

Implementing Early Head Start in Family Child Care

Conference Call Operator: Hi to everyone, and welcome to the Implementing Early Head Start in Family Child Care Conference Call. Today's call is being recorded. I would now like to turn over the conference to Kelly Claire of I-Link. Please go ahead.

Kelly Claire: Hello everyone, this is Kelly Claire. Before we get started with today's conference, I want to do a few housekeeping items. For today's session, we'll be taking all questions via the private chat tab. So if you look down to the lower left of your screen, you'll see a tab marked "private". Please click on that tab and choose "leaders and assistants." That will insure that everyone will see your question. Please send your questions over as the session is going today. We will address those at the end. But please don't wait till then. We want your questions. So please put them in there, as you think of them. Any technical questions, go ahead and send those over the same way and I will address those and help you out with those kind of questions. If the sound is not as high as you would like it to be, please go to the system settings and turn the speakers up as it is being presented over your speakers at this time. There is a "handraise" feature that we will not be using in today's session. So, please the "handraise" feature will not be acknowledged. So, questions again through the private chat in the lower left using the "leaders and assistants." And with that, I'd like to turn it over to Amy. Amy?

Amy Dapsauski: Thank you, Kelly. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Amy Dapsauski. I'm a Senior Writer and Training Specialist for the Early Head Start National Resource Center. I would like to welcome our audience from the Early Head Start and childcare communities as well as all of you support them. The Administration for Children's and Families is committed to ensuring that vulnerable children have access to and receive high quality comprehensive services. The Office of Head Start and the Office of Childcare want communities to explore and engage in these partnerships to coordinate service delivery across child care and Early Head Start to improve early care and education for at risk infants and toddlers and their families. Office of Head Start and Office of Childcare came together to promote high quality family childcare options because family childcare can be a great choice for families. Many parents would like for their infants and toddlers to be in a home setting. Family childcare not only offers a home based setting but also can offer parents more flexibility to meet their work hours and sometimes the opportunity to have siblings cared for together. Family childcare providers can face barriers when they want to increase the quality and comprehensiveness of their services.

Amy Dapsauski: In 2011 the Early Head Start for family Childcare Demonstration Project was launched to find innovative ways to tackle these challenges by bringing together Early Head Start programs and family childcare providers. Twenty-two Early Head Start grantees participated in that project and provided us with some very valuable lessons learned. Today we have some of those very same participants here to share successful strategies to foster strong collaborations between Early Head Start and family childcare providers to improve early care and education for at risk infants and toddlers

and their families. Welcome and thank you for joining us.

Amy Dapsauski: I'd like to share some of the goals we have. Goals of the Webinar are to explore the family childcare option within Early Head Start by hearing about the highlights of the Early Head Start for family childcare options from the Office of Head Start, support the expansion of quality family Amy Dapsauski: childcare within communities by listening about pathways and partnerships from the Office of Childcare. We want to explore strategies for building systems of seamless services to support and enhance quality by hearing from the Office of Head Start, Office of childcare, the National Association for Family Childcare and two Early Head Start grantees about comparing standards, benchmarks and policies relevant to Early Head Start grantees and family childcare providers discussing ways grantees have leverage funding through collaborations in their communities to maximize benefits and providing examples of ways to support family childcare professional development.

Amy Dapsauski: Now I would like to take a moment to welcome our panel. With me we have Angie Godfrey, Infant Toddler Program Specialist from the Office of Head Start, Dawn Ramsburg, Program Specialist from the Office of Childcare, Barbara Sawyer, the Director of Special Projects from the National Association for Family Childcare, Lee Turney, Director from the Leech Lake Early Childhood Development program in Cass Lake, Minnesota, Becky Littlewolf, Program Manager from the Leech Lake Childcare Services in Cass Lake, Minnesota, and Bill Castellanos, Director of the Children Youth and Family Services Division from the Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County in California. I would like to introduce Angie first, our Infant Toddler Program Specialist with Office of Head Start. Welcome Angie.

Angie Godfrey: Thank you Amy for that nice introduction and for the opportunity for us to discuss Early Head Start and Family Child Care again today. And I welcome all of you on behalf of the Office of Head Start. This has been a collaboration we've been engaged in for a while now and it's a very exciting time. But we're learning that there's still conversations that need to be had. We know that communities are eager to support the partnership and implementation of family child care and Early Head Start. And we're going to hear as Amy said from two programs who through a project that we did began or in some cases we're already implementing family child care. And will hear some more about their successes and their challenges working through the family childcare option and how important an option it's been for them. And we know that as Amy also said it's an option family's love especially for very young children. But as Dawn and I go out and talk about family child care and listen and Early Head Start and listen to folks in the field we're learning that there are still challenges. And one of the questions we get is how do family childcare providers and Early Head Start programs find each other? And then once they find each other how do they -- learn to understand how to work together, that they each bring something valuable to this partnership but that there's also a structure that's important to the work that they do together.

Angie Godfrey: So, we're going to talk about that today. We're going to talk about what some of the barriers are to implementation and how to begin within communities to expand the opportunities for families to have family child care services and Early Head Start. So today will be talking about meeting

family needs through this option. And the first thing those of you who know me know I always start with the Head Start program performance standards. There just an amazing structure to help us in local prime local programs to find and implement the work that we do. So the first one you see here is the definition of the family childcare program option. And again I'm not going to read it. I know you've seen it several times but it really is Head Start and Early Head services provided to children receiving childcare primarily in the home or home-like settings. And I think that's the definition of the family childcare option but it's just a start. And the other to expand on the option 130635 really does give -- it's much more lengthy than I have it here on this slide. I was just giving you the highlights but this gets into the structure of it, how you implement the family childcare program option, hours of operation, serving children with disabilities space indoor and outdoor, yes whether you're in a rural setting in a home or in an apartment. There are requirements for both indoor and outdoor space, the role of policy council which is important in all program options. And then there's special requirements around facilities, the safety plan and the injury prevention and then emergency plans and licensing requirements. And all of these again as you look at those they give you -- they bring the definition to life in terms of how to implement. And they answer a lot of questions. One of the questions that Dawn and I get a lot for example is contracting with providers and how does that work.

Angie Godfrey: And I think that they key is for many programs they do contract with family childcare providers. And it's using the standards both NAFCC standards National Association of Family Child Care and Head Start standards to ensure that everything that's required to meet the needs of children and to implement quality services are met through that contract. And I know that that still comes up a lot and hopefully we'll answer more of those questions today too. Then there are additional standards, 130620 program staffing, again it's lengthy. The thing I always like to remind folks about program staffing is that you're really -- we're talking numbers here. How do you staff a family childcare option? And unlike some of the other options there is the federal requirements through Head Start, there's the state licensing requirements for childcare. And then there are oftentimes for family childcare there are local code of regulations or local standards.

Angie Godfrey: So it's another area that's important for both Head Start and family childcare to be very clear about what has to happen around licensing and standards and ensuring that you're meeting those. And they particularly have conversations about staffing around numbers and ages of children. Head Start requirements around numbers of children in a family childcare home only go up to age six where many states go through age 12. So it's -- again, it's important that you really look at the standards and that you ask us questions about them if you do have questions. And then the last one is the -- it's the second, yes 130620 I and that's very clear that there even many, many more standards and that you must meet all of parts 1304 and 1308 which are pretty extensive. We know it can be overwhelming but we think again that the important thing in looking at all the standards is understanding them. One of the things I'm most excited about today is that Barbara Sawyer is going to kind of talk to us about that both - - what is a crosswalk with NAFCC standards in Early Head Start. Because I think that sometimes confusion where -- and that's a barrier out in the community. So I'm very anxious to hear what Barbara's going to be saying today about standards for accreditation and what everyone's going to say. And with that I'm going to turn it over to my partner and colleagues from the Office of Childcare, Dawn Ramsburg.

Dawn Ramsburg: Thank you Angie and again thank all of you for joining us today and I would like to welcome all of you on behalf of the Office of Childcare. Angie and I are always very pleased when we can share some of the experiences that we had from the project that we are working together over the past couple of years. And so we're also pleased that you all can join us today as we continue to share the lessons learned and success stories and continue to hear the challenges that you all are having so that we can keep thinking about how to keep working together ourselves to get these messages out. Because both the Office of Childcare and the Office of Head Start really want to bring these partnerships to life, you know, in your communities. And we think that the work that we had on the project really gave us a good examples of how the quality of care can be increased and how comprehensive services can be brought together for children in low-income families and how that really benefits not only the children in the family's and the communities. And so for the Office of Childcare which administers the Federal Childcare Development Fund and that provides childcare assistance subsidies for low-income families to access childcare but it also provides funds to improve quality. So there -- it both -- it not only addresses helping again the children and families but there's part of it around improving quality. We see these partnerships between Early Head Start and family childcare as an important strategy towards improving quality.

Dawn Ramsburg: And it's a way for states, territories and tribes which is who we work with. We don't work directly with programs the way Early Head Start does but we see that for our states, territories and tribes you can use these partnerships as a strategy towards improving quality. And again for those -- for the states, territories and tribes who've been hearing this from the Office of Childcare we have a framework that we've been putting out around improving quality and we call it our Pathways and Partnerships. And there are some key components of that that I really think these partnerships lend themselves to and so one is in the area of professional development. Our goal there is to make sure that staff in childcare programs whether it -- in this case it's in family childcare programs are really on a pathway to improving quality. And like I said the CCDF funds have focused on that. And so we're really looking at how that can happen. And we think that by bringing family childcare providers together with Early Head Start as Angie was just talking about Early Head Start and through the Head Start performance standards there are standards that are laid out as far as expectations for staff.

Dawn Ramsburg: And we think that these partnerships are a way to leverage that because again as Angie was saying family childcare providers not only having to deal with their local standards but also the state licensing standards. And so trying to help navigate all those systems using the Head start performance standards is one way to look at how to build that pathway to higher quality from the professional development point of view. And then on the -- a second part of that framework is around quality improvement. And there we're looking from a program level. And so again through the Head Start performance standards there are pieces laid out as far as what programs can be doing both within the programs towards improving quality but then also the comprehensive services that are brought into the programs around quality improvement. So again we see these partnerships as a strategy towards that pathway.

Dawn Ramsburg: And then finally we're looking at improving continuity of care for the low income children. And I think that through these partnerships eligibility and some of the policies can be aligned that makes it a more stable environment, you know, as a more quality environment for children. So this is a very important -- it's very important to us and it's a very important strategy for us. And so like I said, we're pleased to talk about that. And so then I want to turn and just give you a couple of examples. And I know Bill and Lee and Becky are going to go in more detail from their point of view.

Dawn Ramsburg: But I think what I wanted to share is one -- another team that participated in our project from Fairfax County, Virginia and wanted to use them as a model for how both the federal Early Head Start funds and the federal childcare funds and specifically existing funds. So, you know, when Angie and I did this project we didn't give programs more money directly. We were trying to find ways of using existing dollars and existing strengths of both programs in bringing those together. And I think the Fairfax County example lays out a model for doing that. So I wanted to highlight that. And so what they -- what Office of Children in Fairfax County does is they draw on both their federal Early Head Start dollars as well as their CCDF dollars. And they're looking at increasing the number of childcare slots of high quality. And so they've got five different pieces to their model. And one is layering their funding. And so they use their childcare money to pay for the children in the family childcare homes. And their -- those homes are then following the state and county rules as far as provider payments and data reporting another policies.

Dawn Ramsburg: And then they use their Early Head Start money to pay for provider quality enhancements. And they also have higher reimbursement rates that they're able to access the Early Head Start. And then they have staff through Early Head Start that work with providers and families. And then they also use those Early Head Starts to -- funds to fill in gaps for the subsidies. So for those of you familiar with the subsidy program you know that family eligibility is tied to work requirements, you know, families have to be in work or in school. And if there's a lapse in that perhaps because it's summertime and so the parent isn't in school Early Head Start funds are used in this model to supplement that so again from the continuity of care the kids don't fall out. They also have a piece of their model where they have separate but coordinated staffing. And I think that's really important, you know, that they keep true to the requirements under both federal sets of federal funds but they really have coordinated their staffing responsibilities to make sure that kind of the bureaucracy doesn't get in the way I think. And so, you know, they have the childcare staff who work on, you know, the eligibility as far as subsidy and getting arrangements. And then they have the Early Head Start specialists who help review with that and they work on providing the comprehensive services.

Dawn Ramsburg: And next I think that they both have -- part of their model is looking at increasing program quality and partnerships with community colleges. So again they have staff that provide the support, the mentoring and the TA to help the provider promote children's school readiness. And they have -- they help to make sure that the providers are meeting the Federal Early Head Start requirements as far as the education and professional development qualifications. And so again they've built these partnerships with community colleges to help as far as getting the CDA and providing access to that training and education.

Dawn Ramsburg: Next, part of their model is looking at the linkages in terms of linking comprehensive support for family and child development. And so, you know, again ensuring the families have access to the services as required by the Head Start performance standards, the screenings, referrals, health and nutrition services. And so again they've set up their model so that piece is covered between the partnership. And then, finally they've got a piece that looks at the policy alignment. So they've looked at how they might -- because one of the requirements under CCDF is that families pay a co-payment. They've looked at how those could be waived for participating families since all the families receiving Early Head Start are below the federal poverty level and the CCDF fund does allow the copayment to be waived if the family's below the poverty level. They've kind of smoothed that out -- smoothed that process out and they've looked at extending redetermination periods. So that families aren't having to go on and off. You know, if they're found eligible for Early Head Start then they can stay on childcare for that length of time.

Dawn Ramsburg: And so just on the next page here it kind of just is a visual. I won't walk through the details since I just was during that. But again it just lays out for you kind of how they've looked at their existing federal dollars, tried to lay this out. And so, you know, again wanted to just share this because I think what Angie and I hear is people just trying to figure out well how do I bring these together? So we wanted to highlight this model for everyone. And like I said as we keep going we'll have a couple more examples. But for now I want to turn it over to Barbara Sawyer to talk to us a little bit more about NAFCC and how they fit into all of this. So Barbara?

Barbara Sawyer: Thank you so much Dawn. And like all of the others on the call I'm sure you'll hear that we're all very pleased to be talking about family childcare and Early Head Start and how those really partner together, the kinds of things that we can do. Before I talk a little bit about the National Association for Family Childcare I'd really like to define for you what we talked about as NAFCC when we're talking about family childcare. We believe that it's a unique part of the early childhood delivery system in this country, that family childcare is something that happens in every community. But even more importantly than that when we're talking about family childcare we're talking about caregivers who have chosen to offer care for their pay in their own home, whether they're men or women. These are people who have made an intentional career choice to offer care for other people's children. Intentional, using that language to us, means that providers are regulated and they meet the requirements of regulation in their community whatever those requirements are. And as I get a little farther and talk about NAFCC accreditation I'll talk about why that's an important thing for us and the definition of family child care. Family child care providers typically care for small groups of children. When it's one caregiver they may be caring for four to six children. When it's two caregivers when there's a provider and assistant they could care for groups of up to 12 children but they are relatively small groups of children and they are typically groups of children of mixed ages so the providers don't have children all of all one age in their program.

Barbara Sawyer: Family child care providers because they're running their own business are often able to be a little more flexible than another kind of child care environment in a community. And so they

have the ability to accommodate unusual schedules or needs of families in their community. And whether people recognize it or not, we know that family child care is an integral part of the -- of the delivery system around the country. It happens in every community and it happens around the clock in many communities. Want to talk a little bit about what's unique in childcare and I'm also going to talk a little bit about what's the same. In family child care I just mentioned that the group size is usually smaller than in other environments and that it's a variety of ages of children. It's typically one or two caregivers who are with the children throughout the day. And for NAFCC that's one of the real indicators and one of the things about family child care that we really believe is key. Those relationships that are developed with that provider and their families are so important to the health and welfare of young children and to their families as a whole unit. So the man or woman who is the primary caregiver is usually the one who's without -- who is with the children throughout the day.

Barbara Sawyer: We believe that family child care really is the definition of continuity of care for young children because it's the same provider who is with them not only throughout the day but also throughout often a very long time in a child's life span. The provider who greets the children first thing in the morning is typically the one who says goodbye to the children and the families at the end of the day. They're the person who puts children down for naps and the same person who gets them up when they wake up from their naps. And that doesn't always happen in larger environments. Sometimes those caregivers might change. So that really is one of the characteristics of family child care that is very unique.

Barbara Sawyer: As I mentioned earlier it can be more flexible because the providers are typically setting their own schedules and making their own plans around the needs of both their family and the children and families that they have in care. So often family child care is the available care for families who might be working on nontraditional schedules, especially weekend, second and third shift families. Family child care is easily able to adapt to that kind of a schedule. The other thing that is often unique about family child care is that the relationships are not typically just with the child or just with the parent who drops off and picks up with the child but they're with entire families. Siblings are together so it's easy for relationships to develop between the provider and the children in a family. But there are also those relationships that are with the other families in care. Those relationships in family child care often are long term. The strong bonds that are formed in family child care really allow providers to stay in touch with children who have enrolled in their program as very young children often through high school and college. Very often you hear providers talk about going to high school graduations, going to weddings of children who have been in their program when they were younger.

Barbara Sawyer: And providers are now beginning to care for second generation of children who were in their program. They may be caring for that child's child now which is an unusual but very, very relationship-based approach to family child care that doesn't happen in other areas. The other thing that we know that's unique about family child care is even though the individual structure may look different from community to community, in family child care it's always done in a residence of some sort. It's not done in a building that was designed for something else. It's done in

what is typically a home environment. There are obviously some things that are the same. Children's development follows a trajectory. And so it doesn't matter whether a child is cared for in another kind of child care environment or in family child care. Those developmental milestones are the same for all children. The needs of individual children and families are very much the same in family child care or in another environment. Family child care providers have the same challenges from communities and from their families of providing high quality care and especially when resources are limited. They face the very same challenges that all environments providing care for young children really are struggling with, especially in times of very, very, very limited resources.

Barbara Sawyer: The commitment that family child care providers make to meeting the needs of children and families is the very same commitment that caregivers throughout the early childhood profession really do offer to the children and families in their care. And the professional needs of the family child care provider -- and you've heard both Dawn and Angie talk about professional development and professional needs. The professional needs of the family child care provider are the same as they are in other environments. Family child care providers are interested in certificate programs in higher education. In many of the states where providers are operating there are requirements for ongoing professional development for providers every year. And so those are some of the things that are very specifically the same about the environment no matter where the care is happening.

Barbara Sawyer: Let me tell you a little bit about the National Association for Family Child Care and then I want to talk just a little bit. Angie mentioned the crosswalk with accreditation standard and the Head Start program performance standards. And I want to give you a couple of examples of areas where they really are very, very supportive of each other. The National Association for Family Child Care as you can see is a nonprofit organization. Our sole mission is to promote quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care.

Barbara Sawyer: And finally we operate the only family child care accreditation program that is solely family child care accreditation, the only one available currently in the country. We have been doing accreditation since 1987. Ours while it was originally developed as a tool for center-based programs and was modified the current model that we're using now really is developed specifically for the family childcare field. It includes both eligibility requirements and 289 specific standards in the five content areas of relationships, the environment, developmental learning activities, safety and health and professional and business practices. As you'll see in just a moment many of those are very similar. It might be slightly different language but many of those standards are very similar to the Head Start program performance.

Barbara Sawyer: And so let me take just a minute to look at some of those specific standards. And Angie actually already mentioned a couple of these in what she was talking about. The requirement for indoor space in our accreditation standards we have very specific language about needing 35 square feet of usable space per child inside. We know that young children need room to move and to grow, to have

large motor activity inside when they're not able to go outside. And so we know that there is a need to really define in family child care; there is a need to really define what that means.

Barbara Sawyer: What does it mean to have outdoor play space? And so that's one of the areas -- and there are a number of others that I just picked out -- in the program space and environment just to give you a little bit of an idea about the way that the accreditation standards and the Head Start program performance standards support each other. While the performance standards, call it human resources management NAFCC looks at it as relationships. But we're talking about the same kinds of things that the provider really knows the families in her care and that she's able to individualize the child care program for the parents whether that is a specific request about a child's physical needs or whether it's a change around their work schedule. That's an expectation of accreditation. I think the standard about injury prevention obviously is one that many times as we hear conversation around how do we know that family childcare providers are really providing safe and healthy environments for young children, knowing that particularly when family childcare providers are accredited or when they're using the standards as a self-study and quality improvement, there are expectations around this particular area. Providers can see or hear children at all times and the children two and younger are in the provider's line of sight. Those are important things for you all as Early Head Start programs or people who are interested in offering that as a community option need to have the comfort of knowing -- those are things that are expected in any high quality family child care program. And so those are just a few examples of the way that the performance standards and the NAFCC accreditation standards themselves support each other.

Barbara Sawyer: I want to take just a minute and look at the eligibility requirements for NAFCC accreditation and how those also support the Head Start program performance standards. The program performance standards have one that speaks specifically to local regulations and requirements. In NAFCC accreditation we expect that providers will meet the highest level of regulation to operate a family child care program that's available in their area and that they will be in compliance with the regulations at that authorized body. We know that there is a program performance standard around enrollment in a CDA or in an Associate or Bachelor's degree program within a specified period of time. NAFCC expects providers to have at least 18 months experience as a provider before they have an observation visit as part of their accreditation process or if they are involved in Head Start and Early Head Start because of the kinds of supports that you have built into the program they can have that observation visit with 12 months of experience. But there is still that need for providers to really demonstrate that they have experience in this field and that they are pursuing training and education. We require at least 90 clock hours of family childcare related that's dated within three years of their application for accreditation. As part of that they are required to maintain first aid and pediatric CPR certification just like your program performance standards require. Also want to take just a minute to look at some of the similarities between the Child Development Associate Credential and NAFCC accreditation. While they're slightly different they are very complementary processes. And we know that that is one of the areas where NAFCC accreditation really supports the kinds of expectations that Head Start and Early Head Start have of high quality programs.

Barbara Sawyer: The CDA is recognized probably actually even recognized to a higher degree but it is recognized around the country as a credential in early childhood. NAFCC is a process of quality improvement and professional development. Both have clock hour requirements and both of them require a demonstration of competency with either the content areas or the 13 functional areas in CDA. I think it's important to really look at the fact that each of them requires some

outside observation and NAFCC accreditation, that observation is conducted by a trained observer who does not have a previous relationship or knowledge of the provider or program that they're observing. There are some specific requirements around how many children need to be present for that observation. The CDA is administered by the Council for Professional Recognition and the NAFCC accreditation is obviously administered by the National Association for Family Child Care.

Barbara Sawyer: One of the things that we know is that providers often are interested in pursuing both the CDA and NAFCC accreditation and very often will seek some advice about which ones of those should come first. We don't believe that there is a right or a wrong answer to whether CDA should be first and then accreditation or accreditation should be first and then you should do your CDA. Some of the answer to that depends on where the resource are. There are communities where CDA is really well-established and providers pursue that first and then do accreditation self-study. In other communities accreditation facilitation projects have been operating for many, many years and so providers become accredited before they pursue their CDA. Often providers decide that their work on both of those at the same time which is certainly an option for providers. NAFCC and the Council for Professional Recognition are operating under a reciprocal agreement that really recognizes that training and education are critical to quality and to professional development in the field.

Barbara Sawyer: And so there is an agreement that does not require providers to submit duplicate verification of their documentation for training requirements. Want to – before I wrap up -- I want to just really look at I already mentioned that they are complementary processes. But I think it's important to really emphasize that the Council for Professional Recognition and the National Association for Family Child Care obviously encourage providers to pursue both. But both organizations are also working very hard to encourage providers to look at professional development in a way that meets their needs and that it really supports what they're doing as professionals and so that it's not a matter of either/or but the we work as sister organizations to promote high quality family child care. You'll now be hearing from Becky Littlewolf and Lee Turney. As you heard they are with Leech Lake Childcare Services and Leech Lake Early Childhood Development. So Becky and Lee the floor is yours.

[Inaudible, as the web call experiences technical difficulties. Please stand by.]

Becky Littlewolf: Good afternoon. My name is Becky Littlewolf and I'm the Program Manager for the Leech Lake Childcare Development Fund. Our service area providers includes 24 family child care and 14 centers which include a traditional childcare center and Early Head Start programs along with school age. We offer a variety of services to support children, families and childcare providers. Some of those services include our Early Learning Centers where we offer full day comprehensive services in our

communities. We offer a childcare assistance program which provides funding to assist families with childcare costs. We also recruit and license providers within our service area. And with that we monitor to ensure compliance with our Leech Lake band of Ojibway licensing requirements. We provide outreach to our communities and develop and maintain relationships with local agencies. We also offer and provide professional development and training opportunities to our licensed nonlicensed providers along with our families. And with that I'd like to introduce Lee Turney.

Lee Turney: Good afternoon. I'm Lee and I'm the Early Childhood Development Director here at Leech Lake. Other programs that come under the umbrella here at Leech Lake in addition to Becky's Childcare Development Fund Program are a federal and state Head Start program serving 192 federal and 44 state children in six centers around the reservation. We also have the federally funded Early Head Start serving 60 children and 12 pregnant moms and the state early start family childcare option serving six children and two family childcare homes. We also facilitate to stay childcare resource and referral grants, one that serves the Leech Lake Reservation and the other providing services to the 11 federally recognized tribes that reside here in Minnesota. I think the topic of our whole meeting was it all begins with relationships. And we wanted to say that it all begins with relationships because, you know, I think that for us was the basis of our successes and our ability to implement the Early Head Start and family childcare option with few, I should say few, you know, barriers or bumps in the road.

Lee Turney: Part of that relationship building we do internally by meeting very often with our -- within our administration. And just so that we share program updates and where we're going, what we're doing, what things do we have in common, how can we support each other. And we figured on early on that even though we had different regulations that determined how we operated our programs we were still serving the same people, the providers and the families and the children and so it was our challenge to find a way to make that happen. We share a vision here at Leech Lake that each child should have an access to quality care and education and we needed to look beyond what our separate programs were doing at that point in time.

Lee Turney: We also wanted to raise the quality of care and go beyond what the license requirements were asking. We felt that yes family child cares should have the opportunity to pursue such goals, license requirements would be a baseline and that we would provide the direction and opportunity to raise the bar above those initial baseline requirements. We believe our relationship with the family child care providers has been built over time. And I guess in my mind I look at us as being good friends. In our relationship it was like taking them on a walk down an old road where we could talk about this opportunity that Early Head Start and family child care could provide to them. But to our relationship and the bridges that we built through the years it was a walk with two old friends because they were more than willing, able, and capable of taking on the challenges that we talked about through our whole process. So it was nice to know that, you know, we had the capacity but we also had the family child care providers that also showed the ability to accept the challenge and help us implement the Early Head Start and family child care option here on Leech Lake.

Becky Littlewolf: Our vision was to build up capacity and the quality of care for infants and toddlers. We

did this so by building of community of support. We did a self-evaluation of where we have been and what we saw as needs for our communities is important for us to have our community support us. Therefore, one of the resources we used was our community assessments. Partnerships, our partners include Indian Health Service, our Child Welfare Division, our Health Division, our ECFV program and the CCR&R. We partnered throughout the years on training for staff and providers. Our training committee has worked to bring training and education for both family child care and our Head Start and Early Head Start staff. Our CCDF program and our Head Start and Early Head Start have worked together to provide comprehensive wraparound services for children, 0 to 5, by means of early learning centers in four communities.

Becky Littlewolf: We strive to build on our current relationships we've had with each other and with our providers. We have seen that we need to work with providers and support them in providing services to children and families. Neither program can do it alone. We wanted to introduce the concept to our family childcare providers. We broke it down in steps. We held an Annual Infant Toddler Fair where we introduce the project and the option of Early Head Start Services and family childcare. We also brought together our community agencies to share their resources and for them to begin building relationships with each other. During this process we also provided presentations. We had an Early Head Start family childcare demographics presentation by Sue Heisler who looked at our similarities and the

differences in family childcare and Early Head Start providers so they could really begin to get to know one another. We had Marsha Driscoll who presented on brain development in infants and toddlers and how important the care that they're providing to our -- care to our children daily is to our -- is important to our children. And then we wrapped it up with a presentation by Dr. Terry Rose about the importance of comprehensive services for children and families and how they accomplish this within their own programs. Incorporating our comprehensive services we did this -- we worked together to update our program policies for both programs to include this option in our service plans and our work plans.

Lee Turney: What we wanted to share with this picture here -- and again these are pictures of our children in one of our family childcare settings. You know, was -- and I go back to the slide that Barbara shared about the uniqueness of family childcares and I thought how that struck home and how that really talked everything about what this picture -- we wanted this picture to say to all of you is that, you know, the uniqueness of that program option, you know, we wanted to explore the strengths. You know, we've look at how important it was that how children are learning across all age groups in that family childcare setting. And we thought that, you know, that was a strength right from the beginning.

Lee Turney: The other piece that we talked about was the parental choice. You know, and the option that we're able to present to parents around having their child in one setting throughout the day but also being able to receive comprehensive services and also being able to address the flexibility of what the family's daily schedule is and so that the child wasn't missing out and that they could be included and not left out of the education process.

Becky Littlewolf: We wanted to build upon our knowledge and experience with the Early Head Start performance standards our tribal and state childcare regulations. We had Sue Heisler come and provide a crosswalk of all three of those regulations to our family childcare providers and our Early Head Start staff. We wanted to inform them in an approachable manner so that they were open to learning about the option. We wanted to determine how our regulations such as ratios and capacities may affect their program. We wanted to be able to listen to their concerns and strategize to overcome their barriers but stay within the regulations. And then we went into a more in-depth performance standards training. We wanted to make sure that our family childcare providers had the skills and knowledge to implement them. We wanted our family childcare providers to be a part of the process, not to determine their program for them but to work together to implement our Head Start performance standards within their program. We wanted to provide opportunities to have their questions addressed and we were there to listen to their concerns. We all had one question is how can we do this. But we approached it as a team to make it work within our communities.

Lee Turney: Our next slide talks a little bit about the selection of our family childcare providers. And, you know, this was -- we thought that it would present a problem at the beginning being that we geographically are spread out quite a bit over the reservation here. And we also wanted to make sure that, you know, we were -- in our selection that we were going to meet the needs, existing needs of parents and the children on the reservation. And so location was a consideration. But by the cooperation or the interest that was exhibited by the family childcare providers location became less of a concern because we had such a great turnout from our family childcare providers just through our initial meet and greet to just say hi here's who we are and again here's what we have and what we would like to do.

Lee Turney: We also talked about there -- the space and areas that, you know, and that they would need to provide to services. And we wanted to make sure that the education process where we are providers in relationship to their requirements, also wanted to ensure that the licensing -- they were in compliance with all licensing requirements. The other part was I guess, where they were as a provider and their willingness to meet the new requirements. But we found that the majority of them were so open-minded to building the quality within their family child care that it -- there was no question about what and how we do that. But, you know, a lot of them were doing a lot of those quality pieces already. And so this was just a natural fit, you know, for the majority of our family child care providers. We wanted to make sure that, you know, again the people that we're presenting to and the ones that were interested were, you know, go-getters, that they were willing to, you know, to stay with the project, commit to it and follow through with all of the work that we were going to do. And we found that to be true. They were very forthright in their efforts. And it has shown through today, you know, by their continued participation and our continued success in offering this program option.

Lee Turney: I think what is also important was our -- the team that we had here within Early Head Start that met with them, met with us as we developed the program, the monitoring, you know, the checks and the balances -- all of those pieces -- making sure that, you know, that we had every base covered. It was a real nice atmosphere, you know, and the relationships just seemed to grow, you know,

from what it was when we initially got together to where we are at today. And that brings me to -- where are we at today? We currently have the two family childcare providers that are providing services to six children and they're serving five families in that setting. We include our Early Head Start and family care option into our service plans in all of our policies. Early Head Start specialists will, you know, they visit and monitor the program and their specific content areas.

Lee Turney: Our CCDF monitors quarterly for the licensing requirements. They have decided and they finally have come into their policy council. They met at our last meeting and figured out how they were going to provide the input from their families to get representation on our policy council. And we meet about bimonthly as a team just to do a check-in where we're at, how we're doing, anything that is a problem for them, what do we see coming up on, you know, on -- in the future in the short period of time. And so we all come together with our two family childcare providers and get them that meeting done and it's quite -- and it's a good exchange of ideas and thoughts.

Lee Turney: One of the important pieces I think that was as we went through this process was a support mechanism. You know, how do we -- how can we support them through the implementation process, you know, what type of fiscal supports did they need, what type of administrative programmatic supports did they need? And we found that to what are the things that the (AEHS) program, what were we willing to contribute to the enhancement piece of it as far as it goes to service delivery. We talked a little bit about the CCDF funds and what they would be doing. One of the great things is that they, the CCDF through the years has provided that professional development opportunity. And so they've gotten both of our providers through the CDA program but also have gotten one of our FCC providers, she just graduated this past spring with her AA degree in early childhood. So when I say that we've been together for a long time we have been. And we've, you know, we've been there with the family childcare providers and have worked long and hard on the relationship that we've built with them.

Lee Turney: One of the things that we also wanted to do is make sure that we promote the family and childcare option, you, throughout all of our communities. And we continue to do that, you know, through our recruitment process and an informational process with any of our future FCC providers.

And currently there is one that we're working with, you know, that is interested in becoming an FCC DHS FCC site. So that's encouraging and, you know, we -- where we don't get pushy we sure enjoy, you know, the opportunity to enhance and build the quality of care that our native children are receiving here in Leech Lake. One of the pieces also that, you know, we talked -- I talked a little bit about the stipends and we do. We, you know, we're able to provide enhancements on, you know, that provides enhancements for the services that they're receiving. We also give support in health and hygiene, educational supplies and equipment, professional development. So we -- early Head Start provides, you know, support in those areas, diapers, you know, the formula -- those kind of things. So everything that we provide here in our Early Head Start centers is an extension out to our family childcare providers so that they can again continue to provide the quality care in their setting.

Becky Littlewolf: And from a parent's view of many of the comments that we've gotten from parents is,

you know, they're very pleased with the opportunity. It's nice to have all of the children in one setting with the same teachers from zero and they're hoping to go up to five. That continuity of care is so important with their children.

Lee Turney: One of the interesting pieces that it's where are we going? You know, and we are so committed to building the capacity up, you know, and the quality of services that our children and families receive out in the communities that we'll continue to build these strong partnerships and collaborations. And at any point that we can we will, you know, continue to build the Early Head Start FCC program option here. But we enjoy those coming back with our providers and reevaluating the program and reflecting on what work, you know, has been accomplished and where are we going. And it's nice to do that with both the providers and our management team because then we get a good picture of the entire program and, you know, can deal then with any of the needs that are rising. But again we're committed at expanding this option should the need and the desire be there.

Becky Littlewolf: And that leads us into, you know, let us put our minds together and see what future we can make for our children's (inaudible).

Lee Turney: So that gives you an overview of our Early Head Start and Family Childcare program option that we exercise here at Leech Lake. I've got to say that we were part of the initial demonstration project. From the day one that Becky and I discussed this program option we were all in from the beginning. We've only seen it as a great opportunity to bring back to Leech Lake to implement here on Leech Lake by providing another alternative, another option, you know, for our children and families. And so what -- anything that we can do to enhance the lives of our children and families here on Leech Lake we are going to continue to do them.

Lee Turney: With that I would like to introduce the next presenter. And it's Mr. Bill Castellanos. And Bill is the Director of the Children Youth and Family Services Division Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County in California. Bill?

Bill Castellanos: Great. Can everybody hear me now? Oh, great, because I was concerned when Lee was having difficulties in terms of his audio, I thought I was going to have the same problem. So anyway thank you very much Lee and Becky. It's interesting because we've been in the business for over 20 some years in the family share care business. And for the migrant we've been involved with the Migrant Seasonal Head Start Family Childcare about 15 years ago. So it was interesting to hear some of these stories and where we were, sort of live those. And it's also very interesting to see the advancement and how people are sort of embracing this model as another option.

Bill Castellanos: And I also want to congratulate the Head Start because at one time they were somewhat reluctant, in terms of this model, but the fact that they seem to be embracing this as an option for families -- I really commend them on their efforts. My focus is going to be primarily on the benefits -- and benefits to the children and families.

Bill Castellanos: And also to...I'm having some difficulty in trying to change my slides. I don't have those little arrows. Can somebody control it?...Lee are you to maybe help me. Kelly? Are you still able to hear me?

Lee Turney: I'm able to hear you Bill.

Bill Castellanos: I'm just having some difficulties in moving the slides. I don't have those indicators -- those arrows that we had yesterday.

Conference Call Operator: Bill, this is the HSNRC. You can just give us the go-ahead and we'll move your slides for you.

Bill Castellanos: Why don't you go ahead. So, the first part of it -- and I really appreciate that -- the difficulties that we're having here.

Bill Castellanos: So my focus first of all was going to be focusing on the benefits to children. And a lot of these things have already been said as to some of the benefits that people have experienced and some of the things that they're hoping to focus on. So the fact that we have a continuation of care for children as I mentioned before my focus is going to be on the migrant seasonal Head Start, sort of very unique program. And the hours and the challenges for this population is very unique.

Bill Castellanos: So the family child care model really seemed to blend into and really complement the programs that we're doing in terms of our center base. So we have -- one of the advantages and benefits for children is that we have -- many of our children that might stay with the provider for over two or three years we use the family child care as a model to really serve children from birth to 3. We have our centers centered around -- we have our family child care providers centered around close by our centers. So we do have a very comprehensive transition plan for our children that are in family child care. In some cases we serve children longer because in some areas in California we have -- we do not have a center.

Bill Castellanos: So we serve children from birth to five years of age. And the requirements as you know is very different for preschoolers so we need to make sure that all the requirements in terms of school readiness, class, and all these other requirements from Head Start are also implemented and the providers are also well trained. Many of our children as I say stayed with the providers for several years.

Bill Castellanos: And the other thing that I also like to say, that many -- we have about 20% of our providers are -- have either a husband and wife team or they hired a male as part of their staff. And I think that's very important that you see more and more males involved in the area of child development. Now the benefits to providers, the benefits to -- I'm sorry, to families it really gives the families another option. It also gives us a different option to serve children in smaller groups, to serve children close to their homes and also close to their work. I've mentioned that we have a whole team of providers. We have approximately over 110 providers. And this has, you know, this has taken over 15 years to develop this network of providers.

Bill Castellanos: And so and we serve approximately 400 children. So it's interesting to see when Lee and Becky talked about the two providers and their six children, well we started that 15 years ago. We had approximately about maybe 20 children and maybe four or five providers. So we have we have been able to expand that. And again it's been something that has been really a benefit to the community and also to the families.

Bill Castellanos: The other thing about the benefits to the families is the hours that are more likely to meet the needs of our families. Many of our migrant families start work at 4:30 in the morning. And so we have many of our children that start about that time in order to make sure that it doesn't have conflict with their -- with the hours of work. And also the other thing that one of the requirements for our providers and for the families is that they are required for us, for the migrant seasonal Head Start, the providers really need to be bilingual or monolingual Spanish. They really hopefully will be able to reflect the culture of the families that they're working with. And again that's one of the things that's so, so important to us. We do have -- so families feel very comfortable. There is a connection with the providers. As I said when they're there for two or three years they have been able to make those relationships which is so, so important. But the providers I say -- we provide training for the providers on a regular basis. We have pre-conferences and conferences that are rescheduled for our providers. We have a 2-1/2 day conference for providers. And really the training is focusing mainly on the performance standards, the new regulations -- anything that's new in the area of state requirements. But it also provides growth in terms of professional development. One of the other things for the providers it also provides a steady income.

Bill Castellanos: There's a reliable income for the providers. We are not the sole source. That's one of the things that we work very close. We're not the main source of their income. We hopefully, sometime many of our times we have at least 50%, 75% of the children that they serve are from our program. We encourage them because they're a private business, small business. We enter into contracts. We renew them every year. One of the things I think that's also important I think Lee sort of talked about the relationships with the providers is that we also make sure that we take quite a bit of time to screen the providers. We interview them. We actually go into their past history to see if there's any licensing violations. So we are very selective as to the individuals that we select. The benefits to us and also to the community we can serve pockets of children throughout California.

Bill Castellanos: We serve currently about -- we serve nine counties in California. So we cover a very large area all the way up from close to Sacramento all the way to the Mexican border. So having a network of family child care to serve the moving population in terms of the migrant, it really, really complements to make sure that they're truly served. Some of the other benefits of the agency is that that startup because many of the providers that we work with are already established. We also have the potential to strengthen the community. We also have because we also -- the funds that we invest in the providers in their homes there also is also an investment for the community. They brought in -- they bring in money into the community which I think is so important. Some of the other supports that we provide for our providers as I mentioned before is that we meet with the family child care and we train

them on the performance standards.

Bill Castellanos: And one of the things that we've sort of took upon ourselves to start training -- in California it's really not required to have a CDA. That really in California you're required to have units and certain credentials. CDA at this point has not been really recognized as a reliable method of -- in terms of credentialing. So but the Head Start recognizes the CDA. So we have been for the last several years been pushing and training our providers to obtain their CDA. The way that we also provide our -- so the other thing in terms of provider qualifications they must -- first of all we work very closely with the resource and referral agencies in all of our -- well now it's nine counties.

Bill Castellanos: We set up training to meet the CDAs. We work very closely with our resource and referral to work with them to provide the hours that are required to meet the requirements for their CDA. As I also mentioned we also hold two day conferences for, we call it sort of the Family Child Care Institute every year. And that also needs many of the hours and requirements for them to qualify for their CDA. And one of their requirements, again, is that within six months of the beginning of services, the provider must enroll in a CDA or a CE or ECE degree program. And we have at this point we have trained over six bilingual CDA advisors and have been working in all the various counties to help our providers obtain their CDA. Last year we were very successful. Part of this year and last year we had over 25 providers who have just received their CDA. And we have currently right now 28 family childcare providers that are currently being trained for the 2013. So we really have taken off and really embracing CDA. And there has been a really a tremendous growth for our providers in terms of their own professional growth. So we're also because -- have mentioned that many of our providers are monolingual Spanish, have not been able to complete their degrees because the limitation in terms of their English.

Bill Castellanos: So the CDA bilingual family childcare bilingual or family childcare monolingual Spanish has been really an important part of their professional development. Because they cannot take their exam in Spanish, they're able to do their portfolio, they're able to be interviewed in Spanish. So it has been something that has been really helpful for our agency.

Bill Castellanos: Just to say a few words about our specialists, when we originally started 15 years ago we had a requirement of an AA degree. We now because of the complexity of the family childcare specialists, we are now requiring that they have a BA or BS degree or higher degree, because we found out that they just really -- because of the demands of Head Start we really need to make sure that the individuals are well, well-qualified for the positions. And they again they have the background of the qualifications, they must to have. They must have, you know, knowledge and experience and theory in principal child growth and child development. One of the things that I -- we have noticed that the most successful family childcare specialists that we've been -- we've experienced is individuals have been -- who have had experience as a family childcare advocate or family childcare worker and also have had experience with in the classroom or someone who has been a family childcare home visitor, when you have those combinations it just seems to be the transitioning into a center into a -- as a specialist going

into providers. We find that that's just a very nice complement and a very easy transition for individuals to work with because they're working with adults, they're working with their children and also they have a real strong background in child development.

Bill Castellanos: The training given to all our FCC really includes many of the things that were mentioned in terms of the training for CDA, mandate every port or first aid, infant massage and just the list goes on and on and on based on also the needs of the providers and also the things that we recognize in order to make sure that the providers are truly competent and truly feeling very strong in the area to be one of our many contractors to provide services for our infants and toddlers. So we have a whole menu of training based on the needs of the family and also the needs of the upcoming trends of Head Start in terms of the requirements that are now being placed on us.

Bill Castellanos: The group side I think we already talked about that, people talked about the licensing. The -- really the licensing of the state sort of tells you exactly how many children you can have, how many infants. The performance standards are very clear as to the number of children you can have, especially certain ages. So we make sure that we comply with the Head Start requirements and also require that we follow the regulations of Head Start. The other thing I'm dealing with just -- I'll just sort of touch upon them just watching and looking at the clock we're sort of running out of time, children with disabilities. We have a number of children in their family day care homes that have special challenges, special specific disabilities. We work very closely with them.

Bill Castellanos: One of the things that we have -- because we have a whole group of specialists or content specialists, they also visit the family childcare providers. One of the things that I failed to mention is that we do have -- we keep the group size for the specialists, the family childcare specialists, they carry a caseload of 25 to 30 children. But that also means that they probably are using maybe between eight and ten providers. We make sure that the providers are close in -- close proximity so that our specialists are not traveling, you know, spending a lot of time in the vehicle. We require that each specialist spend an hour and a half each week with the provider in terms of visits, making sure that it's running well, training. So we spend a lot and lot of time with providers. And I think that's something that you have to be very up front with your providers when you interview and you're setting up the contract is that they're going to have frequent visit visitors, not just your specialists are you licensing but if there's a particular need, a particular child. You'll have also specialists and nutritionists, social services individuals depending on what's happening with that child with that family. So if they don't like visitors then I would recommend that this is not an option for them. So I think being upfront with the provider and understanding what is going to be required. My experience with the providers is very hungry with -- very hungry for training. They're very cooperative. And again I think the selection criteria as I think Lee and Becky had mentioned -- it takes some time to really educate them and fully understand this model and the expectations. And I think if you come in there with that type of approach you'll have a very successful program.

Bill Castellanos: Again this is the end of my presentation. I will be more and our staff will be more than willing to assist any program that needs more information to provide them information how to get

started. And I think this is something that I again had to recommend and commend the Office of Head Start for embracing this as a really important option to serve our children. Thank you very much.

Amy Dapsauski: Thank you Bill. We are coming to the end of our session and we have had a lot of questions from the audience. And in the interest of time Angie and Dawn will address those and post them at a later time. We know there's a lot of interest and a lot of conversation has opened up. And we really invite you to look for more to come. And in this I would like to turn the closing over to Angie and Dawn.

Angie Godfrey: Just a very quick thank you everyone. I know we are running out of time and thanks for staying on. And the EHS NRC is going to send the questions to Dawn and I. We will put in writing all our answers and get back to you. I just want to thank Barbara and Lee and Becky and Bill -- thank you so much for agreeing to be on this. I think we all learned a lot. And thanks to Amy and Summer and everyone at EHS NRC. So thank you very much.

Dawn Ramsburg: And again I will just say thank you to everyone. And as Amy said this is more to come, both the Office of Childcare, Office of Head Start are very committed to continuing this conversation. We want to know your questions. We want to know your issues and we're committed to moving forward, so that we don't get in your way of doing these successful things that you heard Bill and Becky and Lee talk about today. So thank you.

Amy Dapsauski: And this is Amy and we are so excited you were here with us today both the Office of Head Start and the Office of Childcare communities. It was wonderful to see you, to hear from you. And our very last slide show some additional resources. And so don't forget these wonderful resources for family child care. This session is being recorded and it will be posted on the ECLKC Web site as you can see <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>. Thank you so much for your participation and have a great day.