

## **The 5Rs for Early Learning Leaders: Explaining the Reason for Practices and Policies**

Beza Semu: Afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining our part two of a five-part webinar today to learn about the five high-leverage practices and practical strategies of effective early learning leadership. My name is Beza Semu, and I'm your host and co-presenter for today's webinar. So, welcome again, and thank you for joining our webinar today on the five "R's" of early learning leadership, "Explaining the Reason for Practices and Policies." Joining me today to present this topic is Gail Joseph. Gail's a leader in the field of early learning. She is a co-principal investigator at the National Center of Early Childhood Development and Learning, a founding director of Cultivate Learning, as well as a faculty and professor of early childhood education at the University of Washington. She's a former Head Start fellow and a former Head Start teacher. Hi, Gail. Welcome, and thank you for being here with us.

Gail Joseph: Thank you, Beza, and welcome, everyone. I'm so excited to spend time with you today.

Beza: So, our intention for today is to spend a little bit of time reviewing the five high-leverage early learning leadership practices that we introduced in our previous webinar in January and highlight one of the five "R's" on providing the reason. Before we dive in, we want to remind you of who we mean when we use the term "early learning leader." This includes, but is not limited to, the program leaders who oversee educational service components such as curriculum, planning, and implementation, ongoing child assessments, coaching, and training for education staff. Learning leaders often carry the title of education manager or education coordinator in Head Start and Early Head Start programs, but in some programs, there may also other program leaders, such as the site directors or site coordinators, child-development specialists, semester teacher, or coaches. Whatever the title of the learning leader, they act to encourage and inspire staff using the five "R's" we'll talk about in this series. After today's session, we hope that you'll walk away with practical strategies on how to encourage your staff by providing the reason behind policies and practices. In essence, practices you can implement every day to share the "why" you do what you do in order to inspire your team into an exciting vision of the future, shared program goals, and outcomes for children and families. You'll have a chance to reflect on your current practices and discover how sharing the reason behind practices and policies promote an effective interaction with children and families, especially during distance learning.

Gail: So, in our previous webinar, we introduced what we're calling the five "R's" that summarize what we are learning about in terms of being an effective early learning leader, and we talk about leadership purposes and practices. So, just to give you a quick overview of how we got here to these five "R's," we started out by seeking to understand what effective early learning leadership looks like within an Early Head Start and Head Start context. And we wanted to be able to explain what is unique about effective early learning leaders versus K-12 or in other circumstances. And we wanted to see if we could identify and categorize these behaviors

of effective learning leaders and then really capture and provide examples of what these look like in everyday practice. So, we started our quest by doing literature review of all the current leadership frameworks that are out there, including what we were learning about instructional leadership, and then we discussed with early learning leading experts, researchers in the field, you know, what do they think of when they think of an effective leader? What have they seen? We interviewed early learning leaders in the field. "What is it that you do to be so effective at your job?" And we interviewed early learning educators from the field: "So, what behaviors does a leader exhibit to inspire you to be the best educator you can be?" And that included birth to 5 in various early learning settings, so teachers, family child care providers, home visitors.

Beza: And what we discovered as common themes across this various exploration is what we came to call the five "R's." We discovered that early learning leaders build strong relationships with educational staff and used these relationships to build a unified culture, a workplace with trust, collaboration, and belonging. We found that learning leaders inspire educational staff to meet program goals and objectives by providing reasons for policies and practices. We also found that learning leaders are resourceful. They use their knowledge, educational staff, and family expertise and funding to support educators' professional development and growth. They also engage in reflective dialogues to learn about how staff are doing, how children are doing, and how families are doing. And, finally, they create formal and informal opportunities to recognize big and small wins and encourage the heart of educational staff. So, in our previous webinar in January, we focused on responsive relationships, and I'm gonna turn it over to Gail to give us a little overview.

Gail: Hi, there. Let me just remind you about what we talked about, and I'm so sorry for that little delay there. So, we talked about some key and foundational practices and strategies that really help build strong relationships. And the first essential strategy was clarifying our own values and communicating our values clearly. So, we know that education staff will be more interested in supporting us and following us where we want to lead them if they really know who we are, what we value, what we intend to lead, how we intend to lead, and how we intend to support them. So, as an early learning leader, clarifying your own values is just an essential critical first step. And then, second, it's crucial that once we've clarified our values and talk about our values, that our actions align to those values. This really helps build trust, helps educators see us in our authenticity, and helps really set an example for others, the type of relationships you expect from them. And then, finally, we discussed how building trust and strong relationships promote a culture of collaboration and belonging. And we shared how these strategies overall are really serving to promote positive workplace engagement of staff as they work in service of families and children.

Beza: On today's webinar, we'll focus on providing the reason in order to inspire educational staff to meet programs and school-readiness goals and objectives.

Gail: That's right, and before we dive in, we want to pause for reflection. Can you think of a time or an instance when you or others were inspired to action, to implement a new policy or

practice? And then also think about a time you might not have been inspired. What was the difference between those two instances? And I love this question. Think of a time you felt inspired instead of required. Go ahead and enter those thoughts. What's the difference between when you feel inspired versus when you feel required? And for those in the Q&A, I already see things are coming in here, things that definitely resonate with me there. So, go ahead. Keep entering those in. Think about moments when you were engaged in your role because you were caught in and you believed in the mission and the purpose and the reason. What are some conversations that have guided your decision or have propelled you to engage in a desired action toward a desired outcome? I see some great things coming in, some very compelling behaviors, great examples. So, let me move on to share this. This is my all-time favorite quote about leadership, and I know you can read it. Let me just read it for you. "The art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations." So, leadership is "the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations." So, what is, I think, really key here is that "to want to," because we can, as leaders, and maybe have at some point, mobilized others to struggle for shared aspirations, right? "Do this because I said so." "Do this because it's required." "Do this because it's a mandate. We have to." But really effective leaders mobilize others to want to do the practice, to want to follow the policy, if you will, and that "wanting to" really comes from the reason, from sharing the reason why it's so important. So, think about that. Think about a time that you've engaged others, mobilized others, inspired others to want to work really hard for shared aspirations.

Beza: I love that, Gail, and, really, to let that connect, as well, we're gonna have a video that we're gonna watch in a moment. It's by Simon Sinek on knowing the "why." Simon Sinek is a well-known author and speaker in topics of leadership and self-motivation. So, in this video, which is also available in the resource widget, he talks about how – the ways in which we communicate can help us to inspire and mobilize people. The Golden Circle is a simple but powerful model that he demonstrates where when leaders start with the "why," they inspire and get results. So, as you watch, take a moment to enter any questions you may have in the Q&A, or you can reflect on your own what resonates with you in this video.

[Video begins]

Simon Sinek: I call it the Golden Circle. Why? How? What? This little idea explains why some organizations and some leaders are able to inspire where others aren't. Let me define the terms really quickly. Every single person, every single organization on the planet knows what they do, 100%. Some know how they do it, whether you call it your differentiated value proposition or your proprietary process or your USP. But very – very few people or organizations know why they do what they do. And by "why" I don't mean "to make a profit." That's a result. It's always a result. By "why," I mean, what's your purpose? What's your cause? What's your belief? Why does your organization exist? Why do you get out of bed in the morning? And why should anyone care? Well, as a result, the way we think, the way we act, the way we communicate is from the outside in. It's obvious. We go from the clearest thing to the fuzziest thing. But the inspired leaders and the inspired organizations, regardless of their size, regardless of their industry, all think, act, and communicate from the inside out.

Let me give you an example. I use Apple because they're easy to understand, and everybody gets it. If Apple were like everyone else, a marketing message from them might sound like this: "We make great computers. They're beautifully designed, simple to use, and user-friendly. Want to buy one?" "Meh." And that's how most of us communicate. That's how most marketing is done, that's how most sales is done, and that's how most of us communicate interpersonally. We say what we do, we say how we're different or how we're better, and we expect some sort of a behavior – a purchase, a vote, something like that. Here's our new law firm: "We have the best lawyers with the biggest clients. You know, we always perform for our clients who do business with us." Here's our new car: "It gets great gas mileage. It has, you know, leather seats. Buy our car." But it's uninspiring. Here's how Apple actually communicates. "Everything we do, we believe in challenging the status quo. We believe in thinking differently. The way we challenge the status quo is by making our products beautifully designed, simple to use, and user-friendly. We just happen to make great computers. Want to buy one?" Totally different right? You're ready to buy a computer from me. All I did was reverse the order of the information. What it proves to us is that people don't buy what you do, people buy why you do it. People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it. This explains why every single person in this room is perfectly comfortable buying a computer from Apple. But we're also perfectly comfortable buying an MP3 player from Apple or a phone from Apple or a DVR from Apple. But, as I said before, Apple's just a computer company. There's nothing that distinguishes them structurally from any of their competitors. Their competitors are all equally qualified to make all of these products. In fact, they tried.

A few years ago, Gateway came out with flat-screen TVs. They're eminently qualified to make flat-screen TVs. They've been making flat-screen monitors for years. Nobody bought one. And Dell, Dell came out with MP3 players and PDAs, and they make great-quality products, and they can make perfectly well-designed products, and nobody bought one. In fact, talking about it now, we can't even imagine buying an MP3 player from Dell. Why would you buy an MP3 player from a computer company? But we do it every day. People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it. The goal is not to do business with everybody who needs what you have. The goal is to do business with people who believe what you believe. Here's the best part: None of what I'm telling you is my opinion. It's all grounded in the tenets of biology. Not psychology, biology. If you look at a cross-section of the human brain, looking from the top down, what you see is the human brain is actually broken into three major components that correlate perfectly with the Golden Circle. Our newest brain, our Homo sapien brain, our neocortex, corresponds with the "what" level. The neocortex is responsible for all of our rational and analytical thought and language. The middle two sections make up our limbic brains, and our limbic brains are responsible for all of our feelings, like trust and loyalty. It's also responsible for all human behavior, all decision-making, and it has no capacity for language. In other words, when we communicate from the outside in, yes, people can understand vast amounts of complicated information like features and benefits and facts and figures. It just doesn't drive behavior. When we can communicate from the inside out, we're talking directly to the part of the brain that controls behavior, and then we allow people to rationalize it with the tangible things we say and do. This is where gut decisions come from.

You know, sometimes you can give somebody all the facts and the figures, and they say, "I know what all the facts and details say, but it just doesn't feel right." Why would we use that verb, "It doesn't feel right"? Because the part of the brain that controls decision-making doesn't control language, and the best we can muster up is, "I don't know. It just doesn't feel right." Or sometimes, you say you're leading with your heart, or you're leading with your soul. Well, I hate to break it to you. Those aren't other body parts controlling your behavior. It's all happening here in your limbic brain, the part of the brain that controls decision-making and not language. But if you don't know why you do what you do, and people respond to why you do what you do, then how will you ever get people to vote for you, or buy something from you, or, more importantly, be loyal and want to be a part of what it is that you do. Again, the goal is not just to sell to people who need what you have. The goal is to sell to people who believe what you believe.

[Video ends]

Beza: So, I love that video. I think it resonates really well with inspiring the "why" but also with our previous webinar on our values. When there's a lot of things shifting around us, there are things that keep us anchored, and things like our values and our "why" – why we do what we do – are the things that remain constant. So, for instance, during this physical distancing and the times that we have shifted a lot of our learning, our "how" has dramatically changed. For the programs that are operating virtually or in some combination of in-person and virtual service delivery, how we work with colleagues, with children, and families looks extremely different. We've implemented new strategies, introduces new ways of communicating virtually, introduced lots of avenues of learning online, which has required us to learn new technology and establish new guidelines and routines. And for programs that are operating in person, again, safety-related routines – sanitizing, wearing masks, social distancing, smaller group sizes – are all new considerations of how we do our work. For home-visiting staff, interacting with families on home visits looks very different and requires the implementation of new routines, as well. So, for instance, and example of how our "how" has changed, one strategy education staff are using to incorporate emotion naming into daily routines is posting feelings chart by the sink cause that's where we're now spending most time hand-washing. Another example is staff taking pictures of themselves displaying different emotions – smiling, frowning, or frustrated. And throughout the day, since they're wearing masks, they hold the photograph of themselves with a smile and say, "I'm feeling happy today." So, these are examples of how we are shifting things around us in order to really keep the essence of why we do what we do. Another example of things that we've shifted is the "what." So, maybe you've changed your daily routine, maybe you've changed what you prioritize, what we prioritize in our lesson planning, especially, again, around health and safety and family engagement. But, in the essence, while these things are changing, the "why" we do what we do still remains.

Gail: That is right. So, our "how" and "what" might be different, but it's the "why" that is so compelling. So, the reason we do what we do hasn't shifted. Our mission, our vision, our values, the reason you were called to do this work – to serve children and families has not shifted. Your goal to ensure high-quality and joyful interactions and learning experiences that inspire young

children for a lifetime love of learning so that they are school-ready, that they arrive at kindergarten excited and ready to learn, and engaging families, ensuring safety, and high-quality environments for all children are still the "whys" that drive our work. So, even though the "how" and the "what" has shifted, the "why" is still there and perhaps even more compelling in these challenging times. So, as an early learning leader, it's essential for you to know your "why," right? To understand and know the "whys." If you don't know the "why," then others won't know why they're doing what they're doing. So, knowing the "whys" and communicating these in ways that help staff resonate with them, that they can understand and so that they can adapt their practices and behaviors in service of the "whys" to accomplish your team's shared goals. So, remember, "mobilizing others to want to struggle for your shared aspirations" is what you're doing as a leader. And, again, especially during these times of program shift or when we're introducing new routines, new policies – anybody had to do that lately? New expectations or guidelines? – providing the reason. The "why" behind those as well as connecting the "why" to the higher sense. Our calling of the work that we do really helps to build the trust and the buy-in from educational staff. Remember, you're selling the "why." [Chuckles] And it also opens an avenue for dialogue, provides an opportunity for staff to share their input or ask questions to get clarity into the practice or policies. So, exactly "why" exists in the line-up with our mission.

Beza: So, take a moment to reflect on what you've learned about the Golden Circle and the importance of sharing the "why." What resonates with you? Is sharing the "why" something that you do in your interactions with staff? Is it something that you'd like to do more of or more frequently and more consistently? So, take a minute to think about that and reflect on your own. So, one of the things we know – in order to share the "why," it's really important for learning leaders to invest in their own ongoing learning and professional development. So, learning leaders invest time to deal with their own knowledge, awareness, and understanding as it relates to our early childhood development theories while keeping equity educational justice, health, and safety in mind. So, for example, in order to communicate the rational or the "why" behind everyday practices that support social, emotional learning and well-being, particularly during times of extreme change that we have experienced in the past year and continue to experience, it is essential to, first, understand the theories behind the practices that are most effective at supporting children and families' learning. So, this requires, again, for learning leaders to invest in one's own professional development, whether it's for your own reading of child development trends, establishing peer groups to support your learning or attending trainings, webinars, and coaching.

Gail: That is right. So, in addition to building your own knowledge and awareness, it's also essential to be able to make those connections between theory or research in everyday practices and routines of your educational staff. So, for example, think of a child that may need some additional social and emotional support. Is the child displaying behaviors that are challenging to you or your staff? What do those even look like? What are the ways you can connect this situation to child development theories and best practices and articulate what those practices are to support the child while being grounded in the "why," right? Why is it that we want to be able to support this child and enhance their social and emotional learning? Now,

for example, while home visiting or during a program observation, let's say there's a child who's visibly irritated – throwing blocks or pushing a child, and education staff might look to you for support. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to engage in reflection practices with the staff and encourage them to get to the "why" behind not only the child's behavior but the "why" behind why we want to support this child's social, emotional learning and start to see their behavior from the child's perspective. Thinking about why that child might be acting that way, what skills might that child need to develop? How can we support the family to also understand the "why" behind the behavior? Is it that the child can't communicate? Did this behavior come out of the blue? Are there changes in the environment or in the larger home context? This reflection can really lead to practices that you can put in place to engage with a child regularly, to monitor child behavior closely, ways to build stronger relationships with families to better understand the underlying situations and make collaborative plans, and so on. But the real thing here that we're trying to convey is that understanding the "why" and taking opportunities to connect what we know about child development theories to the practices, why we engage in certain teaching behaviors, certain educational behaviors. It's so important. Beza.

Beza: Thanks, Gail. So, in our remaining time together, we want to go over some practices and strategies that can help you make sharing the "why" part of your daily routine. So, these came through our research and our interview with leaders and educational staff. So, in our research and discovery, we were able to identify four practices and examples that fell in the category of providing the reason. One practice that was commonly discussed by those interviewed was that communicating the "why" in order to inspire commitment to practice was something that came up, and, Gail, do you want to provide a quick example of some of the strategies that came up in those conversations?

Gail: Yeah, you know, during our interviews, there was one story a leader shared, and I just think this is such a great example of this. So, the leader was talking about a time that there was a teacher who was getting kind of irritated, I would say, with the policies that the finance manager their program had in place in terms of when the educators were doing home visits and traveling, the way that the finance manager wanted them to document their mileage. So, wanted them to actually submit, you know, the map or the route that they took and the mileage, and it felt to that teacher really cumbersome, really not a good use of their time, and really felt like it was just a compliance piece that just this one finance manager had in place. So, the teacher kind of continued to have some challenging behavior about compliance with this, and the leader knows that teacher was also a very inspiring leader to her peers, so really found this behavior kind of troubling. And so, what she did was have that teacher actually have a one-on-one meeting with a finance manager, and the finance manager explained the "why" behind that, right? Explained the reasons why it was so important to document to funders that they were good stewards of their resources, that they were tracking where the money was going, but also explained that one of the reasons why the finance manager wanted to see maps and things like that was to see if there were some efficiencies. Like, was there a way to save money by saving mileage during these really important home visits, and kind of explained that, even if we were just saving, you know, \$3 in a week, if that teacher was able to save \$3 by taking another route per week in mileage, then that added up to \$12 a month. And what could \$12 be

used for in your classroom to help support children? Could it be a new book that you wanted to share with children that went with a theme to deepen knowledge? You know, could it be used for a squiggly pen for Caleb to attract him to the writing center, to inspire him to do some writing? And that explaining the "why" behind the practice completely shifted that teacher, and the leader told me that that teacher not only was inspired to follow that practice, inspired others, but also became, like, kind of the efficient spending guru of the center, where it was really about the "why" we want to make sure we're good stewards of resources is to maximize what we can put towards children and families in our program. So, I just thought that's such a compelling example – a practical example of that explaining the "why."

Beza: That is so powerful and so connecting and wonderful to – it's like a great example. The second practice that emerged is that learning leaders focus on the perspectives of the children in the family, and they often ask, "What else do I need to know about this child in order to meet the needs being expressed?" And they also prompt education staff to understand this need to reflect on the child and family's perspective to best support the learning that is happening for them. Gail, do you have examples or some way to connect this to practices?

Gail: Yes, absolutely. One of the things we heard from leaders and from educators is that this really came to light when leaders just always have children and family present – top of mind. So, interactions with teachers was, you know, "How's it going for you?" But also asking how children in their classrooms were doing; asking about, you know, the latest communication that they had with their family. Always leading staff meetings and group meetings by talking about a story from a child and family's perspective. So, it's really just keeping that top of mind, whether it's visually in photos and things surrounding in the center, but just every time you're talking is about asking, "How are the children doing? How are their families doing?"

Beza: And the third practice is that effective learning leaders continuously ask, "Why are we doing this?" and "Does it meet our vision?" They create a culture of data use. They take the time to explain to families and educational staff why data is important and the purpose of each piece of data that is collected. And they also ensure that, once they've collected the data, that the information and the evidence works for them, that it supports the decisions that they make. It supports the improvement [Inaudible] that they make. And they also use accessible and simple visuals to incorporate data to inform conversations and support educational staff. Gail, what are some ways that you've seen learning leaders do this with data?

Gail: Oh, you know, in so many ways, and I know that we're gonna talk about this a lot when we get to another one of the "R's" there in terms of reflective dialogue. But really, the data can really connect the "why." So, showing teachers, you know, again, kind of understandable visuals about how children are doing across domains, and then having not only – not only then saying, "And this is why we might do a math-enhanced curriculum because, look, our children our consistently lower in math than in other domains. You know, we need to build on their strength and interest in math in more compelling ways." So, it's that kind of, like, having the data drive a compelling reason why we want to do this, and data is so motivating. I know that some people might think that is a ridiculous thing for me to say, but data is really motivating.



When you get to see, you know, something going up or something going down that you want to go down, you're compelled to want to keep seeing that trend. So, yes, leaders really use, and teachers really talked about the ways in which their leaders motivated them to keep on going because of that data.

Beza: Wonderful. And, finally, learning leaders ensure that social and emotional learning and children's well-being inform the work. They help educational staff to focus on individual children and how to support each child. They ask, "Is this decision gonna be inclusive? What does it mean for this child? What else do I need to know about this child to meet the needs being expressed?" They also offer opportunity for lessons and training focused on impacts of chronic stress or trauma and how they impact social, emotional learning and well-being. When they think about the "why" and, you know, how to help children with trauma, it is also about building relationships and helping them develop skills to these [Inaudible] strategies. So, they focus on moving towards a healing approach versus talking about the past. They ask, "What are we really doing to move toward a healing approach?" And healing happens in the context of relationships, as well, so connecting it back to our first "R."

Gail: That is so true. We can't overemphasize that enough about how important that social, emotional learning piece was in terms of the "why" we're doing what we're doing. Early learning leaders communicate, you know, the rationale, the *raison d'être*, if you will, the overarching purpose, the reason for the practices and the knowledge and the policy as a way to inspire educational staff to commit to that shared vision, keeping motivated to do all of the education services, and how that contributes to not only the overall mission of the program, but what's the compelling reason that you want to be here as an educator? What drew you here? You know, what is your calling? So, effective leaders really help staff to understand why they are doing what they're doing and how that connects to their personal mission and vision and the overall mission and vision of the program. And they also encourage educational staff to ask their own "why" so their practices and implementation of policies are really connected to a deeper understanding of the overall intended outcome. So, early learning leaders embed that "why" in everyday conversations. You know, one of the things that became apparent when they talk to leaders and teachers is that teachers, or educational staff that you are leading, do not measure your leadership in terms of accomplishments, they measure your leadership in terms of moments; that you take everyday moments as a time and opportunity to inspire them to have more meaningful interactions with some of their families, to keep doing their work well. So, thinking about that, how do you take every moment as a leader as an opportunity to present that "why" in front of your staff.

Now, that, you know, measuring our leadership in moments, moment by moment, is really that practice of taking every opportunity that you have interacting with your staff as a time to recommit to, to demonstrate, to kind of inspire as to the why it is that we're doing. So, one of the strategies that we heard from leaders and from educators is the importance of telling the compelling story when recognizing a staff member. So, there was one leader that actually saved this little thing, "Never give a naked sticker," and that just sticks in my mind because a naked sticker is one in which you're giving kind of a reinforcement or recognition of something, but it's

kind of empty. It's naked. It doesn't, you know, tell you why it is that you're recognizing that staff member.

So, we heard a lot about how important it was for educators to hear why they were being recognized, and there was one. I'll say this really quickly, but there was one great example a leader gave. So, there was a leader where it was important that teachers got certified, went through kind of a training certification in the ongoing assessment, the [Inaudible] assessment that they were using in their programs. So, they really wanted to make sure all teachers got certified in that. And when the educational staff got certified, that leader, who had a little bit of some discretionary money to do this, put a little, like – you know, like, a \$5 coffee card in their box, right? Like, "Yay, you did it. You got certified." And she thought that was a really great thing and recognized that she was giving, you know, maybe a few thank-yous, whatever, but it just felt like, "Wow, I did this thing for you," and it wasn't really being received well. Well, when she ran out of funds to do the coffee cards, she actually instead took the time to write a note about why getting certified in that assessment was so important, right? That meant that you were gonna be able to do, you know, reliable, objective observations of each and every child in your program's development across all domains so that you know how to give them just the right amount of support to get them to the next level and that that was going to truly help these children leave our program feeling inspired to be lifelong learners, ready to tackle kindergarten, and we know that when children start ahead, they stay ahead. And so, that thing, getting certified in that assessment really was a part of that compelling mission and vision that they had. When she did that, she got huge thank-yous back from the staff. They were so touched that they had been recognized. So, it didn't take a \$5 coffee card to have them feel recognized. It took the compelling story to connect it to the mission and the "why" that was so important. Beza?

Beza: That is very inspiring, cause I think it also – like, as we're talking about the "why," it's not explaining the reason at the surface level but also using that in a deeper level to inspire and motivate staff, so thank you for sharing that story, Gail. And an activity that you can do to bring the "why" into perspective is to engage in the "So That ..." activity. You can find this document in the resource widget. But, essentially, at the top of this document, you write the policy and the practice, and you only write one practice per sheet, but the practice can be anything that educational staff are expected to do. So, for example, this could be "know every child by name," "assign a primary caregiver for each instance," "seek opportunities to engage in extended back-and-forth conversations," "ensure classroom's organized to allow dedicated space for dramatic play," or "[Inaudible] computers," "ensure that learning experiences during home visits deal with materials found in the home." So, in the line, in the first line, you would write, you know, the practice or the policy that you have in your program. So, we'll just give an example. So, for instance, one example can be where you would want to communicate the reasons around well-organized classrooms; so, ensuring that children have well-organized environments and dedicated space in the classroom, in the family child care home, so children can move freely and have clearly labeled activities. [Clears throat] So, once you have that written out, your first reason behind importance of the well-organized learning environment can be stated as, "So that children are able to play with different materials that are engaging

and interesting to them.” And your second "So That ..." can be, "So that children can develop their emotional, cognitive, and physical abilities through meaningful interactions with materials and one another.” And the third reason why you would do that is that "So that when they enter kindergarten, they're confident, ready to learn.” You can add as many "So That ..." as you would like to this list. The goal is to start with the program policy or practice and connect it back to the "why" it matters, why it's important, and what the intended goal and outcome is.

We're coming to the end of our webinar and transitioning into Q&A, but before we do, we want to thank you for joining this webinar session. We'll be taking questions soon, and we look forward to connecting with you on our next webinar, which is taking place on Tuesday, April 27th, where we'll talk about the next "R" on providing the reason. We also look forward to continuing this conversation on MyPeers, which is the education leaders community page. And if you don't have an account on MyPeers, you can visit the ECLKC website. It's at the bottom of the page. You can select "create an account" and be able to get connected with us that way.