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>> Hi, good morning. I am so sorry for the delay. Harold are you there. >> Yes.

Thank you for joining today. I apologize for the delay in our start we are pleased that you are here today for our special guest speaker today for the O,U,R, project

observing understanding and responding to child neglect. Our mission for this project is to ensure our children safety so we are pleased for those of you who joined us before and or if this is your first time we are pleased to have you. I am going to turn it over to our project team manager, Doctor Harold Johnson, who will say a few more words and then introduced our guest speaker today.

Thank you everyone for being part of the call. All of you know that are kids are at greater risk. All of you know that we have spent a great deal of time and resources increasing people's awareness of the problem. Also, understanding how to recognize trouble. And more importantly

Hands & Voices is working to give parents and professionals the tools they need to prevent abuse from occurring in the first place. In many ways it's like telling all of us to where our seatbelts when we get in the car as opposed to only after someone has had an accident. So we are trying to prevent. Doctor Carty know are you on the call?

I am.

Harold, I am sorry. I will start the recording right now so if you can hold on a second while it starts. >> This is Doctor Harold Johnson. I am codirector of the Hands & Voices project we are pleased to have with this Doctor Caroline Gardena.

She is from North Florida University in her research focuses on the topics of literacy technology and deafness. Also she has an interest on international elements as related to the [Indiscernible] education working with students for deaf plus and also on the topic of child abuse and neglect. I have had the privilege of presenting with Hands & Voices on many occasions and learning from her. Doctor -- Dr. Cardino knows about [Indiscernible] and she is aware of the frustrations and problems experiencing in doing that. Today, she will be talking to us about strategies we can use to accomplish that goal and in Hampton -- enhancing the safety and success of our children. The title of the presentation is knowing your child understand their rights and knows when to say no. Thank you for joining us today and we look forward to hearing your ideas.

Thank you, Harold, and thank you to all of you in Hands & Voices and the participants today for inviting me to speak to about this important topic that is very close to me. I think it was approximately 6 years ago that Harold brought forth this topic to the Association of College educators of the deaf and hard of hearing. Was that in Kentucky, Harold, the first time --

Yes.

I think it was. You spoke to the organization and presented the topic with passion in the sense as College educators who are preparing the future teachers of students who are deaf and hard of hearing how we can better infuse the topic of child abuse and neglect into our preparation program so that teachers were aware not only that there are mandatory reporters but also that they understand the signs of

child abuse and neglect so they can be better prepared to report incidences of that in case their students were experiencing child abuse and neglect. He had asked the audience and I was

one of those audience members if anyone was willing to collaborate with you on a national coalition to work towards stopping child the -- abuse and neglect especially those who are deaf and hard of hearing but in general those of disabilities. I raise my hand immediately because as a survivor of abuse, I know firsthand what it feels like not to have your voice be heard and I am adamant about making sure our students whatever mode of communication they use are heard and that teachers and parents are equipped with the tools of understanding our children when they are saying they need help. And even before that. What are the signs that a child might be exhibiting or a student might be exhibiting that something is not right in their environment. And so I come to you today to support this drive to include goals and objectives within the IEP that will help our children be equipped to saying no, to understand that something doesn't feel right and to understand where to go in order to seek help and protect themselves.

Today, I would like to share with you not only my support for your goal but also

share with you resources that exist that can help parents and teachers understand what child abuse and neglect look like. , To observe those clues and then feel confident in their ability to report to authorities. Then I want to specifically look at not only state standards but the Cowman -- common core standards that we can use to advocate as a means to support using child abuse and neglect curriculums into the existing standards. This would have been -- them support the need because we know that education today is very standard-based and their teachers are driven to make sure that those standards are met and so if we can identify standards in which support child abuse and neglect curriculums, that would be an easier way to make sure they are addressed on an annual basis. I say that because we cannot just suggest that teachers are going to teach this one time and children are going to know what to do. We need to start as early as possible in terms of educating parents and then teaching children self advocacy from the age of three years old onward, and this is essentially what can go to the IAP is making sure they have the self advocacy skills needed to protect themselves. And so let's start by

-- Thank you, Harold, for introducing me and also letting everyone know that I am a bright spot and I will get to that a little later. So, Harold, going back to where we were, Harold came to the organization and I jumped on board and since then Harold and I have worked together on various projects to push this national agenda forward and one of the projects that we recently completed was the state of Florida uses a curriculum by the Monique Burr foundation safety matters. And child

safety matters. And we addressed this curriculum in the sense that making sure that students with disabilities have access to that curriculum. So I know today the presentation is being captioned and I appreciate that. That is another element that we need to make sure to address and to make sure that all of our materials are accessible for all of our students and parents.

So regardless of a child's hearing loss, whether it be mild or profound, whether or not it's unilateral or bilateral loss. We know that that can impact their ability to learn language as well as understand and acquire academic skills across subject matters especially at communication. Keeping that in mind, we know that students who are deaf and hard of hearing are often misunderstood because of their challenges with language. We know that they also have struggle with their ability to regulate social and emotional situations because of the struggle with language. We also know that they may not always be given self advocate -- advocacy strategies needed to prevent abuse and neglect. That is where our jobs as parents and as teachers begin is making sure first of all that our children have the language needed in order to express what they are feeling and what they are experiencing.

In order for us to provide children and students with those tools, we as teachers and parents need to have those tools first. So we know that child abuse, especially in residential schools, has been a problem. But we also know that now more than ever we have curriculums and tools accessible and free to us online that we can use in order to educate ourselves so we can educate our children and the students. >> The O,U,R, project focuses on understanding observing and reporting abuse and neglect. There is an incredible checklist that I would like to point out on the Hands & Voices website that our child project has a safety checklist and within that checklist you can learn about the different types of abuse so we know there is neglect, there is physical and sexual and emotional and psychological abuse and where people might be confused is a lot of the curriculum sometimes takes this approach that abuse occurs from strangers. But we know that is not true. Research actually notes that typically the abuse is a known member of the child's family. The child knows the abuser. And so

the more people who are highly educated in the immediate circle to that child, the more protection that child has. We are working together to make sure that that child has a safety network. So understanding what does neglect look like, what does physical abuse look like and sexual abuse and psychological. Emotional abuse is one of the hardest types of abuse to identify. But it often doesn't occur alone. And so we can look at other indicators to help us determine whether or not that child is experiencing emotional or psychological abuse. What I tell my preservice teachers in Florida, one of the things you should look out for is if a child is trying to cover themselves since it's typically hot here in Florida, one of the signs might be the child is wearing long sleeves or long pants at a time where the weather is very hot. So they may be trying to cover themselves or cover some type of physical bruise or scarring. Some of those are very important signs for us to be looking out for. Also called away the child interacts with other children, other adults. This can give you indications of the type of -- what they consider is normal behavior. And sometimes it's not. I remember I was

doing a research study here in Florida and the classroom had students with severe behavior challenges. Many of them were considered developmentally delayed because they were so young they didn't have a clear diagnosis yet. I remember something that one of the children was doing, and there was a clear indicator that that

-- they had a skewed perception of what normal behavior was when they were taking a pillow during circle time and laying on it in a way and moving on the pillow in a way that was referring to a sexual performance. And I thought, you know -- and the child said, yes, I see my daddy do this with his girlfriend. So I thought, you know, these are the indicators where we feel uncomfortable because we don't want to accept that this child is replicating a behavior that they should not have seen at this stage for children who are four or five years old and a preschool environment. What do we do at that point? So many teachers might say, okay, I will just ignore that

or stop doing that, that is not okay but really what we need to do is document what we are seeing, and document and say, okay, this doesn't seem normal. And if the child then continues to have atypical behavior than our responsibility to turn that documentation, not only in to our supervisor, but then we need to use our God and say, okay, I have to call the authorities. The teachers typically get worried and think they might get fired or are the parents going to be arrested. I tell them, no.

You are a mandatory reporter, so when you see something or a child reports something that is atypical, and you can follow your gut, you can follow your common sense. You can ask other, maybe an assistant in the classroom -- maybe they have heard the child report that. But your obligation is to report, not only to your supervisor but to an authority. So I often refer them to the one 800 to the one 804 a child helpline. Or they can call the local police department and report. And I tell them you don't have to be afraid to be a reporter because you are not indicting somebody when you call. What you are doing is you are opening an investigation. You have to think about this in terms of the child. If you don't do something, yes, it is a legal because you are a mandatory reporter but think about the child first. If you don't report what you hear or what you see, then that can only further hurt the child depending on what they are experiencing. And so I remind them you are opening an investigation. You are not sending anyone to jail. And in those cases, unfortunately, it takes quite a while before action is taken. So really, ultimately, in order for us to be able to help our children and help our students, we need to first understand what are the different types of abuse, and what do they look like. What does a child's relet -- reaction to that type of abuse look like and how do we respond? So some of the resources we have available to us are not only that safety checklist that I referred to earlier, but we also have great resources from the child welfare information Gateway. We have an excellent publication by Harold Johnson on the ash shot website entitled protecting the most vulnerable from abuse. We have curriculums available to us such as kid power, good touch and bad touch, the Monique bar foundation. We have a hotline. So that one 804 a child hotline, you can utilize that as a resource for more information. Not even if you are suspecting a child has abuse, but you want to know more. These people are there to help. As well as the bright spots. I mentioned those earlier. Harold had begun a quest to identify 100

professionals across our nation and even in the Canada that were available to assist parents and teachers, even students, who feel vulnerable or need assistance discussing the topic of child abuse and neglect. And I am one of those bright spots as well as several other amazing individuals who you could see their videos and see their testimony on if you Google search bright spots and deaf and hard of hearing and child abuse, it will lead you right to that web resource. So I want to talk just a few minutes about bridging the gap between knowing what child abuse and neglect looks like and how can we get this information infused into the existing curriculum in our schools so that we can have IEP goals and objectives that protect our students and children.

What I did is because I am living and teaching in Florida I will take the approach, the first approach I will take is looking at the Florida State standards. And then I encourage you to look at your state standards because those standards are probably fairly similar to the Florida's and we didn't adopt the common

core but our standards are very similar to common core. So if your state is using common core you can look at those standards and I have a few references from common core we will address as well. Really, my push is if we utilize the standards because teachers have to work towards helping their students meet the standards, that will give us the leverage we need to support child abuse and neglect curriculum infusion into the existing school programs.

So looking at the Florida standards, there is health education, physical education, science, and we have what is called special skills. Those standards were developed based on different advocacy groups for students with disabilities and the national standards that are to support and further develop the skills needed for students with specific disabilities so we have special skills for students who are deaf and hard of hearing and those left visual impairment etc. But because we are focused on deaf and hard of hearing, I want to present some of the special skill standards for students who are deaf and hard of hearing as well as the unique skilled students with disability needs across-the-board.

So looking first at the Florida standard in health education, beginning all the way from kindergarten, we have a standard that states demonstrates the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks. So most teachers might think, oh, okay, this standard means that I am going to teach some skills that helps them understand. Okay, candy is bad for me. But we don't have to take that approach. This standard doesn't tell us we have to teach about foods that are good or exercises that are good for us that would reduce health risks. This standard is written in a way that will allow us to say I am going to give you the interpersonal skills. I am going to teach you the interpersonal skills that will help you reduce the risk of child abuse or neglect. And that is the same so that we have health education, the first grade level that says internal and external influences, analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors. This is great. This standard lends itself to saying I can analyze the way in

which my family and peers and technology are making me feel. How is my health based on my interaction with my family. Do they treat me with respect do they touch me in a way that is safe. This is first-graders. We are still talking about bathing our children and preparing them for bedtime and we are even talking about neglect. Do they encourage me -- do I have potty training. Have I been potty trained or am I able to get up in the middle of the night to use the restroom safely? Do I know to take care and brush my teeth and bathe myself. So the standards are lending themselves for us as educators and parents to advocate for our children to be able to protect themselves and understand what their rights are. In the second grade in Florida we have health education standards that is self-management and demonstrates the ability to practice advocacy, health enhancing behaviors and avoidance of reduction of health risk for one's self. Again, I encourage you to look at the standards in your state because I believe they to will hold the key to allowing us to unlock the language that we need in order to infused child abuse and neglect curriculum. Really, when I say child abuse and neglect curriculum, what I am really saying is self advocacy because the more our children know and understand how to protect themselves and how to communicate their needs and their feeling, then that is what prevents abuse and neglect. And so looking at physical education standards in Florida, we have the value of physical activity for health enjoyment challenge self-expression social interaction. Understanding and keeping oneself safe also means having good physical skills and appropriate interactions with one's self in their environment. The science standards, we start at first grade teaching about heredity and reproduction, all the way through the fourth grade. Really confusing what is appropriate physical touch versus good touch or bad touch. And this is also understanding their body and how to refer to their body parts. This can all be incorporated into our science curriculum.'s talking about the special skills that we have here in Florida, we have a lot that focuses on language and self determination and self advocacy, personal and interpersonal communication skills. This again refers back to the better our students are better to self advocate in communicate, the better they will be able to protect themselves.

So now, let's look at the common core. We know that the common core is very general but we have some specific standards that discuss link -- English language arts and they referred to speaking and listening. So if we were to look under that standard, we could see that there is a standard for describing people, places, things, and events with relevant details and expressing ideas and feelings clearly. There again is that essence before being able to communicate and express themselves and protect himself. So I could go on and on.

And I would be happy. I have a presentation here that is guiding my discussion with you today, and I will share that with Harold and Janet. It does include screenshots of these standards but I encourage you again to look at your own standards if you feel like that is what you need to have the evidence that supports including goals into the IEP that align with your state standards. Because we know the state standards have to be met and teachers are accountable for meeting those. We are not asking them to take the entire school year to address this safety,

child abuse, safety and neglect curriculum. We are asking them though to do it regularly and annually so that students have that ability to self advocate and they understand the signs. You know, essentially students can help each other. The greater the network, the greater protection that they have.

I think I have done quite a bit of talking, and I do want to leave you with my email address which I think was on the flyer. Feel free to email me but also are there any other questions that you might have for me today considering the content that I have put in. I know we don't have a lot of time, but I would like to provide you with the opportunity to ask me any question that I may be able to answer. >> This is Harold.

Caroline, one of the problems we have with a lot of our kids is that they are lonely and isolated and they don't have any friends and for some of the kids any attention is better than no attention and sometimes attention can be better bullying and harmful. Are there any strategies you found that would deal with kids learning how to have friends Age-appropriate and have a sense of what friends do and don't do?

Yes. That is great that you brought that up. That is incredibly important and I know that students can seek out attention that may not be positive and in some ways detrimental.

So understanding a healthy relationship is a great place to start understanding. Having role models of what is a healthy relationship is important. To be able to make that connection between healthy relationships Basie among the adults they know and then maybe their siblings, healthy relationships with their siblings, having friends and themselves with their older or younger siblings is important.

I think you asked me about resources. Making friends in finding friends. Typically, unfortunately, it seems to me that children are trying to find that information online. There is a lot of information online and we know that a lot of it can be dangerous. I always encourage the preservice teachers to have a couple online resources that students can refer to. But really to teach that social interaction within their own classroom and to send home information to parents. Some of the things or resources that we can use our some of the books that you have listed on the safety checklist that are appropriate for children at different age levels. But teach them about what a loving relationship is, how parents take care of their children, how grandparents take care of their children, some of the safe traditions that families experience and practice that show love and respect for one another. So books are a good place to start. There are some social interaction videos that teachers and parents can share with their children. And then there is also role-playing. From my experiences, the students get a lot from role-playing, what is a healthy interaction with one another. What is respect, self-respect and respect for others.

Thank you very much. Either other questions that you would like to ask Caroline before we letter -- let her go to her other work?

This is joy [Indiscernible]. I used to work at [Indiscernible] and now I am up in New Jersey.

I remember you.

I just wanted to thank you really because of is looking for resources and I do a lot of pull out stuff and [Indiscernible] into the classroom but I don't read my own class anymore but I like the idea of books and videos and I will look at the special skills standards in Florida and see if anything correlates. But I wanted to say thank you for the resources and information.

You are welcome. Really, honestly, the safety checklist that is being developed by Hans invoices and Harold Johnson -- Hands & Voices and Harold Johnson -- that has a comprehensive list of books and materials and many of them are free. Another resource I do like to use is the described and captioned media. Pretty sure you probably have already subscribed to that resource but there you can download.

I stream videos that I showed to the preservice teachers and you can use them to show to your students as well and they are all captioned and described. And really they have a good resource in terms of describing what are the different types of abuses and how do you identify those different abuses. But if you are talking about younger children, you can utilize some of the bear describe and captioned media in terms of what is appropriate, what is an appropriate way to interact and some social skill videos as well. Some like safe resources. They have a lot of videos that are accessible and available to anyone working with students who are deaf or blind.

Thank you so much.

You are welcome.

We have time for one more question.

This is Christine Griffin and I am calling from Washington state. I had a question regarding evaluations. So if a student in a school is a value-added and the schools as well that student doesn't qualify for -- specially designed instruction, what are the strategies families can take at that point?

In Washington, is there a curriculum that is being used statewide to teach children about abuse and neglect or even perhaps development collect personal development ?

There are a few that I have had -- heard teachers talk about adopted by specific schools. I don't know if there is one specific to the state of Washington.

What I would suggest then is to google the safety checklist, deaf and hard of hearing. It's on the Hands & Voices website and Harold is there a better way to refer them to the safety checklist?

That is probably the best way it's probably your link to the website under your knowledge base.

Deaf Ed .net under the knowledge base heading. You can find it also there. Or simply email Janet or myself and we will send you to the link or a copy of the documents.

Because what I would say is if the school deems

-- evaluates the student and says they don't qualify, that doesn't stop parents and teachers from utilizing resources that will supplement that students knowledge base. And so the safety checklist has a list of videos and DVDs , online resources, that you can use to educate, not only the child that the parents. A lot of times what happens is with these curriculums is you have components that have been developed for the child and then there is a handout that can be sent home to the parents so they have some knowledge of what the child is learning. It will prompt the parents to be able to ask their child questions and that further allows the child to expand on what they learned in terms of, okay, this is not okay and this is how I am feeling and this is who I can report to. Who are the safe people in my environment. The tools that are developed, typically in the curriculum, have not only things that are tangible to the child, but supporting documents that can be sent home. Often, they have them in not only English and Spanish but sometimes other languages in case you have diverse populations that you are working with. They don't inundate the parent

either. They are typically checklist or maybe a game that they can play with their child to further support that education and reinforce what the child is learning in school. >> This is Janet. Doctor Gordy know, thank you so much for this presentation today. I can tell you many of us on this call and on this committee, when we established the safety checklist, we were very enthusiastic about taking it out to our children's IEP teams and often we were met with resistance even beyond what Christine was talking about, not being eligible, even for kids who are eligible often they would sit there with a blank stare and say this doesn't correlate to the IEP discussion. I think it's kind of new for a lot of people. So associating this with the common core standards or state standard, you made a statement earlier about unlocking that language creates the foundation for these conversations. I can't tell you how excited I am for those of us who have hit some roadblocks to maybe be able to use this as a way to create better conversations in the IEP meetings. So thank you very much for that. It was fantastic.

You are welcome. I agree. It may be often when you are confronted with that roadblock or resistance, it probably is out of fear because this is a really uncomfortable topic for many people. So identifying who feels comfortable in the school to address the topic with the students is also an important factor and many times that is the school counselor because they have had the training. So identifying who that person is and getting teachers to jump on board, it will happen. It just is not often quick. I think it's the same approach when Harold began this conversation six or eight years ago, I don't remember. People are uncomfortable, but letting them know that you are a safe person to talk to and you are comfortable talking about it gives them often the small step they need to be moving in the right direction and we can hold

their hand and we can continue to talk to them to make them feel comfortable and we can even do the work for them. Because unless we talk about it, nothing will happen. And that is why we are here working together.

Just further emphasis, I just finished an analysis of all the CEC online documents in terms of their policies and procedures and standards. Whereas all special education teachers know their mandatory reporters only one special education group for early childhood have the standard specifically stating that they should be prepared to recognize signs of emotional distress and abuse and follow reporting procedures. The only other group of professionals that has a standard like that are paraprofessionals. All the other special educational professionals, there is not one single standard stated for the preparation. There is an ethical standard saying the teacher should do no harm and they should report unethical behavior, but it is so vague it's not address. Most of our special education professionals, while they want to do right and they know this is important, they are not sufficiently prepared yet. Part of why Hands & Voices is doing this now is working with and challenging CEC to recognize the current inadequacies of their standards and to encourage them to better prepare our teachers and our students teachers so they know how to respond to us and say I hope my kids know how to communicate and Caroline your presentation today and the work of Hands & Voices is leading the way so again we thank you for this very much. Janet, I think that probably concludes this part of the presentation. I will turn it back over to you and again Caroline thank you very much for your presentation and we will pass along a copy of your PowerPoint or make it available on the hands and voices website and we recognize she is one of our bright spots in keeping our kids safe and successful. >> Thank you. I appreciate it.

This is Janet. Harold, would you mind sharing with the group who our speaker is for next month.

It is Doctor Catherine core. She is at Vanderbilt University. She actually is leading the early childhood and early intervention section of CEC development of standard specifically around this topic and not simply recognizing and reporting but also preventing child abuse and neglect.

She has research on this topic and she was a fellow that was funded specifically on this topic and is one of the bright spots we hope to introduce to the Hands & Voices group.

She will be talking about this topic from early intervention standpoint and helping both parents and professionals know how they can help families to be safe and therefore their kids be successful.

Thank you, Harold. This is Janet. I want to thank everyone for joining us today. We are going to be having a specific food at the early hearing detection and intervention conference next month

in Atlanta and hopefully it will be next to the Hands & Voices booth. Before we close today, I wanted to give any of our regular committee members or any of our core team any final comments that you wanted to make today? >> This is Sarah. Thank you Caroline so much for

sharing. I also am really encouraged that we can connect this kind of work to standards and I am wondering and I will email a you -- you about this about how parents can advocate within the school district to expand standards to include this kind of information if it's not already available. But that is for another date. A >> That is a great question Sarah. It motivates me for our group to go back and look at our safety checklist to see if we can incorporate some of this language in today's conversation around standards and directly into the checklist that might help families. So again we want to thank you all for joining us. We meet every month at the same time and same place. I am so sorry there was a delayed start today. Typically, we are really good at starting at the top of the hour. Thank you, everyone. We hope you will join us next month. If you are not on our regular committee list, please email me at janet@handsandvoices.org and we will make sure you are on the list to receive information that you might want to put in to your calendars the second Tuesday of the month at noon Eastern time typically for one hour. We look forward to our guest speaker tomorrow and thank you all for being a part of this movement to keep our kids safe. Have a great day, and we hope to hear from you and this will be available for recording and a transcript. So please email me if you would like that. We will talk to you soon. Goodbye.

[Event concluded]