

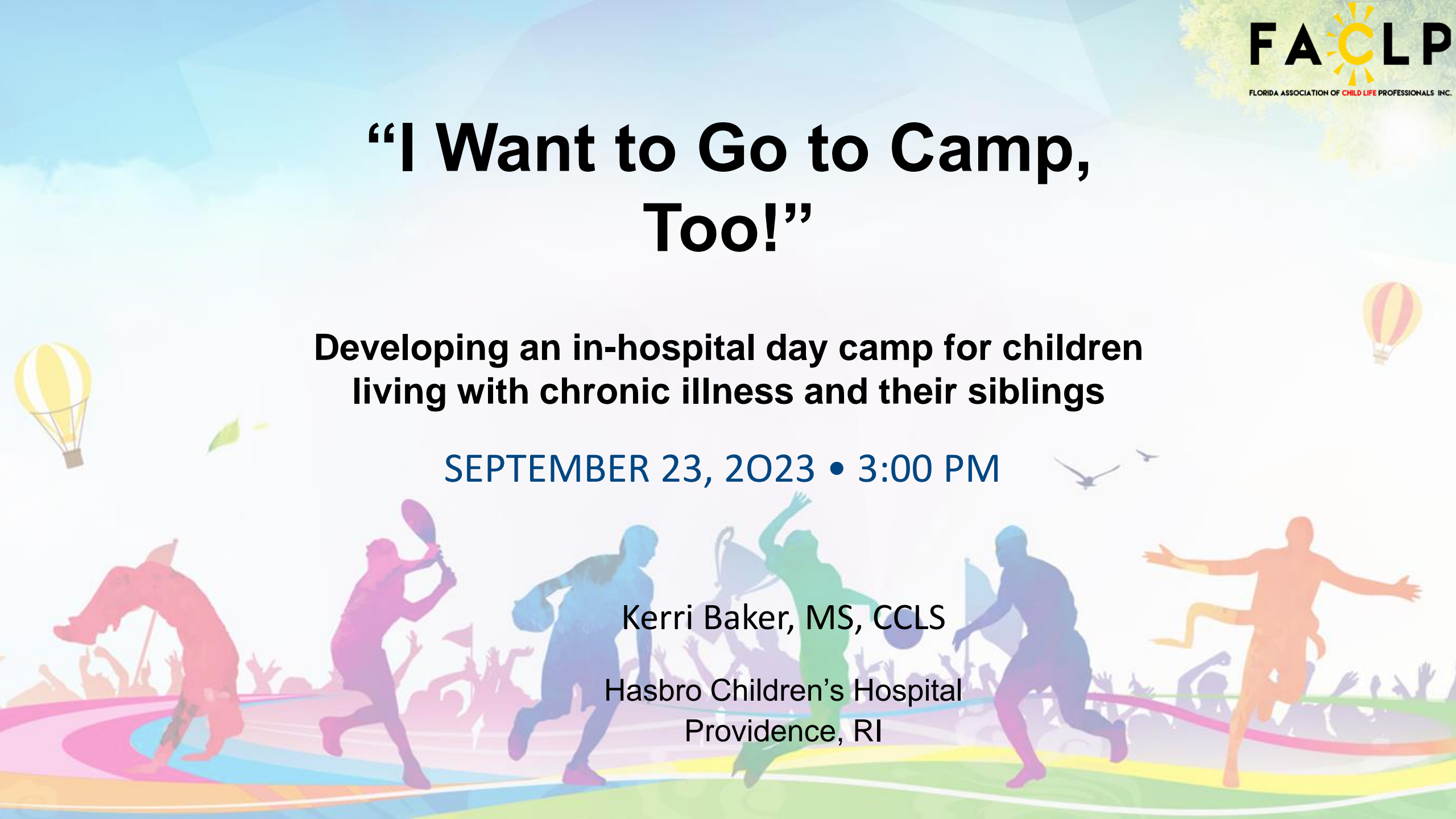
“I Want to Go to Camp, Too!”

**Developing an in-hospital day camp for children
living with chronic illness and their siblings**

SEPTEMBER 23, 2023 • 3:00 PM

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**Hasbro Children’s Hospital
Providence, RI**



Disclosures

- No professional/personal gains
- Not selling products
- All images have signed consent



Learning Objectives

1. Participants will be able to identify underserved populations and assess needs for developmentally appropriate medical day-camp programming within their own facility
2. Participants will be able to identify tools and planning resources needed to organize a similar camp program
3. Participants will be able to recognize potential roadblocks to implementation, and brainstorm alternative plans to achieve success



Who's here today?

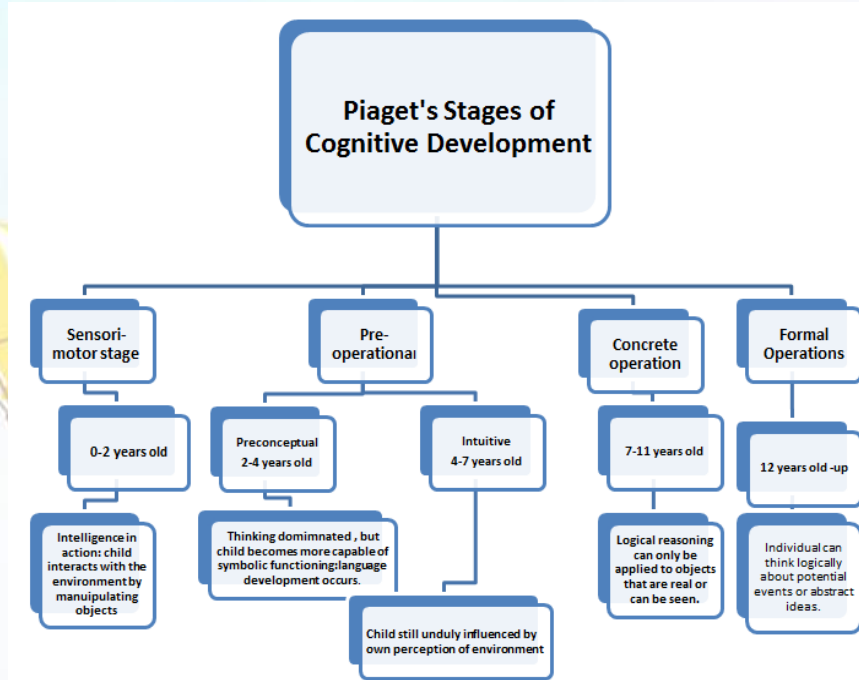
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Current Research

- Chronic exposure to high levels of stress, anxiety, and uncertainty can contribute to long term physical, emotional, and psychosocial distress. Difficulty with adjustment to illness can compromise adherence to medical treatment regimens. Furthermore, many pediatric illnesses are exacerbated by stress encountered in other aspects of children's lives (Compas et al, 2012).
- Exposure to peers with similar experiences allows children and families to build an empathetic social network and may allow for them to develop a new perspective on their disease (Salazar & Heyman, 2014).
- Camp experiences can provide a sense of unity and normalcy for children coping with chronic illness (Thompson, 2018).
- In 2000, the American Academy of Pediatrics(AAP) stated that "child life specialists use their skills and training for positions in disease-specific camps...". In addition, the AAP also stated that "siblings of pediatric patients present with their own unique anxieties and psychosocial needs, needs that are often not assessed or addressed" (2014). This program reaches both children with life-threatening diagnoses, as well as their siblings, demonstrating commitment to family-centered care. As child life specialists, we agree to the goals of "(1) maximizing the physical and emotional health as well as the social, cognitive and developmental abilities of children and youth, and (2) minimizing the potential stress and trauma that children (unless modified, children refers to infants, children and youth) and their families may experience" (CLC, 2011).

Developmental Need



www.sociopsychology.net

Connection to the hospital

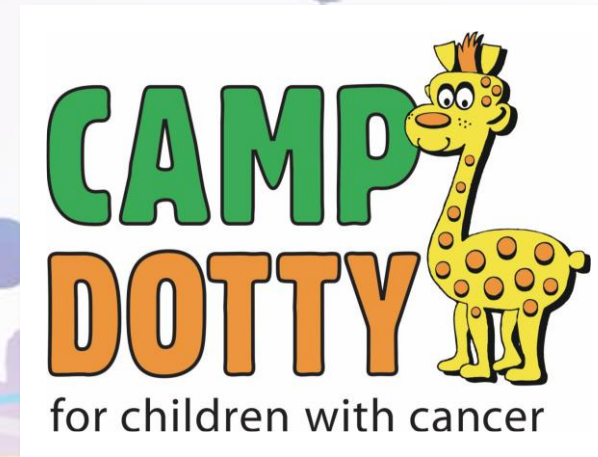
Comfort with hospital staff, despite chronic/acute illness

Ability for young patients and siblings to connect with each other, and with medical providers in a playful environment

Offering age-appropriate independence, mastery, etc.

Background Information

- Pre-existing camp design within own hospital
- CCLS' identified need to support additional population with similar model



Reason for Implementation

- Previous model: 4 – 7 year old w/oncology diagnosis
 - “advertising” in pedi-heme/onc clinic
 - Some families missing out
- Identified need for not only heme patients, but GI/neuro/ortho etc
- Local overnight programming available for older ages, but not within state lines
 - No transitional program for families to feel comfortable



Staff Collaboration

Development
Physicians
Nursing
Infectious Disease
Risk Management
Media



Funding

- Camp Dotty
 - Independent funder (non-profit)
- Camp Grace
 - Needs assessment
 - Independent Funder
 - Community events

Hasbro Children's Hospital
Radiothon

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

- Connection to local colleges
- Current hospital volunteers
- Collaboration with volunteer services
- Group/phone interviews
 - Commitment to program, consistency of care
- Child Life 101
- Team-building
 - Events prior to orientation
 - Orientation
- Counselors vs Camp Assistants

Vendors & Donors

- Developmentally Appropriate Activities
- Performers
 - Collaboration with in-hospital arts programming
 - Musicians, storytellers, magicians, martial arts, yoga, dance, artists
 - Theme specific, when possible
 - *services both donated and paid for, as needed*
- Lunch
 - Varied selection, utilize community for donations



Project Management Tools

Google Docs

Microsoft Excel

Trello

Doodle planning

Survey Monkey

Planning Committee

Band

Hospital shared drives



Challenges & Successes

- Staffing
- Professional Boundaries
- Pandemic
 - “Camp in a Box”
 - Masking
 - Vaccination
- Camp Grace: 90+ patients/siblings in 8 years
- Camp Dotty: 500+ patients/siblings in 24 years





Counselor Feedback

"I loved camp! It was the best experience and I loved getting to know this kids and bond with them."



"No additional thoughts, just a lot of love."

"This camp is a great experience for the kids AND adults."

"I thought the camp was an overall great experience for kids who may not have had similar opportunities. Thank you for organizing this!"

Caregiver Feedback

“I loved that in this hard time you guys bring joy to these kids that has had a tough year.”



“I thought everything provided and done was great and professional.”





Who can benefit?

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____



Why is this important?

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____



What format do I think will work best?

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____



Who will I need help from?

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____



Some “speed bumps” might be...

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____



Potential Roadblocks

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- Money
 - Space
 - Location
 - Time
 - Staffing
 - Access to volunteers
 - Donors
 - Vendors
 - Vetting
 - Population





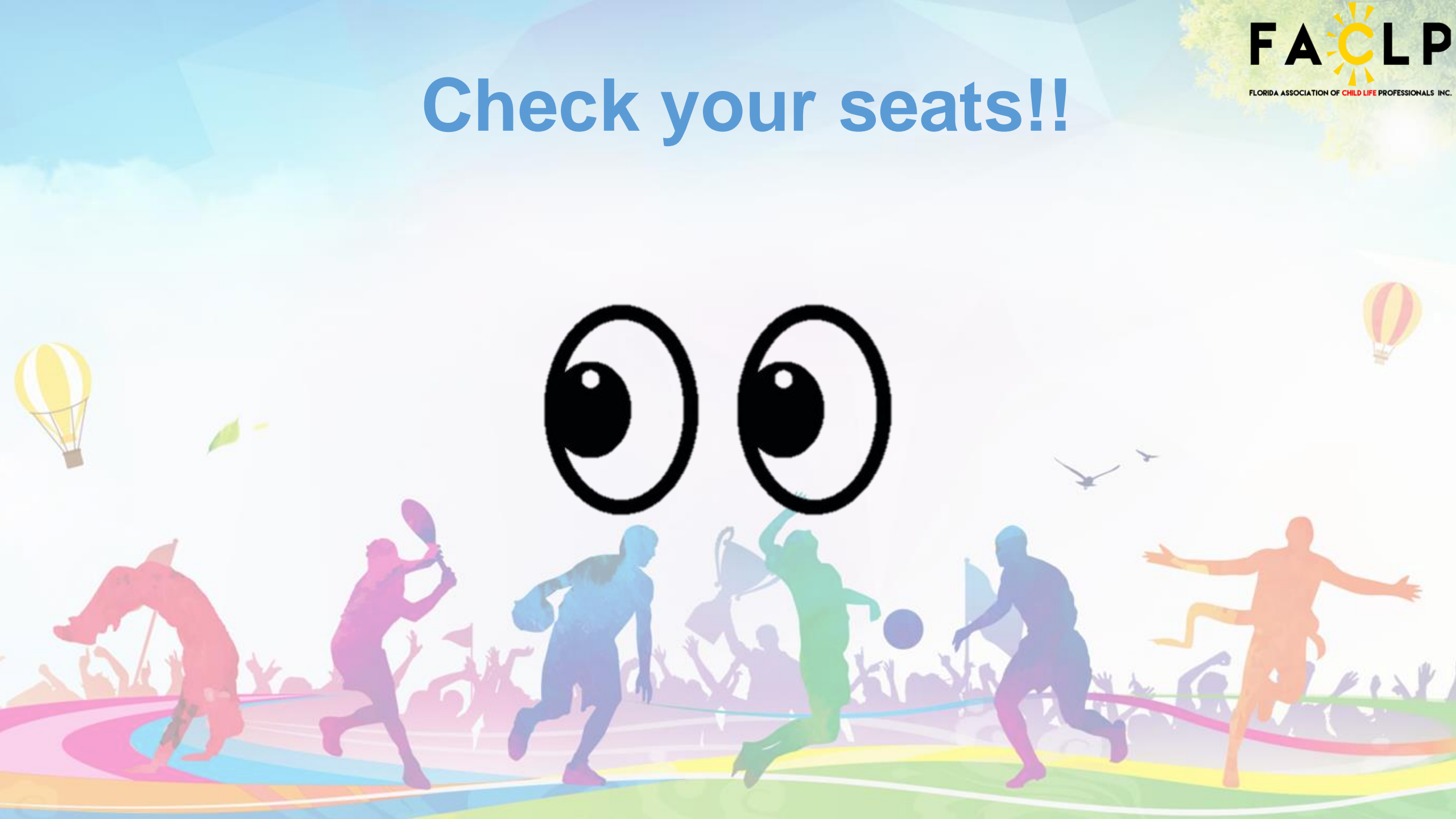
- **Kelsey Mullen, CCLS**
- **Courtney White, CCLS, Kim Morse, CCLS & Lisa Cantore, CCLS**
- **Anna Moran**
- **Hasbro Children's Hospital's Child Life Department**
- **Camp Grace and Camp Dotty families**
- **ALL volunteers, donors, & vendors**
- **DelVecchio Family**
- **The Tomorrow Fund**
- **Staff**



Citations

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- Thompson, R.H. ed. (2018). *The Handbook of Child Life: A Guide for Pediatric Psychosocial Care*. Springfield, Il, Charles C. Thomas.

Check your seats!!



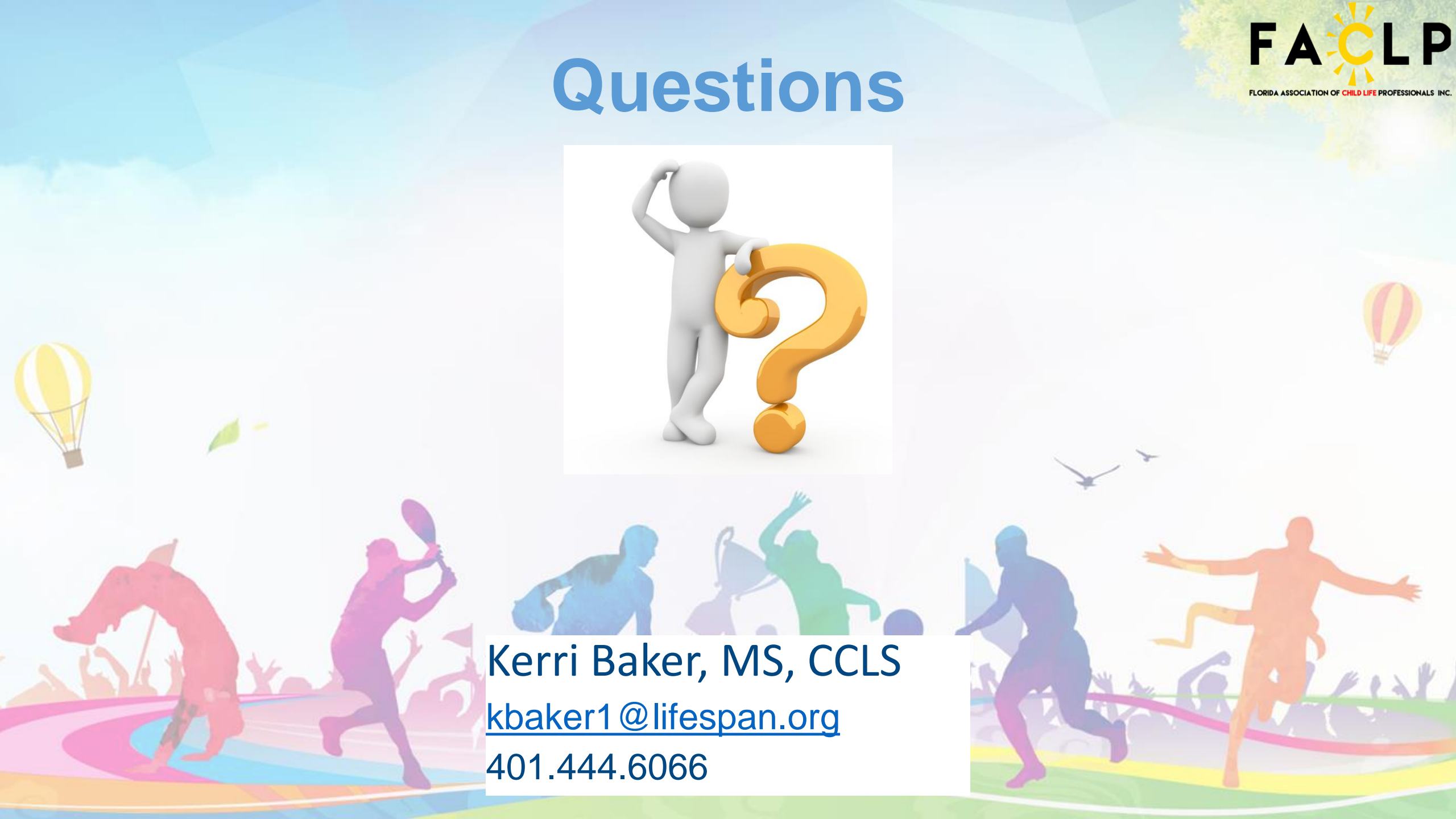
Questions



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QR survey code here

