

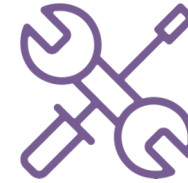
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Conflict Happens: Anticipating and Overcoming Challenges

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Event Materials

Visit the **event page** to download a copy of the presentation slides and any additional resources.



Continuing Education

This webinar has been approved to offer continuing education credit. Please stay tuned for more information!



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Readiness. Knowledge. Network.

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Today's Presenters



Dr. Kary Zarate

Assistant Professor
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Served As:

Paraprofessional
Special Educator

Research:

Collaborative Partnerships in Special
Education
Teacher Preparation & Leadership

Today's Objectives

1. Reflect on personal experiences of conflict and how those were resolved
2. Gain strategies to manage and overcome barriers to collaboration within schools, military installations, and communities.
3. Learn the importance of repairing relationships to prevent further conflict.

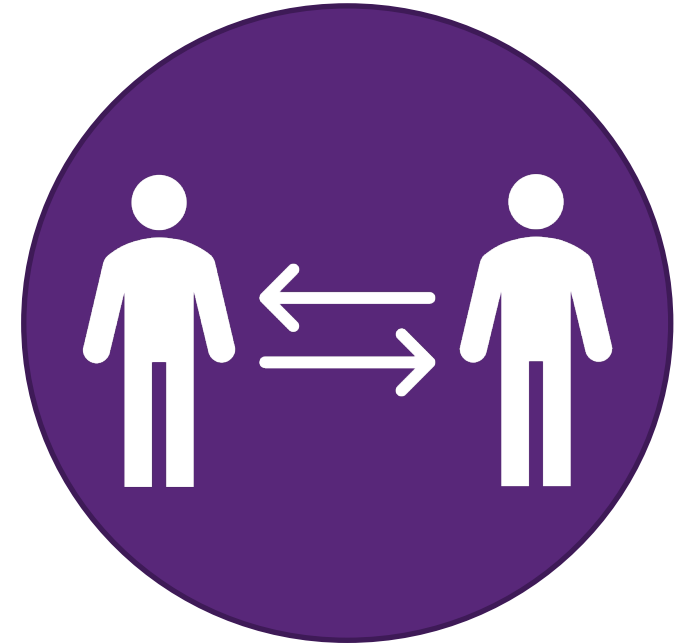


What is conflict? How does conflict feel?

We may even disagree on what it means to disagree...

A word cloud on a blue background featuring the following words: fearful, avoid, stress, trauma, sadness, stronger, toxic, conflict, worry, delicate, and anger. The words are arranged in a central cluster with varying sizes and orientations.

Conflict can be...



...and the way we handle conflict varies.



Poll



How do you handle conflict?



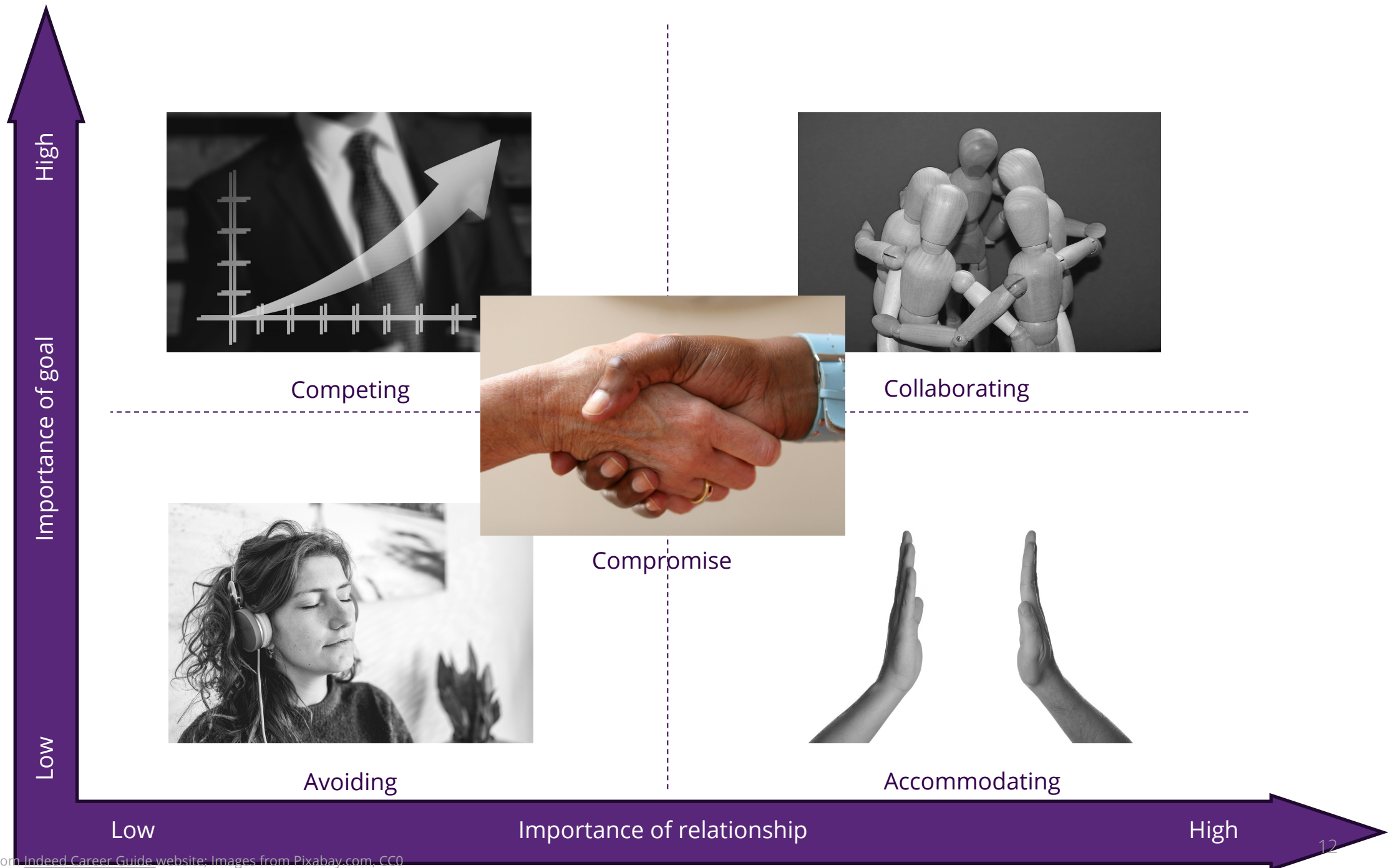
A. RUN! AVOID! ABORT!



B. Ignore...but later explode!



C. Calm, cool, & collected!!





Conflict just is.

Possible Positive Outcomes of Conflict

★★★ 1. High-quality decisions resulting from conflict: intense effort in generating solutions.



2. Strong sense of ownership with a commitment to implement action steps



3. Improved reasoning from members, as they sharpen their understanding and points of view to clearly communicate ideas.



4. After successful management, teaming is stronger, more trusting, more open.



5. Practicing communication through conflict can make it easier for the next time.

Stages of Conflict



- Anticipate Conflict & Prevent
- Resolving Conflict to Improve Positive Outcomes
- Rebuilding after Conflict



Anticipate Conflict: Strategies to bypass detrimental conflict

Collaboration Contracts & Team Agreements



Outline Roles and Responsibilities



Anticipate that conflict will occur and ask partners to anticipate their communication needs.



Provide a reference to come back to, to assist with keep teams objective.








What Goes Into a Team Agreement:

TEAM AGREEMENT CANVAS

Much like an orchestra tunes up before a performance, or an athlete warms up before a practice, tuning a virtual team helps get everyone on the same page.

Team name: _____ Date: _____

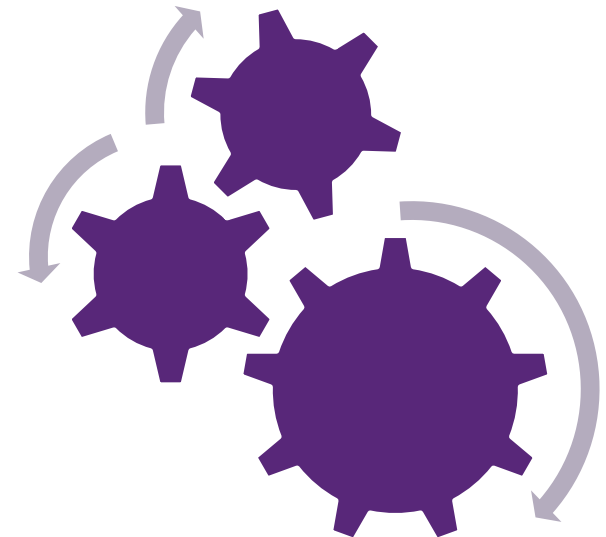
VALUES What are our guiding principles? 	INFORMATION What information do we need to share and how do we access it? 	COMMUNICATION How and when do we talk to each other? 	COLLABORATION How do we know what each other are doing? 
WELL-BEING How do we care for ourselves and each other? 			



-  Preferred mode of communication
-  Communication needs when conflict is present (e.g., cool-off period, scheduled conversations).
-  Team goals or vision.
-  Defined roles and responsibilities (e.g., note-taker, meeting scheduler)
-  Team member behavioral expectations (e.g., phone off, on-time).

Problem Solving Framework

- To manage team conflict, particularly when goals and relationships are highly important.
- Formal process for objectivity and organization. Allows all voices to be heard.
- Adopted at forming stage as a "just-in-case" tool.



Define the problem

- Describe the challenge and craft a problem statement.
- What is the current difficulty and how urgent is this?

Analyze the Problem

- Explore why the problem is an issue and associated variables. Generate a problem question.
- How come this is occurring? What are the historical events that have led you here?

Generate Possible Solutions

- All members of the group are invited to share any creative solutions. Generate as many solutions as possible.
- Solutions may address all or part of the problem. Do not evaluate solutions yet.

Evaluate Solutions

- Consider the merit of each possible solution and potential positive and negative effects of each.
- Narrow down the list or create a pro's and con's list for possible solutions.

Implement and Assess Solution

- Create a plan for implementation of solution that was agreed upon
- Implementation of a plan can take time. Consider how to evaluate if the solution is working.

Mindset Shifts

Change the Labels:

- Stubborn → Persevere
- Non-listener → A lot on their plate
- Over achiever → Goal-oriented
- Lazy → Needs support

Separate the Person from the Behavior:

- Difficult Person → I don't enjoy it when they...



We can't control the behavior of others, but we can *shift* our reactions.

The Cortez Family

In the last webinar we met the Cortez family. The daughter, Stephanie, is a third-grade student and the family recently relocated from a military installation in Southern California to Great Lakes Naval Station near Chicago, IL. Stephanie has been having some academic struggles and the school team has been in communication with Mr. and Mrs. Cortez. In the last meeting with the school team, to discuss Stephanie's progress, there was some tension between the school counselor and Mrs. Cortez. Ms. Little, has been monitoring Stephanie's progress, and she notes that the interventions they are trying at school don't seem to be working. The school team will recommend that Stephanie have a full initial evaluation (FIE), as Ms. Little suspects Stephanie might have a learning disability in reading. As it's still early in the school year, Ms. Little knows that she will have to work and communicate with the Cortez Family often. She wants to set the stage for successful collaboration, so she asks to set up a 15-minute conversation with Mrs. and Mr. Cortez over the phone to create a mini team agreement. Primarily, Ms. Little wants to know how they prefer to communicate and what they may need in the upcoming meeting with the school team. Mrs. Cortez and Ms. Little set up a time to chat on the phone for 15 minutes. Ms. Little begins the conversation with asking if now is still a good time to talk. She then asks, generally, what is the best way to communicate information to the Cortez family – would they prefer phone calls (and if so scheduled or unscheduled?), emails, or notes sent home. Mrs. Cortez says she prefers a scheduled phone call.



Strategies Resulting in Positive Outcomes from Conflict

Conflict “Rules” for Fair Play

Use a form of “face-to-face” conversation.

- Phone, Zoom, In-person.
- Harder to assume-and- impose negative intent when interacting with face and voice

Try to Resolve 1-on-1

- When voicing a concern, try addressing it with that person.
- Team settings (even group chat) can yield feelings of embarrassment or shame.



Negotiation & Difficult Conversations

Avoid
Or
Confront?



Principles of Negotiation

1. Focus on the issues, not the people

"You don't understand how difficult it is to schedule a meeting with this many people."



"Scheduling for this meeting is really complex; let's see how **we** can be creative with meeting."

2. Trust & Verify

Assume Best Intentions – This takes some vulnerability and trust.

Seek clarity about the *why* of every negotiation, if it seems unclear.

Principles of Negotiation

3. Agreement: State and Restate

“So far, we all agree, that we all want to support Linda in being more included in after-school activities, so that she can begin making more friends in this community.”

4. Reduce emotional components

If there is a very strong emotional response, regrouping may be necessary.

Read the room and be the one to pause.

Principles of Negotiation

5. Relationship over Issue

Sometimes, we must resolve the conflict within ourselves and...let it go.

Testing for Consensus

Hesitation about solutions
can be a brewing ground
for more conflict.

Summarize

Repeat the proposed solution

Clarify what you are NOT asking

Might not be the BEST or their 1st choice solution.

Clarify what you ARE asking

Does the proposed solution meet the needs of the problem? Can they live with it and support it?

Immediate Yes!
Consensus! You're done!

Unresolved Questions
Address, resolve, then agreement!

Guidelines Unmet?
Discuss and modify if needed. Might
need to prepare new solution.

The Determination Meeting

The Cortez's gave permission to the school to conduct a full initial evaluation for Stephanie, to determine if she may be eligible for special education services as Stephanie was struggling with reading. It now time to have the determination meeting, and the Cortez's are eager to hear the results of the full evaluation. During the meeting, Mrs. Little begins by explaining the process and all the team members re-introduce themselves. Although the school team tries there best to be positive and demonstrate how much they enjoy Stephanie. Mr. Cortez is having some feelings hearing the ways in which Stephanie is struggling in school. More than just reading, Stephanie seems to be having a hard time adjusting to the new school, making friends, and feeling like she belongs. The school social worker asks if they have seen any signs of depression with Stephanie at home. The D word has Mr. Cortez very frightened. In the way he was raised, depression was NOT something kids had, and he feels like his daughter just needs to "knock it off and work harder." Mrs. Cortez is distressed at her husband's reaction and wants to shut the meeting down. Mrs. Little, the teacher, knows that she has to act quickly in this moment to try to get things back on track---how can she use some of the principles of negotiation to keep the meeting moving forward?

Principles of Negotiation - Review

1. Focus on the issues, not the people.
2. Trust & Verify
3. Agreement: State & Restate
4. Reduce emotional components
5. Relationship over Issue

After Conflict: Repair

Reset the emotional tone.

- Acknowledge the tension.
- Bring up positive memories or optimism for the future.

Be Open to Feedback

- Once things have cooled, ask if there is something that you could have done differently to manage the situation.

Find Neutral Ground
(Literally & Figuratively)

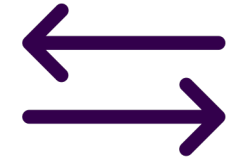
- Find places of alignment rather than identifying who was wrong/right.
- Find a location that is neither yours nor theirs (particularly for coworkers!).

Restore Trust

- Offer something the other person might need.
- Create a verbal contract of the behaviors you committed to changing and do it!

To view this video, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtl5UrrgU8c>

Understanding Feedback



Get the
Micro-Yes

Show
Impact

Name the
Data-Point

End on a
Question



Meeting Continues

Mrs. Little was able to keep the meeting going, She reminded the team, that everyone wants Stephanie to succeed and that we may all have different ways of defining success. She suggests that the team takes some time to stretch their legs and regroup in 10 minutes. Everyone agrees this is the best option. Mr. Cortez stays quiet for the rest of the meeting, and Mrs. Little is worried that he does not feel like his voice was heard. She decides that afterschool she will call the Cortez family and ask if they have a few minutes to talk about the meeting, or if another time would be better. When Ms. Little calls, Mr. and Mrs. Cortez happen to be home and are willing to debrief the meeting. Mrs. Little, trying to show how impactful their presence was says, "I thought today's meeting was a bit tense, but I'm glad we were able to keep going—I think we will be able to provide some great support to Stephanie, Is there anything I could have done in that meeting that would have made it go better?" Mrs. Cortez says that their culture plays a large role in all the decisions they make, and that today caught them off guard a bit. She mentioned that they really trust Mrs. Little but have a hard time hearing everything the social worker has to say. They wondered if moving forward they could schedule a pre-meeting with the school liaison present, more for information gathering than decision making. Mrs. Little responds, I think that would be fine, but I need to check in with my administrative team before I can confirm. The Cortez's thanked Mrs. Little for her thoughtfulness and Mrs. Little felt relieved that trust had been restored.

Review

1. Defined Conflict
2. Planning Strategies: Anticipating Conflict
 - Team Agreements
 - Problem-Solving Framework
3. During Conflict:
 - Rules for Negotiations & Difficult Conversations
 - Testing for Consensus
4. After Conflict:
 - Repairing
 - Giving and Receiving Feedback



Final Thought:

Conflict is inevitable but can be used as an opportunity for learning and growth.

Contact Us

Kary Zarate

kzarat2@illinois.edu



Upcoming Event



Collaborating During Changes and Transitions for Military Students

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023

This session outlines the various school-based changes that may occur over time for students and their families. The transitions between schools, communities, and adulthood all have unique challenges. This session provides strategies to assist with varying transitions and how collaboration is critical throughout the transition for decreased service disruption.

Continuing education credit will be available for this session!

Continuing Education



This webinar has been approved for the following continuing education (CE) credits:



Thank you for participating in this evaluation.

Board Certified Patient Advocates & Case Managers: If you would like to receive 1.5 contact/clock hours from the **Patient Advocate Certification Board** and/or the **Commission for Case Manager Certification**, please click on this link to access your certificate: [https://www.oneop.org/ce/continuing-education/2024/01/14/141447](#)

Certified Family Life Educators: If you would like to receive 1.5 contact hours (0.15 CEU) from the **National Council on Family Relations** to Certified Family Life Educators (CFLE) for this webinar, please click on this link to access your certificate: [https://www.nationalcouncilonfamilyrelations.org/ce/continuing-education/2024/01/14/141447](#)

Education professionals: If you would like to receive a Certificate of Completion for **general use** and/or 1.5 State Continuing Education Clock Hours (SCECHs) for providers in **Michigan**, please click on this link to take the post-test: [https://www.oneop.org/ce/continuing-education/2024/01/14/141447](#)

Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists: If you would like to receive 1.5 CE credits for Social Work, LPCs, and LMFTs from the **University of Texas at Austin, Steve Hicks School of Social Work**, please click on this link to take the post-test: [https://www.oneop.org/ce/continuing-education/2024/01/14/141447](#)

Evaluation Link

Go to the event page for the evaluation and post-test link.

[Continuing Education](#)

Questions?

Email Robyn DiPietro-Wells:
OneOpEarlyIntervention@gmail.com

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