling out the success of what they're doing, calling out their success stories from parents and programs. Jamora says it was posted just this week.

Brandi: Late-breaking news! [Laughter] That's wonderful. For those of you that are still in the midst of looking and thinking about virtual service delivery, there is a whole portion of ECLKC that is devoted to all things COVID-19, and there are so many things. I know one of the resources that Miss Jennifer showed was "Making the Move Together," one of the resources that we created for families, when she reviewed what to do three weeks out, two weeks, and one week.

We actually created one also that's for uncertain times, and so much of those resources live under the COVID-19 tab. Actually, you can get to it because there's a big red bar at the top of ECLKC that allows you to go explore over there, and it's certainly broken down into categories, many of which we've mentioned today.

All right. I'm about to take a couple of closing comments here. Katie and Jennifer, I want to give you the heads-up. I certainly would love to give you space. If you have any final words, I'll come to you in just a second.

As I look at the other comments that we have in the chat, I want to lift up a couple more. We have a "Thank You" from Amy for "such great tools to use and the continued work that we do with supporting, assisting, and living life"... aww ... "living life with our children and families. So much change in the world these days, and this webinar has been exceptionally purposeful."

Amy, we appreciate that. I normally don't lift those things up, but I really wanted to lean into the part about "the continued work that you do with supporting, assisting, and living life with your children and families" because, to me, that speaks volumes, what you said about "it is our calling, it is our space, it is what we do and how we serve."

You guys have done it in ways that you've literally set the example for others in our country. We know right now that people are looking to Head Start to reopen their schools and their school systems because we've been able to do it in a way that holds the families and their kids close and tight, and we've loved each other through it. We've laughed. We've cried. We've felt all the feelings, but we did it together. That's what makes a huge difference.

We thank each of you for what you do today and every day. With that, let me pause, to honor my good Southern upbringing, and make sure that Jennifer and Katie have the final word.

Jennifer: Well, I'll jump in. I just want to thank everyone for attending today and all the words in the Questions and Answers. We're going to be really combing through that to learn some of the strategies that you are using and some of the helpful comments that you made. Katie?

Katie: I'll echo that as well. I always love these because it feels so reciprocal. We're sharing information that we have with you. Just as much, you all are sharing information about all the amazing strategies and efforts that you are making on a day-to-day basis. You definitely fuel our fires and keep us going. We're so happy to be here to support you.

Brandi: Thank you so much, Katie and Jennifer. One final instruction for your evaluations, because a couple of you have reminded me, and I want to make sure that we honor that question because it's a thing. You have to have it. [Laughter] Once this webinar concludes, your window will close by itself. Let it close by itself. Don't X out in the top right-hand corner. Just let it close on its own. Once it closes, in a few minutes after, you will get an email that gives you a link to an evaluation. Once you fill out that evaluation, your certificate appears.

I'll say it one more time, and then we'll bid each other a fond good afternoon. When we end here, in just a couple of minutes, do not close out of your browser. It will close automatically. You'll get an email. You'll fill out the link in the email with the evaluation, and then you'll get your certificate.

Thank you, guys, so much for spending any moments of your day with us. We know everything you're juggling and holding, and it's always an honor to be with you. We can't wait to be back together soon. Thank you, guys, so much!