

Strategies from the Field
Week of Active Supervision: Keeping Children Safe

Adrian Hawkins: Hello and welcome to the webinar Strategies from the Field. My name is Adrian Hawkins, and it is my pleasure to introduce you today to Marco Beltran, Health Program Specialist with the Office of Head Start, and Amanda Bryans, the director of the Education and Comprehensive Services Division and also a presenter on the Monday webinar No Child Left Unattended. Just a few housekeeping items, all of our lines are currently muted, but to ask a question, you can do so in the "Ask a Question" box on the left-hand side of your screen. There's also resources that will be mentioned from SETA and Contra Costa that are in the "Event Resources" side of your screen. And with no more further ado, I give you over to Marco Beltran.

Marco Beltran: Thank you, Adrian. Welcome and good afternoon to Strategies from the Field. I hope you were able to participate in some of the webinars that were held this week. This is the last webinar on the Week of Active Supervision: Keeping Children Safe, and I'm excited to be joined on this webinar by Amanda Bryans, the division director of Education and Comprehensive Services within the Office of Head Start. This webinar will hopefully pull together the concepts presented earlier in the week through actual practices implemented by two Region IX grantees, the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency and Contra Costa Community Services. The content for this webinar was taken from a very successful training on health and safety in Region IX that featured both SETA and Contra Costa. During this webinar, I will present on their behalf and highlight some of their key points that were developed – and some of the materials that they developed.

If you have more in-depth questions about how a strategy was implemented, feel free to email our info line provided at the end of the webinar and we will forward your questions. Also, please be sure to email questions during the webinar, as we have allocated some time for question and answer at the end of the segment. Again, I would like to acknowledge the Region IX Regional Program Manager, Jan Len and our Region IX Head Start colleagues Cynthia Yao and Bernie Lagud as well as Camilla Rand, the director of Community Services Bureau Employment and Human Services Department at Contra Costa, and Denise Lee, the deputy director of Children and Family Services at the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency that I will refer to as SETA throughout the rest of the webinar. During this webinar, we want to briefly reinforce the current standards around supervision.

We want to provide an overview of national supervision citations down through monitoring reviews. It is always good to give contacts for how significant these issues are within our Head Start programs, right? But most importantly, we want to spend a lot of time reviewing SETA and Contra Costa strategies to address supervision. And during this webinar, I encourage you to think about program systems and policies and consider what is working well, what could be improved, and what from this webinar can be implemented in your program.

I'm not going to spend too much time on this particular slide, but I just wanted to show it to you to highlight our Head Start Program Performance Standards that address supervision which I know many of you know by heart. So active supervision is an issue for us, right? Or supervision in general. Looking at

our monitoring data, we have seen an increase in supervision citations over the past couple of years. And just to kind of give you the number, over the past several years we've had a total of 149 citations, and our programs tend to be cited for children being left unattended on buses, children being left unattended on play spaces or in bathrooms, and children leaving the facility unknown to staff. So our goal within the Office of Head Start is to really try to get these numbers down within the next couple of years, hopefully in a year. For the rest of this webinar, we will dig a little deeper and use the Region IX multi-level approach to prevention which targets the grantee level, the parent/family community level, and the child level. This was developed by our colleagues in the regional office at Region IX. The grantee level looks at how grantees address supervision, the systems, policies, and procedures in place, trainings for staff volunteers, and periodic internal monitoring of facilities and involvement of policy council and governing bodies to receive input and feedback on program policies.

At the parent/family community level, programs look at how they involve families in talking about supervision at school and at home. And at the child level, children are encouraged to be engaged in the development of classroom rules and understand their role during transitions.

Let's take a closer look at the grantee partnership, leadership, and staff level. This is where programs develop a culture of safety through child health and safety plans, policies, and procedures. Programs provide health and safety trainings for all staff and volunteers, not just for teaching staff. With this in mind, let's look at an example from SETA. SETA developed a written plan that they share with their stakeholders. Their plan is developed around the 10 Head Start management systems. For example, this document here shows that budget planning committee meetings discussed needed facility and safety repairs. In the facility section of the plan, maintenance work orders are generated and followed up to ensure that the repairs are completed. In drafting a plan, programs should consider all elements of the program from staff, volunteers, and children to the communities where centers are located to ensure that the plan is comprehensive. In developing their system of safety, Contra Costa decided to address a few critical areas. In addition to the hourly and transition counts, Contra Costa has implemented secondary alarm systems.

For example, each door to the hallway or outside the building has a door alarm, and each classroom has a half door where staff can easily see inside the classroom. Alarm systems do not have to be intricate. Programs can use door chimes or bells, anything that would alert staff that the door has been opened or closed. There are also critical times of the program year to be on heightened alert. For example, in the fall when new preschoolers are coming into the program and in the spring when four and five-year-olds are anxious to move on to kindergarten, it is at these times that it's important for staff to review in-house supervision curriculum. Staff also review classroom and outdoor schedules and procedures around supervision and transition. New families are also oriented to the center, and all families are trained on pedestrian safety. And site directors also conduct critical checks to ensure that staff are not taking breaks or scheduling prep time when children are outdoors and that front desk staff greet every family and have eyes on the door so that no one comes and goes without being noticed.

Training of substitute teachers, volunteers, and consultants is critical. In addition to what Contra Costa administration covers in vetting substitute staff, this checklist is also covered the center level. You can

see that the directors cover a number of topics, appropriate interactions with children, families and staff, to what to do in an emergency, and sign-out procedures including transitions as well. The redundancy of covering these topics at the center level in addition to the grantee level enables substitutes to move from center to center to become familiar with individual center practices. At Contra Costa, every child is assigned to a small caregiver group during enrollment. Children remain in these small groups during the day and while transitioning. That includes transitioning to and from the classroom, hand-washing, meals, and toileting, which are all done in small groups. This helps to minimize the number of children absorbed – observed, not absorbed, and to manage.

This checklist allows supervisors and managers to observe transitions. Some of the things managers are looking for are that children move from one area to another in small groups, that teachers are prepared – that have prepared activities so that the children are kept busy at wait times and that wait times are reduced, I'm sorry, and that children are prepared for transitions. Contra Costa also has a policy that no more than two classrooms are out in the playground at any given time, which again helps reduce the chance of children being left unsupervised.

Staff training on supervision is important, but sometimes the information can seem like a repeat. SETA has kept the supervision training relevant and refreshed with the new training that they developed called Step Up to SUPERvision. The training reinforces the need for consistent practices and calls out the redundant systems and safety nets that are built in for all staff. And all staff from teaching staff to family service workers, cooks, and bus drivers are all trained on supervision. The five steps to SUPERvision are: Stop. Children are taught to stop what they are doing by using an audio signal, a bell or whistle or a visual signal like a stop sign. Unite and gather. Children know to gather at a clearly marked designated spot in the classroom or outdoor play space. Perform and sweep. A designated staff then sweeps the classroom or outdoor play space while children are at the gathering spot. Exact count. Each teacher does a head count out loud, accounting for all the children at the gathering spot. This number is compared with the transition log to confirm the correct number of children. And roll call and re-count. As another redundant measure, teaching staff then mark off each child on the transition log and make contact with the child, either a pat on the back, a high-five, or a handshake to verify that the child is present and accounted for.

It is important to keep in mind that even the most thought-out plans, that there is always a chance for an interruption such as parents on their cell phones during drop-off or pick-up, a child becoming injured in the classroom or outside and the staff needing to take attention to that, a runner that requires extra eyes, or a family crisis. When developing a plan or a strategy for supervision, these real-life interruptions should be considered because they will happen and staff need to be equipped on how to handle them.

On this particular slide, we just kind of wanted to highlight some approaches that were developed by SETA. They created some videos of their techniques and practices that are available to you through YouTube. We will provide you with the actual link, the handout during this webinar. Here SETA gives an example of how staff can provide feedback on their concerns or what hinders them from watching children safely and effectively. This is important because as policies and procedures are developed, they need to be revisited, reassessed, and revised if they are not doing what they were intended to do. In this

case, keeping children safe, right? Some of the concerns could include building hazards, compromised lockdown procedures, staff/child groupings that are out of ratio, or a child that requires heightened supervision. Staff can strategize on how to overcome these concerns. The same approach is taken in regards to classroom safety specifically around transition, bathroom supervision, and appropriate staff ratios. This format teaches staff about the location of their classroom gathering spot, who will perform the sweep, who will complete the transition log, where will staff position themselves in the classroom, what barriers exist for bathroom supervision, how are breaks scheduled, and how are emergencies handled. I really like this example, considering that during the QTL webinar that was held earlier in the week, Jamie was talking about how a classroom staff member that was new had left the classroom to go to the bathroom and not informed anybody that they were leaving and didn't understand why that was an issue.

But each classroom will post a revised plan for other staff and parents to see, and plans are reviewed every six months or when new staff are brought on board. So it is important to think about how programs work with parents, families, and communities and think about how these groups are involved in your prevention strategy. How often are parents trained on supervision? Is a larger community safety campaign needed? What's the level of involvement of the HSAC in safety and supervision practices? And how are home visitors and family service workers effectively used to address safety and supervision issues at home? This is actually an issue that's coming up more and more and we're hearing a lot of – a need for us to dole out some resources and/or training and technical assistance around this particular issue.

Contra Costa has a no-cell-phone policy for staff and parents. Parents are asked not to be on their cell phone during drop-off and pick-up, to hold their child's hand, and to give them their full and complete attention. Parents are also asked to verbally tell teaching staff when they leave the classroom and not to leave before the teacher greets their child. Safety is woven into parent and policy council meetings, and in the larger centers, safety subcommittees have been developed with parent volunteers who help to monitor doors and check that parents are not talking on their cell phones. Communities are also involved in safety where the center and the community talk about keeping the entire neighborhood safe. This is a really big concern in areas where – we mentioned the concept of runners earlier. We do have kids that just run, and we have kids that have left our building and gone out into the community. So it's always nice to have some sort of community plan that helps to address some of these issues.

Amanda Bryans: I think that's a really good point, Marco.

Marco: At the child level, how can programs support the individual child when it relates to supervision? Each program has a child that is a runner or some staff that are burned out dealing with children with challenging behaviors. Take class into account. How many quality teaching child interactions support effective supervision of children? We need to think about how staff are engaging children not just during group time, circle time, but during transitions. Engaging children during bathroom, indoor or outdoor play transitions can help prevent children from wandering and going out of sight. Children with challenging behavior can take supervision and support away from other children in the classroom outside on the playground or on field trips when supervision should be heightened. For example, Contra

Costa has the ability to place additional staff in classrooms so that a teacher can spend more time with a child with challenging behaviors or the larger group. In addition, Contra Costa has a unique partnership with the local health department mental health interns who work with teachers, parents, and children. This may not be the case for every program, but consider what you can do in your center. Educational managers spend time with mental health managers, site supervisors and directors to observe classroom room arrangements, teaching strategies, classroom interactions, and classroom setup so that they can keep the children interested and engaged.

And finally, positive guidance plans are developed in partnership as written strategies to address challenging behaviors when room management does not resolve the behaviors. SETA developed PAWS, a monthly classroom curriculum for children designed to enhance the overall safety of the children in their care. It is implemented across the program and noted on lesson plans. Activities have a description, a group type, materials needed, vocabulary that can be used with children and ways to expand. SETA has given permission for other agencies to use this curriculum as a resource but suggested it might be more effective to create your own and get the buy-in from your staff. Contra Costa used an eight-week ready-to-learn curriculum that includes in-depth discussions around children, staff, parents in dealing with safety. Both grantees have developed materials that are available to all our participants on the webinar, and feel free to look at what they created and use it or make the appropriate changes to meet your needs. Before we take a moment for questions, I want to inform all the participants that an IM on supervision and transitions will be issued soon. The IM will reiterate some of what was said on the webinars this week and continue to reinforce the supervision of children at all times is our responsibility as Head Start and Early Head Start programs. So now we're going to engage Amanda, which we're really looking forward to, and start to ask some questions.

Adrian: Okay, great. So our first question is: Are outside doors locked during the day while children are present?

Amanda: Well, that is a terrific question, which sounds like it should be easy to answer, but like so many things, it requires a little thought. I want to say, before I start, Marco, that I really enjoyed the presentation, and I think it was – you talked fast and it's incredibly rich with a lot of detailed information. Adrian, I saw a lot of questions about: Are the slides going to be available? Will we be able to access this information afterwards?

Adrian: Yes, so all the slides will be archived and posted on the ECLKC at a later date. And currently, all of the resources that were mentioned by Marco, such as the tip sheets, the YouTube clips, those are available in the "Event Resources."

Amanda: So those are terrific training tools, and as grantees are thinking about in-service and pre-service training, I hope they'll be able to draw on some of this material to use with their entire staff. With regard to the door question, most programs keep doors externally locked so that people cannot enter a program undetected during the day while children are there, but doors have to be unlocked from the inside because in the event of emergencies, clearly it's illegal to have doors locked so that children would be, and staff would be unable to exit if there was an emergency. So the door can be

locked from the outside so no one can come in without adults being aware of it or staff knowing. A lot of programs use a buzzer system. People have cameras, but it can be a window and people get buzzed in. Some programs use code systems so that parents have the code and are able to come in, but other people would have to be buzzed in, would have to notify – provide notification and be let in the building. So I think that is a basic safety feature that hopefully most programs now have, although I know we have a lot of Head Start programs in very small or rural locations where they may not have done that. But great question.

Adrian: Thank you. We have another question here about doors. If the classroom has more than one door, does every door require a secondary alarm?

Amanda: Yeah, that's a great question, too, and here's why: First of all, there's no Head Start requirement that doors have an alarm that would alert people if the door is open. Many programs have implemented alarms or used alarms because they feel like that is a protection in a way of ensuring that kids aren't exiting without adults knowing it. Other programs have other systems that aren't an alarm, that don't include an alarm, such as just thinking about where staff are positioned while children are in the room and making sure that it's very explicit who's responsible for making sure that no child exits on their own. So I think door alarms are one way. There are many other ways. The important thing is to be thinking about what the issues are, what kinds of protections you need in place, or safety strategies you need, and then what's the best way to meet them. And, again, classrooms should have two exits because that's another fire safety protection, and I think it's up to the program to figure out the risk and figure out whether or not they want door alarms or they want to make sure they have another strategy for making sure that kids don't exit.

Marco: And think about risks. Amanda, would you consider the locations of the door and what would need to be attached to it, for example, or if you would want to put an alarm with it? We have seen situations in which the door leads to an unsafe environment, say, a street or a busy sidewalk and/or a parking lot. Would you really take the environment into consideration and say, "I really need --"

Amanda: I think that's exactly right, Marco. So you absolutely, like if it's a situation where lethal harm could come to a child who exited that way, you might have a lot more urgency around making sure that door is protected. On the other hand, harm can come to any young child in virtually any environment. So even if you think, well, the door exits to our fenced playground, so that's not as serious, it may, in fact, still, you know, have dangers for children. So I think the important thing is really being conscious in making a plan, being aware of where you have vulnerabilities, and responding appropriately.

Adrian: Kind of switching topics a bit here, another question is: When we are in our gym, we do structured play, but there are times when children just need to run. Do you have any thoughts on how to maximize safety in a large open space?

Amanda: Sure, that is also a great question, and I think it actually is really related to something that Marco talked about with regard to making sure that children are engaged and that adults are engaging with children. And I would use this opportunity to remind people of the resources that were provided to programs through our I Am Moving I Am Learning approach or Little Voices for Healthy Choices originally

for the infants and toddlers, but the idea of helping children realize they can be physically active and not crash into each other and not have big – it's not necessarily a safety hazard. There are ways that you can work with children if teachers are supporting them so that kids can be running up and down. I love that the question – the person asking the question really is recognizing that some children just – sometimes children just need to be able to get – express their physical energy, and that's right. And I think part of what we do is help them do that in ways that are safe for them and talk about it with them. This is how we can be safe while we are needing to run. Kids can get an incredible amount of activity in a pretty small space. Having children hop on one foot without touching each other will wear them out quickly. Playing music, you know, but having rules of engagement as you work with them so that you build up to being able to do this without it being total chaos and kids doing damage to each other.

Marco: Some of the stuff can be done during planning. For example, if you know that in certain places when the weather gets a little bit colder outside you're going to be spending more time in large areas within buildings, but when the weather gets better, you're going to be outside and it might be open spaces, so can you incorporate that into some lesson planning or some yearly program plans?

Amanda: Yeah, I think that's really important, and I think that it's important to give children a chance to really play and to do their own thing without, though, having it be a free-for-all that results in a strong likelihood of injury. So I think you're exactly right, that planning is an important part of it. And I think that in the old days it wasn't unusual to see an outdoor play area or an indoor play area where all the children are on their feet and moving and all the teachers are sitting on a bench or chairs to one side. We've gone beyond that. We want to see people up, actively engaging with children, working with children, recognizing them, calling them by name, talking to them, supporting what they're doing, not taking over their play but being very pleasant so that, again, with both with regard to keeping children safe but also observing children's development and using that information to continue to plan.

Adrian: We had a question about more on outdoor play spaces. The question reads: If you and another staff member are outside on the playground and a child gets hurt and needs to go back into the building, is it okay to leave one adult outside with the rest of the class? And this is a case where there are two staff members and there's 20 kids.

Amanda: Another great question, and it absolutely is going to happen. It could be an injury, it could be a child who needs to go to the bathroom, it could be a child who is really cold, you know, maybe they don't have warm enough clothing. For some reason, that will happen. And I would say no, it's not okay to leave somebody alone with 20 children. Where Head Start is so fortunate is that we have auxiliary staff at our centers in most cases in the form of center directors, cooks, family workers, or bus drivers or bus monitors. Nobody has all of those people, but frequently there is an additional staff member.

I think that along, again, the lines of the things that Marco was presenting and kind of as exemplified by the two programs that we featured today, planning. You know, what is the communication situation? Do you have a walkie-talkie or a cell phone with you while you're on the playground? How do you let somebody know that you need additional assistance to take care of a child? But having a plan so that you can get a third person so that you can deal with that. Thinking about, well, you know, we really need

to have our emergency supplies with us on the playground, the Universal Precaution Kit and some basic first-aid things, because it may be a couple of minutes before we get somebody, an additional person to take the child in. But definitely important things to think about, not when it happens but well in advance and making sure that staff are trained so they know.

Adrian: And then similarly, in cases when there are just in general not enough staff. Let's say a teacher calls out or something like that. So you're going to be out of ratio. How do you adequately supervise those children knowing that you're already down a staff person? Amanda: Yeah, that's a program management concern. Many states would be at risk – you could be at risk of losing your childcare license if you operated that way. If you got a – that would be something Head Start would consider as a serious issue. So what we would say is that you want your management team to plan for contingencies. We expect that programs have substitutes available. We expect that you use those additional staff that you may have. Many programs I know might ask a family worker to spend the day with the classroom. A lot of programs provide basic education training to additional staff people, maybe people such as bus monitors, so that they can fill in as assistant teachers or to help teacher aides to cover a classroom. So I think that the key there is prevention, to avoid that situation where you're not – where you're out of ratio.

Adrian: Now we're going to switch gears a bit here and talk about how we work with the parent level, since that was mentioned in the presentation. So what are some ways you can educate our parents on safety? This particular grantee shares a building with another program, and so addressing this issue is really important.

Amanda: Yeah, I mean, I think – we know in Head Start that the work we do to respectfully engage parents is critical. I'd say the first thing that we need to do as Head Start staff is to ask parents before they're even – as they're enrolled in the program what they know about their child, what works with their child, what is the child's interest, do they have concerns about the child, what are their practices around health and safety in ways that are – because we need to learn that so that we can support those things and so that we can know your child better. The first day of school we don't know children yet, and parents are the best resource for helping us understand what the child may be going through and kind of what the behavior may be. And then I think, on our side, we need to work with parents to understand child development. I remember when I was education manager – Marco, you may have experienced some of this, too.

A lot of parents thought that kids who were four were old enough to cross the street by themselves. And we were able to really do some workshops talking about impulse control issues that four-year-olds have, motor planning issues, even sometimes visual immaturity that might make crossing – well, does make crossing the street really dangerous for young children, and I think that has a lot of – that was very – it had a strong impact in that community. It wasn't that parents were being irresponsible. It's just that they just didn't kind of have that child development knowledge. So really helping parents understand what young children are like, whether they're infants or two, three, or four-year-olds, in a way that makes them able to kind of plan and make sure to keep their children safe.

Marco: In addition to that, I would think – we're always talking about meeting families where they're at or meeting parents where they're at. I think as it relates to safety, I think it's a very broad kind of category, and what are some safe concerns for us as programmatic – from a programmatic perspective might not be top priority for some of our parents. So it would be – as you were saying, how do we engage as we're talking to the parents during enrollment or whatever, talking about what are some of our key features that we need to address. And then in addition to that, I kind of want to make a plug in for the material developed by the National Center on Health and some of the work that they're doing with – that falls under our health literacy priority that's being led by the Healthcare Institute. And I know that a lot of grantees have participated in some of our health literacy training. We do have specific pieces related to that training that now specifically address safety. So it would be really good to, if you're not aware of that material, to go on the ECLKC and look for it and to contact us so that we can make that information available to programs.

Amanda: That's really helpful, Marco. And the last thing I would say about parents is that we always want to – I've never met parents who didn't care about the health and well-being of their children, and I haven't met parents who don't love their kids, right? So I think we have to operate from that basic understanding, that platform, and then really start to talk with parents. And I think there are sometimes different priorities or different levels of knowledge, but I think we're all in it together and we all share the same goal.

Adrian: And I know, Marco, you mentioned in the presentation about working with children who tend to have challenging behavior. And so a question that we have here is: Does the Office of Head Start believe in suspending a child in an early childhood setting for continuing to bite children while being supervised closely by a caregiver?

Amanda: Right. So that is a question that comes up a lot with regard to safety, and it's actually used as a justification often of either suspending – people in Head Start don't tend to call it "expelling," but we have heard cases of a program telling parents that a child is not ready for group care and can no longer attend Head Start. And we've also seen cases where children's time in the program is reduced. And I would think – I think we want to say very strongly this is not appropriate. It is not okay to suspend, expel, or reduce the time of a child. Any child who's having behavior that is sort of this dramatic that people feel like they can't keep the child or the other children safe should be getting a multi-disciplinary evaluation, so they should be referred to either the Part B or Part C agency under the Individuals with Disability Education Act to get the evaluation and to make sure that the appropriate supports are in place to help ensure that child's safety and the safety of other children in the room. I certainly understand about biting in early childhood.

My son, I think, got bitten multiple times when he was a toddler, and it was disturbing to me and certainly he didn't enjoy it, but we worked hard with the program to understand what the problem was. The problem was both related to the child who was doing the biting, but it also turned out that my son managed to position himself in such a way that made him a frequent victim, probably for reasons of the attention that was gained after an incident. But it took the parents and the staff working really hard together until we could get that situation under control, and that is what we would expect to happen.

And, again, in cases where it really is something that is so serious that the staff feel like they're having trouble keeping that child safe or other children safe, a full evaluation is necessary. And programs, I know that funds are short, but at times they may have to provide additional staff in the interim.

Education managers, disability services managers need to at times spend time in those classrooms where a really extreme situation is going on. But we don't want any child to experience school failure as part of being in Head Start. It's our expectation that those children's needs are met. It is a tiny number of kids who really need clinical outside support. Most of those kids can still stay in Head Start. And in the very, very unusual situation where a child's needs are so exceptional that they can't be met in Head Start, the Head Start program is required to work with the family until a transition is successfully made. And that, again, is so rare.

Adrian: Well, thank you so much for that, Amanda. We're going to transition again to talking about children being or leaving with unapproved guardians. Okay, so one of the questions we have is: Let's say, for example, that the father is not on the approved guardian list, but the father wants to take the child. The mother does not want this to happen. What should the program do in that case?

Amanda: That's a pretty tough situation, and we've actually had this happen. So biological parents have rights to their children unless there is a court order or other legal document preventing a child from – from taking the child. So if there's a biological father, even if the child doesn't live with him, if there's nothing that bars him from taking the child, he is permitted to take the child even if the estranged mother does not want him to. So that is a very delicate situation, and programs really need to understand that we had a case where it came in as a child abduction, and it turned out it was the child's biological father, and while he was estranged from the mother, he had the legal right to take the child and even to leave the area with the child.

Marco: Would more exploratory kind of work need to be done? And by that I say –

Amanda: Yeah, because we don't even know –

Marco: This isn't somebody coming in to say, "I'm the biological father." We need to make sure that their name is somewhere on some sort of form or –

Amanda: Right, a birth certificate or – yeah, I mean, it's very complicated. You're right, Marco. There needs to be – when I was in the program, I never understood that. Unfortunately, the issue didn't come up, and we just went with whoever enrolled the child's list of approved people, pick-up people. But that, in fact, is not always adequate or sufficient to cover all the situations. So I think, you know, it's a case of really when you're, again, doing intake enrollment and that form is filled out, understanding if there is an estranged parent what the relationship is and is there any court mandates related to the child's custody. And is there any – to the extent that we can find out the chance that, like, an estranged biological parent might exert their parental right, it's better to know that in advance. In the worst-case scenario, you're in the position of making a decision about whether you need to call the police and when you do that. If you're certainly thinking it appears to be a stranger abduction, again, plans need to have emergency procedures about those things. We've had a number of really positive stories about

programs protecting children's safety by not releasing them to adults who weren't listed or who were not willing or able to provide ID.

So I think it's important, and I think programs have gotten a lot more sophisticated about figuring out who can be on that list or not on that list. We've also had cases, Marco, of somebody saying that they're a name that's on the list but not actually being that person and not being able to show ID. So in those cases, again, that was – often innocent. The parent knows that the neighbor's not on the list but really wants the neighbor to pick the kid up, the child up, so they'll say, "Well, just tell her you're Sally Jones." So Betty White the neighbor comes and says, "I'm here to get the child," and she says, "I'm Sally Jones," but then they say, "Well, we need to see your ID," and the only ID she has is for Betty White, and the programs have not release the child, and that is the appropriate thing to do.

Marco: But this goes also, you know, not to keep on re-hitting the point, this whole idea of like redundant systems and constantly, like, practicing and making sure that things are in place, sometimes people get a little too familiar with things and they skip certain pieces or processes or policies. In this case, I know that there's been some situations in which everybody in the program knew, the parents knew, all the parents that were picking up the children, and the children – a child left with another parent because the parent said it was okay, everything was fine, but there was nothing on paper, it wasn't – it was in the program's policy, and then that child gets hurt at the other parent's home, so then the child's parent went after the program by saying, "You released my child to this parent." Like, we've had those kind of cases happen.

Amanda: We had a case where another parent said, "Yeah, I'll take him," and the program let him go, but the child's parent didn't know, and they came shortly after and said, "I'm here to pick up my child," and he wasn't there. And it fortunately did not end in a tragedy, but that's right – and, Marco, I think something that you said is really important. Many, many of these problems occur when people get complacent, right? We go through this routine, you do it 75 times, and everything is perfect. On the 76th, you don't do the routine and that's when something goes wrong. And we absolutely know that's what happens when kids are left often on a bus. Every day the driver and the monitor check and nobody's there, and on one day the driver says, "Ah, I'm sure the monitor checked," and the monitor, "Ah, I'm sure the driver checked," and that's the day that a two-year-old gets left on the bus for four hours in sub-freezing temperatures, right? So the thing that helps me with that is to regularly review how I would feel if on my watch that happened to a child. And I think it's a combination of feeling this incredible kind of concern that you would do this and what it would feel like to be a child who's left or who gets injured, and then as a program, to build in these systems that recognize human beings make mistakes. It has nothing to do with not being hard workers or not loving children or not being talented. It has everything to do with the way human minds work, the distractions we have in everyday life, the complexities of the program. Both things together mean that mistakes happen, and that is why we need these redundant systems to ensure that no child is injured.

Adrian: I know we just have a minute left. We have lots of questions here, so we're going to follow those up, like we said, through either an FAQ, but please do continue to send those questions in. Before we

leave, Amanda and Marco, is there anything that you want to say about family childcare settings and supervision?

Amanda: Well, sure. There were a lot of questions about that, too. The big question we always get, I'm going to say it right here on the public webcast: How do I go to the bathroom? You know? I've got children in my care. And I can say as a parent that you leave the door open, and that can be a little rough, but you've got to go. You're not going to go 10 hours without nature calling, and kids, you need to be able to hear and hopefully see them. Most of us have been in the bathroom with a baby in there with us. You hope a toddler is not necessarily right in there with you, but they might be. But you've got to be able to provide supervision even when you are indisposed for a minute or two. Is that what you were getting at?

Adrian: Yes.

Amanda: And, I mean, I think family childcare is wonderful. There's so many advantages it can offer for children, the small group, the ability to have siblings there, the mixed age. I think there are also lots of challenges around safety, but again, it's the same basic idea as everything else, intentionality, planning from – doing some what-if kind of thinking so that you've got some strategies in place to help avoid what can really be a tragedy.

Adrian: Any other closing remarks?

Amanda: I would just say thank you so much for the work you're doing on behalf of Head Start and Early Head Start. You are leading the nation. It's a privilege to work with you. I am so grateful for the questions that came in and the opportunity to talk with you. And we will just keep working on this together.

Adrian: Well, that will close out our webinar for today. Thank you again for joining us on this Week of Active Supervision: Keeping Children Safe. Just a reminder that there is, after this webinar, there is a survey for you to complete, and once you fill out that survey, you will get a certificate of completion. So thank you again and have a great weekend.