

Welcome/Opening Plenary

Family Services: We Make a Difference

Kim Alleyne: Welcome, bienvenidos, bonjour, jambo. We are so excited to see you. I am Kim Alleyne. I am the director of the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And our team at the center is really excited to welcome you to our first-ever family services manager Institute. Think of this institute as the two-day leadership retreat. You get to take a step back to learn with and from family services managers, and other staff from all around the country and Head Start and Early Head Start programs. We know family engagement is everybody's business, and we encourage you over this time together to reflect on your strengths as a leader and your programs vision for family and community partnerships. As you engage in each of the dynamic sessions planned for the next two days, ask yourself, how can I best lead my staff and partner of families to make our program's vision a reality. It is also my pleasure to introduce our special guests. Today, we have Dr. Deborah Bergeron, the director of the office of Head Start, and Kiersten Beigel, senior program specialist and Community Partnerships. Join me in welcoming Dr. Bergeron and Kiersten Beigel.

Kiersten Beigel: Hello, my name is Kiersten Beigel, and I'm the lead for the office of Head Start for family and community engagements, and I am delighted to be here today with Dr. Bergeron, the director of the office of Head Start, and we together are very excited to welcome you to the first, but certainly not the last of its kind, the family services managers institute. Welcome.

Dr. Deborah Bergeron: Kiersten, I am so excited to be here with you to do this. I can't think of a better premier than this. I know we've been waiting a long time to be able to pull these folks together and celebrate them and provide some very specific professional development and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement has just done an incredible job and putting this together so I'm super excited to be here and I just want to thank everybody who worked so hard to put this together, and thank you for being such a great champion in this area.

Kiersten: Well, I'd love to give you just a few numbers about these folks, this professional group. Did you know that there are almost 26,000 staff doing the work of family and community engagement and partnership work in partnership with start and Early Head Start programs?

Dr. B: No, I did know that, and I got up my calculator because I wondered if we have that many folks out there during this work, what is that ratio per child, and it comes to about one for every 38 children, and here's the reason I did that. I know and other educational settings, if they even have somebody who does something like this, it's something like one to three, four hundred kids, so it is amazing that we prioritize this, and we make this a really important part, not just for what we expect but also for resources.

Kiersten: Absolutely, there's around 4,500 folks, many of who are joining us for this institute I hope, and they're supervising around 21,000 staff. In some cases, they're working directly with families themselves, and I know this is also something that you love about Head Start, Dr. B, is that 11% of all Head Start staff are former parents of the program.

Dr. B: That is a really big deal. It's really important for so many reasons. When you've got parents embedded in the program, you have sort of these naturally, organically loyal folks who helped to build and promote. But it also speaks to the outreach they have because that's the reason they get brought into the program if someone notices, hey, you're looking for some direction. Let me give you some support and show you how you can build your own skills and put them to work pretty fantastic.

Kiersten: Yep, we've got all kinds of directors and managers who are former parents, and we celebrate that. Every day, family service managers and coordinators lead and support their staff in building Partnerships with families that help families achieve their goals and the goals they have for themselves and for their children. Dr. B, you know that ... We know, who work with you in the office, that you are traveling around the country a lot, these days more virtually, but you meet a lot of people and Head Start folks in your travels. Tell us a story about what you see Head Start meaning to parents and families.

Dr. B: Well, that is true, and there have been so many parents I've met, even recently, virtually, it's been fine. It's just virtual site visits and meeting parents online, and they've talked about how have supported them, in these really challenging last few months. But my favorite story actually comes from when I was very first seated in this office, and it wasn't some traveling. It was just being out in front of this building, here in Washington D.C., and someone was, a gal was on her phone, and I could tell that she was confused. She made eye contact and asked me for directions, and she was actually looking for the Switzer building, which is where the office of Head Start is and asked me, what you doing this building, and I said well I am the new director of the Office of Head Start, and it was as if time stopped. She stopped in her tracks. She looked at me, and she said, "I am one of the first graduates of the very first Head Start program in 1965, in Richmond California." And I was stunned that out of all of the people in DC that needed directions, I run into this person, and she proceeded to tell me the story, and the thing that resonated with me the most ... She was clearly a well-educated, very successful person. She was coming into Switzer to meet like the VP of communications for a nonprofit, and what was most resonating about that conversation is that she didn't talk one minute about what had started for her, she talked about what it has done for her mother. And she told me how desperate they were when Head Start came into the picture. And she was five, but she remembers this, and she remembers Head Start saved our lives, and she told me about what her mom was doing now and how well she was, and I thought, wow. You told me that holds story from 50 years ago, and it was white Head Start have done for your family that matter the most. So, I think that's pretty good illustration of how important this work is.

Kiersten: That sums it up. I love the timing of that story. So, I want to speak directly to the folks directly participating in the Institute now to say something about ... I know you're going to have

all kinds of opportunities, leadership capabilities, exploration this week, or in the next couple of days, you'll have the opportunity to think about your supervisory skills and your work with program data and lots of things. But before any of that, before you first accepted your current position, assume your duties in that position, you already became leaders in the field of early childhood, and it's kind of what we've been talking about a little bit today because you are part of something that is both visionary and practical. It's aspirational but also realistic. You and your staff are the ones who make the thing that Head Start and Early Head Start that is so unique about come to life: family and community engagement. So, to that end, Dr. B, what are some of your favorite things that you see family service managers and coordinators doing in Head Start and Early Head Start?

Dr. B: Kiersten, that was said so beautifully. I hope ... We need to take that little clip and tweet it out or something. That was fantastic. I think though ... I was thinking about this before we came in to have this conversation, and the thing that is top of my list is how this mechanism that's built into the program is the most important piece of building trust with families. And I am ... Talk about it all the time ... I am 100% behind the idea that if you can build trust with parents in any educational setting, you have made incredible strides in supporting that child. Because when there is trust, there's a sense of commitment, there's a willingness to take risks because you trust the person has your best interest at heart, there's this support that you get that otherwise isn't there, there's buy-ins of new ideas. And so, all of that that these folks do to build trust with families ends up paying off tremendously in the classroom when a teacher engages a child who might be struggling and has to have a conversation with that parent. So, to me, that's at the top of the list. It's the most important thing they do. And then, just all of these other sort of offshoots of that, of the benefits of winning that trust is established. What happens? Well, you hire a bunch of these folks and they become part of the staff, and you can't beat that. As we said that earlier, those are built-in advocates that are loyal to your program. I love the fact that I'll meet folks who've worked for a Head Start program for 20 years. They started as a parent, and they never leave. It wouldn't matter ... They are so committed to the organization, and that's priceless, really. I love the whole mantra that parents are a child's first and most important teacher, and that's true forever, not just when they're little ... when they're older, when they're in elementary and middle and high school. And embedding that and parents early so that when they go into the public school system, they not only can handle that whole transition piece we've talked about so much, better, but they're ready to be advocates for their kids, even if that means a little bit of noise. And I know as a school leader, I appreciated my parents who were willing to go to bat for their kids because they are going to care more for their children than anybody ever will. So, I think that's just infinitely importance, and in the long term, benefit of that, we just see every day.

Kiersten: Yeah, we know that family well-being is actually the greatest predictor of school readiness. So, that exposure to early adversity, including many of the things that family's deal with related to housing stability, related to food, needing food, dealing with interpersonal or community violence, and all of these things impact on children's learning and development and family well-being. And what I respect so much about family service managers and staff who work with families is that every day, they try to achieve more safety and economic stability in

the lives of their families by walking with them, giving them space to build that trust you talked about, to create opportunities for families to heal and grow. I know, having dealt with the same kinds of work in my life over the years, that you may not see the long-term kinds of outcomes and family successes, although you do keep in touch with your families. The investment that you make however large or small, that you're making on a daily basis, are really part of an important legacy in the field of early childhood, and that is effective for family engagements. I want to just thank you for the work you do every day to make that happen, to be such an important part of the Early Childhood field, a special part. I also want to thank Dr. Bergeron for your leadership and your commitment to this most revered aspects of Head Start. You're such a champion. And I want to thank the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. They work so hard. They bring the expertise and the research base to our community. They develop resources, provide training and transformational experience for programs, many of you. And they build community in a way that honors staff and families, so really want to thank them for all the blood, sweat, and tears it takes to bring you this kind of institute. I also just want to say have a great institute. Hope you can really enjoy it and get a lot out of it.

Dr. B: Yeah, it is an incredible opportunity when you can get together with peers and kind of let go and allow yourself to think differently, and figure out what you don't know, because you don't know what you don't know. So, being exposed to new things is always good, and I would say in this virtual environment, there are some benefits to be virtual. I think we can all recognize some of the things that are kind of difference and maybe more effective about being virtual, but overall I'd say it's a little bit harder to connect, so as you go into this institute, I'd tell you to be present. And what does that mean? I don't know, it depends on where you're logging in. But what do you have to do to be really present and your virtual space, whether it's make sure the TV is off or to make sure the dog is taken care of or whatever to be able to really engage with the process. Turn off that email. Do not have another screen up over here with your email so that you can double dip. I promise you there is no such thing. Every time you look over here, you lose something that's being presented to you. So, I know we all do it, but in this moment, give yourself the gift of really engaging in this process. And I would also make sure, and I'm sure that this is built in, but make sure you're taking some breaks. Get a break. Don't use it to check emails. Go to the bathroom and walk around a little so that when you sit back down, you're really there. And try to be present. And here's your challenge from me: Connect with one person you don't already know, during this conference, during this institute, that you can then follow up with after it's over and make a new professional relationship. Because that is what's most valuable about these kinds of events. It's meeting new people, making you acquaintances, and becoming each others' support over time. So, other than that, I just want to thank you, thank everybody who put their time and energy into this, and of course I can't end without thanking Kiersten. She is so much fun to work with, and I love working with someone who has as much energy around and devotion to what this work means as she does. It just makes it fun. So, thank you very much.

Kiersten: Thanks Dr. B. Have a great institute, everyone.

Dr. Guylaine Richard: Yay, go Family Services, go. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Bergeron. Thank you, Kiersten for giving us the time. I am Dr. Guylaine Richard, and I'm the director of training and technical assistance development, and I say good morning. Bonjour, [Inaudible]. It's my pleasure. Brandi, take it on, my friend.

Brandi Black Thacker: Well, you guys know that she needs no introduction, and usually I have the pleasure of introducing her first so I can give her all the fanfare she deserves, but today I'll behave because we're so excited to be in this moment with you right here right now. And, for those of you who I haven't had the pleasure to meet yet, my name is Brandi Black Thacker I'm the director of training and technical assistance and cooperation for the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And we have so much to think and talk about together over these two days that, Dr. Richard, we're going to just jump right in, yeah?

Dr. Richard: Yes. Let's go.

Brandi: Let's do it. So, some of you may be experiencing the On24 platform for the first time. And I'm going to give you a very quick tour right now, but here's the best news. Don't worry. You actually have a recording of this that you can access. You will get an instruction at the top of every session, so if you have any questions, we're happy to help you at any time. We're going to give you a quick tour now, and then we'll come back to this often so that you'll have everything you need to enjoy this virtual experience over these two days. So, walk with me a little bit. Let's take a tour.

This first part of your virtual experience is called the media player. And if you take your attention to the top left-hand corner, that's where you're going to see the speaker for our time together this week and that's where you might see any videos that play. In the bottom left-hand side, here is an area that we really want you to focus your attention because this is called the Q&A widget. Now, it says Q&A, but this is where we want you to interact with us for the entire experience, not only to offer your questions but to offer comments, to offer any kind of notions that you have and you want to share with us or the group, and we'll be happy to convey those out. So, that's the Q&A widget, bottom left-hand corner. In that center part of your screen, that's where you're going to see the slides for our I'm and the experience for the contents that will bring forth. Over in the top right-hand corner, this is the main question you guys have a lot, is where are the resources? Can I download the PowerPoint? On the top right-hand side is the resource widget, and you'll be able to download anything you need from that space and go reference you there. And you will find copies of all the PowerPoints in that spot as well. In the bottom right-hand corner, you have the speaker bio section or the widget, and if you want to learn more about any of us, you can always click there and peruse around and see a little bit more about who each of us are and why we have the honor to be before you. And the last couple of things I want to mention quickly, and again, we'll come back to these. You can actually resize any of these windows and widgets, so if you'd like to stretch them, you can go to the corners, you can make your own space, you can individualize what you see and how you see it. So, when we say come on in and get comfortable, we really mean it. And you actually have charge of doing that and how you arrange your virtual space in the way that really leans in

so how you see it and the way you want to experience it. The last thing I'm going to mention at the very bottom is the dock bar, and I'm going to call your attention to those last three widgets on the screen. The teal-colored one that just popped out a little bit is what we call a knowledge check, and we're going to be visiting that a lot at the end of your sessions because we're going to get a little quiz, a little pop quiz a few will. And once you complete that successfully, it's going to lead to ... Dr. Richard, I feel like we need music or sound effects, so like the dun dun dun, your certificate of completion. So, during each one of your sessions, you'll have the chance to answer questions, and once you finish those, you're going to have a pop-out box that gives you your certificate for spending time with us, and you're going to be able to download that, which is what we recommend, so that you have access to it wherever and however you need it for your professional development files and for CEUs, which you'll get more information about, if that's something you're looking to do. And last but not least, you have the yellow question mark widget, which we call the help widget. And there's a document there that you can download that has frequently asked questions. If you get stuck, however, you can always also come to the Q&A widget, and we have a whole team of incredible technical experts just waiting to jump in if you find anything that you might need a little support around, so feel free to do that at any time.

And, Dr. Richard, there is one more thing I want to point out before I turn it back to you. When you registered, you were able to look at these tracks and really individualize and create your own learning experience. Now, if you've spent any time with us at the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement, you know that we have this saying that's called, "Everybody teaches, everybody learns." So, part of what we want to do in this experience is make sure that you have all of the things at your fingertips to really coconstruct this learning experience so that you get to take responsibility for the things that you hope to hear, listen, learn, contribute, and get to have some choices in that, of course, along the way. So, let's take a look at these tracks quickly so that you know a little bit, if you haven't chosen where you might want to go, based on the contents and decisions that are offered. Now, this introductory track is just what it sounds like. If you're new to, or you've been in your current role for less than five years, this may be the spot for you. Also, as we think about the PFCE framework, which I really love the way this looks on the slide with the whole starting gate. If you're getting started and thinking about how to implement the PFCE Framework and maybe you participated in one or two of our workshops but maybe you haven't come to one of our longitudinal experiences, this might be the track for you. Also, if you haven't yet been able to train your staff ... You guys are family manager ... If you guys haven't trained your staff or your other colleagues at the program level yet on PFCE topics that you're interested in doing that, this might be the track for you. And then, certainly, we have a seminal document that we call the relationship-based competencies, and you're going to be seeing and hearing about that a lot more in these two days. If you're just getting started with those as a professional development tool, this also might be the track for you. So hopefully, that's helpful in just unpacking a little bit about what we mean by introductory track. And then, in the same vein, let's take a quick look at what we mean about that intermediate track. You can see your little visual cues here on the slide, so if you've been around for five or more years. We think this might be for you to come visit. And also, if you've really been actively implementing that framework and a systemic integrated and

comprehensive way, come on over. We hope to share some of your nuggets, some confirming nuggets, but also intriguing for about and what you want to do back at your program. If you've been with us and our longitudinal experiences, you may know those as institutes, academies, learning cohorts. This will be the spot for you to come in, listen, learn, contribute. And also, if you've put those RBCs or those relationship-based practices to work, competencies, then this will probably be the place that you'll find a little something of interest.

So, let me pause there, and I can't hardly stand it from Dr. Richard isn't talking right along with me, so I'm going to get her back on the mic with me immediately. I want to bring back to the screen the one, the only, Dr. Guylaine Richard, and she's going to introduce somebody really special.

Dr. Richard: Thank you, Brandi. I think you cannot leave without doing it, so I'm giving it to you my friend. Thank you so much, but guess what? Thank you for the tour. Brandi, this was really helpful. So, now it's time for us to introduce a very special person. You are here for a treat. Dr. Catherine Ayoub. She is the co-principal investigator at the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. And guess what? She's also leading our evaluation and research team. When I say that, I say that with pride. Because guess what? If she says something, take note. Because she has data, she has facts, she is an encyclopedia A live encyclopedia. So, with no further ado, what I want to do is to give it up now, I know you do that better than I, Brandi, so do you want to do that? Let's give it up to the one, the only ...

Brandi: The fabulous Dr. Catherine Ayoub everybody. [Crowd noises and Laughter]

Dr. Catherine Ayoub: Thank you, both of you. How to follow that act, I'm not quite sure, but I first want to say it is such an honor to be here on this very first day of this incredible institute. So, my job, which is one I really am excited about, is to talk about how we make a difference. So, I'm going to spend the next 30 minutes or so doing just that. Because the question has always been, when you talk to the academics or the people looking at this practices, is what difference does family engagement make? Well, it makes a lot of difference. Particularly now. So, I want to talk a little bit about what's happened over the last 10 years, that you all ... any of you who has been here for ... Even if you're just starting, but particularly those of you who have been with this for the last 10 years, and some of you 20 or 30 or more, what have we done? What have we done? Well, the first thing is we've said no more random acts of family engagement. So, we now have strategies and ways of thinking about family engagements, of studying family engagements, of understanding family engagement, and practicing family engagement. And they are four key concepts I want to share with you that have really changed. The first is that family engagement has become much more intentional. And I would have all of you out there listening think about how you have really made family engagements intentional. You've planned it. You've thought about family engagement goals. You then thought about so what this is going to look like? You've supervised staff. You've encouraged them, and some of you, my guess is, have really been coaching around family engagement. You made it very intentional. The second piece is, it's specific. It has to do with how do we partner with families in goal-directed ways? It's not broad and amorphous, but you know what it is, and that's what

you are really doing and have them for the field, so thank you. Third, it's rigorous. You really think hard about what is it that works, how does it work, is it working well for the families that I serve in my program? And how do I know that? And finally, you know that because you talked about it's measurable. You know how to measure it. You're thinking about, so how can I really show other folks that this makes a difference for families?

So, in thinking about these four things, I want to talk a little bit more about some of the ways that you have changed the family engagement field, because you have. First of all, family engagements is pretty complicated, and I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this diagram. I could probably spend a lot of time, but there are lots of pieces, from what you do within your programs at the program level and with your communities to working with how programs interface and what kind of supports the family service specialist that you serve and you work with and you supervise, how they really can interface with your programs to support them to do their work. Who are those professionals, and what do they do? How do they relate to families? Deep knowledge of what are the families like that we partner with? And how do they engage with their children, and how do we engage, and the teachers that we work with and the other staff? And finally, what does this mean for the children? So, I'm going to try to quickly cover that.

You have to start with what are the key ingredients that you need, and the first thing you need is an orientation, a definition, and a map. So, I think as my wonderful colleagues said right before me, you're going to be hearing a lot about what is family engagement, and what is this Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework? Because it gives you the pathway. So, we have a pathway. And I'm actually going to start from the far side or the right side and the Family Engagement Framework that we lovingly call the PFCE framework, and start with the children. Back, I think, about in the 1960s and in the 1990s when first we thought about Head Start and then Early Head Start, impact on the child was critical. That was first. And if you take a look at the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, but it's part of the PFCE Framework, you can see all of the multiple domains in which Head Start and Early Head Start are making a difference in child outcomes. So, what does that have to do with family engagement? Does it make a difference? Because if we're not making a difference to the children, then part of our mission is really not achieved. Well, there's some really good news here. Yes, you have made a critical difference in the lives of children. And here's some of the ways, and I'm going to give you some examples. Family engagement has improved school readiness across developmental domains, whether you talk about reading, whether you talk about math, whether you talk about social-emotional development, whether you talk about that child as a whole, and their physical health. Across all of those domains, family engagement is one of the key ways of really supporting children's school readiness. In addition, family engagement has an impact beyond Early Childhood. In other words, the family engagement practices and the partnering that you engage in with families has a long-lasting impact on families. It really does start them out on a trajectory or a way of thinking and learning and being with their children that lasts well beyond early childhood.

And finally, there is some new and great evidence in the current research that tells us that family engagement enhances well-being well into adulthood. Let me give you some quick examples. And I'm not going to go through all of these, but I wanted you to be able to look at them and pick and choose. Again, I think I said: Family engagement facilitates children's school success. And multiple colleagues, fellow researchers have demonstrated this. Secondly, family engagement, when we look specifically at early learning activities, in both center-based and home-based work, is linked to school readiness. So, we know that those of you in Early Head Start who are offering home-based services are really having an impact. Those of you working with our youngest children in center-based work are having an impact. And those of you in Head Start, working with those wonderful 3- to 5-year-olds are also having an impact. Furthermore, we understand a bit about how does this work. When parents are more engaged with teachers and they show more engagement with programs with schools, in early childhood settings, their children are better prepared for kindergarten, so it really has to do with engaging those parents. And some of the other ways we know that this happens is that when parents are engaged positively with you, and with your staff and when you actually facilitate that engagement with teachers and with your health managers and with your disabilities folks and with people in the larger community, you are impacting those children. You're improving their learning. There's more. There's a lot about children. This slide and the next one. When you as family service professionals engage parents, and they really can become more involved and can really partner with you in the ways that you really work with them, respect them as equals, as experts, their children. This increases the child's capacity, interestingly enough, to learn even around the most what you would think of as academic kinds of things, like math and literacy. So, here's an example of some of the ways that this works. Particularly, when researchers looked at Head Start and they looked at engagement practices, they found out they were associated with school engagement or family engagement in the center, but also it improved the parents capacity to really do work with the child at home. And some of the ways that happened, they were actually relationships between the parent's level and ability to engage with you and your staff because parents increase their learning time. They enhance their child's motivation. They increase their child's commitments to being in a program and later to being in a school, and they increased expectations of both achievement and success in multiple ways. Finally, last but clearly not least but probably first, I put it second because I wanted you to see about how you're really made a difference in children's lives academically. But, as are more important, the family school interventions ... Every single one that you have intentionally introduced, worked on the staff, implemented, and modified in ways that are really best for that individual family and their needs, those interventions have a positive impact on a child social-emotional development, which we know is foundational.

Again, some other things, young children who experienced higher family engagement have 20 or 30% lower odds of developing depression as early adults. Another example from the literature is that family engagements and family support also demonstrated that those children had higher achievement, and during adolescence and young adulthood, they experienced less episodes of the delinquency, so it really was a delinquency prevention program. My colleagues know I could go on and on, but I'm going to move on, but those are children. So, the answer is yes. You are doing so much to advance the positive evaluation around how children really do

better with the care and support of their families that you're enhancing. But what about families? Does it make a difference what you do with families? Yes. Absolutely. Here are the things that we know from the literature over the last 10 years. First, families have a critical opportunity to partner and learn about engagement with you in the program, with community. And it really supports their being able to be advocates for their children, not only in the early childhood setting, but on into the school setting and even when their children become young adults. Parents have an opportunity to engage and improve their parenting, to provide them with critical foundation, and this is an area where you have excelled with your colleagues and with your staff, in doing that family engagement work. Third, parents have partnerships and supports that help withstand and develop resilience to adversity. I think you heard it mentioned earlier on, that one of the key predictors of school success for young children is family well-being, and we can't say that enough.

Another thing that's critically important that you do with families all the time is you support their own learning and their career goals. And we know that this is a critical to in which families may move out of poverty, may increase their own self-esteem, may develop careers, may continue in their own learning, so this is another critical and key message. So yes, these are all the things that you've been doing for the last 10 years. Some quick examples of those from the literature, that Head Start have a positive impact on parenting behaviors, particularly since the Head Start performance standards, which address the issue of parents and curricula, you and your staff have been working very hard with your programs and other folks in your programs to develop parenting curricula, and you're very hard efforts are really coming to fruition because parents are really demonstrating but they are adding to their repertoires positive parenting and parenting behavior. I mentioned this before; can't say it enough: Family well-being has a significant impact on school readiness, so everything that you do in developing partnership agreements and really going on to implement those agreements and to work one on one with families is critical. The other thing that we do know is that families continue to live in poverty are at higher risk of a cluster of adversity, and we now also know of disparities that are related to some of the basic needs. So, your ability to impact a child also relates to your ability to help that family, particularly now during the COVID-19 pandemic when families are facing basic need shortages and concerns about employment and all of the other issues that go along with what we're all experiencing now. This is a time when you can be more, have more of an impact than other times, so thank you. All right, so impact on kids, yes. Check that off. Impact on families, of course. What about impact on the family service professionals that you supervise, that you manage? And for some of you, doing direct services, and actually on yourselves. Can family engagements making a difference for you, and does it make a difference for a programs? Well, let me tell you the answer there again is yes. Family engagement, because you've been saying it's everybody's business, can also have the ability to change but the work environment is like for you, and the family service professionals with whom you work, and who you support, and who you guide with your leadership. So, engaging families can actually improve the climate of your Head Start and Early Head Start program. It increases the morale of not only your staff, but the teaching staff and leadership. It can improve the professional identity of the family service professionals in a program and also increase our confidence. It's a win-win. So, again, I was giving you some large views. I'm going to give you some of the data. My colleagues

Mashburn and Pianta found that when parents engage with teachers through the facilitation of family service professionals and when you partner with teachers and when parents are involved in early care settings, they have the opportunity to share information with you, with teachers about their children. And this, in turn, enhances the quality of teacher-child relationships and, yes, in a new extended study that's just coming out, it also enhances the quality of the family service, child, parent relationships in a three-way interaction. When parents build relationships with family service professionals, they share knowledge with teachers, with other staff members about families, about children. And this, in turn, improves, as I said, teacher-child relationships but also instructional practices. So, the work that you're doing around family engagements actually has a ripple effect, and it really helps your colleagues who are teaching the children around their instructional practices. And, in turn, it has an impact on the children's development. So, you have both a direct impact on families, in the way that you work closely with them around partnerships, and an indirect impact when you work with colleagues who are working with their children. More? Let me do this quickly. I could talk about this all day. Family engagement reciprocally benefits staff. More job satisfaction, stronger relationships with families, more rewarding alliances, and as a result, for family engagement professionals, there's higher moral and more confidence in your work, and family service staff feel more equipped and more confident about working with communities, and in particular, this is one particular study, very interesting, and in communicating difficult information to families. So, families engagement overall is a critical aspect of high-quality care, and also kindergarten to 12th grade education.

So, how and what do we have that can provide us with some guidance? I just want to mention, I know we've talked about the framework, but the next step in thinking about what is it that the family service professional can do to really consider best practices around family engagement and one of the ways that that's been outlined for you as a guide, is through the relationship-based competency suites of resources, which I know my colleagues are going to be talking about. Another very important resource, or set of resources, that have really talked about the how do we do this, because both the relationship-based competencies are what we lovingly call the RBCs, as many of you know, really talk about what is the individual best practice for the family service professional, and those of you as family service supervisors. So, that's one. Then, these are examples about what are some of the core skills around family engagement practices? I'm not going to talk about all of these, but I just wanted you to see. We know a lot. We've learned a huge amount about practice in the last 10 years. We understand what it means to build a partnership. A goal-directed partnership. We understand what it means to focus on the family-child relationship. What it means to reflect on your own personal and cultural perspective and what you bring to the interaction and how you can value a family's passion, working with both their positive and negative feelings. And these are just some of the examples of the kinds of things that you all have been engaged in on the ground that have made such a difference. At the program level, here are some more examples of some of the things that you've done. So, organizational restructuring of programs to really make family engagement everybody's business, conferences across disciplines, reorganizing in some Head Start programs fragmented family-related services into one family engagement unit. Many of you have really addressed welcoming environments, mental health consultation, and you've paid close

attention to, now for the first time since 2016, a family credential is required. Assigning family services to give in classrooms and figuring out how they can work with teachers. Including family engagement skills and hiring staff. Thinking about family engagement, coaching reflective practices, Again, I can go on and on. For communities building two-way partnerships. Recruitment, enrollment, and retention of those vulnerable families that I know you all have been working on for the last several years. Thinking about families experiencing natural disasters, and I mentioned families living with COVID-19.

So, the last piece I want to talk to you about is so ... A lot of impact on our Early Head Start programs, but you've done more than that. You have made an impact in the field And I want to take the last five minutes to tell you about what you've done. Do you know that in the last 10 years, we have moved from having very little interests when you look at influences state by state to moving to having all 50 states, having a description of family engagement? And Head Start and Early Head Start has been the true national laboratory that has led the way. I'll let you read some of these statistics on your own, but there are things like 48 of 50 states have a reference to the Parents, Family, and Community Engagement framework. And some of them have actually lifted it and just put their state name instead of Head Start PFCE framework. That is the most superb type of flattery. We're so excited. All states have at least one family engagement quality indicator, and many have six to 20. But there's more. Now, I get into my real academic. In the last 10 years, we have increased eightfold ... There are eight times as many academic papers and books on family engagement and on the work that you're doing. And my guess is in the next 10 years, we're going to see those kinds of increase again. Practice Publications, there were 50. And that was stretching it a bit in 2010. Now, there are over a thousand. Back in 2010, there were 59 philanthropies or foundations interested in family engagement. Now, there are over 340. And I know you know about our new Head Start program performance standards and how they really made a difference to highlight family engagement. So, also we've made differences with community, and you have done it. You are the people who have made the change. So, as you are part of this institute and you think about moving forward, remember, you are the folks who are bringing family engagement forward.

So, I leave you with these thoughts. Take pride in all that you've done. Step Up, be present, and share your knowledge. Understand the best family engagement practices, and think about the how. How do you deliver them? Is it a family engagement coaching model? How about mentoring, reflective practice, the supervising that you do? Build and sustain, experience family services workforce because we know that the issues with families are complex, and you are expected to be a jack-of-all-trades. You're expected to have multiple specialties to really meet the individual needs of vulnerable families, and you also have to outreach to the community, connect with them to get them what they need. Measure your success with rigor and specificity. And finally, provide professional development and supervision, which are things that you are doing now. But continue to do that and challenge us to give you the most advanced tools in the field. Challenges around COVID are particularly, particularly of concern. But you had stepped up to the plate. Folks across Head Start and Early Head Start are providing fabulous, fabulous work and connecting with families in a time when family engagement could not be most important, because now we are accessing those children, sometimes exclusively through

their families. The family is central to communication, to safety, and to care. And you are the partners with those families. So, I commend you for this work, and please continue. So, I leave you now with this simple message. Remember, family engagements is in, and you are on the leading edge. You're the leaders. You are the people doing the work and leading your staff on the ground, so give yourselves a hand, take this in, and enjoy your time. With this, I'm handing this back to Dr. Richard.

Dr. Richard: Wow, wow, wow. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Ayoub. Thank you. Did you know all of this? Aren't you proud? Did you feel her passion? I told you you were there for a treat. Thank you.