

## Using the 5Rs of Early Learning Leaders to Support Children's Cognitive Self-regulation

Vanessa Maanao-French: Good afternoon or good morning, depending on where you're joining us from. Welcome to our webinar, Using the 5RS to Support Cognitive Development in Young Children. My name is Vanessa Maanao-French, and you've seen me on several of our webinars now for the education manager series, but I do want to pause right away and introduce you to Katie Miller, who is my colleague here at the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning. She can introduce herself and say a little bit about who she is and kind of what brings her to this work. Katie?

Katie Miller: Awesome, thank you. I'm a newish face to this webinar series. I've been a part of DTL for a few years now, but my name is Katie Miller, and I'm a content specialist, and I do a lot of training development, is one of my main tasks. But I have a great, great love of all things Head Start, so I'm super happy to join in on this webinar series. I actually – I was not a Head Start participant when I was a child, but as a child, I got volunteered to be in my mother's Head Start classroom. That was my first experience with Head Start, and then later I was a bus driver and teacher aide, and also, I had the role of master teacher, which is similar to an education manager. I've been in various roles in Head Start throughout the years and thrilled to be here with you today.

Vanessa: Thanks, Katie, and now you see why she's the perfect match to be with us. She's one of us education managers.

As a reminder, this webinar series is focused on approaches to learning this year. We're really looking at that domain of the ELOF and digging in deep on one specific domain, right, so approaches to learning. And we're not the only ones doing it, which is so fantastic. This year, our content has been integrated with Teacher Time, both the preschool and infant toddler episodes, focused on approaches to learning, Coaching Corner. If you have coaches that you're working with, or maybe you're a coach yourself alongside being an ed manager, I know the role of wearing many, many a hat. There's Coaching Corner webinars that also focus on approaches to learning this year. Of course, our series, there's our little flower logo in the center, and then Home Visiting also is having the same focus on approaches to learning. Our goal is that this helps to facilitate conversation between roles and that you can plan training around these different episodes that have been kind of geared to be role-specific, but then you can dig in deep. Again, we really encourage you to check out Push Play as one place to be able to get access to those webinars, or to go onto ECLKC as they are posted. But let's dig in a little bit further and talk about what you will need to be able to engage in this webinar.

The Viewers' Guide is new to this series but not new to the Teacher Time Series. If you have been watching Teacher Time, you understand what this is. If you don't, we call our version of a Viewers' Guide the Leader's Digest. And the Leader's Digest follows along with our presentation, offering you space to reflect on a video that we'll share later or just some questions that we pose. It's also a great space to catch some notes if you'd like to bring this content to your team. Please, if you haven't already, download it, we've made it so that it's

available to you to download right away and electronically, you can just type right in or print it off. Totally up to you.

Moving on to get us kind of situated and grounded, this is what we're hoping you come away with at the end of our time together. We want you to be able to identify ways to leverage the 5Rs into your leadership practice, so to better bolster the cognitive self-regulation skills of young children, and we're also going to introduce some research around how the brain works, both in children and adults, that we feel really helps to promote some positive ways to engage with your staff, who then engage with children. We'll talk a lot about the parallel process throughout our time today, so do know this is going to be a place where you get to engage as much as we hope staff engage with children.

Approaches to Learning – again, this is our focus. And it's about how children learn, because what the research tells us is that the skills that kids have around how they learn really helps to support them in all of the other domains, right? How they're able to persist in a task, how they're able to use their working memory, how they're able to be flexible in their thinking really helps to help them shine as learners, as they grow.

As you know, if you've been with us already this year, starting in November we've started this series, and our very first one was on Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation, and we'll get through all of them. Initiative and Curiosity will be in April, and Creativity, I think, we're doing in June or July. Come back for those, but today we're really focused on Cognitive Self-Regulation. We really want as ... During our time together, to think again about that parallel process, about how adults use the very same skills we're going to talk about in their own practice and how we can bolster those. Katie is going to lead us through a quick activity to get us into that mindset of cognitive development. Katie, I'll let you take it from here.

Katie: Great. To give you an idea of what this might feel like for our teachers and children, we're going to play a little game. A series of words will appear on the screen and then as you see each word, I want you to say aloud to yourself the color of the text, so not the word itself, just the color of the text. And the point of this is to go pretty quickly, so don't be surprised if they flash through your screen pretty quickly. Get ready, and we'll go. ... We made it to the end. How well did you do? What did you notice? Feel free to put any thoughts in the Q&A. We'd love to hear about those. But this test, if you haven't seen it before, is called the "Stroop Test," and it's a common way that researchers measure cognitive flexibility in mostly adults. Though children can do this, mostly this test is used with adults. You might have noticed that at first, the written name of the color matched the color of the text. But then at some point, when I cued you that it's going to get a little harder, the written name of the color was different from the color of the text. This probably made it much harder to say the name of the color of the word quickly. What tests like this do is to demonstrate the brain's ability to switch between tasks. To be fast at the task, you have to ignore the word and focus on the color, and that might be really hard to do since a lot of our reading skills tend to be a little bit more automatic. Your brain has to practice that ability to inhibit its natural tendency to read and to focus on the colors instead.

Now, a really cool thing to know is because people who are learning more than one language have natural practice at switching between languages, they tend to complete Stroop tasks more

quickly and accurately than people who are monolinguals. Bonus for people who are multilingual, because this does show their mental flexibility.

This theory of selective attention really emphasizes that recognizing colors, compared to reading words, requires more of our attention. Because of this, the brain needs to use more attention and energy when attempting to name a color, making it take a little bit longer. This is a really neat opportunity to think about how we practice this as adults, but the same skill is actually nurtured in young children, just for their cognitive self-regulation. We've also, just so you know, included a link to an interactive Stroop Effect Test in our Leader's Digest if you would like to share this activity or do this activity with your team.

Let's keep moving. Thinking about mental flexibility and cognitive self-regulation, the test that we just completed exercised your brain to take in information, including information that we say created dissonance, so kind of clashed with our natural abilities. You had to resist making an immediate decision, especially during those last few slides. Cognitive self-regulation, as you see on the screen, is like the air traffic control system in the brain. It's a group of skills that help us to focus on multiple streams of information at the same time, as well as set goals, make plans, make decisions in light of available information, revise plans – how many of us have revised a few plans, right, with the pandemic, a skill we've all used a lot – and then resist hasty action. That is a huge one. I want to just pause on that one because I feel like for preschoolers, but for all of us, that's a really important skill, is to hold back hasty action and think through before we process. These are skills that emerge in young children and are strengthened with help from adults.

The cool thing and the, I think, fascinating thing is that children aren't born with these skills, but they're born with the potential to develop them. Children's brains grow faster, you might know, in the first few months and years of life than they do or will at any other time in their life. No pressure, but a lot is really happening with us, early childhood educators and staff, and I find that really amazing. By the time they are born, an infant's brain has all of the different regions that it will have as an adult and most of the neurons, but it's got a huge period of growth to go through. At birth, infants' brains are about one-quarter of the volume of adult brains, but then the rest of a newborn's tiny body is not even close to one-quarter of her size. Children's brains continue to grow, and quickly, including a recent study which calculated the rate, or how fast that infant brains grow. By the end of the first year of life, children's brains are already 70% of adult size, so pretty impressive. But then by 5 years of age, a child's brain has grown to about 90 to 95% of adult size. This particular graphic says 90, but there's some information that estimates it to be up to 95, as well.

Note that while the 5-year-old brains might be 90% of the size of adult brains, it doesn't mean that they're 90% developed. It's got a lot more to do. For example, when a 4-to-5-year-old child can only sometimes control their impulses, they do still need support from adults. The parts of the brain that control impulses, like the prefrontal cortex, which is right here, also called the frontal lobe, still needs a lot more time and experience to develop. Scientists estimate that the brain doesn't actually finish developing until well into the third decade of life. But by 5 years of age, children have a lot of those raw materials, those brain cells, those neurons, some of the synapses that really build the brain, so pretty cool. I'm going to finish showing these here. By

the time they're 18 years old, you see 100%. Very amazing. Children's brains are really uniquely primed to learn from those everyday experiences. Neat.

Vanessa: Thanks, Katie. I wanted to reflect back, too, to the Stroop Test and some of the comments that were coming in. It was like people were saying, "It was tricky." "It took time." "I had to pause." It was definitely harder, right when you cued them, that it would be harder, it got harder. But there's something about being able to practice with that mental flexibility to get us into this space that these young brains are in, too. They are exercising their mental flexibility as they're learning new concepts. We're thinking about self-regulation around cognition today, and that really encompasses these skills. And Katie mentioned most of them, if not all: sustained attention, impulse control, flexibility in thinking and working memory.

I want to call your attention to a resource that we have in the Leader's Digest, and it's called "Beautiful Bilingual Brains," I think it's called, or "Bilingual Babies," which one? "Brilliant Bilingual Babies." Let me get that perfectly right for you because it is an amazing resource, and I hope you download it and read it if you have not already. It talks about the brainy benefits of being bilingual, and it goes back to something that Katie just mentioned about that prefrontal cortex development, and because these children, these young children are exercising their brain in different ways, holding onto two languages, and they're working memory is getting worked overtime to be able to hold these two languages together. If we were to measure their development in all the languages that they know – let's also acknowledge that we have children in our programs who are not just bilingual, they are trilingual. They may have four or five languages spoken in their home, but these children are exercising their brains in a very, very different way, which, when we measure them across all the languages that they know, they are on pace with their monolingual peers if not ahead of them in some of these skills, such as working memory and flexibility of their thinking. Please check out this resource. There is also a little bit within it, a little resource you can pull out from that about how to work with families. If you have home visitors, if you have teachers going out for home visits, family childcare providers, you see your families every single day, there are nuggets in there that you might want to work into your conversations with families to really promote the brainy benefits of being bilingual.

Let's move onto our next slide, where we want to really ... Let's review a little bit. OK? I know we know these, but it's always good to go back and check in about what the goals are for our infants and toddlers. And as Katie mentioned, we had ... babies have the seeds of these ready, right? They're ready to bloom, but they need the nurturing of adults in their lives to help them grow. You'll notice for infants, it's their ability to maintain attention, but they'll need – with support, notice that these end often with support – to develop the ability to show persistence, the ability to be flexible in their actions and behaviors. They're showing the start of these things as infants and toddlers. Similarly, as they grow, they're going to continue to need that adult guidance as they increase their independence in their ability to show these things, control their impulses, and then sustain attention with less and less support. But still, support is in there to be able to perform tasks and stay on task. And then, again, we've talked about this, and you just practiced this – being flexible in their thinking and in their behavior. Holding onto those, knowing what we're thinking about our kids, let's talk a little bit about how that's supported through Teacher Time, and Katie's going to take us through that.

Katie: Great. We wanted to go through a little bit about the Teacher Time basics of cognitive self-regulation. Just as a heads-up, episodes of Teacher Time – if you haven't seen them before – are designed separately and specifically for preschool and infant toddler teachers. During each episode of the basics, this is a collection of teaching strategies, and they are reviewed with examples for a subdomain of Approaches to Learning. The most recent episodes are focused on cognitive self-regulation, which I love. And then home visitors can use the same basics while they're working with families to build cognitive self-regulation in their children, as well. The Teacher Time basics include: "B" is behavioral expectations in advance; "A," attend to and encourage appropriate behavior; "S," scaffold with cues and prompts; "I," increase engagement; "C," create or add challenge; and then, "S," specific feedback. I love those, short and sweet.

We don't have time to walk through all of the basics and their application to cognitive regulation during our webinar today, but we wanted to take a moment and just review one of those, so we chose "A." The "A" in BASICS is for "Attend to and encourage appropriate behavior." And we know that one sure way to help children learn cognitive self-regulation skills is to help them know just what to do. As an education manager, you can work with your teacher and family childcare providers to acknowledge when a child is showing continued interaction or persistence. This might sound something like, "You are playing so well together and keeping the water in the tub," at least for the most part. This type of attention can help children sustain attention to what they are doing and persist at a task, really being encouraged. Home visitors working with families can help families recognize and reinforce these behaviors, too, so during the visit and then to identify other times of the day when their child can practice these new skills.

We highly recommend exploring these webinars and sharing them with you staff, or better yet, viewing the webinars as a team. We also encourage you to include your disability services coordinator to offer insights into how basics can be tailored to highly individualized teachers for children with disabilities. We've included a link to the DTL Push Play website, where you can find all of our webinars, including the most recent Teacher Time webinar.

We're going to take a moment and pause for a poll question. Let's shift gears and think together about your leadership practice. We want you to tell us, when do you feel most effective as a leader? How would you complete this statement today? And we know that your answer could change based on current circumstances or that you may want to select more than one option. Try to pick your top choice and finish this statement, and I will click through so it launches the poll for you. I feel most effective as a leader when: I am engaged in one-on-one reflective supervision, I inspire my team to work together to persevere when challenged, I can provide my team with resources they need to do their best, "I can help my team ask critical questions when reviewing data, or I acknowledge staff for their successes. I'll give you a few seconds to complete that. ... Seeing some answers start to roll in now. Wonderful. ... Great. We've got about 40 percent, so thank you so much all of those who have answered so far. We're going to hold on. Let's see if we can get to 50 percent, maybe even 60 if you go quick.

Vanessa: Yep. There they go. This is easier than the Stroop Test, friends.

Katie: Looks like we're holding pretty steady, just about 50%. Thank you so much. OK –

Vanessa: Oh, this is fun. Great. OK. The results..

Katie: Vanessa, I'll turn that back to you.

Vanessa: Oh, OK. I'll take it back. This is great. We can just stay on the data all day, though. I love ... I'm super curious. Well, the good news is that there's no wrong answer, right? You are effective in what you're doing no matter what you chose there, because each of those is tied to one of the 5Rs. And for those who have been with us before, you probably know these by heart. But for those who this may be your first webinar joining us, thank you for joining us. And let me give you a quick mini-history of the 5Rs. The 5Rs research was led by Dr. Gail Joseph here at the University of Washington because she and our team were super curious about what makes an effective leader effective. Pouring through all the research that's already out there, all the literature that's out there on leadership, we found that the closest thing we could come to were things about different industries outside of our own or secondary ed, elementary ed, but not so much about the leadership of early learning teachers, family childcare providers and home visitors. The best way to learn was to ask you, so Gail and team went out and spoke to education managers, home visitors, teachers, family childcare providers, coordinators – talked to you, along with other leaders in the field – executive directors, directors – to learn, what are those commonalities? Where do we come together and see this synergy around practice? And really, that synergy came into the development of these 5Rs.

What that all came down to was that we need these five things. We know that leaders build strong relationships, and these relationships lead to a unified culture where there is trust and collaboration, where people feel a sense of belonging, that there are reasons that ground the practice. When we say the reasons, we're talking about the big why. Why are we doing this? Why do we wake up every morning? Why do we do this even on days and months – and maybe it's been about almost 2 years that it's been extra hard to do this work. What is our reason? And a lot of times, that's really our heart work, as our colleague, Lisa Wilson, would say, that draws us to the work. How do we use the reason to inspire commitment to the practices, policies of practices that we use every day?

The third “R” is Resources, and we think often about resources as those material things, things we buy. And that definitely is part of Resources as an R, but it's also knowing that the best resource you have is yourself, and the second-best resource you have is the person sitting next to you. How do we really lift up ourselves as a resource and see each other, including our families, as resources that inform our practice?

The fourth “R” is Reflective Dialogues, and these last two might be my absolute favorite – I say that every time I talk about them. I think Katie knows. I'm like, "I could say my favorite is each one of them," but today my two favorites are reflective dialogues because – and recognition, which is the final one. Reflective dialogues create that space to have conversation about practice in deep ways. It's a space where we can look at our data not to evaluate solely, but to learn. It's a place where we can push the boundaries of what we understand and really identify

places where we have a gap, where there might be inequities, and be OK having conversations about, what can we do to remedy those?

Finally, of course, Recognition as our final “R” is something we want to be able to do every single day, which is to help our teams feel seen, feel valued, feel validated, and that we see their work and we appreciate their work. Recognition is about small wins that we have every day, especially when it's hard to see those wins, coming through when things are hard. It's about saying, "I see you." I think a lot about Dr. Adolph Brown, and I quoted him in the recognition webinar that we did on the 5Rs. He has this phrase he uses, which always sticks in my heart, which is "Because of you" as the beginning of a statement of thanks, right? "It's because of you children and families are able to thrive during this time that has been hard." "Because of you, this child has learned a new skill today or is excited to try a new skill today." But at managers, "Because of you, a teacher home visitor, family childcare provider is taking a risk and trying something. Because of you, they're able to celebrate."

Those are the 5Rs in the quick, little snapshot. If you're interested in digging in deeper to any of these five, we do have all five on ECLKC as a separate webinar. I invite you to check those out on ECLKC or on Push Play.

We told you we were going to give you some research, and Katie gave you some nice teasers about brain development at the top. I want to give us a little bit more from a different perspective. This is from Dr. Carol Dweck, who talks a lot about fixed and growth mindset. You may know her work already, but we're offering you here today to help think about flexibility, and how we think and how that may influence how we act. She talks a bit about kind of fixed being, you feel like – well, it seems kind of obvious – growth isn't an option, because the brain you have, the talent you have – that's it and you operate within that. Where she would push that and say, "Well, no. People with a growth mindset see that as a starting point. I can always do more. I can grow in different ways. I just need to shift how I think about it," right? She probably says it better than I do, so why don't I just let Carol speak for herself for about 5 minutes? What I would love for you to do, if you downloaded the Leader's Digest, pull that out. We got a special space for you to write some thoughts because we're going to ask you at the end, so preview, we're going to ask you for your thoughts about what you take away from this video. Again, it's about 5 minutes. If you didn't download it, that's fine, too. Scratch paper works, whatever is around you. But let's listen to Carol talk about mindset.[Video begins]

Carol Dweck: Today, I want to tell you about the power of yet. I learned in high school in Chicago where students had to pass 84 units to graduate, and if they didn't pass, they got the grade "Not yet." I thought, "Isn't that wonderful," because if you fail, you're nowhere. But if you get the grade "Not yet," you're on a learning curve. "Not yet" gave them a path into the future. And "Not yet" also helped me understand a critical experience early in my career. To figure out how kids cope with challenge, I gave 10-year-olds some problems that were a little too difficult for them. Some of them reacted in a shockingly positive way. They said things like, "I love a challenge," or "I was hoping this would be informative." They understood that their abilities could grow through their hard work. They had what I call a growth mindset. But other children, for them it was tragic, catastrophic. From their more fixed mindset perspective, their core intelligence had been tested and devastated. Instead of the power of yet, they were gripped by

the tyranny of now. What did they do next? In one study, after a failure on a test, they said they'd cheat next time instead of study more. In another study, they found someone who did worse than they did so they could feel better. And in many studies, we found they run from difficulty. Let's look at how that looks in the brain. Moser and his colleagues measured from the brain as kids encountered errors. Processing the error shows up in red. If you look at the fixed mindset brain on the left, nothing is happening. But if you look at the growth mindset brain on the right, it's on fire with yet. They're processing the error, deeply learning from it, and correcting it.

How are we raising our kids? Are we raising them for now or for yet? Are they focused on the next "A" or test score instead of dreaming big, instead of thinking about what they want to be and how they want to contribute to society? And if they are too focused on "A"s and test scores, are they going to carry this with them into the future? Maybe, because many employers are coming to me and saying, "We've already created a generation of young workers who can't get through the day without an award." What can we do? How can we build that bridge to yet? First, we can praise wisely. Our research shows that when we praise kids for the process they engage in, their hard work, their strategies, their focus, their perseverance, they learn that challenge thinking. They learn that resilience. Praising talent, praising intelligence makes them vulnerable. There are other ways of rewarding yet.

We teamed up with game scientists at the University of Washington to create a math game, Brain Points. The typical math game rewards right answers right now, but not Brain Points. We rewarded process and the learning curve, so effort strategy and progress. The Brain Points game created more sustained learning and greater perseverance than the standard game. And just the words "Yet" and "Not yet" after a student has a setback, we're finding creates greater confidence and greater persistence.

We also can change students' mindsets directly. In one study, we taught students that every time they pushed out of their comfort zone to learn something really, really hard and they stuck to it, the neurons in their brain could form new, stronger connections, and over time, they could become smarter.

[Video Ends]

Katie: Great, OK. There's our video. We did promise you we would be asking you for your thoughts and your feedback about what you just viewed. What was your takeaway? We'll pause for a moment so we can get your thoughts on the video. ... Oh, interesting. I love – we have a comment about connecting the idea of “Not yet” and learning to use the ASQ, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, on taking that and observing teachers with the class tool, reminding teachers that children might not be there yet. What a great connection.

Vanessa: I love that. Thanks for pulling that one out, Katie. It's amazing, the difference about saying “No” versus “Not yet.” It's so powerful, just adding that extra word. ... "Focus more on the positives than the negative." Thank you. Oh, Ron, yes. "Never stop trying, and don't give yourself a time frame." I need to take that. Ron, I might make that a poster on my own whiteboard. I try to do too much in a short amount of time. "Sometimes grace is given with a little bit of time." Yes.



Katie: Right. We also have a comment about connecting it to their confidence, so thinking about this connection between their cognitive ability and their social-emotional skills. That's wonderful.

Vanessa: Yes. And Laticia is speaking my love language when she says, "Allowing yourself to make mistakes," and that is actually embedded into the 5Rs. Reflective dialogues is one of the spaces. We do talk about, it's OK to make mistakes. In responsive relationships, we talk about leaders being able to say, "Yeah, there were some missteps. I take ownership of that, but look at what we've done differently because of that." It's that growth mindset. Yes, I love that response. So great. "Never stop trying," love it.

Well, good. What I'm going to do is, I'm going to have our team – I'm going to post it to our QA team so that they can push it out to all of you, so that you can have the link to the entire video that we pulled for Carol Dweck. It's about 20 minutes, I want to say, and we only showed you the first 5 minutes or so. She goes on to talk more about fixed versus growth mindset. You may have noticed, too, that a lot of her references were to students or to older children. And maybe you're thinking, "Well, how does that relate to young children?" Well, it does, because we can foster this growth mindset in kids now, and it certainly applies to your work with your staff.

I think now I turn it over to you, Katie, to talk a little bit more about the 5Rs we were just talking about.

Katie: Great. You might have guessed, but of course we want to make a connection between the growth mindset and some of the work that we're doing with our 5Rs. We want to ask you, just an opportunity for you to reflect in your role as education manager, or we might have some people in other roles here today: do you ever work with teachers, family childcare providers, or home visitors that seem to have a closed mindset, or have you before? And for those staff members, is it easy for them to change and adapt to improve their practices, or might it be more difficult? Another thing to think about, how have your staff – how has their morale and their pandemic restrictions contributed to staff willingness to exercise a growth mindset? How has that impacted, maybe, a staff that typically did have a growth mindset is struggling, or maybe the opposite? The staff that was struggling with a growth mindset before has kind of been forced into this idea of frequent change. If we can help education staff make that shift to a growth mindset, it really does open them up to the ideas of change, collaboration, and, of course, ultimately that improvement of their practices. Shifting the mindset really does help improve practices faster than if a teacher is stuck in the fixed mindset. Education staff with a growth mindset are open to change, to trying new things, to accepting feedback, and being willing to take the risk of failing. A lot of those things connect to our 5Rs pretty directly.

The core practices within the 5Rs can promote a shift to the growth mindset. Today, we're going to focus on two of those – Relationships and Reflective Dialogue. One thing to keep in mind as we explore these are a couple of overarching messages that come from these two 5Rs, two of our Rs, that promote that growth mindset. Those messages are, "We're all in this together," and "Let's try this!" I want to pause for just a moment and acknowledge that we might have heard that message, "We're all in this together," through the beginning of the pandemic especially. We might be all in the same storm together, but some people have a yacht and some people have a steamboat, and some people have a canoe and it has sprung a

leak. We are all in this together, but perhaps we might have different resources, and skills and abilities at our disposal. But the message is still really important to this work.

Let's jump into talking about Relationships. Effective leaders develop and sustain positive and productive relationships with their teams by doing a few specific strategies. First is promoting that deeply unified culture, establishing a community of learning among education staff, promoting an attitude of "We're all in this together," and equally investing in implementation and policy. They also honor and respect education staff's needs, so they think about and understand other's perspectives, value planning time, and support a balance between child and operations-focused consideration as well as supporting professional development based on the individual's choice and need. They are available as a trusted resource, so they communicate confidence and education staff's decisions, modeling best practices, providing guidance for implementation of best practices, reinforcing those best practices, remember, Carol just talked about, how do we thoughtfully praise or encourage, reinforce? And walking the walk by doing rather than directing and making visions and values evident through their actions. One of my favorites, acting with authenticity with consistency and transparency, so being present and visible, meaningfully connecting with education staff, following through on commitments, and acknowledging mistakes along the way. I know that was a message that a lot of people took from the video, as well. And then finally, making vision and values known and visible in the work, so actively promoting a common vision and continuing to reiterate the vision in everyday interactions, sharing excitement about their own learning. I love to share excitement about brain development. It's one of my favorite topics, so doing things like that, really stimulating learning, leaders create stimulated staff who enjoy spending time with the children.

And Vanessa loves to talk about Reflective Dialogue, so she's going to join in for that part.

Vanessa: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, Katie. She let me have Reflective Dialogue. If we could virtually arm-wrestle for it, I would definitely be all in for Reflective Dialogues. In considering the growth mindset, we need to create spaces for minds to come together and grow, and to grow, we need to be able to roll up our sleeves. Think about gardening – we got to roll up our sleeves, we got to dig a little, and sometimes we don't know what we're going to find when we dig, and that's OK. That's part of the journey. We want to be able to come together to collaborate to make meaning.

Oftentimes when we talk about Reflective Dialogues, we're talking about making meaning of data. We collect a lot of data as education managers that we can use, and often, we don't pull it apart as much as I wish we did. Oftentimes, we gather it and we report it, and that's the end of it. But what I'm inviting you to do is to bring your data back out. Make it be front and center, and again, go back to that thought. This is not about evaluating performance of either staff or children, it is about learning about our practice. How can we engage in dialogue around our data, thinking about ways to promote equity? Who are the children that are benefiting from our practice right now? Who are we not reaching yet with our fullest potential? Where is our "Not-yet" in the work that we're doing with our kids? This is the way that we can use reflective dialogues. We want to be able to challenge and provoke thinking. We want to be able to have a space where anyone in the room can raise their hand and ask, "Can we do it differently?" and for people to look at that person and go, "Why not? Let's try this. Let's see what can happen

from this." We are scientists in classrooms and in family childcare provider homes. When we are with our parents during home visits, we come in with ideas, and we kind of test them, don't we, in the ways that we interact. We try to see what works for each child. In a way, we're experimenting. Let's be scientists with this information. Let's use our data as much as we can to learn and, again, to find those gaps and to promote equitable practice. How can we best serve all children?

And that last one is so important for this all to work. It needs to be a safe place to ask those questions. "I notice this," or "I don't feel good about this," or "I feel like I need help with this." That's when you know you have a safe space for trying new things, when someone can easily ask for help, and this would be the space to do it. "The data is telling me this, and I don't know what to do," and for that to be OK in that space of Reflective Dialogues, because we're all in this together, and we're here to try this. I think Katie is going to help us kind of think through an activity that will help us move our mindset from fixed to growth.

Katie: Great. Actually, there was a question in the QA that relates really well to this, and I wanted to just acknowledge that for a moment. The question was about, "How do we encourage families to help their children develop that growth mindset at home, as well?" We mentioned home visitors kind of briefly when we talked at the start. But I encourage you, as we go through this activity, think about how a family could do very similar things at home. How do they respond if the child makes a mistake or does something that's against the rules or fails in some way? How did they themselves model the growth mindset, acknowledging mistakes, talking about how they addressed it and improved? You can use a lot of these same strategies with the families, as well. Don't view this as only within your education staff, but a lot of these are very relevant for home visiting staff, as well.

Vanessa: Yeah, and if I could pop in one other kind of thought that as you were talking, Katie. If there are things for home visitors out there specifically, if you see a behavior and you can talk to the parents about, "I noticed this," and then be able to tie it back to the way the parent engaged with the child – "The last time I was here for the visit, I noticed that your child wasn't really all that into puzzles that I introduced, but this time around he seems eager. What's different?" And the parent may share, "Well, we spent a lot of time with puzzles after you left, and we sat side-by-side together." You can comment then on the parent's interaction with the child, "What you have done has improved, has enhanced that child's ability to persist with a task, even when it's a challenge. Your time spent has yielded this result." Wouldn't that be amazing? OK. Sorry, Katie.

Katie: No, no. I love that. Absolutely. I think we're all very interested in how this information applies to our individual types of roles and tasks, so it's always a great opportunity to do that.

In this activity, we are going to take a moment and think about the language that we use and how it might support or not support that growth mindset. Language can be really powerful in supporting our mindsets. We're going to practice changing some fixed mindset statements to one that's more reflective of a growth mindset. We welcome you to share your ideas about how you would adjust or shift this perspective through the QA widget or to add your ideas in your Leader's Digest.

We're going to go from a few different perspectives, and let's start with the child's perspective. Thinking about this statement that's focused on the adult's response versus the child's, how would you adjust this statement? Rather than saying, "This child will never learn how to do this," what would be a perspective from a growth mindset? Let's give you a couple of seconds ... And then we'll give you one of our ideas. ... Keep answering in QA. We'd love to see your ideas. One of the suggestions we have is, instead of "This child will never learn how to do this," say, "How can I present the information, so that the child understands or makes growth toward their learning goal?" Focus on how we present the information and focus on progress. I like that approach.

The next is focused on interactions between two adults. How would you adjust this statement? "My director encourages us to incorporate new methods, but I don't want to fail." I think that's probably a common feeling among a lot of people. How could you support an educator who shared that? And again, feel free to use the QA widget or your Leader's Digest. ... Great. Seeing some great stuff in QA. Thank you all for sharing your thoughts. One idea, and this is just one, just one possible way to respond and reflect, "I am going to add something new each week. If it fails, I will be prepared to learn from the mistakes so that I can improve next time I try."

Let's look at one last one. This one is actually my favorite. "The problem is due to the lack of teacher buy-in and teamwork," so offering, how do we approach challenges? Here's one possible response. "This problem is an opportunity to learn about our limitations, mistakes, and how we can work together as a staff." By thinking back to our poll at the very beginning, one of the top two answers that you said what makes you feel most effective as an early learning leader was helping your team persevere through challenges. What a great opportunity to be effective in that role. Pretty amazing. Thank you so much for those contributions in QA. Love it. A lot of teamwork going on.

Vanessa: Thanks for that, Katie. That was a nice exercise, right? It could be helpful to replicate this with your team. We did include this in the Leader's Digest, again, as Katie mentioned. Maybe share these with your team and see what ways they might switch these to be growth mindset statements.

As we round out our time together, we are curious, because we are curious by nature, what is a strategy or an idea that was presented here today that you might want to take back to your program to use yourself, or to share with others today? Or maybe not today, depending on the time of day. I know East Coast folks, you're getting ready to shut down shop, but tomorrow, this week, next week – what's one strategy or idea that you would love to take, to use or share? And we'll pause for a moment to see those ideas come in. ... "Not yet." Yes, "To reward the process." Yay!

Katie: "Trying something new little by little." I like that. It's like progression.

Vanessa: Me too. That is fantastic. I can't keep up with them because they're rolling in very quickly, but these are all fantastic. Yes, please keep your ideas rolling in. What we can do, too, is this is not where our conversation needs to end at all. You all know that we have a MyPeers space, as well, dedicated to education leaders. We'll share some of the ideas and strategies either from this session that you'd like to use and share with others. Or if you have others you'd

like to add to the community around ways to support the cognitive self-regulation of young children, or to help your staff kind of build their growth mindset and to be able to engage with children and families.

We are winding down on our time, and I want to be able to be sure that we say thank you to you for your time and joining us. We know that time is precious, and you've carved out an hour to be with us. That, for us, is an absolute gift, so we want to recognize and appreciate you taking the time to be with us. This will be available on Push Play very, very soon, so feel free to share this information with others. I hope that you will join Katie and I, we'll be back again in April. We're in Katie's heart space here, we're talking about more brain stuff, and promoting initiative and curiosity. We will be excited to be with you for another hour in April. And, again, we'll be together in the summer to talk about creativity.

Again, thank you for your time and joining us today during the webinar. Katie, any final words?

Katie: Thank you. Have a great afternoon.