

## Supporting Infants' and Toddlers' Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation

Gail Joseph: Hi, everyone. Welcome to "Teacher Time". It's so great to have you here with us. I'm Gail Joseph, and I'm so excited to introduce my new co-host. Go head, Maria.

Maria Alvarez: I am Maria Alvarez. Yo soy Maria Alvarez, and we are from the National Center of Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning.

Gail: And thankfully, we just call that DTL, because that is a mouthful. I'm so excited to have you here with us, especially to talk about infants and toddlers. "Teacher Time" is a webinar series just for you, for all of us that are here as teachers and family child care providers. And this season, we're so excited. We will have a total of eight episodes. Four will focus on pre-school aged children, and four on infants and toddlers. We'll have four topics throughout the season so that we can cover the same concept, but both for infants and toddlers and preschoolers – children birth through age 5. We're so excited to have you with us today for our first infant and toddler episode of our new season of "Teacher Time".

Maria: Yes, we are. This year, we're excited to thread our topic, "Approaches to Learning", together through all our webinars. We'll talk about the topic as it applies to the different roles, and hope that this consistency will support learning and teaming across educational staff teams. We look forward to hearing more about how you are collaborating across the topic.

Gail: I'd also like to call your attention to one of my favorite things about "Teacher Time", the viewer's guide. You can find it in the resource widget. If you're new to "Teacher Time," the viewer's guide is for you. You can download the guide and use it throughout our time together for taking notes, reflecting, planning on how you'll use the "Teacher Time" practices in your own settings. The resource guide also has resources if you want to dive deeper into the topic. I would love to know – I'm going to do a little pulse check here – how many of you have used some ideas from the viewer's guide in the past. You can just give us a little thumbs up if you have used one in the past. We're so excited to hear from you if you've done that. We really love those viewer's guides because they always have something that you can try out at home. Alright, we're getting people in here that have used it. Some people have not yet, so we're hoping that they'll download it this time.

Maria: Yep.

Gail: Alright. I think that's it for the logistics. Let's go ahead and get started.

Maria: Yes. Thanks, Gail. Before we dig in deeper, let's briefly go over an overview of what we'll be covering in the next hour. "Approaches to Learning" will be our first topic that we talk about. Adult self-regulation, how we manage our own emotions – which is very important – infants' and toddlers' developmental progression of emotional regulations and how we can support them through our basic strategies – we'll cover more about that. And then we focus on small

change, big impact. Those are some equitable teaching practices that meet all children's needs. We discuss a little bit about equity, too, and reflect together, which will be great. And together, at the end, we can discuss some resources for your own classroom library or your home library, and share final thoughts and answer some questions. Let's jump in.

We're very excited to be focusing this season on "Teacher Time" on supporting young children's self-regulation and learning, emotional. Supporting self-regulation and learning is also referred to as "Approaches to Learning," which, as you may know, is one of the domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, which we also all ELOF.

Gail: Approaches to learning. Some people have questions about what that is. Approaches to learning focuses on how children learn. It's the behaviors that help children learn. It refers to the skills and behaviors that children engage in when they're learning, and it incorporates emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation, as well as initiative and curiosity and creativity. I can't wait until we get to those things later on in our season, as well. Cognitive self-regulation skills are often also referred to as executive functioning, or EF skills.

As we return to fully in-person services, some children and some adults will experience a big transition, and these big changes can mean calling on those emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation skills in a bigger way. We hope that this topic will be especially helpful for you as you support these changes for children.

Maria: That is true. The approaches to learning domain is comprised of four sub-domains of development, which Gail already mentioned. Emotional and behavioral regulation is the one we're focusing on today for infants and toddlers. Cognitive self-regulation, or executive functioning, initiative and curiosity, and creativity. Today, like I said before, we're going to be focusing on emotional and behavioral self-regulation. Over the rest of our "Teacher Time" session, we'll talk about the other sub-domains of approaches to learning.

Gail: Let's dive a little deeper and learn about the emotional and behavioral self-regulation ELOF goals for infants and toddlers. The sub-domain is made up of two goals that you can see there on the screen. Goal 1 is the child manages feelings and emotions with the support of familiar adults. Goal 2 is the child manages actions and behavior with support of familiar adults. Notice how these goals are written. They are written so that the child is learning these skills with the support of an adult, which is very, very important to remember. For infants and toddlers, having a supportive adult with them as they learn to manage feelings and actions builds trust and helps them take chances as they continue to grow and learn.

You might wonder what all the letters are at the front of the listed goal mean. If you're new to the ELOF, let's break it down for you. First, we have the word "goal." Next, we have "IT", and that stands for "infant and toddler," and, in the pre-school domain, you would see a P, but we're focused on infants and toddlers, we're in the IT part. The ATL stands for "approaches to learning," not the Atlanta airport, which is often what I think of when I see that, but it's ATL – approaches to learning. For each domain, the letters will align with the domain, and the numbers that you see are the numbered goals. Alright. Let's go back to the goals.

Today, we are going to focus on Goal 1, and I imagine that a lot of our viewers that are joining us here today, Maria, are pretty interested in this goal, which is the child manages feelings and emotions with the support of familiar adults. This goal is – it probably sounds familiar, so we're talking about it in approaches to learning, but you'll also see similar goals in the emotional functioning sub-domain of the social-emotional domain. There, the goals are about learning to express, to recognize a range of emotions, and here in approaches to learning, our goal is to support the infants and toddlers in managing these feelings, which will require that we also pay attention to helping young children learn names for feelings, et cetera. I love how interconnected these things are. It's just so great to see that.

Maria: Definitely. What do we know about emotional regulations in infants and toddlers? We know that adults provide guidance and support, and just like the goal said, we need to provide that support for them to develop those skills, and toddlers – they become increasingly able to manage their emotions and maintain focus and attention, increasingly on their own, but we do have to provide that support. Their secure attachments develop over time through our consistent, sensitive, and responsiveness when we interact with children, within our infants and toddlers.

We know that when educators create a safe, predictable environment, children can develop a sense of trust and security, and they're more willing to explore and engage and have conversations with you or with other people around their own surroundings. They have their ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors, and they have that confidence to continue exploring and developing other parts of their development, as well, in other domains, but it is super important that we provide that support and that we as educators and caregivers have a strong collaboration and partnership with partners as well to be able to do that.

Gail: Absolutely. I love that. It's something that we do every day by being warm, responsive, sensitive, and predictable. Because a calm and responsive adult, not the picture you're seeing right there, but a calm and responsive adult is so critical to supporting a young child's emotional development. It's really important to start with ourselves. I feel like that's where most of the hard work is, because we're all human and we will experience a wide range of emotions as we work with infants, toddlers, and other adults.

Think for a moment – this is our time to kind of get honest – think for a moment when you're working with young children, when you're working with adults in the environment, think for a moment about what kinds of behaviors you find challenging. What are those behaviors that we sometimes call that as “pushing your hot buttons.” What are those behaviors? Go ahead and answer those into the Q&A widget. Go ahead and list those types of behaviors that you find personally challenging.

I know that some things we often hear are things like biting and screaming, and not following directions, hurting others, those are some of the behaviors that we often see come up when we ask about that. Now, that's the hard part. Being honest and being vulnerable about that. Now that you've admitted to yourself or through the chat, through the Q&A, what kinds of behaviors push your hot buttons, let's talk about how that makes us feel. How does it make you feel when

your hot button is being pushed? Especially, maybe it's a day when you're feeling a little bit more tired; maybe it's a day when you're just feeling a little bit more hungry. When your button gets pushed in those moments, what is that one-word feeling that comes out? Enter some of those feeling words into the Q&A now as well.

We'll take just a moment for some of those to come in. Oh, yes. Feeling frustrated, feeling overwhelmed.

Maria: Helpless.

Gail: Helpless. Mm-hmm. Stressed. Angry. Yes. Very honest feeling there. Anxious, irritable.

Maria: Irritable. Mm-hmm.

Gail: Yes.

Maria: Yeah, a lot of frustrated, a lot of anxious.

Gail: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. We're seeing some of these words coming into the Q&A right now – frustrated, disrespected, angry, and we often hear that some of those big behaviors can bring out big feelings in ourselves.

Maria: Solidarity.

Gail: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. A lot happens. Some strong, big feelings. It's really important for us to be aware of these feelings that we have, and we've actually heard from some other teachers. We're going to hear from some teachers now talking about the ways that they feel in those moments.

[Video begins]

Woman 1: Just feels like everything's sort of caving in at the moment, and it just feels really disruptive, even if it's not as disruptive as it feels.

Man: Anxious.

Woman 2: Worried.

Woman 3: Disrespected.

Woman 4: When I'm dealing with screaming, I feel very irritated.

Woman 5: When that's happening, I feel really frustrated. I feel overwhelmed, like I don't know what to do in that situation because it's happening over and over again.

Woman 6: Honestly, I totally feel disrespected.

Woman 7: It makes me feel like I'm not in control of the classroom.

Woman 8: I feel stressed and ineffective.

Man 2: I feel frustrated, like something already went wrong in the classroom.

[Video ends]

Gail: Oh, my gosh. As co-host of the preschool version of "Teacher Time" says, "I think a lot of people are feeling seen right now." Hearing all of those, and clearly, some of those are preschool teachers, some of those are infant-toddler teachers. Feeling seen.

Maria: Yes. Yeah, clearly. Clearly feeling upset, frustrated, disappointed, and stressed will not maybe help us to be our best teaching selves, and certainly won't help us support young children's emotional regulation developments. Here's a question for you, and you can type that in the chat box, the Q&A chat box. What strategies do you use to manage your own emotions? Talking about your emotions. Not the children's yet. Yours. Let's see if some of those are coming in. What strategy? Redirection.

You redirect yourself. Deep breathing. Yes. Mindfulness right there. Prayer. Yep. Meditating. Mm-hmm. Talking to friends. Yes, definitely. Venting helps. Yeah. Definitely the deep breaths are a big one. Yeah, it's great to see so many of you are already using strategies to help you self-regulate so that you can be that great support for your children when they need it too.

Gail: And we want to give another little tip on how to, in that moment, to maybe help ourselves because, as we've mentioned, some behaviors push our hot buttons, those feelings are elicited, and when those feelings start to fester, they can influence and impact the way we think about the situation, that then impacts the way we feel about the situation, and then that impacts the way we behave in that situation. One other strategy we can use – I love that idea that people were thinking about they pause, they take a deep breath. Another thing that you can bring to your mind in that moment is something we call "red light, green light" thinking, and it is this idea, recognizes that our thoughts, our feelings, our behaviors are all integrally – that's not the right word – they're all involved. They all are related to each other.

I just want to give you an example of what it looks like when we change our thinking, and it can influence the way we feel, which can influence the way we behave. In every moment, we have an opportunity to go down some red light thinking or some green light thinking. Let me just take you through an example that's not based in a classroom. You've been working to save some money. You finally managed to save a little money. You're feeling pretty good, and then you get a big bill to pay. That's the situation. If we're using our red light thinking, we might be thinking, "Ugh, this is hopeless. I'll never save any money. I'm going to struggle, and it will be so awful." If I'm thinking that way, the way I might start feeling is I'm going to feel sad and depressed, and the way I might behave then is probably give up trying to save, even though that's a goal of mine. The way that I'm thinking is going to influence this behavior.

In that moment, though, when we feel that feeling – Ugh – we could also check in and just see if we couldn't get ourselves into some more green light thinking. Green light thinking might be, "Hey, this is a setback, but it's not the end of the world. I'll have to plan for those types of bills in the future, perhaps start paying them off a little bit at a time." How do I feel? I'm not going to feel fantastic, but I'm going to feel maybe OK and a little bit more hopeful about controlling the situation. And how might I behave? I'd probably work out how I forgot about those bills that come intermittently and plan for them in the future and pay them off a little bit at a time. The idea here is just that we check in with our thinking and say, "Uh-oh, I might be stuck at a red light here. I might be just stuck in a way that I'm only seeing the negative."

Let's take it into a classroom situation. Let's say you're sitting with two toddlers playing at the sensory table. One grabs a measuring cup from another. They both start screaming. They start to hit, even when you're trying to separate them. Then a third toddler comes over and is pulling on your shoulder crying. Oh, my gosh. I've been in those situations before. I'm sure our listeners have been in a similar situation. That feeling is stress or frustration or all those big feelings that we had, but now we have a moment to check in with our thinking. If I was going to go down a red light thinking path, I might be thinking, "This is impossible. I can never just engage with children and be fully present." The way I might feel is feeling a bit more overwhelmed and upset, and the way I behave is I'd probably just tell the child to wait and just take the measuring cup away and solve it and move on.

But let's move onto some green light thinking. Let's do this together. What might be – we're going to use our Q&A widget here – what might be some different ways to think in that moment? Go ahead and enter those into the Q&A. How might you think in that moment? This activity's also in your viewer's guide, so feel free to write down some ideas there, too, if you want to keep those to yourself. Hopefully, enter some of those in the Q&A. How might you feel differently or think differently? What might you do there to think differently? People are entering some of those things in now. They might think, "This too shall pass." They might think, "Hey, this is a learning opportunity." "This is temporary." Great. Now, how might you feel in that situation if you started to think, "Hey, this is temporary" or "This is a learning opportunity"? How might you start to feel?

Maria: I got this. Somebody said "I got this." Yes, you do.

Gail: Yeah. Exactly. Right. This is learning. This is what I got into. "I can do this." Yep. Great. Then, what might you do in the behavior part? What might you do? Yeah, "I feel a little bit more relaxed." "I got this." And then the behavior – people are putting those in, and we're sending those out to ... You might take a deep breath. You might support the toddler that needs you right now and say, "I see you. Just a moment, just a moment." And then help those children with a problem-solving situation. Alright. We got it. We went from red light to green light thinking. Just a little example, something to put in your toolbox there to help you calm and be your best self so we can help support young children's emotional regulation.

Maria: I love that some of them said also validating the children's feelings. That's so important, for them to keep that trust going and have honest conversations with you, and then get in a better place to solve this problem.

Gail: Absolutely.

Maria: OK. Now that we have thought about how we can use strategies to regulate our own emotions and behaviors so that we can be more available for children, let's think about what emotional and behavioral regulation looks like in infants and toddlers. Infants and young children cannot regulate their emotions on their own, which we saw from our goal, we need to support them. They need loving adults in their lives to help them immediately regulate their emotions and behaviors and learn skills to do so independently, and that takes time. That is a gradual skill to develop. With practice and support, young children can learn the skills to help them self-regulate.

Gail: Let's look at the developmental progression of emotional regulation for infants and toddlers, and some of this might be review for people, but we think it's really important to demonstrate kind of how young babies into toddlers develop with their emotional regulation. Emotional regulation skills develop throughout early childhood, especially when children have support, the developmental progression can look like what is on this slide. You can read those down at the bottom. By the way, this information is directly from the ELOF, and a link to the ELOF is in your viewer's guide, so you can always have this developmental progression at your fingertips. You can even do ELOF to go and have it on your phone.

Let's look at infants first. Infants engage with familiar adults for calming and comfort to focus attention and to share joy. They are watching us and relying on us. Of course, all children differ, so you might see some younger children more able to self-regulate than older children, or you might see differences day to day, depending on how a child is doing at home or at school. This is a guide to keep in mind as you interact with children in your care. We're going to watch – we're going to focus on this first one, this infant, and let's watch a video here. We're going to watch this one. Let's watch a video to see what the family child care provider does to support the infant's feelings and emotions. While you watch, note these in the Q&A.

[Video begins]

Woman: Yeah. OK. [Speaking foreign language] OK, baby.

Woman 2: [Speaking foreign language]

Woman: [Speaking foreign language]

Woman 2: [Speaking foreign language]

Woman: [Speaking foreign language] Yeah. Yeah. [Speaking foreign language]

[Video ends]

Gail: Beautiful. The baby's getting a little upset, looks to the family child care provider. The family child care provider picks up the baby, uses a soothing voice and touch to help regulate.

Maria: Yeah. I do love how she read that cue from the baby right away and was able to help the baby out. It's so important for us to be aware of those cues that children send us. OK. Now, let's look at another age group. Around eight months, we see that an infant seeks to be close, makes contact, or looks to a familiar adult to help with strong emotions. We're going to watch another video, and as we watch this video, please, in the chat box, tell us how you notice the child is – or what the child is doing to manage his feelings. Share those ideas in the Q&A box so we can share some of your wonderful ideas out, and also, just like Gail has said, you can write those ideas in your viewer's guide. Let's watch this video.

[Video begins]

Baby: [Crying]

[Background voices]

Woman: You talking to him? You talking to him?

Teacher: Whoop!

[Background voices]

Boy: [Crying]

[Background voices]

[Video ends]

Maria: I love how we see the developmental progression here already. You see that this baby has more motor skills. He can lift up his head a lot more, lift up his body. He's using a lot of body language to tell that familiar adult that he's getting frustrated, and he needs that support. And I see a lot of you have already shared your strategies and shared what you've noticed, and that yes, that caregiver tried a few things, first tried to give him a toy, but we also know some infants don't like tummy time so much. He calmed down as soon as he was sat down, and just, she kept continuing to be with him and just keep him distracted with toys, and that definitely worked.

Gail: Yeah, that baby had great skills, though. Like, knew how to look, used vocalizations to get that familiar adult to come help support. Love it. Then, finally, around ...

Maria: He was like, "Hey!"

Gail: Yeah. Finally, around 16 months to 3 years old, toddlers use various strategies to help manage those strong emotions, such as removing themselves from a situation, covering their



eyes or ears or seeking support, again, from a familiar adult. We're going to watch another video, and just note what you see the young children – what are they doing to help kind of regulate their own emotions. Tell us in the Q&A or write some of those ideas down in your viewer's guide, and notice what you're seeing.

[Video begins]

Boy: [Laughing]

[Toy rattling]

Boy 2: [Speaking foreign language] No, no, no!

Boy 3: No, no!

Woman: [Speaking foreign language]

[Video ends]

Gail: Alright. Alright. We see some ideas coming in, like, clearly. It got a little bit big, the emotions got big, and so, using that strategy of just kind of removing themselves is something that they were engaged in. But one of the things that's so great is going back to that baby that was in the swing to what we saw then, what a remarkable amount of development that happens in these infants and toddlers. How exciting to be an infant and toddler or family child care provider to witness that tremendous amount of growth in such a short amount of time. It's really great. Very exciting.

Maria: Yeah. Now that we're familiar with those developmental progressions of emotional regulation, let's talk about ways infants and toddlers, teachers, and family child care providers can support that emotional regulation. Here's three big areas to focus on. First, teaching infants and toddlers to identify those emotions, and we'll talk a little more about that. Teaching infants and toddlers to develop and practice empathy for others, which we probably already do in the classroom, and maybe you realize it, maybe you don't, but I'm sure you do. Teaching infants and toddlers strategies to regulate those big feelings, like we can see that last video, that child knew how to regulate it, and it takes all that time, all that skill, that support from us to get to that point. Use your viewer's guide to note some of the strategies that you might like to try and how you would teach them to self-regulate if you're teaching infants and toddlers.

Gail: I love that picture, too, because that is a day in the life of an infant-toddler family child care provider. You're holding one; you're soothing another; you've got another one that is right nearby, too. OK. Let's get to the BASICS. New to this season of "Teacher Time" are what we call the "Teacher Time" BASICS. What these are is a collection of strategies – sometimes, we call these teacher moves – that can be used in any classroom or family child care environment. We will review this every "Teacher Time" episode. We're going to stick with these, because no matter what it is that you're focusing – maybe you're teaching gross motor skills or literacy or

early math skills, or like today, emotional regulation – it's always important to remember the BASICS.

Maria: Using "Teacher Time" BASICS will help us support those infants and toddlers that we have in our classrooms to learn that emotional vocabulary, empathy, and self-regulation skills. The BASICS is an acronym, as you can see, and we're using that for six teacher moves or strategies that are helpful in learning. We'll just – sorry, let me go back to the BASICS. We can use the BASICS to learn pretty much anything or teach pretty much anything, but let's use those teaching strategies right now – let's use these strategies to focus on how we would support self-regulation and emotional behavioral self-regulation. The B is for "Behavioral Expectations in Advance", which you have already probably applied in your classroom, and we can use this to support young children's – welcome back, Gail – emotional regulation skills –

Gail: Thanks.

Maria: It's OK. ...by stating behavioral expectations in advance. Sorry. We all know that Internet can be on and off. This means that before the children start a new activity or getting settled into a new activity or transition to a new place, which I know in my classroom, I used to give them a heads up or have a visual schedule, and that helped a lot. We need to share these expectations ahead of time. This helps the children understand what they are supposed to do. Here's some examples of what using behavioral expectations in advance might look like, so we can say, "We're going to the table to change your diaper" and you're expressing that ahead of time, so they know. "We're going to use our walking feet and hold each other's hand." Notice how I'm using positive language. I'm phrasing these in positive language. We don't want to tell them what they are not to do. We want to focus on the positive. Instead of "No running", we'll say, "Use your walking feet." Instead of saying, "Hitting is not OK," we will say, "Gentle touches" or "Touch Gail softly or gently." We use that.

Even if you're in a toddler classroom and you're potty training, even then, you use positive phrasing for your potty training experiences for your toddlers, and you can say, "We go to the bathroom in the toilet." Even if they have an accident, we don't say, "No, not on your underwear!" We say, "We do it in the toilet," and we continue to phrase positively. Here, behavioral expectations don't always have to be verbal, especially when we're talking about infants and toddlers who may not process language yet because they're still developing it, or they need more visual support or more modeling. As you can see in these pictures, they can tell the child or the children what they can do or what is expected of them. In the picture of the left, you can see a toddler who can find their picture on the table. They see where they're supposed to sit when it's a small group or meal time. In the picture on the right, you see the adult that uses a larger mat to create a space that helps toddlers understand where to sit or hear books or group play, and they know that's part of their routine, and they know that's where they're supposed to sit.

Gail: That's right, and thanks for letting me freeze there for a moment and come back. Now, A is for "Attend to and Encourage Appropriate Behavior". That's the A in BASICS. One sure way to help children learn emotional regulation is to give infants and toddlers your time and attention

and encouragement when they are regulating their emotions. Here are some examples of what that might sound like in an infant-toddler classroom or family child care. You might say, "Ella, you are using gentle touches with the baby," or it might be "Xavier, you are really staying calm while you wait for me to help Myles," or "Baby Jewell, you found your fingers to slurp – what a good way to soothe yourself. Slurp, slurp, slurp." Or "Tyreek, you are waiting for a turn. It's so hard to wait, but you're so good at it." That's really it, is giving your time and attention to children when they are engaged in the behaviors you want to see more of. We can attend and encourage appropriate behavior with our words, but we can also use gestures. We can do a high five, thumbs up, cuddles with an infant, hugs can all send a message to a child that their efforts are being noticed and that they are important. High-five those babies.

What are ways that you give your attention and encouragement? Let's enter those into the Q&A. We don't have a chat. We have Q&A, so enter those examples into the Q&A so others can see your great ideas. What are the ways you provide attention and encouragement in addition to your words? Going to wait for some of those ideas to come in. Oh, I love the idea of sending a big smile, laughter. Of course. Just that matching their emotions, engaging, some praise, some hugging. Oh, I love these. Eye contact, smiles, lots of hugs. I love this so much. Hand gestures. I love it. Smiling with your eyes. You would have a mask on. You have to make sure that you're smiling a lot. Doing a happy dance. I love that. I love it. Also, remembering that we can give that same time and attention to parents when they're picking up their babies, too, and reinforcing what it is that they're doing with their young babies. I love that, too. Alright, moving on to S. Maria.

Maria: Scaffold with Cues and Prompts. This is super important. It's a big thing to help children learn pretty much anything. When we provide scaffolds, we're helping a child learn by providing them with just the right amount of assistance to help them reach the next level. We're not doing anything for them, necessarily, but we're just providing that small amount of assistance. That assistance we provide can look like a cue, "Look here" or pointing to a block they may need or anything they may need. It could be any kind of cue. An assistant can also involve prompts. Prompts can be physical, such as moving a child's hand or positioning an infant slightly to help them roll over or reach for a toy, or prompts can also be verbal, like in this picture on the left, the teacher is gently supporting the child by holding their hand and modeling words to encourage the child to let the other child have a turn.

Gail: I love it. "I" is for "Increase Engagement." Another way we can support emotional and behavioral self-regulation is to increase a child's active engagement in that learning. That's what it is for young children. They are hands-on learners. Infants, toddlers, and young children learn fast, always, when they're actively engaged. That might mean touching, feeling, exploring, using their senses about anything that they want to know. There are so many ways that you can increase active engagement in learning emotional regulation. We have a few ideas here.

Remember, one big key thing that we can do is build young children's emotional vocabulary. I can't overemphasize that enough because we know that when we learn the words for these emotions, as we begin to become verbal, we are going to be able to express ourselves verbally,

and that is going to help us so much in emotional and social competence. Some ways we can do that are with feeling books. We're going to highlight a lot of them later on in our webinar today. Feeling face dice. These are just those kind of cushy dice that have laminated pouches where you can put in different photos, and I love to use photos of the children that I'm working with. Different expression of their expressions we can put in there, and they can mouth it, they can look at it, and we can label the feelings as they're looking at them.

And then mirrors. Playing with mirrors is a big way to build emotional vocabulary, because as babies are looking in the mirror, we can label what those feelings are. We can label how their face is looking. Such a great way. I know that our viewers have tons of great ideas, things they've been doing to build emotional vocabulary for young children. Enter those now in the Q&A so we can share them with each other, and so that we can share them on another "Teacher Time" in the future, as well. Enter some of your ways to teach young children feeling words with some active engagement there. I'm looking at some of those ideas coming in now. Doing a lot of modeling.

Maria: Yes, so important to model everything that we want to see the children also learn.

Gail: Yes. Feeling songs. Yes. I love those. Making pumpkin emotion cards. I love this, with expressions. Emotional dolls.

Maria: I love puppets. Yeah, that's a huge one in my classroom, too.

Gail: Oh, and Tucker Turtle, of course. Peekaboo, feeling games, drawing feeling faces. I love this.

Maria: Singing songs about feelings every day in circle time, just asking everybody how they're feeling today, and that can also give you a little insight about what children need a little bit more support that day, too.

Gail: I love this, and we're going to be pushing all these ideas out. Frog emotion cards. Oh, great ideas that are coming in. We'll make sure to be pushing those out through the Q&A. And onto C.

Maria: C is "Create or Add a Talent." It's super important to add a complexity or challenge piece to keep up with young children's rapid brain development, which is something we know really develops quickly. We're taking advantage of that. We're also always thinking about how to extend the child's learning to deepen those connections they're making in their minds. I know when I'm lesson planning, that's one thing that I always have. How do I extend, how do I support? Here are a few ways you can create or add that challenge to help infants and toddlers learn emotional regulation skills. You can always add more advanced vocabulary words, like Gail was mentioning. Little kids love big words, and they use it – even though they might not use it in the appropriate way or context, but they love using it, and we love to hear it, and it is never too early to start using that advanced vocabulary when children are ready.

You can increase the problem solving solutions you introduce to young children. Some teachers have problem solving baskets or boxes or ideas for each scenario, but usually, the sharing one is difficult, and you can create your own problem-solution box of ideas for scenarios like that. Or, for example, a toddler might be really good at a very simple solution to the problem of two toddlers wanting the same toy by saying, "Mine, mine!" and grabbing it tightly. But create that challenge by offering words to the toddler or assign, such as "My turn." Instead of saying "Mine," maybe it's "My turn." For infants, think about adding a challenge by extending that time you wait, that time delay, that time you wait for infants to find their thumb or fist to self-soothe. Some like the fingers. Let them find that a little bit longer.

What are some ideas you have for creating or adding that challenge to develop children's emotional regulation skills? Share some of those ideas in the chat box. We'll see what comes up.

Gail: We're waiting for some of those. Those are such great ideas, extending that time within that zone of proximal development. I love just extending the time a little bit longer for an infant to start to learn some self-soothing. Such a great idea.

Maria: Yeah, they'll surprise you. When you give them a little bit of a wait time, they'll surprise you and see that maybe they don't need you as much, and just that little scaffolding, little assistance is OK with them.

Gail: Yeah. Being there, giving just enough support. I'm going to move us on to S here. Moving on to S, is providing – our second S – is "Providing Specific Feedback." When children are learning emotional behavioral regulation skills or really any skill, for that matter, we can help them learn by understanding what they are doing and what they can do more of. Providing that specific feedback. This seems to be sometimes something that we forget to do. I know as a teacher, I've forgotten to do that a lot, so it's just helpful to have that last S reminder of providing specific feedback. Providing specific feedback really helps encourage children to continue their learning and serves to correct learning or behavior that's required.

Specific feedback really can acknowledge and extend a child's actions or words. Here are some examples of ways that I've heard some teachers give some specific feedback. Maybe they're reading a book with a child. "You said you think the bear is feeling happy, and I think you're right, because he is smiling so big. And when people are feeling happy, they sometimes smile, and what does it look like when you're feeling happy?" Very specific feedback. "You said happy, and I think you're right." That's specific feedback. Here's another one. "Look at Trevor's face. I don't think he likes that." That's pretty specific feedback. "Let's use a gentle touch." I think I've said that many times as a teacher, and "Oh, I know that loud sound scared you." Specific feedback. A baby gets upset, they heard the loud sound. "But it's OK. You're safe." Specific feedback. "Yes, now you're curious about that drum, aren't you?"

Great ways to reinforce what they're expressing or their emotions or the way that they're expressing themselves, and then to either provide some corrective feedback or some extension of that learning, and that is the S.

Maria: Yes. There you have it – the BASICS. To review, the "Teacher Time" BASICS can help you teach any content. And in this episode, we were just talking about how to use BASICS to help infants and toddlers learn to regulate their emotions.

Gail: Now, sometimes, children we work with need a little extra support to be successful, and in each episode of "Teacher Time", we provide tips for making modifications or adaptations for children who may have a disability or suspected delay, and really, for any child who just may need a little extra support with a specific routine or learning activity. And sometimes, these small changes can have a big impact on children's success.

Maria: Yes, and one modification that we can see on our screen right now that can help toddlers who are having a difficult time being able to wait – patience is a skill that is hard for everybody, but especially toddlers – is to create that “First-Then” card. In this photo, the family child care provider puts a photo of what the toddler needs to do first, and what they need to do second. For example, it could be a photo of a sink. First, we wash our hands, and then a photo of crackers. Then, it's snack time. The card with the photos provide that additional information that helps the child see what will be next, and this is helpful when a child might not be processing verbal language efficiently, or even if they're dual language learners and they need that visual support to know what they need to do and what's coming next.

Can you mention some changes, like maybe you label your classroom or objects or furniture with more visual supports, and that could be a universal support for all the children in your classroom, or anything that you have done that's maybe a small change, but has a huge impact – has a big impact? I want you to think of a child that maybe has a hard time waiting, or use your viewer's guide and write that down, because I think we're running a little bit – with a little bit of time left. You can definitely use your viewer's guide. Write a plan or small change that will help support a child. The viewer's guide does include some guiding questions to help you plan a modification, to see if that small change has a big impact, the one that you're thinking about in your planning. If you find successful strategies, you can share them with a child's family, which may be very helpful for them at home as well.

Gail: That's right. Now, we want to focus on equity. As we learn more and talk about emotional and behavioral regulation, it's really important to think about how we do or do not use equitable teaching practices. When we talk about equitable teaching practices, it means using practices that meet each child where they are to support their ability to fully participate and belong in their learning environment, to have that feeling of belonging. The practices we talked about in BASICS and Small Change, Big Impact can be considered equitable teaching practices, as each practice can be individualized to a child's learning needs. Often, before we can implement equitable teaching practices, we must pause and reflect on our own behavior and what might be getting in the way of our equitable teaching, and one of the ways we do that is by examining and shining a light on our implicit biases about children and emotional regulation.

Now, there have been quite a few studies lately that have suggested that sometimes, teachers perceive children to have more disruptive or more aggressive behavior when they do not. Dr. Walter Gilliam is somebody who's done a really interesting study about looking at bias in the

classroom, and because we're running low on time, I'm just going to explain it very quickly, and we're going to have that posted – the video posted either in the Q&A or over on MyPeers so that you can watch it.

Basically, Dr. Walter Gilliam showed teachers videos of children in a classroom, and he asked teachers to point out children who are going to engage in challenging behavior, or children that had challenging behavior, and there were children in the classroom of various races, and more often than not, the teachers would look at the Black boy when they were asked to look at a child with challenging behavior. And the thing is is that none of the children were exhibiting challenging behavior. What brought to mind was that there was something, some implicit bias, that those teachers were engaging in that made them think, when they looked at a classroom and were told to look for challenging behavior, they looked towards the Black boy, and that was a real unfortunate unveiling in shining some light on our implicit biases. The idea there is to think about, when you're thinking about children with challenging behavior or you're thinking about children that might be having difficulty with emotional and self-regulation, how are your biases coming into play there?

Alright, we're going to go to one of our last segments, "The Book CASE". "The Book CASE" is a segment where we highlight books connected to our theme and then make a case for using them, and CASE is an acronym that we use which talks about how we see C – can connect the learning in the book to an ELOF goal. A is for advanced vocabulary. What vocabulary can we teach using that book? S is ideas for how we can support engagement while reading the book, and E is to extend beyond the book. We have some books in the viewer's guide, and you can see them there, that are connected to emotional and behavioral learning.

"The Color Monster" is just a lovely, lovely, lovely, fun book. I have it both in English and in Spanish. Good book, where a little girl helps a color monster sort out his feelings. Great vocabulary in there. "Making Faces" – another great one. It's probably on your bookcase now, but if it's not, put it on there. Lovely, diverse faces in here. Lots of different feeling vocabulary, and my favorite is at the very end – a mirror, so you can do some of that mirror play with a baby. Then, finally, we have – oh, this one's just really tiny. I love this one so much, though. This is "My Face Book." Not the website, but like the face book here. You can get it in lots of languages. I have it in English and in Spanish. I have it in English and in Hebrew. I've gotten it in Somali, as well. Lots of ways that you can find that face book, and it's filled with lots of different feeling vocabulary.

It's definitely connected to our ELOF goal of emotional regulation by teaching different feeling words. You can use lots of emotional vocabulary, advanced vocabulary in there. You can support engagement by having children make the funny faces or touch to their nose when you touch to the nose in the book, and you can do extension beyond the book by making your own classroom feeling face book. Here is a lovely, lovely toddler is part of one of our feeling face books we've made in the classroom, and she's demonstrating excited, and then you have lots of different pictures of the toddlers making different feeling faces. Laminate them, put them in your bookcase, and I promise you, they will be some of the very favorite books that people seek

out in your classroom because they love to see themselves; they love to see each other; they can name the feelings. And be sure to ask families to also tell you how to say those feelings in their home language so you can build your own emotional vocabulary in multiple languages, as well. That's our Book CASE.

Maria: Yes. We talked a little bit about this in the beginning, about how it's so important to engage in that self-care and manage your own emotions to help support infants and toddlers or kids in your classroom. We'll go over very quickly a little strategy. When children are just learning how to regulate their emotions, they can have several meltdowns or a period of dysregulation, and they can make us feel a little bit anxious and stressed and upset, like you all mentioned at the beginning. We can use a mindful STOP, and the S is for "Stop what you're doing," and that could be clenching your fist or gritting your teeth or tightening your stomach or however your body tenses. The T is for "Taking that deep breath or two" in through your nose, out through your mouth. The O is "Observing what is supporting you." Is it a chair? Is it the ground? Just feel that support that you have and imagine that you're supported. Once calm and less tense, you go to the P, and then you proceed positively with your plan to be your best self, your best teaching self and caregiving self.

Gail: Love that mindful STOP.

Maria: So important. Now, before we almost end, let's just talk a little bit about Push Play. Have you missed a webinar before? We have you covered. Go to Push Play DTL On Demand, where you can view recently aired webinars, like the "Teacher Time" self-regulation for preschoolers. Emotional and behavior self-regulation for preschoolers is already up there. We've made it easy to find exactly what you're looking for. The more views you have, the more customized this experience will be for you. But please be sure to bookmark the site and save it, or you can find it on MyPeers as well.

Gail: That is right. We are out of time. It flew today. That's all the time that we have, but we are going to see you over on MyPeers, where we can continue this engaging conversation. We will have lots of other resources for you over there. Join us again in December, as we talk about supporting preschoolers' cognitive self-regulation, and again in January to catch the infant and toddler version of cognitive self-regulation. Maria, well done. I loved co-hosting with you.

Maria: [Speaking Spanish] Thank you, Gail. Gracias, everyone!