

**Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Webinar:  
Comprehensive Services, Part I: Curriculum & Assessment  
March 24, 2014**

Introduction: First of all, you may have realized that your line is muted. That's so that we can avoid the distraction of background noise. If you have questions throughout the webinar today, you can type them into your question box.

Please note that we won't be answering questions live on today's webinar, but we will be passing on any questions that we get to our policy team so that they know what kinds of questions are coming in from the field.

It's worth noting that our registration today for the webinar was higher than our webinar capacity. It looks like everyone's going to be able to get on because we had a few folks that are not attending, but we will be posting the audio, the transcript, and the slides from this webinar on line within a week. And we'll make sure that we're distributing the link to those and other resources widely so that you can pass them along to your colleagues.

Finally, I will mention that the slides are not yet available, but again, they will be posted with our other resources.

With that, I will hand it over to Sharon Yandian, Director of Technical Assistance for the Office of Head Start.

Sharon Yandian: Thanks very much, Tricia.

Well, welcome to this third in the series of webinars that have been organized to give background and context for all stakeholders who may be interested in applying for the upcoming Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships Grant.

As Tricia said, I'm Sharon Yandian, the Director of Technical Assistance at the Office of Head Start here with my colleague Ginny Gipp, the TA Division Director at the Office of Child Care, who you'll hear from later in the webinar.

Before I introduce our presenters, I wanted to talk briefly about Early Head Start – Child Care partnerships.

As you know, this is a new \$500 million competitive grant opportunity to support the partnerships between new or existing Early Head Start programs and child care providers.

We at the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care are really excited about the President's initiative for expanding high-quality comprehensive early learning opportunities and services for young infants and toddlers and their families.

It's really going to allow us to reach many more young children and their families in communities all around the country. It's also giving us an amazing opportunity to collaborate more fully here internally across our Federal Offices of Head Start and Child Care.

In the next hour, you'll hear just a little bit about a part of our comprehensive services for curriculums and assessments, and I know this topic is near and dear to many of our hearts. What is that magic that happens, particularly in relationships with our babies and toddlers, that families entrust us with when they are in our early care settings—in this case, in the family child care and centered-based settings?

So I'm very excited to hear the webinar today and before I hand it off to Angie Godfrey, who is one of our presenters; she is one of our lead Infant-Toddler Program Specialists at the Office of Head Start. She's here with Jennifer Boss, who's the Director of the Early Head Start National Resource Center, one of the Office of Head Start's national centers, and Katherine Falen, who is a Technical Assistance Specialist at the National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement, one of the Office of Child Care TA Centers.

So right, as for our transition to Angie, I'm just going to kind of give a quick overview of the objectives that are on your screen, or what we hope to accomplish today.

We hope you'll come away with an understanding of what a curriculum looks like in Early Head Start. We hope you'll be able to identify key components of curriculums. We're going to explore the Head Start definition of assessments, and we're going to look at the inner section of Head Start program performance standards and QRIS.

So with that, Angie, let's hand it over to you.

Angie Godfrey: Thank you, Sharon. Hi, everyone, and welcome. I'm really glad to be here today and really excited to talk about curriculums.

When we were trying to arrange the comprehensive services webinars, I kept saying, well, curriculums are a foundation of comprehensive services, and I hope today, as we take you through this webinar, that we really help you develop an understanding of what a curriculum looks like. It's in

Early Head Start and in early care and education because we really want to be able to implement curriculums across all settings as we move forward.

And one of the things that we talked about—and I love this slide—this first slide is, as we began our webinars, we taught the importance of partnering between Early Head Start and Child Care, and I also want you to keep that in mind as move forward.

The focus today is curriculum and assessment and QRIS and other regulations that we hope all will align as we work together and move forward together.

The point I always want you to make as context is that both Child Care and Early Head Start provide services to the most vulnerable infants and toddlers in a community.

And if we can always start there and think about that and all the work that we're going to be doing together, then we can think about what it will look like and understand that both Child Care and Early Head Start share accountability for quality experiences that can lead to strong outcomes for children and their families.

And having had our kind of basic partnering, I hope as you think about curriculum and assessment today that you think about how to share resources in supporting comprehensive services in your program and, as I said earlier, how we'll look at this in terms of the infants and toddlers that you serve.

So just to kind of lead us again into a curriculum, I did want to give you a brief overview of the comprehensive services in Early Head Start. We get a lot of questions. Well, what are comprehensive services? What do you do? What does it mean? Here is a very brief overview.

First of all, as I said, it's early learning and development. It's what happens in terms of supporting a child's learning and successful growth and development.

And it's early education and care for infants and toddlers, and that's the broad focus. That's a broad foundation. It's also health services. It's developmental and behavioral screening, physical well-being for children and families, mental health services for children and families, and services for children with disabilities.

And you are going to be getting another really nice webinar on what that looks like. Importantly, nutrition in infant-toddler programs around

supporting breastfeeding practices for the youngest children and nutrition and healthy meals for all children.

And I think nutrition is another one that crosses over because when we talk about nutritious and healthy meals for all children, that also has to encompass the foods children recognize and eat at home, and it's a real cultural bridge to families when we understand the things that children like to eat and we can sometimes eat those things together as staff and family.

The next one is an opportunity for socialization, and again, opportunities not just in formalized settings, but for children and families to spend important time together and with each other as well as with families.

And then family engagement. In many ways, having worked in Head Start for years and Early Head Start, family engagement kind of defines the parameters of how successful we can be. It focuses on the parents as the first teachers and decisionmakers for children. It also brings parents in and involves them in decisionmaking, particularly decisions around a curriculum, both for group care and how they, as a parent and the first teacher, can help support their child's learning through the curriculum that's selected. And ongoing assessment definitely involves families.

So that's just a short overview of what comprehensive services look like. And today, we're going to talk about comprehensive services supporting the implementation of curriculums.

And again, I talked a little bit about integrating health and nutrition into the program. One of the things we all know is that when children come to school healthy, well fed, well taken care of, and nurtured, that's a wonderful foundation for staff to build on. And so it's important to look at health and nutrition in terms of children and family as they first come into the program.

It also is building relationships with families. So many times today, you're going to hear me say relationships, relational learning, the connection of the baby and the attachment of the baby to the provider and the family, and the ability of the family and provider to connect with each other. So you're going to hear that more than a few times from me today.

The other thing that we know about curriculum and infant-toddler programs is that they happen within the context of close, nurturing, culturally responsive relationships. That is the heart of a curriculum. A curriculum is scientific, it's evidence-based, but when it comes to life when you're implementing it, it will happen if you do it in the context of the third bullet.

And all these things support a child's development and readiness for school. I know that school readiness is a big issue, and we talk about it a lot, and the thing I want to say to you is in early care and education and infant-toddler, people don't be afraid of school readiness. School readiness will happen when we know how to work with babies and toddlers.

And our curriculum choices will help us implement the kinds of services children and families need to support school readiness. So take deep breaths and embrace full readiness and you'll be able to do it as we talk about babies.

So this is a definition. You know, we need a definition, we need a written plan, we can talk about a curriculum, and each of us can look at it a little differently. But I think there are some guiding principles to what a curriculum is for infants and toddlers. And the first is that it provides a framework to support the planning of meaningful experiences for children that support their development and learning.

A curriculum isn't like just, well, what am I going to do today? It's as well thought out a plan for babies and toddlers as it is for preschoolers and kindergarteners. It just looks differently because you're basing it a lot more on the individual needs of very young children and how you integrate those into both the needs of the individual child and small-group care, which is what we're talking about with infants and toddlers.

It's an evidence-based written plan built on principles of child development. It's individualized with goals for each child. It's nested in responsive care; that's another thing you're going to hear a lot today. What does responsive care mean? We'll talk about that.

The plans for learning experiences across all domains and children's interests—even the smallest baby that comes into your care has interests and things that attract their attention and has a place for us to build on. So think about that. And then again, it's relational with infants and toddlers. Particularly, it involves the relationship of child, family, and provider.

We talk about curriculums, but we have to make sure that we understand that we're talking about curriculums for infants and toddlers. We're talking about them in the context of the relationship with the providers and families.

And then here are the school readiness roles. And again we have to acknowledge and embrace these goals because if we understand them, not just the 1307.3, which is part of the Head Start regulations that all of us will be responsible for, then we also understand them as the framework for

our written curriculums that will help you plan across developmental domains for learning. And that's the important piece.

And as you watch babies, you will see where the different elements are happening and then you can, again, adapt these five domains to support, learning, and development for babies.

I love this slide. I think it's much friendlier than that wheel we just looked at. Again, we're still looking at the five domains, but I think—hopefully, it helps you see—not that it's important to this, but how natural it is to build on these domains.

If you look across those five pictures, you can think of the different domains, but the other big word on that slide that I want you to think about is attachment. And with each of those, at least to my looking at it, you can see a connection with the child and the adult. Even the first one, there's only a child in that picture, but that child is focused on that adult in that picture. So keep those in mind and think again about attachment as we move forward through these slides.

So what does "individualizing" mean? We've already said that a curriculum is a written plan; a curriculum must be evidence-based. We have many curriculums that you choose from, but one of the things that will help you choose curriculums, if you understand what evidence-based means, what it means to have written plans, then the third piece is what it means to individualize. And "individualizing" means that you're tailoring care that's responsive to each infant and toddler to support development and learning.

And I just want to stop here to say we've had questions about group size in Early Head Start and we've had questions about the one-to-four ratio, and now, we're talking about individualizing.

One of the most important things to remember if you're going to apply for this partnership grant is to apply for funds that will allow you to meet the regulations, requirements, and group sizes and that will allow you the opportunity to implement an evidence-based curriculum.

It requires planning for choosing and selecting a curriculum, for implementing it, and for following the progress of children. All that should be included, not just in the philosophy and the approach of your application, but in the budget for your application. That's another thing that I don't want people to be afraid of because that's one of the things that we should be able to support you with.

So again, it's tailoring care that is responsive and is based on observation and ongoing assessment, active partnering with families, and knowledge of child development.

So another part that's very important is observation, and I just want to talk a little bit about observation. I was going to give you the standards. The standards are important because if you're implementing a curriculum and you know observation is a part of it, the standards give us the guidelines. To give us guidelines that, if you look at the first one, parent's opportunity to increase their child's observation skills.

So you know that it's not just you observing the child, but it's you and the parent and how do you support the building of skills and observation? And again, in Early Head Start, there are funds for parent training. So it's important to look at this as a regulation but also as a support for implementation.

And then, there's a second one about using strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress. And that's why you have a plan because, as I said to someone recently, please don't talk to me about instructional strategies and infants. We all know that you have to have a plan for working with infants and that comes through an appropriate curriculum.

And on the next slide, again, I won't go through all of this, but on this slide, these are some of the resources and tools. These are some of the ways that you access and plan for implementing a curriculum for children in Early Head Start group care and child care group care as well as in family child care and center-based care.

And these are all important. I talked about school readiness and the goals for school readiness. And again, they're very important—curriculums and interactions.

A lot of you that work with Child Care know that there's CLASS, which talks a lot about child-teacher interactions. Well, we don't use CLASS or that sort of an assessment in Early Head Start, but we know, as I said earlier, that the foundation for learning, everything we know about brain development, rests on what happens between a baby and interactions with others in the environment.

All the connections and the thinking process that develops at an early age happens with interactions. They don't happen if the baby is left alone and there are no interactions going on.

Routines and varied schedules are not separate in Early Head Start. They should be integrated throughout the day. They're a foundation in many ways, too, for a curriculum. Diaper-changing can be one of the richest activities that a child participates in during a day. It could be language; it could be listening; it could be stories. Many things happen in routines and daily schedules. And so I think that an evidence-based curriculum will support the integration of learning throughout the day, including routines and schedules.

And then again, we're going to talk a little bit more about experiences and the environment. It's so important to plan for experiences based on what I said earlier, what the children's interests are, and then connecting them to the learning domains and always extending them just a little bit more so that you're not frustrating children, but you're providing them opportunities to build on the things that we may not call interests in a baby or a young toddler, but we can call a cue, a direction, or guidance for us to follow.

And then environment we're going to talk about. Again, we talk about responsive environments as well as responsive caregiving, so know I'm going to come back to that one.

These are just, I think, really nice definitions of implementing a curriculum. The first one comes from NIFTY, which was an Office of Child Care infant-toddler project. It talked about planning and tailoring experiences to the developmental needs of infants and toddlers.

And again, you're supporting engaged active learners. Now, if you look at that baby, he or she is an engaged active learner. Sometimes, we think, oh, a cute baby, but he or she is so much more than a cute baby.

And then again, if you look at the next slide and the definition from the California Department of Education on infant-toddler learning and the development guide, it talks about following a child's lead, and it's what we talked about earlier.

You know, there's a term for it. They call it scaffolding a lot of times, but it really is just I'm sitting here playing. I'm 2½ years old, maybe 2 years old, and as the caregiver, you see what I'm interested in, and you help me to understand that there are colors there and maybe fruit there. I can define and describe the things that are there even at 2 years old.

So those are the kinds of things that we're talking about. And remember, I told you I was going to come to responsive caregiving. And again, when I see the picture there, I think it's the one on the top left, because responsive caregiving happens in the context of the family, child, and caregiver.

And that picture, I mean sometimes when I look at it, I just think there's not a more beautiful picture because they're all in tune together. They are, but it's one sweet picture. So I think it's important to see and recognize, and it's hard work.

Sometimes, people go into working with children because they don't want to work with families, but you have to work with both if you're going to work in an infant-toddler program. And hopefully, we will always be able to give you the tools you need to set that environment up.

But relationships are the heart of infant and toddler curriculums, and as I said, they're the foundation of brain development and learning. All three of these pictures show that and, again, the other thing I talked about was observation.

And if you look at the bottom picture, I just think that's exactly what the caregiver is doing. She's looking at the children, she's seeing what they're doing, and then she's trying to read their cues to determine their needs and their interests to then begin to adapt that curriculum to support learning for each of those children. And that's what is both a responsive curriculum and responsive caregiving. They're really tied together.

So I did tell you I was going to talk a little bit about environment and again, environments are important. And just as I said, when you're looking at class size, when you're looking at ratios, and when you're looking at the time it takes to do observations for children, that certainly is a philosophy, but it's also a budget. And we need to ask for the funds you need to make sure you can implement—that the same is true for well-designed environments.

And well-designed environments are not expensive environments. They're responsive environments. They're the environments that help the children and families come in and be welcome. And if you look particularly at the first ones and someone were to ask me what I see as the important pieces of that environment in the top picture, I would say the teacher and then the ability of them to be together. So think of environment and how important they are in that you do need to fund them but don't think about them as things. Think about this also as being responses.

And then I just want to say a few things. Does an environment send powerful messages to children's families? They affect how children and adults feel and behave. The environment makes a huge difference. Think about how you feel when you walk, when you wake up in the morning at home, or when you have to walk into your workspace. You know, think

about the things that make you glad to be there. The same is true for all children as well as adults.

Also, we have to ensure safety and promote health. Yes, we have a lot of regulations around health and safety in Early Head Start, but I would venture that there are a lot of regulations in all early care and education environments. In most States, there are even more regulations for infants and toddlers. So I think it's a common ground for us to build on.

Then also the environment supports the social-emotional needs of infants and toddlers as well as their development in the other essential domain. And so that's key. And when I say social-emotional, that brings us back to that piece about respecting the culture and language of every family that comes to us, and that's where that social-emotional trust comes into an environment, too.

So the next slide is pretty self-explanatory except, again, it's another wonderful picture. Because they're playing together, it's a nice environment, but you don't see a lot of stuff on the walls, and you don't see a lot of stuff on the floor. What you see are responsive care from adults, peer-supported relationships, and culturally appropriate environments.

So that is my very quick and brief overview of curriculums. We can give you so many more resources and talk to you so much more about curriculums, or at least this beginning piece of it. So know that and know that we're here, because it is a foundation for learning that everyone who applies for these funds will need to know.

And now, Jennifer, I've talked a long time. I'm going to hand it over to you for assessment.

Jennifer Boss:

Thank you, Angie.

So Angie has been describing what curricula in Early Head Start looks like and some of the key components of a responsive, effective curriculum. So just remembering some of the key components that Angie identified for curricula, that they're evidence-based; they're built on sound child development principles; and they're individualized, responsive, and relational.

But in order to implement a solid curriculum, you really have to have an understanding of who the child you're serving is, who are these children who are in the programs? You have to have an understanding of who they are and who their families are.

And so how do programs do that? How do they gain that understanding? And they do it through a system of ongoing child assessment. So I'm going to talk a little bit about assessment and Early Head Start in that.

So a system of child assessment provides programs with a way, in an ongoing manner, to collect information about children that tells you about the child's development, the child's learning, and their own unique living and familial circumstances.

And the Head Start program performance standards provide guidance, as Angie said, to programs. So let's look at what the performance standards say about assessment.

So you have some language here on this slide from the performance standards, and you can see that the definition for assessment is that assessment means the ongoing procedures used by appropriately qualified personnel throughout the period of a child's eligibility to identify the child's unique strength and needs; the services appropriate to meet those needs; the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family; and the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of their child.

So again, you see here the importance of family engagement, as Angie was talking about earlier, as well as some of those other aspects of individualizing for children.

So an important thing, I think, to remember is that in the field of early childhood development, there are multiple definitions of assessments, and they often carry different meanings. So you will often hear different people using the terms assessment, ongoing assessment, informal assessment, formal assessment, evaluations, or screenings. So lots of different terms are used in different ways.

However, within Head Start, the term ongoing child assessment is typically broader in scope than others in the field, and it outlines the dimensions of a good system and method to conduct an assessment.

And additionally, the performance standards, as I said, include language that names families as key to problemsolving and as a great source of information about the development of their child.

So what is ongoing assessment? I want to just briefly acknowledge that some of the language included here in the next few slides that you're going to see were contributed by our colleague from the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness. So thank you for that.

Ongoing assessment in Early Head Start is a system of collecting information, or data, about an infant's or toddler's growth and development and learning through observation for the purposes of planning culturally and linguistically appropriate individualized experiences that will support the child's learning. So again, repeating and reemphasizing some of what you heard Angie just say a few minutes ago.

A system of ongoing assessment deepens our understanding of the child's competencies and those of the caregiving and learning environment and whether that environment is in a center, a family's home, or a family child care setting.

A system of ongoing assessment is predicated on the staff having a strong understanding of early childhood development. So you really have to know early childhood development to know what you're observing and to understand the type of data that you're collecting and information you're collecting about a child to put that into context. So those written teacher and caregiver observations of individual children are grounded in a full understanding of child development in general.

And through observation and a solid understanding of early childhood development, programs use their system of ongoing assessments to identify the child's strengths and needs and to determine the individualized services to meet his or her needs.

So in other words, a solid system of ongoing assessment supports and drives the individualized curriculum that Angie spoke of earlier, with the child at the center of that ongoing assessment system.

And I should also mention here what a system of ongoing assessment is not. So it's not using a tool of some sort, particularly a tool developed for screening purposes. Like, using that tool once in a while on a child, filling in the results of this assessment, filing them in the child's folder, and then checking the box that says we've done our assessment of children, and we're done. Sort of, that's it. That is not what's intended here. We're talking about an ongoing assessment of collecting and documenting information about children and then using the data to individualize services for children.

So what does ongoing assessment do? What does it do for programs? So having a solid system for informed ongoing assessment built on the solid knowledge of early childhood development ultimately contributes to the platforms on which programs provide quality, culturally and linguistically responsive, individualized services for children.

And an important component, again, to remember within Early Head Start and Head Start is that families, as I said, are key components to a system of ongoing assessment. Families are expected to be full partners and fully engaged in the process. They are critical data sources for their child, and you can't fully understand who a child is without engaging with the family to learn about that child. Assessment is also a strengths-based approach that informs and guides staff or caregivers to facilitate future growth and development. It informs the curriculum.

And finally, it requires program staff to ask the question, what does this child know already and how do we move forward to maximize this child's healthy growth and learning and development? So ongoing assessment for all children—so this is a little bit of a repeat, but I think it's important to underscore that programs are putting into place this system for ongoing assessments of all the children in their programs.

And another point to emphasize is that ongoing assessment is just that; it's ongoing. It's not, as I said earlier, a one-time kind of process where you use the tool, you collect information, and then you're done. It's a system of recurrent processes, including observation, recordkeeping, data collection, and documentation, that occurs over the course of the child's participation in the program.

And then just quickly, there are many, many ways that programs engage in a system of ongoing assessment, and the strategies the programs use are tailored to their local programs, their communities, and the family context. But just to give you a bit of a flavor of some of the considerations that programs might think about with ongoing assessment, programs might explore looking at how their curriculum-based assessment items match up with the daily routine for children.

So Angie talked a little bit earlier about the importance of those daily routines and that they are a foundation for the curriculum. So the times for diapering, napping, and feeding—all those times are ideal for gathering information and data about children and then for applying that data to their—to your ongoing assessment.

And teachers and caregivers might, maybe during some time when they're reading, read books with infants and toddlers in their care that add opportunities for conversation and vocabulary, and this is a chance to collect information about children.

So very young children might simply watch and attend to the adult who's holding them and maybe with older toddlers, teachers might observe that older toddlers are displaying recall skills or asking questions, or the

teacher might ask the child to identify a name or objects that they see in the book.

Those are all opportunities, as I said before, to collect information and data about the children and the program and to understand how the services that are being implemented are impacting the child and the child's learning and then to use that information to continue to individualize and refine services for children. So really, utilizing those day-to-day routines and experiences to observe and document what you see children doing and learning is an important strategy for your system of ongoing assessment.

Okay. So now, I'm going to actually turn it back over to Angie to introduce more components of quality in the form of standards and regulations.

Angie Godfrey: Thank you, Jennifer. And I'm just going to talk a minute and then turn it over to Katherine.

When we were talking—and we knew we were, as part of comprehensive services, going to be talking about Early Head Start—one of the requirements in Head Start is that Head Start and Early Head Start align with the State quality improvement system, or QRIS. And we also knew, and one of the reasons Katherine is here, is to talk a little bit about that because we know that we have to be familiar with each other's systems as a way to bridge and possibly build a new system that understands not just Head Start program performance standards and quality rating systems but the other things that are out there.

When I worked on the family child care project, I learned so much about the different requirements for family child care providers. There was the Head Start program performance standards; Federal standards; State standards, which sometimes were quality rating systems and sometimes were not; early learning guidelines, which many States have; licensing regulations at both the State and local levels; and maybe local code enforcement.

So we are including all these as we move forward. We did particularly talk about quality rating systems because it's in the Head Start Act that Head Start should align with them, and we do look forward to doing that.

We just gave a little summary here of the things on the next slide—the four different points that we look at in terms of assessing, improving, and communicating quality care programs. We know that's what QRIS is doing with the child care programs.

Setting standards of excellence for providers and supporting programs to improve quality, as well as quality assurance and monitoring, and I know we're going to be talking more about monitoring in some of the other webinars.

So with this, I'm just going to turn this over to Katherine, who's actually going to talk about QRIS and other regulations that will support our work as we move forward together. Katherine?

Katherine Falen: Thank you, Angie, and thanks to the Offices of Child Care and Head Start for the opportunity to be with you all today.

While we don't often think of curriculum and assessment when we think of babies, thoughtful planning of daily activities and observing infant and toddler development are critically important. Infants and toddlers are strongly influenced by the people, routines, and environment that they experience each day, and we shouldn't underestimate the impact that program standards can have on ensuring a successful beginning for each child.

States, Territories, and Tribes have policy, funding, and regulatory strategies that they can use to promote learning and development for infants and toddlers in child care settings. Regulatory approaches, such as licensing regulations, can be the most effective because they're mandatory for all early education programs unless exempt by State law, and they impact the largest number of providers and children.

As you're aware, there have been many efforts to support providers in improving the quality of care. Tools like the infant-toddler environmental rating scale; the development of early learning guidelines; and quality rating and improvement systems, or QRIS, are some of those examples.

Currently, 36 States have a statewide QRIS model that serves as a framework for these efforts, and then other States have a pilot or field test of a QRIS under way, are engaged in planning to develop a QRIS, or operate multiple local QRIS models.

The QRIS builds on the requirements found in licensing, defines higher levels of quality, and helps parents understand the elements of quality as well as evaluate the care that their child is receiving.

And many States have used their QRIS as a way to incorporate standards on learning environments, program assessment, and child observation into child care, with some States including standards specific to the infant-toddler age group.

State professional development systems also support curriculum implementation and assessment in the classroom in multiple ways. States offer training opportunities, provide scholarships to act as credit-bearing courses, deliver related onsite and offsite technical assistance, and track professional progress along the career pathway. Core knowledge and competencies are standards aligned with national standards, and they are the foundation for State professional development systems.

The National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives—the State core knowledge and competencies—has found that all 44 States with CKCs have both a curriculum and learning environment and a child development content area. Thirty-six States also have observation, assessment, and documentation of the content area.

The Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships project provides an opportunity for us to improve both the alignment of these standards and requirements across programs and to raise the bar on quality for all programs.

As noted in an earlier webinar about State policies, we found it helpful to look at State regulations and standards and Early Head Start standards to identify where they need to be comparable. And by comparable, we mean that categories are covered in a large number of States, although specific requirements may be different, as they're going to vary from State to State.

First, there are licensing requirements that are comparable to Early Head Start performance standards in such areas as having the primary caregiver for infants and toddlers, posting written plans of learning activities, and aligning activities with developmental domains.

We think it's important to include the comparison to licensing standards because some States do not yet have a QRIS and not all child care providers participate in States that do have a QRIS.

Many licensed child care programs may already be meeting the licensing requirements that are comparable to Early Head Start standards. Secondly, there are QRIS standards that are comparable to Early Head Start performance standards. Some of those are in the areas of observation and assessment of children. So again, States may find that child care programs at higher QRIS levels may already be meeting several of these Early Head Start performance standards.

Lastly, there are some QRIS standards related to the learning environment that are not comparable, as they actually appear only in QRIS standards

and not in Early Head Start standards. For example, most QRISs use environment rating scales to measure the learning environment or require programs to base their curriculums on the State's early learning and development guidelines.

A really good resource that we're excited to bring to you is the National Program Standards Crosswalk Tool, and it will allow you to compare Head Start and Early Head Start standards against your State licensing and QRIS standards.

It's a new online tool that is prepopulated with national early childhood program standards, such as Head Start accreditation and Caring for Our Children. The tool is designed to provide a simpler way to compare different program standards. It's not intended as a guide for programs reaching to meet these standards or achieve accreditation, but it can be a helpful way to see points of intersection across different standards. An enhancement to the tool that's going to occur this week actually will allow you to enter and compare your own State's licensing and QRIS standards against Head Start standards by topic area as well as to download your results.

As you can see here, many States include comparable standards to Early Head Start in their licensing requirements. We've got primary caregivers for each infant and toddler and written plans of daily learning activities for infants and toddlers supporting infant exploration and the environment, in particular, that you can see in the licensing column. We have a fairly good number of States that have standards in licensing that relate to those topics.

However, note that most QRISs use the infant-toddler environmental rating scale to measure the learning environment, and they don't specify a lot of standards in these areas. This isn't surprising to see, as so many States already address this in licensing. We would expect that if it's covered in licensing, it would not be covered in the QRIS. Here, we're looking at the standards that address domains of development and ensuring that infants and toddlers' learning is supported across those domains. Again, we're not surprised to see that the States that address these areas in licensing have lower numbers in the QRIS column.

And note that for QRIS, if a State has alignment with the early learning guidelines as the QRIS standard, as illustrated in the first row where it says the alignment of infant-toddler learning and development guidelines, we show only two States in licensing but 17 who have that requirement as part of the QRIS. We refer to the State's early learning guidelines for the developmental domains that were addressed in the standards as our source for the information in this document.

And finally, here we're looking at standards about the use of observation and assessment. In this case, we see that the numbers of QRIS that address these areas are much higher than the number of States that include this in licensing requirements. This again is not surprising since licensing focuses on health and safety, and the use of observation and assessment is more frequently addressed in quality improvement first. Note, too, that QRISs don't require specific assessment tools to be used. Rather, States say that programs must observe and document children's development, and this is consistent with what Early Head Start says as well.

So we hope this was a helpful look at existing State regulations and standards as compared to Early Head Start standards in these areas. You can see where programs already may be meeting those similar standards and where providers may want to focus additional attention.

And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ginny Gipp.

Ginny Gipp:

Thanks, Katherine. We really appreciate that information, along with the information from Jennifer and Angie.

And I'm pleased to share with you this slide, which is where to go for more information and resources. The first Web address is our child care TA site, and the second Web address is the Office of Head Start's Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. And you can go to both sites to find a lot of really good information.

On the next slide—the next two slides actually, but we can start with this one—you'll see there are, as I said in the next two slides, a lot of really good resource examples. For example, there are TA bulletins, papers, tip sheets, tools, and other information products on topics that presenters have talked about, specifically on curricula, assessments, child observations, program standards, and quality rating and improvement systems.

Again, here's the second slide with more resources.

Are you planning to apply? That's a really great question, and you'll see here that only the applicant organization needs to register. And then the second bullet is really important because the registration process can take 1 to 3 weeks, and it might not just take 1 week. So be planning ahead and thinking it through and do not wait to the last minute. Give yourself some time just in case things happen and you can't get on the system at the last minute. Just organize early and plan ahead.

Here are the other tests for those of you who have applied for several grants before. You know these tests. For those of you who have not, you

will want to go to [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) and familiarize yourself with all the information on this page.

As you heard earlier, you can e-mail questions to this site here, which we'll leave up for a minute. We are collecting a lot of the questions because they're helping to inform our policy team here working on the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, and we will have some more materials being posted on our Web site to help potential applicants.

And finally, we hope you'll join us tomorrow for the next webinar in the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships series—Comprehensive Services Part II. Today was Part I; tomorrow is Part II. We'll have Part III later in the week.

Part II tomorrow is on health, mental health, nutrition, and disabilities, and it is from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. eastern time. We hope you all have signed up, and we will be following up with an e-mail with these Web addresses and also with—you'll see—you've already received one e-mail with a transcript and the PowerPoint slides from the first webinar. You will be receiving followup e-mails with all this information and with Web addresses.

And with that, we will say thank you so much for joining us today, and we hope you'll come back tomorrow. Bye-bye.