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Hello everyone. Thank you for your patience. Welcome to Preventing the Mismeasure of Young Children. We would like to thank you all for joining us today. Before we begin, just a few logistical details. This webinar is being recorded. There will be a transcript available at the end. There are also slide in the chat box to this presentation. And we also have cart captioning. You can press the CC button on the lower hand corner. We are tight with time, so we will have the presentation and if time allows, we will have question and answer at the end. You can ask questions through the chat box on the console. If you could just keep your mics muted throughout -- throughout the webinar, that would be great. I will now pass the mic over to Mary Beth Bruder, chair of the early childhood SIG who will introduce our speaker.

MARY BETH BRUDER:

Thank you Anna, and thank you for your patience. You would think after two years of using all these online platforms, we would get it down! But we do not! Just last week, I could not pull something up and I was just in the same position Steve was. I think it is showing us that we are tired of doing zooms. That we cannot wait to get in person again. And not rely on this technology, which is not reliable. But thanks to Anna, we will be using the slides in this mode. And it is my pleasure and privilege to introduce Stefano Bagnato because he has started to learn Italian, which I am so I just admire him, to be learning this. And he is speaking mainly in Italian, which I do not understand, and a lot of our interactions! Steve is the expert in assessment. He has been in the field for 45 years. He has written 12 textbooks. He has written eight gazillion articles. And it is still his passion. He is still contributing. He has another book coming out, not as soon as I need it. Like, I need it now! But it will be out, and it will be again looking at LINKing assessment curriculum but really using a lot of what he has learned and what he has proposed so many years, which is authentic measurement which we know is what we should be doing with all kids.

Before we get started, Anna, can we do the pole about where people are from? What we are trying to do is, can we just quit it – might get a quick count if you can just click on where you are from so we can see how many LEND versus UCEDD are here? Did everybody get their voting? Anna, do we have results?

SPEAKER:

So we have 41% LEND, it is about a tie. 40% UCEDD, 18% both.

MARY BETH BRUDER:

Thank you, this is a perfect audience for Steve. We would also like to ask you one other thing, if you would not mind. Would you please put in the chat your primary discipline? We want to get a sense of how many different types of disciplines we are reaching. With no more talk from me, I'm going to turn it over to Steve.

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

Good afternoon! With a few glitches, here we are. Greatly appreciate being asked to present to you, as I say to a lot of people before when we have a lot of information, I am going to try and give you the turbo version of this. This actually is part of a course that I am teaching this spring at the University of Pittsburgh. It is called assessment of children's development in real-world contexts. Today, I am going to talk about proved venting them -- what I call Preventing the Mismeasure of Young Children. These are two of the books that Mary Beth was mentioning. The first book is with Guilford press and the second is with Brookes publishing. I am going to start out with a quote first and I want you to do some thinking about this, because the concept here is misrepresenting children through Miss measuring them denies children their rights to beneficial expectations and opportunities.

And think about the civil rights implications of that. It is a big deal, what we do. It is not an administrative exercise. It is one that has a lot of implications or how we see children, what we expect of them, what their needs are, what their assets are. All of those things become important. The second quote is attributed to Einstein, and it is (Reads).

And I usually say to my psychologist students, the applied developmental psychologists and school psychologists, that part of our job is to make the unmeasurable, measurable. We usually think of measuring with tests, but that is not the only way to measure things. And so, we are going to deal with these topics about why there has been, over the last 25 to 30 years, changes in measurement in early childhood. And talk a little bit about conventional testing, purposes, and what is this Authentic Assessment alternative. We will talk about professional standards, give you some examples, and hopefully at the end we will have some time to pull this together and talk about teamwork and actually putting Authentic Assessment into action.

So why are changes needed? Well, the take-home point is changes are needed because measurement, testing in early childhood, is totally at odds with the changes that have happened since 9442 and 99 457 were passed. And we were leave -- believe in developmentally appropriate practice, inclusion, natural environments. We believe in equity in instruction. We believe in response to intervention, getting in there and changing what we do with kids. All of those things are at all odds with

testing at table. Developmentally inappropriate practices are what conventional assessment is about. It is assessment out of context. It is assessment in some unusual circumstance requiring kids to do things that they do not know how to do. Because they are too young to do them and part of our job is to help them wait, share, take turns, share, pay attention, get it – I get along with others. No Universal Design is allowed, in the end. Because it actually violates the standardization procedures.

There is a failure to link or align the content of traditional majors with curricula in standards. In most traditional measures, they lack any treatment validity. The content is not functional, the content does not match curricular items. It does not match state early learning standards. And then perhaps lastly, and this should be probably the first one, is that parents are not core partners with professionals in the use of traditional assessment procedures.

So that really begs the question what is wrong? And I love this quote by Bronfenbrenner, and you can read it for yourself, but it is intriguing because much of developmental psychology as it now exists is the science of the strange behaviour of children. With strange adults and strange settings for the briefest possible periods of time. And he really is talking about the context and the relationship and how children are taught and how they are instructed and intervened with.

Yes, we are talking about testing at tables primarily. And that is part of the problem, because kids do not learn at tables. They learn through play. And they learn through natural activities. Now of course, yes, we want kids to learn to do things at tables, particularly as they get older and they have to do what is required in kindergarten. But we want to gauge learning with functional skills that happen regularly in typical circumstances.

The other part about traditional practices is that they violate almost everything that we know about development in children. Early learning is play-based, fundamentally. Close attachments are crucial for early learning by little kids with familiar adults. Familiar and knowledgeable caregivers. And these responsive, give-and-take attachments are crucial. Temperament influences child behaviour. And every kid has their own developmental ecology. They have circumstances under which they do really well when they are paired with a friend, when an adult gives them physical prompts or verbal prompt, when those things are unavailable to them we are denying children their right to express themselves and express their optimum skills.

So there is a whole range of different things that are wrong with conventional tests and why we needed a new track record with this. Now, this is not just me or others like me rambling about this. The National Academy of Sciences in 2002 and the President's commission on Special Education was made up of a committee of people just like you guys, many inter-dictionary -- interdisciplinary professionals, government representatives, physicians, psychologists, physical therapist, all reach the conclusion about high risk children and youth and conventional testing and the committee regards the

effort to assess students decontextualized potential or ability as inappropriate and scientifically invalid.

A damning public statement. And frankly, that conclusion led to the change in idea that got us to where we have a multitiered system of support and response to intervention as part of the law now. Get in there early, find out what kids need, and modify our instructional procedures.

Now, let's talk about assessment for an example. Assessment comes from a Latin word which is (Indiscernible). There is also an Italian phrase that is used in Italy. (Speaks Italian). It means to evaluate together. That is what we are talking about here, is a relationship between someone who knows the child well and is connected to them. There are primary purposes for assessment. And we always seem to focus on eligibility determination. But there are a variety of different ways that we can measure things and actually meet the required purposes and fulfil those of the early childhood intervention field. Screening and detection for delays, eligibility determination to confirm service access, which can be done also with curriculum-based measures, for example the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System has severally valued -- validation studies for using it to declare eligibility. And there are many other measures like it in the same way. Functional assessment, to really track strengths and needs that lead to individualized goal planning, the monitoring of progress towards goals and standards, measuring response to intervention or therapy, and evaluating program impact and then accountability for state and federal oversight.

But the overarching purpose is really the design for individual plans for care, instruction, and therapy. If a measure cannot do this, it is not worth its salt. So what is the Authentic Assessment alternative? Well, what it is is this quote (Reads).

... About the naturally occurring behaviours among children in daily routines by familial or unknowledgeable caregivers in the child's life. Now, you can do this as well as I can, but we can go through and track what is different about this. First of all, this is not just about I think, I feel, I believe. It is about I can see, I can record. This is about systematic recording of developmental observations using specified formats and protocols. We are not doing one time, we are doing it serially, over time. We are focusing on behaviours that kids naturally do. Finding the right toy at the bottom of the toybox, which is a great example of object permanence. Communicating needs, getting across the room. All of those things are things that happen in daily routines, at home, in school, on the playground, at church, wherever it may be. And it is assessments and observations of familiar and knowledgeable caregivers in a child's life that opens up the doorway to parents, grandparents, babysitters. But all of us as PT, OT, speech therapists, psychologists, who have a relationship with the child that makes us a familiar and knowledgeable caregiver. But if we do not have that, we are not in the business, we shouldn't be, of working with the littlest kids.

So, those track on everything that I mentioned to you. Oh, and by the way, Authentic Assessment is

required by NAEP C and the division of Council for exceptional children and the head start performance standards.

And so, we look at assessment actions that are serial across time, place, and people. Observations that are structured but they are naturalistic, we are observing in the natural context at the time. And looking at the degree to which a child has acquired us -- a skill. A fully acquired, partially acquired skill, acquired under certain circumstances, not in the kids repertoire yet. The more graduated the scoring, the better we are able to track the extent to which the child is doing certain critical competencies.

We can also do probes in vivo, in the situation of responses to interventions for, you know, sight word vocabulary for putting objects together, big objects, playing with large blocks of toys, cooperating with others in building. Solving complex problems, but video segments become really crucial to us and at this time of the pandemic, we realize that video observations are critical to what we do. Cell phone snapshots of kids doing things and having parents send them to us, so we can observe and record that and then comment on how the relationship between the parent and the child was beautiful, that enabled him to play so well.

We use interviews is another measurement strategy. We use ratings and functional classifications, informed opinions are required in early intervention, particularly in birth to three. They have to be part of all assessments of what we do. So our mantra is no tabletop testing for our littlest kids.

So there are professional standards, and I am just going to mention eight of them. But then I am going to really talk about two of them in depth. In our 2010 LINKing book, we talked about eight overarching standards for choosing and using assessment measures. And the first one is acceptability, the degree to which the measure is tapping content that is functional and has social worth and can be detected easily to measure progress over time. Authenticity, using natural methods in everyday context. Collaboration, measures should be designed that they enable parents and professionals to work together to collect information. Evidence, measures need to have in evidence. They need to have psychometric qualities but they need to be designed for kids with disabilities and they need to have an evidence base. (audio issues) ... not ... we have problems ... we are being told that they meet standards and meet the needs of kids, but in design, they really do not. Multi-factors, we talk about synthesis of ecological data across circumstances and situations.

Measures need to have sensitivity, finely grated content that even the most primitive skills can be measured, as well as the most advanced skills. Universality, the measure needs to be facts double enough so the content and the presentation can be changed or it can be built in. -- Flexible enough. Typology versus functionality. And then of course utility, which is where the measure needs to meet at ECI purpose, particularly helping us plan and measure intervention.

So authenticity, we want to talk about functional content. So one of the things you would do as a consumer, you would look at measures and you would say does this measure contain necessary competencies for real-life participation? And if it does not, then that would be a developmentally appropriate quality sedan or that you would next from that particular measure. Observational methods, does it allow you to have in vivo observations and reports a familiar people? Natural situation. Does it allow you to capture data in familiar classroom, home play, and community settings? Those are the kind of settings that we are talking about right there.

This is some non-authentic content, and very commonly used early childhood test. Removes and replaces pegs for a pegboard, sorts from a dryer acrimony -- macaroni shapes into a sorting tray. Stocks blocks horizontally and vertically. You know, these are all skills with dead ends to them. I love this one, eats items of a meal in an acceptable order. That is on the learning accomplishment profile. You say, where did that middle-class item come from? From 1968.

But, when you look at the Carolina curriculum, you find something different. Engages in adult role-playing. Build large structures from blocks or tears and centres play around them. Identifies feelings. Or, on the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System, locates objects, people, and events without cues. Initiates communication with a familiar adult. Moves around a barrier to change location. And so forth.

So we can talk about universality and we can talk about typography versus functioning, and you can do this as well as I can. But traditional measures measure the service feature of a skill. Walks across the room. It measures like the desired results developmental profile access, major function. Gets across the room. That opens up the opportunity for children to show locomotion rather than just walking. Do they have goal-directed behaviour? Can they get there? Can they crawl, roll, use a wheelchair? Talks to express needs. Gestures to communicate needs. And so forth. So you see where we are going with that, is that truly authentic measures become universal depending on their content, and we need measures that allow us to sample very strong skills that kids have, not just their deficits. And that is where accommodations come into play.

So here is a snapshot. This is kind of fascinating. We did a study in our 2010 book and you have two of those refereed publications that came out of it, you know, that you can download from the AUCD site. It is a 2014 and 2016 study that we did where we had over 2000 professionals across the United States rate the qualities, the development appropriate qualities of about 300 commonly used measures in early childhood. These are not just people that you pickup up the street. These are people who were devoted to working with preschoolers over the years and so they were ones who vetted these measures and the results were that the conventional measures were so poor in quality compared to the Authentic Assessment measures that only 83 of the measures out of 300 actually made it into our 2010 book because the consumer social validity study that we did.

We are doing a new one for the 2022 version of our LINKing book, and this one takes a different tact because we are going international with this and we actually had a forum and focus groups starting in September through to the current time. We are still doing this. We had people from 10 different countries including the United States, and we are looking not only at the methods, the scales, but we are looking at the process, the steps of assessment, that make it real and valuable and doable.

What we did in the 2010 book is we had a consumer ratings with operational definitions of these measures and this is how the conventional and authentic measures came out on the eighth's -- eight standards.

These are some of the measures that survived in the book. The adapted behaviour assessment septum to what the time, now the three. Developmental observation checklist system. The basic school skills inventory. Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory. The ages and stages, the AEPS, every move counts, the Carolina curriculum, and of course the wonderful devout desired results development or profile and access. These are only a few just to show you. But these are measures that while there isn't perfection in Authentic Assessment at the moment, we are moving towards really high standards with this and the evidence base has been growing over the last 20 years about Authentic Assessment. On the social side, preschool and kindergarten behaviour scale, actually our measure, the temperament and atypical behaviour scale, and things like the class and parenting interactions with children to look at context and parent-child interaction are part of the new book.

And then, this is in keeping with something that does not work in the United States because we have a horrible public health system. And our insurance system denies high-quality measurement to be made. Functional classification systems like the ICF see why and of course the diagnostic classification system birth to five now.

Alright, let's sort of take this towards the end. And talk about how do we put Authentic Assessment into action? First of all, we need to broaden our point of view on what assessment is. Assessment is fundamentally not a test-based exercise. This is our quote, (Reads). And it is purposely brought -- broad because tests do not make decisions, people make decisions in the end. We are professionals and we need to rally behind the fact that we take evidence and we make decisions on the evidence and our clinical judgement is as good as a physician's and we need to take it that way.

We need to believe in our team models, although because of our funding system, a teamwork is always under threat in the United States. Multi and inter-and transdisciplinary teamwork. I am not going to go into this in detail, but we know that this is the lowest common denominator because multidisciplinary teamwork does not meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is developmentally inappropriate, requires kids to see multiple people separately or in the same day. It

just does not work. But inter-or transdisciplinary teamwork, where people as professionals and parents pair up and work together, meets our needs and meets our relationship dynamics.

And of course, the transdisciplinary model which has been the basis of particularly birth to three, you know, since the beginning is part of the process. So when we think of these things, we also think about the context and the more natural in the context, natural or analog, it is better than simulated or clinical and there is more detail on this in the PDF that I sent you of this talk. So you can take a look at that. But fundamentally, we are looking at real kids in real, everyday situations doing the kinds of things that little kids do. And using behaviours that actually are exemplars of developmental competencies in language, cognitive, motor, social, adaptive that we need to report in order to come up with holistic plans and goals for kids.

So what are the steps here, when we think about it? Well, I like to think that in this grid feature, and I would like you to sort of take this to heart. And then I am going to give you 12 steps after this. The first one is this feature of assessment is about the why, the what, the how, though who, though when, and the wear. So the why is we need to have a notion of why we are doing what were doing. We are not just giving a test, we are collecting information that has got to be accurate because it is a reflection of the child capabilities and needs. And, you know, our country has such a bad track record in the use of particularly intelligence tests to marginalize immigrants in the United States that we have a bad taste in our mouth about how we use measures that are not designed to be flexible. So the rationale and purposes to implement the assessment is the why. So, what is the purpose, the ECI purpose, the early childhood intervention purpose? And the fundamental implication is this is about individualization. We are about the individual, not the group. That is what makes early intervention so beautiful. We have a IFSP. We have IEP. And we are about individualized habilitation and education plans. The what is the content of the Authentic Assessment. We are about functional competencies, just like the ICF see why, we are about activities and participation. We want competencies that allow kids to grow, develop, become independent, and show skills that help them in real life circumstances.

The how is the method or the format about -- for Authentic Assessment. It is always observation and judgement together. And there was a whole different way of doing this, which is not only recording, not only prompting, but videoing and so forth in getting information. Multiple people doing this. That is where the who comes in. Parent professional collaboration and the use of teamwork models and selecting -- selecting the model based on what the parent thinks is the best circumstance so that we will see the child that they know. The child with their warts and all, that they know. Not this child with unusual behaviour because we are doing things they have never experienced before.

The when is the timing and the occasions of the assessments. This is always over time, and progress which could be daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly. We determined that based on how we expect intervention to impact the child.

The where is the context, and it is always natural environments in play. So we take that to heart, we can get to these 12 kind of steps. The first one is particularly for, I am going to say, for psychologists, particularly school psychologist. We need to reframe our assessment role as the orchestrator of Authentic Assessment via others. Since too often we are strangers to the child, the parent, and the teacher, we are the outsider. But we are really well skilled in measurement and if we know about group dynamics and teamwork, we can orchestrate the assessment so we do the probes and then others collect the data over circumstances, time, and people. And so, we reframe our assessment role is the orchestrator of assessment. We choose a teamwork model in order to make that happen that the parents believe fits the child well with our input. Observe children's natural competencies in playing classroom routines. How are you going to do that? One way is to select a developmental profile to record competencies that is universally designed, that has functional skills, and has graduated competencies in it that can lead to goal planning. We ensure the use of professional judgement and impairment informed opinion, and we enable that to challenge the results of more traditional assessments that are inflexible and do not sample the same content that we are looking for.

We observed across multiple home and preschool activities. We partner with parents and caregivers, as well as teachers and others – like other professionals, and that is where professional carrying comes into play. The speech therapist who is working with the teacher together individually, in group circle time with kids, and in small groups. We engage in child play with the kids themselves. To probe specific skills. We might select familiar toys and peers that set the occasion for a lot of kids who might be reticent, might not have very good language or social skills, but gives them the way to interplay with objects and peers. We interviewed caregivers about the child's competencies and needs and then, of course, we use videos as one of the bases for Authentic Assessment and we take the video evidence and allow it to really make it work.

Now, I'm going to show you this in one minute, but the last thing you will see on the PDF is a little bit more detail on each of those 12 things that I told you about. So let's take a quick look, hopefully this will work out OK too. Let's take a look at this video from the Results Matter's website in Colorado. Which had been there virgin -- version of Authentic Assessment at the time. So let me see if I can make this whole screen. Maybe.

SPEAKER:

Let me stop sharing.

(Video plays)

(Video stops)

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

Do you want me to keep going, Anna?

SPEAKER:

I would try it one more time by staring your screen.

(Zoom call disconnected).

(Zoom call reconnected).

This is a test.

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

Let me see if I can bring it up again. OK. So I have the video up again, it is an MP4.

SPEAKER:

For the cart, hold on. I am not seeing the video.

SPEAKER:

Let's see. Dragon. There you go. It is not showing the video.

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

I do not know why it is the whiteboard.

SPEAKER:

Is there a way for us to see the video in the chat box instead since your sharing function is not working?

SPEAKER:

You mean put the link up there?

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

I do not know.

SPEAKER:

We do have a hard stop in 10 minutes. I know our internet just stopped, but I did not know if you wanted to go on with the slides. Or ...?

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

I think we can go into questions.

SPEAKER:

OK! So, this is a time for questions, if folks have questions. You can either unmute your microphone to ask or you can type in the chat box.

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

I see Diane, how can we access a list of assessment tools that are more authentic and developmentally appropriate? Well, it would not be all of them, but in the two articles that you downloaded from the AUCD site, there are lists of measures that were analysed. And so you can look at those. The only other way you can get them is to buy the LINKing book (Laughs) From Paul Brooks. It has the 83 measures and it has snapshots and at a glance, which means a one-page overview and then several pages on a lot of the measures that where the highest quality ratings. And so, the book is called LINKing, Authentic Assessment and early childhood interventions. 2010. Diane, thank you for the question. That is the way to get at those measures and to identify them. And frankly, a lot of them are the ones that we end up using as curriculum measures, both curriculum embedded and curriculum reference measures. In early childhood programs. Go ahead.

SPEAKER:

Steve, I have a question. In trying to get people to think, and for some, people, districts, programs, this is a whole new paradigm if they have not been trained. Where is most of the resistance coming from and how do you suggest we kind of overcome that resistance to implement Authentic Assessment?

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

That is a good question. I think it comes down to the director and supervisors of programs to give latitude to the specialists who know what they are doing. Physical therapists and occupational therapists have been doing Authentic Assessment ever since their profession started. And so, it is all about linking intervention with observation and clinical judgement. And so it is that merger of those two things. So the supervisors need to give the latitude to people to begin to think differently about how they are collecting data and information. Too often, we end up thinking about assessment only for eligibility determination and not thinking about how can we get a good gauge on what the child can do

so we can plan goals and strategies right off the bat, rather than waiting for several months before we get "the gold standard results", which are never what you want them to be. Because people underplay what kids can do. So that is one of the ways of thinking about it. Is that it starts, in my view and experience, with the administrators. When you have administrators and programs that give the message and the training to people that they have a hand in designing how assessment happens in their program, then the quality is very, very different.

SPEAKER:

Thanks. So we need to get you out to administrators!

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

(Laughs) Me and a number of people that are doing the same thing. Other questions? Figure mac Steve, I just want to emphasize, because I know you do this, for those who are still doing remote and for example in our state, we may be going back to remote for birth to three. This can be done and is being done remotely.

DR STEFANO J. BAGNATO:

Exactly. There is a question from Kathy, do you see any roles for assessment measures that provide (Indiscernible) standardized scores. Absolutely! That is fundamental to what we do. Many of the measures that I showed you there actually do have normative scores. So the adaptive behaviour assessment systems three has been field validated on almost every disability group. So there is a measure whose standardization meets the needs of early childhood intervention. Unfortunately, measures like the Baileys scales of infant development no longer really meet our needs. They had their day, they had their time, but they are not the kinds of measures that lead us to where we want to be. They are not really focusing on neurodevelopmental skills that are functional. And that is the direction that the Disabilities field is very clearly moving, or has moved into. So norm-referenced majors that are developed in ways that individuals with disabilities can actually show up on those major measures -- measures, either in the norm group or by the accommodations we make for them to function, different stimulus materials, different response modes, they are the ones that have the universality that would meet a developmentally appropriate standard.

Well, you all have been so gracious with all of the warts with this. I hope you found this intriguing, maybe energizing. Read the articles and feel free to reach out to me. My email is Bagnato's at PI TT.edu and I would be happy to talk with you.

SPEAKER:

Steve, thank you so much, and I think all of you including Steve for putting up with our glitches and technology. But the content was well worth it, and well worth staying on and I thank you all for being persistent and following through. But I think Anna has something about the evaluation.

SPEAKER:

The evaluation will come to you today or tomorrow along with recording and the slides and the article links. So thank you everyone for joining us, thank you again Steve, and have a great, safe rest of your week! Stefano mac all of YouTube stop -- all of you too.

SPEAKER:

Thank you guys. And thank you Steve.

By. Live captioning by Ai-Media.