

Supporting Children Who Do Not Qualify for the IDEA

Valeri Lane: Now that you know who we are, we'd like to take a moment just to have a sense of who has joined us today, so we'd like to ask you to please respond to the poll that should now be up on your screen by letting us know the primary role you have in your program, and you only get to answer once. So, your primary role in your program. And we'll leave that open for just a moment and then be able to show you the results, also. It looks like we're running about 50 percent, a little over -- our disability coordinators. And the next most prevalent role is education manager. We'll just wait another moment or two.

Okay, the percentages aren't changing a lot, so I believe, Renita, we can close that poll now and go on to the next slide. Thank you very much.

It's very helpful to see this. Right. So, moving on. Here are our objectives for the session today. What we hope you will come away with from today's time together is a basic understanding of the reason that we're focusing on children with delays or potential disabilities who do not qualify for IDEA, that you will understand the importance of individualizing for all children, and that you will know strategies for individualizing for all children and be aware of some very helpful resources that are available to all. And here's how all of that will flow.

We will start off today with Sangeeta providing a brief overview of the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act that are the absolute foundation for these services. Then, Beth will discuss the foundations of individualizing for all children, even when they are not eligible for IDEA. And finally, Sharon will guide us through more specific strategies and resources that are available to support you in your work. Now that you know where we're going, let's go ahead and get started with an overview of the laws and regulations that provide the foundation for this work. Sangeeta. Sangeeta Parikshak: Thank you so much, Val. I'm so happy to be here with everybody today. So, as many of you already know, Head Start has a very long history of serving children with disabilities. And agencies that operate Head Start and Early Head Start programs are required to enroll a minimum of 10 percent of children with disabilities. In fact, the Head Start Act states that the 10 percent requirement is for children who have been determined eligible for services under IDEA.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards, which were last revised in September of 2016, must be met by all Head Start agencies that provide services to children and families. They address how programs should provide individualized services for children with disabilities and ensure that all children are fully included in all program services. You'll hear that theme as I talk about -- a little bit about the Head Start Program Performance Standards. I want to provide a brief overview of some of the sections that are most relevant to this webinar. So, in general, the standards implement changes from the 2007 Head Start Act, which replaced reliance on Head Start programs to evaluate some children and provide IEPs to make it clear that such services are entitlements under IDEA. So, it's not a new requirement in here, but it's something that programs have been following with the statute since it was enacted, but the regulations now accurately reflect the act. We have a few subparts that really focus on children with disabilities.

You see here 1302 Subpart C -- Education and Child Development Services. It ensures that programs include all children including those with an IEP and ISSP. Subpart C in particular recognizes that some children with delays may not be eligible for IDEA, but they benefit from additional supports and services. So, for example, the standards state that if a child has a significant delay, the program must partner with parents to help the family access services and support to help address the child's identified need and that it may be appropriate for the program to provide these services and support under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. So, specifically, if you end up being able to browse and look at the standards, we say that if after the formal evaluation happens and we find, okay, the child is just not eligible for services under IDEA, then what the program must do is seek guidance from a mental health or child-development professional to determine if the formal evaluation shows the child has a significant delay in one or more areas of development that may be likely to interfere with the

child's development and school readiness.

And we -- You know, we say that, really, because we're not trying to put too much pressure on the programs. We're trying to help, because we understand that, oftentimes, it can be frustrating at the program level for staff and for teachers who are really seeing a child struggle. They don't really qualify for services under IDEA, but the teachers do get a sense that, you know, this child would really benefit from some additional support. So we're trying to provide that assistance through the regulations, as well as through TA. And so, that is -- We've gotten a lot of questions -- "Why have you put this in?" and that is one of the main reasons that we put that in the standards. So, Subpart F of the Program Performance Standards is entitled "Additional Services for Children with Disabilities." And you'll see here we have 1302.60 and 1302.61 called out in the slide. So, 1302.60 really talks about the full participation in program services and activities.

We specifically state that a program must ensure that enrolled children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, those who are eligible for services under IDEA, and their families, receive all applicable program services delivered in the least restrictive possible environment and that they fully participate in all program activities. So, again, really honing in on making sure that all children, regardless of their disability status, are fully included in the least restrictive possible environment. In 1302.61, we have two parts here. So, we have "A," which talks about additional services for children with disabilities.

So, here, we talk about how programs must ensure the individualized needs of children with disabilities, again, including, but not limited to, those eligible for services under IDEA, are being met and all children have access to and can fully participate in the full range of activities and services. And I'm stating it multiple times because I really want to bring that point home for folks, and we do have this language multiple times throughout the standards. We talk here about programs must provide any necessary modifications to the environment, multiple and various formats for instruction, and individualized accommodations and supports as necessary to support the full participation of children with disabilities. In this section, we also talk about how programs must ensure that all individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination under and provided with all services and program modifications required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This section also -- Under "B," we have services during IDEA eligibility determination. So we really pull out that we understand -- Oftentimes, it can take a long time to determine whether a child even is eligible for services under IDEA, so we really don't want that child kind of floating out there not able to really fully participate in the program. So we do have this section here talking about how while the eligibility is being determined, that program should really make sure that any support that the child may need in the interim is provided. We talk about individualized services and supports here to the maximum extent possible to meet the child's needs. Here, we also have the same language as before about serving children may be under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. We provide that, really, as just kind of an example of maybe a place that we can get services for a child while they're waiting to see if they are eligible for services under IDEA or if they're not eligible at all. We also do speak to how additional supports may be available through a child's health insurance, as well. So, those are two sections that I really wanted to highlight for you under Subpart F of the Program Performance Standards.

I also wanted to let our listeners know that these are not the only sections of the Performance Standards that relate to providing services for children with disabilities, that we have Subpart G, which is Transition Services, and Subpart J, which is Program Management. So, respectively, they talk about providing services to children and families as they prepare to leave the program. So, making sure that those children who have an IEP or ISSP, that that travels with them, that documentation travels with them, to the next place they're going, probably kindergarten. And we also talk about coordinating and collaborating with local agencies responsible for implementing IDEA. So, as today's webinar is really targeted to supporting children who do not qualify for IDEA, I'm not going to go into much detail in these sections, but I just wanted to let our listeners know that if you're interesting in looking more thoroughly at the Performance Standards around children with disabilities, please look at those sections, as well.

And, finally, I know that we've been getting some questions about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and I wanted to emphasize that this is -- Section 504 is not new, but it's understandable if some of you may not know about it or have some questions about it. And so, generally speaking, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act -- It's been around since 1973, and it says that individuals with disabilities cannot be excluded from participation in any program or activity receiving federal funds. Accommodations may be required to ensure that individuals are not excluded. So, as you all know, there are different definitions and criteria for identifying a child with a disability by state.

So, therefore, a child who may qualify for services under IDEA in one state may not qualify for services in another state. But you still may find if you partner with -- with a child-development specialist or mental-health specialist that the child does have some kind of significant delay. And so this is where, you know, 504 may come into play. There are some diagnoses, such as ADHD, which really don't qualify for services under IDEA, but you would in some places under Section 504. And so we're not asking or requiring that programs write a 504 plan themselves. What we're saying is that this is just another avenue that the local education agency may be able to take to set children up with the supports they need if they don't qualify for IDEA. So if programs know that this is an avenue that could potentially be used, then they can -- It kind of helps with better coordination and collaboration with the LEA. So, that is -- That is my kind of update for everybody around the Performance Standards and 504 plans. And, Val, I'm going to turn it back over to you.

Valeri: Thank you, Sangeeta. I know that people were aware that 504 was written into the Act and it's been a part of Head Start performance standards even prior, but I know people still have questions. So it's helpful for you to clarify the implications of this and that you go over the parts of the Performance Standards that are particularly relevant to this population. So, I want to remind everyone that if you have questions, I encourage you to keep them coming into the Q&A box. We've had a couple up here already. And as time allows, we may do some Q&A with our presenters before the close of this webinar, and if time does not allow, then we will get answers to any questions that you ask. We will be able to post those within the MyPeers network, along with the recording of this presentation. So please keep those coming and remember, if you put questions in the chat, they scroll up out of our sight, and we will not be able to see them. But the questions in the Q&A box will get you an answer at some point. Now we're on to Beth, who will talk with us about the foundations of individualization. Beth.

Beth Caron: Thank you so much, Val, and thank you, Sangeeta. That was a great overview. And I'm going to try very hard to talk slowly. I'm a fast talker from New England. So, I'm going to do my best to try to be a little slower so that you can all hear me well. So, before we begin talking about individualization, I just wanted to reflect for a minute on what it looks like to have a high-quality program that supports all children. Children in Early Head Start and Head Start programs already have an advantage in that they're in programs that are designed to support active parent involvement, that utilize a research-based curriculum, and that have disability coordinators in each program to help assist the front-line staff who work with children with unique needs. So, on this and then on the next slide, we're going to talk about some of the key components of just such a high-quality system, which includes knowing individual children's strength and needs, fully engaging parents in the children's educational experiences, and using a broad, age-appropriate curriculum that emphasizes structured activities designed to meet all children's needs. Whoops. I just have to make sure I'm on the right button here for flipping my slides. High-quality programs include instructional strategies that are individualized based on each individual child's needs and interests.

In such programs, children's development and progress is continually measured and monitored, and routine and activities are modified based on those progress monitors -- measures so that adults can easily address the areas of concern as soon as they're identified. Fortunately for these children, Early Head Start and Head Start programs are already designed with these exact features in mind. So, with that image of a high-quality program forefront in our minds, how can you support children with delays or with learning challenges who are not eligible for IDEA services and children who may be eligible for services, but who have not yet been determined to be eligible? So, in other words, you're waiting to determine whether or not they're eligible. So, how can we go about doing this? Well, let's take a look at the early learning Head Start framework as a sort of foundational element that will sort of think

through how we can support all children.

As the premise for effective practices for all Head Start children, the roof of the house of this framework is highly individualized teaching and learning, which is an essential element to providing high-quality services for all children, including those with significant disabilities and significant delays, as well as those who are identified as having services -- as needing services. So it covers high-quality programs for all children, whether they have delays or not. So it's a useful framework for us to think through, supporting all children. This framework for effective practices to support school readiness for all children give as an organizer for thinking about the strategies and approaches that can be used to support children with unique needs within a context of a high-quality teaching and learning program for all children. So, each aspect or feature of the house. So think about the foundation, the walls, the roof. They represent an element of high-quality practice that can support readiness. And as we move through the elements to the roof, for instance, we'll talk about representing individualized teaching and learning for all children.

And then we can begin to identify the appropriate supports that are needed to meet children's unique needs. And on the next several slides, we'll review each of the elements of the framework and how they can support children with significant delays who are not eligible for IDEA or have not yet been identified. So, we start with a strong foundation when we think about a good house. The foundation of the house represents the elements of high-quality learning environments for all children, and these are nurturing and responsive, effective intervention and interactions in an engaging environment.

So, you don't need to be a special educator, and you don't need to have specialized training to look at your classroom or your setting or your program and identify whether your environment is engaging, whether it can be made more engaging, and whether the interactions can be more nurturing, responsive, and effective. As you examine your classroom, your settings, your program, some of the things to look for are... whether you have engaging classrooms and whether your settings are engaging, whether you have age-appropriate materials and routine, and whether you have nurturing, responsive, emotionally supportive interactions with all the adults -- that includes a lot of back-and-forth exchanges among the children and the adults -- and environments that are organized to provoke -- Sorry. I can't say that. To promote positive behaviors and productive interactions. And, fortunately, these are not new concepts to Head Start and Early Head Start, because you've often been thinking about classroom setting and design and routine. So, we're going to talk a little bit more about some of the additional resources that can help you make sure you have just such a program in mind. We'll talk about some of the resources on the ECLKC website, for instance, that can support you in both examining and adapting your environment to support all children.

So, at the center of the framework of the house is parent and family engagement. And this is really important to remember -- that the critical and primary role of family members, that they are the first teachers for children. They are their primary and first teachers, so remembering that parents are central to a high-quality house and high-quality program. And as Head Start staff, you all recognize and respect that families know their children best and that they're the children's first teachers. So, they offer you the opportunity to learn from them about what their children need, what they like, and what they struggle with. And by knowing and understanding children within the context of their family and knowing their individual skills and abilities from the family's perspective, you can better tailor your supports and services to meet individual children's needs. So, the walls of the house in that framework are implementing research-based curricula and screening and ongoing assessment of children's skills and development.

We'll start by looking at the wall that represents screening and ongoing child assessment. By providing universal screening to all children, you can begin to identify early on how children are performing on major developmental milestones, and you can identify the areas where they might have needs sooner. And by assessing a child's progress and development on an ongoing basis, you can determine whether additional supports or strategies are needed, whether the ones that you are using are currently meeting children's needs, and then you can make adjustments and modifications as soon as identified needs are known. And then, if we look at the other wall of the house, implementing a research-based curriculum, we need to understand what children need to know and be able to do, and that's our

critical starting point. And once we know what children are able to do, then we can use research-based curricula that's essential to meet children's unique needs.

So, your curricula, when you think about what you have to offer in your program or classroom, should be developmentally appropriate, it should be based on solid research, and it should be aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. So, now let's take a look at the roof of the house, which is really the important part about individualizing teaching and learning. How do we individualize in teaching and learning? Well, we think first about instruction that can be embedded in regular classroom routine rather than stand-alone skill-and-drill activities. Embedded instruction and naturalistic interventions occur within a natural environment of the day and are reinforced during regular routines and activities. So, for example, if you're teaching identifying letters, if you carry that activity through to snack time and to circle time, for instance, rather than just teaching letter identification as an isolated designated table-time activity, then it's much more likely to be something that children will hold on to and carry with them through their day and their development. In addition, scaffolding strategies should be used to teach skills and new information to children.

By scaffolding the information and skills that are being taught, starting with easier elements first, and then gradually increasing the complexity, then the providers can identify how children are individually struggling with or learning the skills, and they can make adjustments and modifications as soon as needed. And also by using tiered models of instruction, which we'll describe a little more in detail in a minute, providers can meet the needs of individual children who are at very different levels of development. So, let's talk for a minute about some of the tiered models of instruction that can help us individualize for unique children.

So, tiered models of instruction are very aligned to the house framework in that they start with a foundation of strong classroom structures and supports for all children. But it's important to recognize that some children need more intensive support than others. So this is why tiered models of instruction can be such an effective and efficient way of supporting all children and providing increased targeted supports to those few children at the top of the pyramid who are still struggling with classroom interventions despite the instruction that they're already receiving.

So, tiered intervention models also stress the use of data collection and progress monitoring. That will allow providers to use and make data-informed decisions before introducing any changes or adding any additional intervention. I just want to pause for a moment to say that it's important to think about one tiered instructional model that -- You often have heard about it. It's called Response to Intervention. And this is considered a tiered intervention approach. And you may have heard it discussed as an inappropriate way to delay diagnosis for special-education services. And there have been instances where RTI or Response to Intervention has been used inappropriately for delaying special-education services, but that is not what it's intended to do. What -- The true intent behind RTI is to give providers the ability to respond quickly to a child's needs by continually observing and responding and recognizing their progress and recognizing where they're struggling to develop and learn.

And then the provider can use the data that they've collected to modify and adapt the curriculum and respond immediately to a child's needs. So this project -- process ensures that interventions for each individual child are provided quickly and with intentionality. The approach also allows families to be involved with the providers in setting goals for their children.

So, when you think about tiered interventions and you hear Response to Intervention, just be aware that, done correctly, it actually provides a good model for supporting all children and for tailoring services to individual children with specific needs. Another important example of tiered instructional models is the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competencies, often referred to as the CSEFEL Model. I'm sure most of you or many of you will have heard of this model before. Social-emotional development is really central to young children's successful development. And this pyramid model, as well as other models of program-wide positive behavior intervention and supports, which you'll sometimes hear referred to as PBIS -- these models provide a way to support all children at a universal level and then to target additional supports at increasing levels of individualization to meet even the specialized needs of the small group of children sort of at the top of the pyramid. The

foundation for all of the practices in the CSEFEL Model are the systems and policies that are needed to ensure that providers are able to adopt and sustain the evidence-based practices that they're putting into place. And layered on this foundation are the universal supports and activities that are provided to all children within the program.

These include activities to build nurturing and responsive relationships and high-quality, supportive environments. You should recognize a parallel between this universal tier one of social-emotional intervention and the floor of our house framework, which promotes nurturing, responsive, and effective interactions and engaging environments for all children. This pyramid model describes the high-quality learning environment as it relates to social-emotional development, so that you'll see the parallel there. In tier two of this CSEFEL Model, which is focused on preventing challenging behaviors, providers begin by looking at antecedents or activities that precede certain behaviors and then they try to identify and stem those negative behaviors before they begin. This can help the adults in the classroom to see variables that may contribute to behavior and subsequently change things in the environment or interactions as needed to help prevent the behaviors from continuing.

And then, for children who are still not responding to either the instructional strategies that are provided at tier one to all children or to the targeted strategies that are identified for children at tier two, the adults then work to identify and provide individualized and intensive instruction for those small number of children who still need additional supports in tier three -- the intensive-intervention tier. And a strong program-wide tiered behavior system includes establishing a team, developing a set of behavioral goals, teaching positive behaviors, conducting functional assessments of challenging behaviors, and using the information from those assessments to construct individualized behavior support plans for individual children. So, let me now turn us to some of the resources where we can go to find additional help and supports in trying to tailor some of our instructional strategies for individual children.

So, there are a number of really high-quality tools and resources that are available to you online. And in your PowerPoint presentation called "Session Presentation," down in the Supporting Documents box, that PDF includes live resources to a number of tools, including the ones listed here -- the ECLKC web resources -- as well as the house framework itself and some of the developmentally appropriate practices that we'll hear more from Sharon about in just about a minute.

You should also tap the professionals that are in your midst. Those folks, talk -- Look through your contacts and connections, including your disability coordinators and your mental-health consultants. They can provide you with resources and information, as well. You can also talk with and borrow from the IDEA providers who already work in your programs with individual children. They may be devising and implementing specialized instruction for individual children, but they also have a lot of tips and tricks that they can share with you that would be applicable to a broad range of children in your program. There are also a number of professional-development opportunities that are available to you, so look to your PD and training offerings to see what is coming up in the near future. You can also make requests for training that you need. There are also training opportunities that may be available to you through your LEAs.

So think beyond just your usual places for receiving professional development and training. Head Start providers are written into the new language of the ESSA, which promotes close collaboration between LEAs and Head Starts, so there may be LEA-driven TA that you can take advantage of, as well. So look into that as an option. And lastly, but not least, also look to the upcoming events and activities. National T and TA providers are hosting webinars like this one. There's a Disability Coordinators' Institute coming up in April. And, also, remember to look beyond just HHS-funded programs to some of the other TA centers, such as the IDEA OSEP-funded TA centers, because they also will have resources that are relevant to you and that certainly are available to help you along this path. So, with that, let me turn it back to Val, and we'll see if we have time for a couple of questions or whether we should move into our next section.

Valeri: Thank you so much, Beth, and I want to add -- excuse me -- as you were talking about PD opportunities, that the -- Those of you who are in the MyPeers Head Start Disabilities/Inclusion Network, we are going to have a live chat in March that focuses on professional- development

opportunities for disability coordinators. So watch in MyPeers for an announcement and -- or an e-blast around that. So, maybe you can join, and we can get even more discussion around how they access and find those. So, I think also, Beth, it's just very helpful to begin to understand that there's really nothing magical about individualizing services and that we do have a very helpful tools at our fingertips. I want to thank everyone for the wonderful, wonderful questions that are coming in in the Q&A box. We do have quite a few on 504.

And because they're all specifically a little bit unique rather than one easy answer, we'll be gathering those together and come up with a response that hopefully will answer all of them, but we won't do that live today. That Q&A will be posted eventually in the MyPeers, along with this webinar recording. We do have a couple of questions that have come in, so, Sangeeta, I'd like to pull you forward for one if possible. We've had a question that cuts to the core of what this webinar is about -- What do we do for children who are right about the cutoff for an IEP or an ISSP? Sangeeta.

Sangeeta Parikshak: Sure, Val. That's a great question. And I would like to refer everybody to the Head Start Program Performance Standards again. So, if you go to the ECLKC, we kind of have a pretty easy way to navigate the performance standards. You can go to 1302.33. So, that's Child Screenings and Assessments. And under there, you can go to section number five. And it talks here about, if after the formal evaluation, you find that the child is not eligible for services under IDEA. So this is -- You know, maybe they're right above the cutoff. It can be very frustrating. This would be a time to really pull in guidance from a mental-health professional or a child-development professional. I know we've gotten questions about, you know, what do you mean by child-development professional? You can look at 1302.91 in the Performance Standards, and that's Staff Qualifications and Competency Requirements for the child-development professional, like what background they should have, when you're pulling them in to make sure you get the right person. So, that person should really be pulled in to help you determine if the formal evaluation, indeed, shows that the child has a significant delay. And they're the ones who can really help you. Either the mental-health professional or child-development professional can really help you to figure out how to proceed from there. And so, I think that that's a great question. It's a perfect example of why we have these specific pieces written in the standards. And so I encourage everyone to look again at 1302.33, Child Screenings and Assessments, for further clarification on that question. Thanks, Val.

Valeri: Yeah. Thank you, Sangeeta. I appreciate your ability to handle these things spontaneously. Now, for the next 20 minutes or so, Sharon will walk us through a rich array of resources that are available to support even more tailored interventions or strategies when a child is not successful with learning with regular approaches used in the classroom. Sharon.

Sharon Walsh: Thank you, Val, and I'm really pleased to be with you all on the webinar today. I have to say it's wonderfully distracting to see all the locations that people are saying hello and greetings from from around the country. We're going to spend, as Val said, maybe the next 15 minutes or so, and basically I want to give you a quick walk-through or tour, if you will, of the recommended practices materials that you can use and talk a little bit about what those practices are. I want to remind you that these are things that you do every single day in Head Start. The Head Start Model for providing evidence-based practices for young children and their families is deeply embedded within the recommended practices I'm going to talk about. So, we'll talk about strategies you use. We'll talk about the new DEC Recommended Practices -- how you can find them. And then we'll talk just a little bit at the end about how you might use some other peers to assist when children do need services that are outside and above what we can offer within the Head Start program. So, we're going to do a quick poll.

The practices I'm referring to in this poll are the Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices that were released about two years ago now, and you may or may not have used them yet. I'm hoping you have, but if not, we're going to walk through them. So, could we do the poll question? And, really, in the poll question -- And we're waiting a second while it gets posted up. I'm going to ask you to think to yourself about how confident you are in the work you do wherever you're sitting in one of our Head Start programs -- confident you are in individualizing. And so, there are three choices. We're going to ask you to select one of the three -- number one, whether you're completely confident, meaning you

individualize all day for all children, including those who have special needs... whether you would benefit from additional information or support or resources... or three if you're not confident. And, remember, this is confidential.

No one sees it but you. It'll just give us an idea of how we might tailor the conversation. So, we'll keep it open another couple of -- maybe half a minute. We're seeing most of the response are folks who, second choice, would benefit from additional information and supports and resources. And some of you feel completely confident, which is terrific, because that means you're a great resource not only to all the families you work with, but for your teammates in whatever setting you're working in. And one or two of you are saying, "I really do need some help with this. So we want to make sure that when you're done, you have a variety of resources that you can tap into. And it looks like we're seeing that close to 70 percent of you are selecting the second choice. And so, with that, I think we might see -- If we're starting to have the poll stabilize, we might go ahead and move into the DEC Recommended Practices resources.

Thank you for doing that. So, I'm going to talk about a couple of things about these practices from the Division for Early Childhood. We'll talk about them, where they come, kind of the basis of them, what the principles are behind them. We'll talk about how they were constructed and how you can see them and use them. And then we're going to dig a little deeper into a couple of the topics and some of the resources you can use. So kind of view this as the tour for the next 15 minutes. I wish we were all sitting with our laptops where we could actually explore. But I know that you'll take that opportunity when you get time after the webinar.

So, I'm going to move us now to a little bit of a description of the practices. These are designed for children starting at birth, right up through kindergarten. And the important part in that first bullet is something that I think will relate directly to this webinar. It's not just for using for children who are eligible for IDEA. You know you have many children within your program that have ISSPs or IEPs. You can use these practices to work with them. But you can also use them for children who are not eligible or for, as we talked about before, children who might be approaching the criteria, but don't quite make criteria. They're all observable. They're written in an active voice. They are research-driven, so they were selected because there's evidence behind them. But do not look for them to be disability-specific, because, of course, we like to really approach all children in a whole holistic conversation. So these are not disability-specific.

And they're designed to be delivered in all settings. And they don't duplicate, but they're really designed to build on what we would all call developmentally appropriate or evidence-based practices. And they're selected to be the highest-impact practices. So, in other words, it's not 300 or 400 practices. And just think about your given day. No matter what your setting is, you engage in all sorts of practices and activities all day. But this is a select list of practices that are based upon the research and evidence that are designed to really give you the most bang for your buck. So, here we have in -- The location of the practices that you can find is in the DEC -- on the DEC website. The link is right there for you, and you'll have that link. And you can either download them by themselves -- a short little booklet. Everything's at no cost.

Or you can download them in a format where there's a practice and a number of activities and strategies. The practices are all divided into topics. And we're not going to be able to talk about all of the topics today, but that's okay. But we did pick three that really are the most relevant to our work in Head Start every day. As I said before, there are 66 practices, and they're divided into these categories. And take a quick note at the list. We're going to mostly work in family, instruction, and interaction. And you probably are not surprised at my selection of those three.

For each of the topics, we'll take probably two to three slides. We'll look at the topic, just so you see what's included in it. We'll pick a practice. Just one. And then we will look under that practice at some selected activities. I would ask you to think about, what you do every day, what strategies, what activities you use, because, no doubt, when you read all these materials, you'll spend a lot of time checking it off and going, "Yes, I know. We do that. We do that"... though, hopefully, you'll find some where you'll say, "This is another one we should try." So, we're going to talk about family first, not surprisingly. And this focuses on the importance of interacting with family members so that children

and families interact, so that teachers, providers, home visitors, so that, all together, we can make sure that the family is the primary, which, of course, is exactly what all of us in early childhood have learned from the Head Start work that we've done over the last several decades. Remember the constants are family. And there are some principles that you'll find when you download the whole section on family. But parents are the constant in the lives of their children, and, therefore, the more we work with them, providing them information, building their confidence in their competence, the more children will grow and learn, and that our job, of course, as providers is to respect the unique characteristics of all families. I do not need to tell all of you that. I'm sure that's something you could teach all of us about.

I want to make a note here. You're going to see the term "practitioners" a lot. The commissioners who built the Recommended Practices worked long and hard just to figure out the best generic term to use for "providers," and they landed on the word "practitioner." It's probably not one that you use. So, whenever you see it, as you will, just immediately substitute "teachers," "home visitors," "providers" -- whatever terms work well for you in the setting that you're in. So, busy slide, but I just want to target for you in the family topic, the first practice -- This happens to be Family 5, the fifth practice in family topic. And then the three bullets are activities. And you can go ahead, and I'm going to briefly describe them, but I want to mostly focus on the practice itself.

So, let's look at it. Providers support family functioning, promote family confidence and competence, strengthen family-child relationships by acting in ways that recognize and build on the family strengths and capacities. Now, I know that that is exactly how you approach the families that you work with, and you'll be pleased to know that there's lots of evidence behind that practice. But it's a pretty broad practice. So the question becomes, "How do I actually do that?" "What things would I try?" "What activities would I do so that I could be actually exemplifying that practice?" And you see there's a couple underneath there. Sharing information and providing support to family members. Asking families what activities they currently use to support efforts at home.

Then adding to those practices and using yourself. Communicating that message to families that they know their child's strength and expertise. Behaviors is a great example to do that in, as I'm sure you know. I'm going to move us to another topic here in the interest of time because I know you can easily go into the website and walk you way around at your own pace. The second topic I want to talk about just briefly is instruction. Again, not surprising. This is key to our work in Head Start. These are practices that are designed to help children acquire skills and behaviors. These behaviors and skills are important for independence and success, and for, obviously, long-term outcomes and for school readiness. Nothing could be more important but the topic of instruction. So, let's pick a practice. There's the practice. It happens to be the first one -- Instruction One. Practitioners, with the family, identify each child's strengths, preferences, and interests so the child engages in active learning. Now, this -- You could be sitting there, saying, "Well, these are things we do anyway." And I think if there's one takeaway, at least from my 15 minutes, it would be, "Yes, exactly."

You are masters at individualizing for children's needs based upon their strengths and capacities. And what we're saying is, regardless of the challenges the child brings to that scenario -- and certainly children with special needs or who are at risk are going to bring special challenges that you may or may not have seen before -- your skills in individualizing and accommodating are the ones that you bring to the table. And that's why these Recommended Practices look so familiar to you. I'm going to move to the third topic, which is interaction.

Again, not just instruction, but interaction. Sensitive and responsive interactions which will form foundations so that you can work to help the child grow and learn and help the family to help the child grow and learn. I'm going to pick one topic, or one practice with interaction, as we've been, and here it is. It happens to be the first practice in the topic of interaction. And it's providers promoting social-emotional development by observing, interpreting, and responding to a range of child expressions. So, this is a good example of your amazing abilities, I'm sure, or with your team, at reading and understanding a child's gestures, their facial activities, their -- how they respond or behave, even if there's frustration involved, and helping other children and other teammates, read and understand what the child is trying to communicate and sending strong messages yourself about the importance

of your response to the child and the child's response to you and their peers.

So, what I want to do now is just spend a couple of minutes. Our clock is quickly ticking away. We told you that you can find all of the practices on the Division for Early Childhood website. But I also want to tell you and show you just briefly all of the resources that are available by the ECTA -- Early Childhood TA -- Center website. And you've got that link there, as well. And I want to just give you a table of contents, if you will. There are four kinds of resources. So, you know from DEC, you can get the list of the practices any time you want. The big question is going to be, how do we implement those practices? So here is a list of what you will find on the ECTA page related to the Recommended Practices. And there are four kinds of things.

We're going to talk briefly about each one so you know what you have, and you can go and look at it later. So, the first one is to look at the checklists. So, for each of those topics -- remember the eight topics -- we have some checklists. And they're for you, as the practitioner. They're for families. And you can pick, or you can share with families. And these checklists -- You can't read that so I'm going to go to the next slide so that I can explain to you what's in these checklists. These are basically self-assessments. You can use them as a group. You can use them as an individual.

You can share the results if you want, or you can keep it to yourself. You can do time one and time two. But you're basically saying to yourself, "Here's a list." They're all one page, and there are usually about seven or eight items. And you can sit down and say to yourself, "Okay, in this particular topic area, I want to look at these practices and see the extent to which I really use them." And you can see that they range from "seldom or never," all the way to the "most of the time." And so you'd be able to say to yourself, by looking at a particular practice -- let's say number two -- "Do you identify social communication behavior, the child uses and attempts to use to initiate an interaction?" So you'd ask yourself, "Hmm. Is that a two? Is that three?" "No. Actually, for me, that might be a four." Or it might be a one. Based upon how you score this, informally, you can then turn and look to your teammates, the other folks in your center that can offer you assistance or to technical assistance and try to get help to expand your resources.

You can also suggest to the family that they might want to use this to fill out what things they might want to know more about. So, that's the performance checklist. Now I want to talk to you about illustrations. That's the second section. And we're not going to be able to show these videos in the interest of time, but the illustration section is made up of a number of, I will say, really wonderful video clips. And not only are they video clips illustrating each of the practices for each of the topics, but they're annotated so they will share for you, when you're looking at the clip, exactly what part of that practice you're looking at. So, there's two of them here, and I think we're getting them in the chat box. But the links are here in the slide. Either way. Or you just go right onto the ECTA website and spend whatever time you want looking at those video clips. They're really helpful to show and look at together, and I think families also find them very helpful when you're trying to explain a concept to families. I'm going to take a breath.

We've looked at the performance checklists. We've looked at the illustrations. The next two categories, I'm going to treat as one. These are called practice guides. And we're really excited about these, and we're really hoping that you'll find them helpful. This is a screenshot of one of the practice guides. There are numerous practice guides on the website, and they're all just downloadable for you any time you want. I want to just show you what's in one. Kind of just pull it apart a minute so you know what you're getting when you do one. So, they're all printable in PDF, by the way. So use them any way you want. The practice itself is described -- I'm on the left-hand side here on the screen. And then, under that, you see some descriptions and some kind of tips on how to actually do the practice. And then way at the bottom there, you're going to see, how do I know when the practice is working? There are some things you can observe to say, "Yeah, that really is happening."

Working my way around the bottom and up again, you see there's some suggestions for additional resources. So for every practice guide, you'll click on that, and they'll give you lots of links to other resources you can use. And then, one thing I find extremely helpful are these little vignettes in the little blue box with the video clip. These little vignettes, or the picture next to the vignettes -- They talk about an individual child -- an example of how that particular practice guide might be used. And

then at the very top here, you can click to a short video of the practice. So they really are a nice self-contained way for you to look at any of the recommended topics that you really -- practices topics that you want to look at. And there's a version that you can use on your mobile devices that you can see -- You can't read, but you can see on the far-right side of the slide. So, I'm going to finish up here with just a couple of comments because I know we're running out of time.

But I want to just remind you again of the major take-home message that I think is the most useful here. And I'm thinking back to all the great information Beth and Sangeeta provided before, too -- is that you've got your framework. You have your curriculum. You have all of the wonderful materials that are developed. And you have all of the teammates that you work with all of the time, and, together, you always provide high-quality evidence-based practices. And when we do that in our field in early childhood, we do that by identifying behaviors and skills the child needs to learn, and when we do that, we identify any unique challenges. And, really, that's what this is about -- identifying the strengths and the challenges each particular child is presenting to us, whether they have an IEP or an ISSP or not, and then partnering with others, particularly the child's family, on making decisions on how we might best prompt the next stage of development.

We embed strategies for that skill into our work every day. If we happen to be in a group setting with the child, in our daily routines, you know how we ground in each activity, build in a way to address that skill. And then, most importantly, we help families do the same thing at home so that, together, collectively, we can make sure that that skill is built and then expanded upon. And then last, but not least, we do know -- and everyone who's spoken has acknowledged this, and I know that it's reflected in the chats -- that there are children who are not IDEA-eligible that you know do need additional services. And so working carefully with the expertise in your program -- mental-health expertise, the folks from mental health, whether they're on staff or consultants available to you, your disability coordinator, other experienced teachers and providers like yourself who may have had more experience with a particular challenge.

And what goes along with that is something Beth said earlier about, if you work closely, which many of you do, with school districts, whether or not they're working with a child in particular, they can also be a wealth of information to you about how to deal with a particularly difficult situation. If you want to try to secure a service, such as the speech therapy or physical therapy, that the general consensus with the family is the child needs, and they do not have an individualized plan from the district, there are funding sources, such as Medicaid, that could be used. There are also private insurance. If the family also has private insurance, it could be used to purchase the services. And last, but not least, you know, but, of course, we know budgets are tight, but it is an acceptable use of your funds, as your program decides and as your budgets permit, to help purchase those direct services. And if you want to do that, you know that you're directed to work with the folks in your center -- your center director and your mental-health experts in order to figure out how to quite do that. So, I'm going to pause there. I'm sorry I spoke so quickly, but I know we were running out of time. And, Val, I think I'll turn it back.

Valeri: Okay, thank you, Sharon. And I do really appreciate your sharing the Early Childhood TA website with us and want to reiterate what was put in the chat box and the question & answer and that is if you -- I believe Renita's going to repost those links. Those links are not live in the session presentation PDF. So if you copy and paste them from the chat box, they will take you not only to the two short videos that are shown here -- or that Sharon told us about, but also to a wealth of videos and resources and strategies. So please take some time to copy and paste those, if you will. And, Sharon, I know it is absolutely wonderful for everyone to know about these resources that can help Head Start and Early Head Start teachers, home visitors, and family childcare providers serve children effectively, especially those who need additional supports, but may not qualify for IDEA. Now I want to just take a couple of minutes for a commercial break and remind everyone about our Head Start Disabilities/Inclusion Network on MyPeers.

It was designed to bring together a community of people that can utilize this online platform to interact with each other, ask questions, provide peer support, and share strategies that you have found successful in your work. So, we won't take the time to do another poll, but if you are not a

MyPeers member already, then you can click on the link that was just provided in the chat box. It is a SurveyMonkey link. If you provide your name, e-mail, and role, you will, within a couple of days, get an invitation to join MyPeers. It will come to your e-mail in-box. So, once you join and enter MyPeers, you click on Communities and then select Head Start Disabilities/Inclusion Network, and we will automatically add you to the community. If you are already in MyPeers -- Maybe you watch "Teacher Time," and you became a member of MyPeers, but not part of this community, you can click on Communities from within MyPeers and then select Head Start Disabilities/Inclusion Network click on Feeds, and then select Join on the right-hand side of the screen. And then, finally, I want to tell you that we've had now a total of 37 questions come in the Q&A box, and we will definitely be working on responses to those, and, as mentioned, we'll post them in MyPeers, along with this recording. It will take us a few days because we want to make sure we get the right answer, but please pay attention in that these questions and answers likely will not be posted once the actual recording is put on ECLKC. So you would need to go to MyPeers to see them.

So, thank you, everyone, for joining us. There's always so much we want to cover and only so much time to do it, but we really appreciate your presence, and we encourage you to share any additional questions that you have, and we look forward to seeing you or being with you again either at the Disability Coordinators' Institute in Chicago or on our next webinar.

Thank you, everyone.