

## **Education Manager Series: Using the 5Rs of Early Learning Leaders to Support the Development of Children's Initiative and Curiosity**

Vanessa Maañao-French: Welcome to our webinar, "Using the 5Rs to Support Initiative and Curiosity in Young Children." We're so happy you could join us again, especially to those who have been with us for this series. You know kind of the pattern that we're working with, really focusing on approaches to learning. I wanted to introduce myself. My name is Vanessa Maañao-French, and I'm with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. I'm joined by my colleague Katie. Katie, would you like to say hello?

Katie Miller: Absolutely. Hello, everyone, I am Katie Miller, and I am a content specialist also with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. Approaches to learning in general is one of my all-time favorite topics, but especially initiative and curiosity, so I am very, very excited to have this as our topic today.

Vanessa: Awesome, thanks, Katie. The other that maybe important or interesting for you to know about Katie and I, is that we are former education managers in Head Start. We were one of you, we get the struggles, we get this, we get the excitement that comes with being an education manager and working in Early Head Start and Head Start. We feel so lucky to be able to spend this time with you. As you may know, especially if you've been on this ride with us, we have four webinars that are actually kind of trying to integrate the same content. If some of this feels like, hey that sounds familiar, it may have ... especially if you were just in the Teacher Time webinar last month. Teacher Time, Coaching Corner, our series, as well as the home visitor series are all taking a closer look at approaches to learning within the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. For each of our webinars we're looking even more closely at a specific sub-domain. As Katie mentioned, we're going to be really looking at initiative and curiosity today as the third sub-domain within that central learning domain.

We're hoping that because we're integrating our content, this provides an opportunity for some cross-sharing. Because we're all taking a slightly different view of the content. Right? For us, I'm going to go to our next one here ... We're going to really try to have you hold two things in mind. One is, how this applies to children, but also how this applies to you as early learning leader. We do have a viewer's guide that we in the educational manager series call the Leader's Digest. The intent of this guide is to offer space for reflection, kind of pull up some of the main themes that we cover through the webinar. You can just take it away with you and take it and do next steps with it. Whether it's sharing it with another leader, or thinking about how you might want to repackage that information to share with your team. It is available, so you can download it now and kind of work along side us as we work through this session.

Now I think I really, really am done with my announcements and we can actually get to what we want to talk about. We're hoping in the about an hour that we have left with you, that you will be able to walk away being able to describe the strategies that you can use with your education staff to promote initiative and curiosity in young children. As I mentioned earlier, we kind of

want you to hold two things at the same time. We're also going to be thinking about how the 5Rs of early learning leaders can help you promote those very same skills in your staff. I think, Katie, you were going to kind of get us warmed and grounded in the ELOF and the specific domain we're talking about. I'll toss it over to you.

Katie: All right, wonderful. Thank you so very, very much. I want to make sure I can see everything here. As Vanessa mentioned when she started us out talking about our integrated approach, we have been using the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and specifically approaches to learning to guide our application of the 5Rs. You'll see that highlighted on the side of your screen. We're going looking at the approaches to learning, the infants, the toddlers, the preschoolers, then of course most importantly the teachers, educators that you work with in your programs.

All right, so far this year if you've been with us, we have covered how the 5Rs can be used to support emotional, behavioral and cognitive self-regulation skills in young children. If you haven't seen those yet you can go back and watch those later, we'll talk about the places you can find those before we close today. But today we are really focused, as we've said a couple times, on initiative and curiosity. What do we mean when we talk about those two things?

Curiosity is best described as the way that individuals show interest in people, places, objects, and events. Then initiative is closely related and is demonstrated by participation in new activities, in making independent choices, and an eagerness to learn. Both sets of skills are important as they promote a child's growing independence as a learner. The Early Learning Outcomes Framework or ELOF as we'll say of course sometimes. Helps us to consider how these skills grow in young children, from simple, to complex. Let's briefly review the goals for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Children are born with a natural desire to make sense of their world. That is one of the coolest things about thinking about approaches to learning, is this is inherent within them. They're born with that ability or desire to make connections about how things work. That is how they learn. Curiosity and initiative really drive their learning process.

The ELOF initiative and curiosity goals for infants and toddlers include, that a child demonstrates emerging initiative in interactions, experiences, and explorations; a child shows interest in and curiosity about objects, materials, or events. You can see in this photo the toddler is showing initiative during their home visit by selecting the book. Turning the pages on her own. She may flip the pages in a different order, going back a few pages to review the images and stray elements. Then forward again to pick up the narrative. She may be offering her own words for the story that she's reading with her parent and home visitor. The selection of the book may be following her how interests and curiosity in dogs, or animals more broadly. Adults in this child's life can further her exploration with additional books, toys, or walks in the neighborhood, such as to see dogs in real life.

Goals in the ELOF for preschoolers are like that of infants and toddlers, but the ways in which they demonstrate these behaviors become more complex with their increasing independence. This is written in the ELOF as the child demonstrates initiative and independence. The child shows interest in and curiosity about the world around them. You can see our example in this

photo. That is two children are closely inspecting the patterns of movement of the ants in the glass enclosure. These same children may look for ants when they leave the room for outdoor play, either at school or in their own neighborhoods. They may even dig in the dirt and find new bugs.

Let's take a little look at a video that shows how education staff can guide children's initiative and curiosity. As we watch this video you can take notes if you like in your Leader's Digest, your viewers guide, about the behaviors that you see both in the children and the teacher. Let us know in the Q&A, remember you can find that button at the bottom of your screen. What things the teacher says and does that you found to be especially effective in her teaching practice. All right so if you're ready, let's watch and learn about discovering bugs.

I went too far, my apology.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Let me see. Is there a bug? Oh, no.

Boy: Yeah.

Teacher: Right there? Oh, you're digging down. You're right. They're like ... They're tiny, tiny. Do you see them? They're so small. You have to ... You can barely see it. I wish we had ... Look at this one. Oh, my gosh, look at this one. Oh, it moved. There was one that was so small it was ... You could hardly. Oh, my gosh. Layla, what good eyes you have. Oh, Christen, careful because the bugs are very small. We don't want to hurt them. They're living creatures. Oh, no, we're not going to step on them with our shoe because our friends are watching them.

Boy: I want to play with just one.

Teacher: OK, you can look right here. Look right here. Oh, you want this leaf? Oh, look, here's a bug that ... Look at this bug. Uh-oh. I don't want to touch this one because he has pinchers, but let me see if I can pick him so you can guys can look at him. But look at this one.

Girl: He's a beetle.

Teacher: It's kind of like a ... Look at that.

[Children screaming]

Look at that bug, Layla. Look it. Come look.

Girl: Yeah, yeah, big.

Teacher: Look at that bug.

[Video ends]

Katie: I love watching that. I don't know if matters how many times I watch it, every single time I love it a little bit more. Let's pause for just a moment and if you would be willing to share with us in the QA ... What did you notice about the educators practices and how she engaged with children, especially thinking about initiative and curiosity? We'll give you just a moment, thinking and typing.

Vanessa: Yeah, as you all are typing I have to say I love that video, too. My favorite part is when they scream. [Laughter] She just knows that they're going to come back, and they do. Just the joy in her face was so great to see as well.

Katie: Great, I'm seeing on their level, sharing their excitement, matching enthusiasm. Yes.

Vanessa: Well, you know and kudos to her, too. I noticed that she was wearing a knee brace and still at the children's level. That's going the extra mile.

Katie: Yeah, looks like a lot of people will notice those things. Oh, yeah, and she stopped the child from stepping on the bug and explained it the, to the child that their other friends were interested. Ask questions. Was enthusiastic about their discovery. Used descriptions. Yeah, she even used some advanced language like pinchers.

Vanessa: Open-ended questions, yes, yes, yes. Awesome.

Katie: Helping understand that they're living creatures. Great language and a great understanding of the world, appreciate both those things.

Vanessa: Hands on. Yes, then keep your comments coming in. This is so great. We're seeing the same things we see in this video and more. Think I'm learning from some of you. Yes, thank you Cheryl. She wasn't negative when the screaming happened. Right, she just let that be part of their expression of joy and curiosity in the moment. It's like, surprising to see the bug. I love it. Love it, so, yeah, keep your ideas coming. We love seeing all of them. Oh, my gosh. I almost hate to move us on, but I need to on. That video was amazing. But do come back. If you like this video, it will be available on Push Play and then on ECLKC. If this video is something that would inspire conversation with your teams, you can certainly revisit this video.

Let's play a little game, or pop-quiz, depending on how you feel about it: Initiative or curiosity? I'm going to list some things around one of these, it's one of these. See if you can guess which one it is. Is it initiative or curiosity? It is as important as intelligence when it comes to achievement. It's as important as persistence when it comes to achievement. Supports better job performance. Leads to better relationships. People who have it have greater life satisfaction. It helps us live longer. Are you getting like curious and wondering about this? It predicts leadership ability. What do you think it is? Pop it into the Q&A. I can't guarantee prizes because I've got none, but I want to know what do you think it is? Do you think this describes curiosity or initiative? I see initiative coming in first for a response. Others, others, others. OK, OK, now they're really coming in. Thank you all for your responses. I will keep you in suspense no longer. In three, two, one. It's curiosity!

Was anybody surprised that it was curiosity versus initiative in terms of those descriptions, those characteristics? You can pop that into chat too. But at least we're seeing like a balance of folks guessing initiative versus curiosity. With that I kind of want to shift gears just for a moment, now knowing that curiosity has all of those benefits, including helping you live longer for goodness' sakes. How do you keep yourself curious? I'm going to take a big pause here, because I would love to know what you, because I might learn from you, I probably will. What do you do to keep your curiosity peaked? What do you do?

Katie: This is one of my favorite questions to think about as well. I often think the best jobs that I have had, I think were ones that encouraged my curiosity. I love to hear what people do, it could be within a work context, or outside work context. Looking forward to hearing about it.

Vanessa: You know some of them are super simple. Like Kelly just mentioned, asking questions. That's, yes! Seeking out new information, thank you Heather. Go to new places. Valerie, I want to go with you on your next vacation. That's a great idea. Just being in a new space sometimes helps you kind of gain that sense of curiosity. Seeing reading come out.

Katie: Want to mention, Kylie mentioned going outside their comfort zone. Very cool.

Vanessa: Yes, yes, absolutely. OK, keeping your wonder alive. That could be a bumper sticker Lillie, thank you for that one. Meeting new people. Love it, yes, yes, so all of these things. What I want to do with this is, I want to gather up all these ideas that you're sharing. I'm going to post them on MyPeers. Please do not stop adding your ideas about how you keep your own personal sense of curiosity kind of alive within you. Yeah keep them coming. Spending time with small human things. [Laughter] Yes, kids help keep us curious, if we can be in their mindset for just even a moment, our curiosity can just go wild alongside them. Thank you for these, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

I was thinking, and I saw the ones about reading that we have our colleagues at the National Center for Program Management Physical Operations. When they produce sessions, they often bring out a book that they're using along side their session. I will tell you, every time I go to the session, I've got like four books in Amazon cart because I'm like, "I have to know." I don't always buy them all, but I have to know more about that book because it just makes me curious about what drives them to create content. Yeah OK, that one just touched my heart. Then I really will move on. Actively listen to my daughter. Thank you for sharing all of your ideas and keep them coming. Like I mentioned, I do want to share them more broadly, because I know it's hard to share always in this platform, but MyPeers offers as another space to keep sharing.

All right. Why curiosity is important? It's important for us as adults to be curious, because then we help kids to be curious. We'll talk a little bit more about the research behind that in a bit. But this is why it's important for kids. It helps them to feel comfortable and engage to observe and to figure things out, the problem solve, to try, to experiment. Right? When kids are curious they have to kind of expand their vocabulary to be able to share what they're seeing, what they're experiencing, what they're hearing. It helps them kind of find new ways to use language, which is exciting. It's also associated with greater achievement in math and reading.

When they go on to kindergarten and beyond. Then finally, if you're curious, if you stay curious you're just going to be naturally open to learning new things. It's kind of like the comments that you've been sharing in our Q&A, about just being in a new place can help you become curious. That just kind of spawns more curiosity. It's important for kids.

Here's what we're going to talk about a little bit here. That's kind of the ... what the researchers are saying about curiosity. What they say is there's two different kinds, two big buckets of curiosity if you want to think about it that way: state and trait.

I'll talk about state curiosity first, which is kind of the ... can also be split up into two, so exploratory and specific. When you think about exploratory curiosity, it's those momentary like flashes of interest that kind of, like oh my gosh, that was interesting. I'm going to go check that out. You explore, you get ... kind of like you got the curiosity itch and you scratch it, and you feel good and you move on. For example, there was a new story recently about housing prices. Katie, you can empathize, because I know you're also house hunting. Interest rates going up. That's spurred my curiosity. Like, well, if that's the case how much is my home worth right now? I'm curious. Then I was like, OK, well, if this is what my house is worth, what is, what would a house similar to mine be worth in Dallas? Or Kansas City? Or Honolulu? That got me ... I'm like ... I could go down that rabbit hole for a little while, but eventually I'm kind of done exploring housing prices. It could be a little depressing. I couldn't afford my house if I tried to buy it right now. I don't know if others feel that same way, but it was in it, a curiosity that I needed to scratch, done.

The other is specific curiosity. Then that one, you really want to dive deep into a specific topic, or content area, or skill. You kind of just spend time kind of nurturing and refining that skill, or that knowledge base. It's kind of like you all right now joining this webinar to think about early learning in child development. Chances are you've already spent hundreds if not thousands of hours of training or through coursework on early childhood, yet you're here because you're constantly wanting to improve your practice, learn more. There's never going to be enough because this is a deep place of interest for you. You are all in that state specific space of curiosity right now by joining us. Thank you for being with us, we hope we add to your curiosity and have you continuing to want to learn more.

The other space of curiosity is trait curiosity. We often think about trait as something that's innate, something that's within you. That is what researchers would say is about 20% is like kind of innate. That's what you are. Twenty percent of it is kind of accounted for by your DNA. The other 80% is either nurtured, or not, by the adults and the interactions that we have in our life. We think about how we support children's intellectual, social, problem solving, that tolerance for ambiguity, like being OK that things are not predictable and that's OK, it makes me curious. Or that space of thrill seeking, seeking out new stimuli, to kind of learn more by trying brand new things.

We in the early learning space have a lot of influence about how children continue to exercise that curiosity muscle by how we encourage them, how we kind of give them the space to demonstrate their initiative to go forward in that curiosity space. We really wanted to bring

that to you have you think about those two different ways of being curious: state and trait. Where we can really support children and our staff to kind of continue to nurture those skills.

Now, turning again and this another space where we're going to gather your feedback and share with others. Thinking about your staff. You shared what you do for yourself, whether that's book reading, traveling new places, talking with your daughter – love it. What do you do for your staff to help them also exercise their curiosity and initiative muscles? I'll pause and give you time to think and write.

Katie: I keep reviewing even more of the ones that have come in about people's individual thoughts. Very so interesting.

Vanessa: Yeah. This one from Julie just came in. About, just asking what they've recently learned. I think that's a nice big open-ended question. Inspiring and challenging, thanks Debbie. You know one thing ... [Crosstalk] Oh, go ahead. Sorry, Katie.

Katie: I think people are really digging into this question. I can't wait to see what comes up.

Vanessa: Yeah, for sure. As people writing those I was going to offer a couple things that were kind of fun back in my education manager days. Right, we would explore the idea of rearranging our room. Because that's often something teachers love to do, is like let's rearrange it to make it more efficient, or effective, or engaging for the children. We would just get literally sit on the floor on our behinds and think about what the kids see and become curious about why are they drawn to this area by sitting and looking around, like really trying to be, I don't know, kind of be in the mindset of a child. I think that was mentioned in one of the other comments earlier about trying to take that perspective.

Oh, my gosh now they're really coming in, I can't read that fast. [Laughter] OK, oh, yeah, I mean Ramona even asking staff how they enter a particular training, like what resonated with you? What was sticky? I like talking about training as being sticky. What stuck with you after you left? Why? Why is that?

Katie: Oh, I like that Joann pointed out, giving them new and meaningful things to learn about, that idea of being very meaningful and applicable. Very cool.

Vanessa: Love, love, love it.

Katie: Sharing with each other. Great.

Vanessa: Asking questions. Sometimes it's about just finding that question that unlocks conversation. Thank you for that Jennifer. Have you ever, what do you think about it? I love it. Very nice, very nice. OK, we just need more time with you all. I hate to push us along but, Katie, you want to talk to us next about initiative and support?

Katie: I will love to. As Vanessa mentioned, please keep including your feedback, your ideas in QA and we can share them through the MyPeers space. One of the coolest things about using

that MyPeers space is it really gives even more of an opportunity for you to engage with your colleagues. All these cool ideas that you're sharing here we'll be able to, you'll be able to see what your peers have shared and thought and get some ideas and suggestions from them.

OK, thinking about initiative now. We talked a lot about curiosity and the overlap or connections with initiative. We want to really dive in just a little bit more to specifically this idea of initiative. One way to think about practices and skills that are related to initiative is to consider if the child is doing them on their own or with support. For example, do they initiate interactions with their trusted adults? We want to notice those trusting relationships are important to the development of initiative. Do they use verbal and non-verbal cues to explore the environment with adult support? Do they engage others in interactions or shared activities?

We want to think about also included the picture of scaffolding. You may have heard this before, but this idea of gradually reducing the support we give them as they become more skilled. Really keep that in mind as we talk about initiative in particular. I want to especially highlight that for children with disabilities, education staff can modify activities and materials based on their individual needs and strengths to ensure that children are not bound by a single way of participating and that really supports initiative and curiosity.

Successful learning can then take place in a variety of ways. We like to think of the equation access plus participation equals increased learning. Just pause on that one again. Access plus participation equals increased learning. The cool thing is, is adults could also grow in initiative as well and they sometimes need some of that same supports. That idea of scaffolding works for our adults as well.

Let's look next at initiative with growing independence. Another way to think about practices and skills related to initiative is to consider if the child is showing growing independence. Do they show eagerness to try new things, attempt challenging tasks? Do they have a willingness and capability to work independently for increasing amount of time? Do they plan play scenarios by establishing roles for play, using appropriate materials, generating appropriate scenarios to be enacted? We really want to think about that's what we see that tells us that they are demonstrating initiative. We want to focus on eagerness and novelty as well as challenge. I really love that this idea emphasizes play as important to developing initiative. I know we talk about play as such a tool and how kids learn and grow and work, but I love that this specifically calls that out in connection to the skill of the initiative.

Now, pause for just a moment and compare this with adults who are growing in initiative. Think about the challenges that they might be experiencing and challenges not always bad. There's some level of challenge that is necessary for growth. We can think about that challenge as both a good thing, sometimes a difficult thing, but there's good with it as well. Think about how the adults might be working independently, how they're trying new things, and how they're having fun with work. Sometimes all that is needed to help a child be more successful in an activity, or to try new skill, is a presence of a trusted adult. By joining in the child's play the adult has that front row seat to the child's successes and struggles. All children really can benefit from a tiny encouragement, supported comments, and – especially for children with disabilities – if an



adult can join in in their play and provide opportunities to facilitate those higher levels of play and prevent discouragement or frustration. As you might imagine, some of those same things are really important elements of adults as they develop initiative or explore their initiative as well.

All right. As you might have expected, we really want to focus in on the rest of our session with the connections between initiative and curiosity in our 5Rs for learning leaders. Curious children thrive in curious environments. Children are best encouraged to explore and try new things when they're supported by adults who do the same. Effective early learning leaders helps staff to tap into the abilities to be innovative and test ideas to create these curious and engaged learning environments. If you've been with us for the rest of the series, these might feel familiar to you. But for those who are just joining us for the first time, we're just going to give a quick highlight for the 5Rs and where they came from. In research led by Dr. Gayle Joseph, we discovered as common themes cross explorations of effective leadership in early learning settings, these five R's.

The result is what we call the 5Rs, including responsive relationships, reason, resources, reflective dialogue, and recognition. These came about because we discovered that effective early learning leaders build strong relationships with education staff and use these relationships to build a unified culture, a workplace with trust, a collaboration and with belonging. They inspire education staff to meet program goals and objectives by providing reasons for policies and practices. They are resourceful. They use our knowledge, education staff and family expertise, and funding to support educators' professional development and growth. They engage in reflective dialogues to learn how staff, children and families are doing. Finally, last but certainly not least, early learning leaders create both formal and informal opportunities to recognize big and small wins and encourage the hearts of education staff.

We're going to dive into a couple of these R's and talk about some strategies, some ideas and ways that you can think about the R's with our initiative and curiosity, specifically as you work with education staff. Pardon me. As with children developing initiative, leaders can support initiative and curiosity through the R relationships. I love when we start with relationships because it really is a foundation for so much of our work.

As you see on the slide, build trusting relationships as a base for learning. Support professional development based on individual choice and need. Create a safe space for trying new things. A lot of you mentioned that in your ways that you suggested to support staff. Providing guidance for implementation of best practice, reinforcing that best practice, and walking the walk by doing rather than simply directing.

I really want to emphasize how this brings out the importance of trusting relationships. In order to really build on these skills, build this initiative, we really need to build our relationships first. We also want to think about modeling and providing guidance by doing. So, so many of you pulled out that idea of when the teacher worked with the children with the bugs, how they were sharing excitement and discovery. Of course it should be no surprise, the same is true when we're working with our staff. Sharing their excitement and their discovery and their

accomplishments and the accomplishments of the children is really beneficial to relationship and the development of these skills. One of the things we do want to ask you to pause and reflect on, is this idea that power dynamics can limit curiosity. Won't you just take a moment and ask yourself a few of these reflection questions. I'm going to pause just a few seconds after each one to give you a chance to think. If you would like to respond in QA, please feel welcome to. But this is mostly for your individual reflection.

The first thing to think about is, are educators trying to guess what's in your head? Or can they freely respond to what you're asking? Think about those questions that we asked to support our staff. How do we ask those questions? Next, do you strengthen and develop others by sharing power and information? Do you give others visibility and credit? Of course, we want to do this in a way that our staff are comfortable with and that helps them. That's important to know what is appropriate for them in this context. Pause and just ask you reflect on that for a second.

Last, it's important to give educators and staff challenging tasks to support them to be successful and to clear obstacles from their paths. This might probably won't surprise many of us, but this idea that we both give some challenging tasks, but we also find ways that help them to scaffold them, just like we talked about when we were supporting children. We want to scaffold our staff as well to be as successful as they possibly can. Providing all of these opportunities and being supportive will allow them to feel empowered and to grow as individuals and as leaders in their own roles.

All right. Let's continue to think about how we create those curious conditions. Studies have shown that environmental conditions, including how adults interact with children, can significantly influence their openness to exploration for themselves. In particular, a study of 40 preschool children found that children were more apt to explore their surroundings in the presence of a friendly supportive adult than in the company of an aloof, critical one. Very interesting and really reinforcing a lot of the work we do right? In another study, adults were directed to interact with children in three different ways. The first way was to answer children's questions with only brief, direct responses to encourage their independence. Or, to demonstrate active interest in children's curiosity by encouraging their inquisitiveness with smiles and eye contact and attentiveness. Or, three, focusing your interest by asking pointed follow-up questions to encourage further exploration of topics. What do you think they found?

What they discovered was the latter two conditions, both demonstrating active interest by encouraging with attentiveness, pardon me, and non-verbal cues. Focusing their interest by asking specific follow-up questions were both found to support exploratory behavior. Awesome. Even more interesting, this was especially true among children whose teachers or parents had initially identified them as having low levels of curiosity. Even if the child doesn't seem to be demonstrating that skill, the more that we respond and support them in this way, the better it is for them. That last point is really important because it suggests that children's curiosity is not solely a function of parenting, or maternal bonds, but even brief interaction with other supportive adults can help kids to find and unleash curiosity within themselves. I kind of

love that phrase, unleashing curiosity. It's just there, waiting there to burst forth. We've also found that there is a significant connection between initiative and motivation. Especially in the relationships between educators and leaders. We're kind of shifting and thinking about our support between adults.

One study in particular provides evidence that school administrators personal initiative behavior was directly related to teacher motivation and then it positively affects teacher motivation, thereby affecting quality of their teaching. In the analysis that was conducted in terms of relationships between school administrators' personal initiative taking behaviors and teachers motivation, it was found that these variables had a significant and positive relationship. They both went up together. When the administrators demonstrated personal initiative taking, the teachers motivation went up as well. I love that idea.

In our research for creating the 5Rs, we learned that initiative fatigue is emerged as a challenge in an educators ability to focus on learning for children. If we think about that kind of in context when administrator or leaders can demonstrate initiative, we can really support those teachers and their own motivation and initiative themselves, which in turn supports their work with children. All right, that's kind of a lot to take in. We're going to pause for a moment and ask to think about all of this information. I know it was lot, but I promise we will share with you where you can watch this again if you are interested and see more information before we go. But for the time being, we want you to ask ... ask you to think about how you support educators in building and demonstrating initiative? Think about the benefits of educators making informed decisions to try new or challenging things. Take a moment and ask yourself if you feel comfortable, we'd love for you to share in QA. How can we as leaders encourage playful risk-taking? I'm going to pause. Allow a little bit time for reflection and sharing. Vanessa, if there was anything that jumped to you as well, please feel free to share. I'm going to put you on the spot.

Vanessa: Yeah, put me on the spot, thanks. I really loved that last bit that you shared in particular about how leaders can support staff by their own behaviors. The way that way we operate has such influence, and I think we can often forget how our behaviors about the things we say, but what we do and how that can truly shift mindset and behaviors of our staff. I thought that was fascinating. I'm so glad you shared it.

Katie: I totally agree, that walking the walk comes back again and again doesn't it? All right, some great stuff coming in. Saying yes to new ideas, Jennifer, that's so simple and yet so meaningful. When a staff member has an idea, see if there any way you can see yes or at least partially say yes if nothing else.

Vanessa: Oh, being flexible with results, creating a safe space to make mistakes. I feel like Jennifer you are like previewing the next couple of slides, so thank you for that segue, but we'll pause for more responses to come in. I love it.

Katie: Right, using materials for children to explore and investigate and encouraging educators to do the same. Love that. Oh, giving them tools and resources. Isn't it fun how all of these

things overlap together? I love that. Oh, asking them to talk to each other about the ways that they prefer to teach. Trying from other perspectives. How interesting, Jacklyn. Thanks for sharing that.

Vanessa: This is so great. Keep your ideas coming because what I'm going to share next may feel very affirming to what you're putting into the QA. It's as if you read our story board, which is great. That means that you are embracing the 5Rs, whether you knew it or not. Some of the responses that have already come through are kind of talked under reflective dialogues, that idea about creating a safe space. That attitude of let's try this. Let's make mistakes together because this is where we learn from one another. The idea of challenging and provoking new ways of thinking. This ties back up to what Katie just shared around motivation and initiative and really supporting curiosity. I just so appreciate that saying yes to new ideas, this is where you can say yes to those ideas in reflective dialogue. Creating a space where you can say, well, why not? Let's check it out, let's be scientists in our classroom together. See what works. Let's try this in our home visit, let's talk to parents about this, let's explore this idea with others. If we can create more yes spaces for staff, they in turn will create yes spaces for children. Right?

Thank you for sharing your ideas, and again, this is another one of those things I would love to share on MyPeers, so keep the ideas coming in. But I wanted to kind of talk about KWL chart, we probably all know and love these, have used these in the past. Well, we want to give it a little different spin. What if it was more about what do we know? But what do we wonder about? But then that last "L" is so exciting when it comes to reflective dialogues and that's how can we learn more? Right, so if we were to create this kind of a special chart with your education staff, to think about what they're curious about in this way, what could happen? Could home visitors decide, hey, we just saw this amazing webinar in the home visiting series around initiative and curiosity. What if we all kind of focused on that this month in our home visits and in our socialization's and then we could share back with one another what we're learning from our parents about what they see in their children. Then we can share again about resources that we found worked really well to support that parent child engagement.

What if teachers decided to look back at their observations that they've taken over the past three months and go, you know what, I put this down as a language and literacy observation, but really this child was expanding their vocabulary as a way to express their curiosity. Maybe there's some new nuggets of data that we didn't think about in that way. Because we weren't thinking approaches to learning, we were thinking just strictly language. It's another way for us to maybe think about as we're gathering our observations, is there another layer to what the kids are showing us through their behaviors and what they're doing every day in the classroom? Or in a home visiting setting? Or in their family childcare, right?

Be curious, wonder about different ways that we can learn more. We wanted to bring this little bit of research to you as well. This actually comes from Kathleen Cushman who worked with teachers and teenagers. Right? One can learn from teens, too, right, and they have some amazing ideas about what helps them stay motivated and curious in their classrooms. These were the principles that the teens brought forward. Wanted to be sure to bring these to you

because these may be helpful when you are in reflective supervision sessions with your home visitors or in group training with your education staff all together. These are some ideas to consider. How can you create a space that embraces not knowing, not having all the information, not being the expert? Having to search out the answers to the questions that are coming up in your group. Maybe asking fewer, but deeper questions. Right, getting underneath, getting to the why questions, open-ended like we tried to do with our children. Then this 20/80 concept, right? That idea that and we've covered this before in a previous webinar, where we really think about who are we engaging with? What the research has said is that, typically about 20% of people in the group are the ones being asked the questions. The ones that are getting that non-verbal like affirmation, that yeah keep talking, contribute, how can we better distribute that engagement through direct questions or other ways of participation to engage all of our team members in the learning? The other ones, too, are super important. Like we don't need to have the right answers. This goes back up again to not knowing. But more about the process of thinking through whether it be a problem or a new idea. Let's focus on that process of thinking about it together.

Number five is super important. I'm a mother of small children and I have practice this one daily. That is wait for it, pause, give space and, Katie, does this really well, because demonstrating that today during our session, which is, just take a deep breath. Allow space for thinking, reflection, and then sharing. Pausing, giving time for that thinking and that curiosity to kind of bubble up. Then finally, when that curiosity does bubble up, follow it, go where the curiosity leads the team. We try to encourage our teachers to do that in the classroom, we say follow the child's lead. Go where they're curious. Invest time in where they're investing time. How can we do that as education leaders with our staff? These six curiosity principles are also a challenge to think about how we can lead our team with these curiosity principles.

This is a fun one. This is when we think often when it comes to being the classroom with children. Right? This comes from a very recent webinar – I think it was a front porch, fall of last year – about asking good questions. What really tried to get into this particular slide is, moving from being the expert and telling the kids the answers, or showing them how to do something, to being more on the side as a co-explorer, a co-wonderer if you want, around learning new things. It can be super efficient, right, to tie a child's shoe for them. But instead if we were there along side to help them figure out how to do it, right? Or to explore a new idea that they've just come up with. How can we help them to add information that feeds that curiosity versus just giving them the right answer? What would it be like to be an education leader who's the guide on the, at the side versus the stage on the stage. I'm sure you've heard that many, many times. But how often do we allow ourselves to truly do that and sit beside our teams and think through and explore together? Another challenge for you to move to being a co-explorer in that space of curiosity.

Resources. You mentioned this, too, in your comments – which was so, so great – about peer learning opportunities in particular. Thank you for those who have really pulled that up to the surface. Often, we learn so much if we're just given the time to ask those questions of our colleagues across the hallway. Sometimes we can share the same building for hours and hours a

day, but never have time for meaningful conversations about our practice. Allowing that space where we can share, well, how did you do this and how did the kids respond when you tried that, would be so critically important and feeds into that curiosity and that initiative to share with one another. Then it also validates the work of our peers when we're able to learn from one another.

The other thing that we hope we modeled here today a bit is that second bullet, which is translating theory into practice. Katie and I tried to work in little bits of research here as we found that it applied to our content today. We hope that you found that meaningful. That's also something we hope that you can do with your teams as well. There's lots of amazing research out there happening every day that reinforces what we're doing in early learning. How powerful would it be for you to be able to share some research that affirms, that says yes, and the research finally caught up and agrees with you. What you're doing is amazing for kids and families.

As we're winding our time down, we want to be sure to give you more resources – this fits perfectly right under the resources bucket of the 5Rs – more resources to dig deeper with your teams. Not too long ago we created an In-service Suite all focused around STEAM. Right, so science, technology, engineering, art and math. It's fantastic and there are some amazing resources that are embedded in it. The In-service Suite itself has a PowerPoint, and it has video, and it has handouts. This one of the handouts that I especially love because it has questions. [Laughter] This would be great just to post in the classroom. Or to share with families, like here are some ways to encourage curiosity in your child. Right, let's ask some of these questions. What do you think will happen? I think those were some of the questions that came up to in our Q&A box. What are your predictions? Let's investigate, right? Creating that space to try new things. How powerful would it be for a child to hear what did you notice? Right? Have them tell you as the learner, the co-explorer with you what they're seeing. Definitely check this out, this is in the Leader's Digest, if you haven't pulled it down yet please do because the resources we're highlighting now are included. Such a nice quick and easy way to get through all of these. I want to share a couple more.

We have In-service Suites. These are really focusing in on those adult-child interactions. A lot of the work that Katie was highlighting earlier about how do you ask really good questions. How do you get kids engaged in the co-exploring with you? How can you follow the child's lead? These In-services Suites, if you're not familiar with them, are like training bundles. You can either do it by watching an overview video, or you can download the whole bundle. It's all on ECLKC, with presenters notes, and PowerPoint's, and handouts, etc., etc. Things that you can build your training around. It can be an hour, it could be two hours, it's up to you. You can really build it to kind of customize it for your team. We offer these for you as well as resources.

Then Teacher Time. Love, love, love Teacher Time. As we mentioned at the top of our time together, they are also exploring these learning domains, sub-domains of approaches to learning this year. They have supporting curiosity and initiative in infants and toddlers and for preschoolers. I think that ones coming up next month in May. Anyway, go check them out on

ECLKC and we'll also show where you can get them on Push Play. But they are available, so they're right to kind of see how they pair up with what we talk about here in the ed manager series. But then also in ECLKC there is, there are the STEAM series for infants and toddlers and for preschoolers. If you can't get enough – I mean steam, I don't think you can – there's even more for you there. Check out Teacher Time, especially if you work with center-based staff, or family childcare providers, that's really the target audience of those two.

All right, I don't know if we have, maybe have time for one question if there are questions that have popped up through our QA panel. I'll pause for a moment to check out and see if there is. I don't know that we have. Thank you, Krista. Amazing, so she ... Krista has popped into to and sent out to you all links to get to some of these great resources. All right. Let's see if I'm seeing any questions yet. But if you do, pop them in here. We can also put them on MyPeers.

Let me talk a little bit about MyPeers as we wind down. As I mentioned MyPeers, if you're not already there, please join us on MyPeers. You can use your phone right now if you're not a member of MyPeers, scan that code, get your membership and then find us in the education leaders community. That is where questions are asked of your peers across the country from everything from, oh, from "How do you observe teachers in the classroom? What are your policies on x, y, or z?" to "How do you stay curious?" We're going to post your answers to our QA during this session there, so you can see what others have said, so I hope you visit just for that reason alone, because you're going to be so inspired. But it's also places where we share new resources. Please join if you haven't already, we would love to have you join the community.

The other thing I wanted to be sure to share with you is Push Play. If you haven't already checked out Push Play, please do and this is also in the Leader's Digest. You can check out the QR code if you'd like to right away. But this is where our webinars live before they live on ECLKC. If you're super interested in sharing this webinar next week with someone else – because it takes a little while for us to get it on Push Play. But if you're interested in sharing this webinar with others, check Push Play. It's also a great way the other webinar series all together in one place. You can find Teacher Time the home visitor series, Coaching Corner ... those will all be together in one place. Our inclusion series is also there. Please check out Push Play if you haven't already, it's a fantastic place to be able to review, training you've already seen, or maybe webinars you'd like to share with others.

I think that might be our time today. I wanted to thank you all first for joining us. We know your hour with us is a precious time away from your program and away from your staff and the children and families. Thank you for dedicating this time with us. We hope that you will join us again for our final webinar in this series around approaches to learning where we will be so excited to talk with you about creativity. Katie and I had our first meeting about the creativity session, and we are already getting so excited for you to join us. It will be a fun one. I'll pause, Katie, if you'd like to say any final remarks and goodbyes. But otherwise have an amazing day. Katie, any last thoughts?

Katie: Yeah, just a big thank you. We really, really appreciate your participation and your engagement. I am just so grateful to know that all of you are supporting our education staff, our children, and our families. Obviously, this is a topic near and dear to my heart and it's so wonderful to see so many early childhood educators just really embrace it as well, so thank you.

Vanessa: Thank you, all. Stay curious. Bye.