

# Shelley MOORE PH.D.



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# THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF INCLUSION

## Learning Series

Session 1: All students are presumed competent

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*Shelley*  
MOORE PH.D.



# Nexwlélexm (Bowen Island)

- The Islands Trust Council acknowledges that the lands and waters that encompass the Islands Trust Area have been **home to Indigenous peoples** since **time immemorial** and honours the **rich history, stewardship, and cultural heritage** that embody this place we all call home.
- The Islands Trust Council is committed to establishing and maintaining mutually **respectful relationships** between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Islands Trust states a **commitment to Reconciliation** with the understanding that this commitment is a **long-term relationship-building and healing process**.
- The Islands Trust Council will strive to **create opportunities for knowledge-sharing** and understanding as people come together to **preserve and protect** the special nature of the islands within the **Salish**



# Welcome!

## Our Plan Together

December 5: Guiding Condition #1: All Students are **presumed competent**

February 13: Guiding Condition #2: All students are **placed** in inclusive classrooms

February 28: Guiding Condition #3: All students are within **proximity to** and **participating in** learning with **peers**

March 19: Guiding Condition #4: All students have meaningful **purpose** in inclusive classrooms

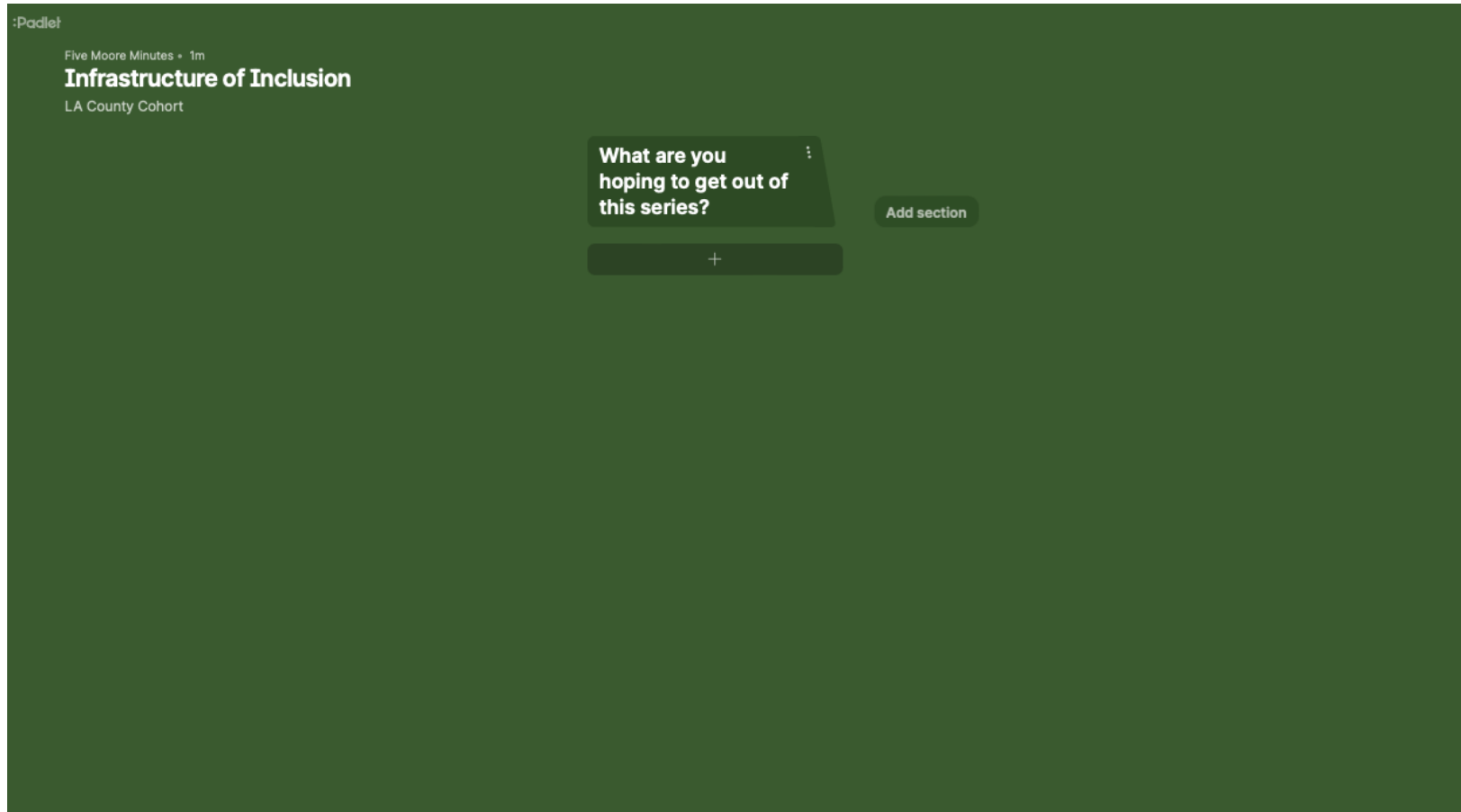
May 30: Guiding Condition #5: All students are **planned for** from the start

# Welcome!

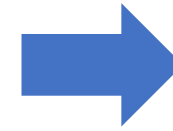
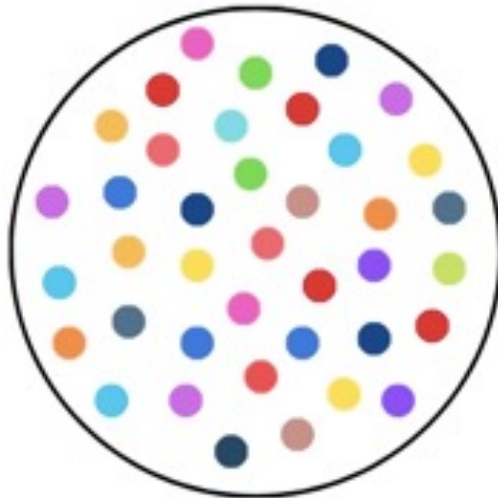
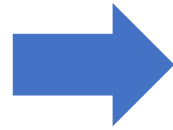
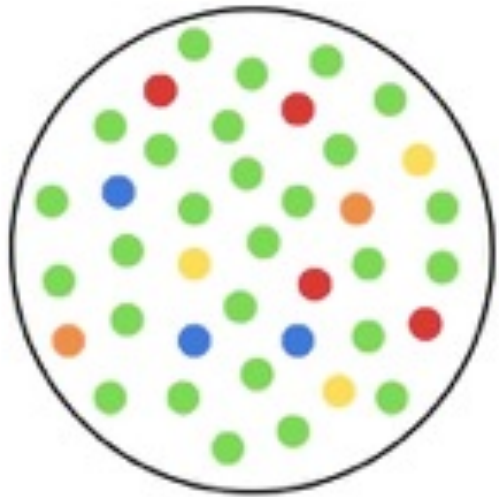
## Structure of Sessions

- Set **intentions** for the day
- Reflect on **shifts in thinking** and **practice**
- Topic presentation with built in **discussion** time
- Reflect and drawing on **learning**
- Make plans to **take action**
- **Homework!**

<https://padlet.com/fivemooreminutes/infrastructure-on-inclusion-844f66fv3bflmpbo>



# WHAT IS *inclusion* ?



How do we  
*include* people  
with disabilities?

How do we teach  
to *diversity*?

How do we  
teach to *identity*?

**WHAT DOES**

*inclusion*

**LOOK LIKE?**

## Guiding Conditions of **iNCLUSION** describe that all students...

are **PRESUMED**  
competent and  
as having  
**POTENTIAL**

are **PLACED** in  
and attending  
inclusive  
classrooms and  
schools

are in **PROXIMITY**  
to and  
**PARTICIPATING**  
with **PEERS**

have  
**PURPOSEFUL**  
roles and  
responsibilities

are **PLANNED** for  
from the start



**Which condition is the strength area for your classroom, school, or district?**

**Which condition is the area that needs to be targeted the most in your classroom, school, or district?**

<https://forms.gle/o7Mf87bShLp9KUwPA>

## Guiding Conditions of **iNCLUSION** describe that all children & youth...

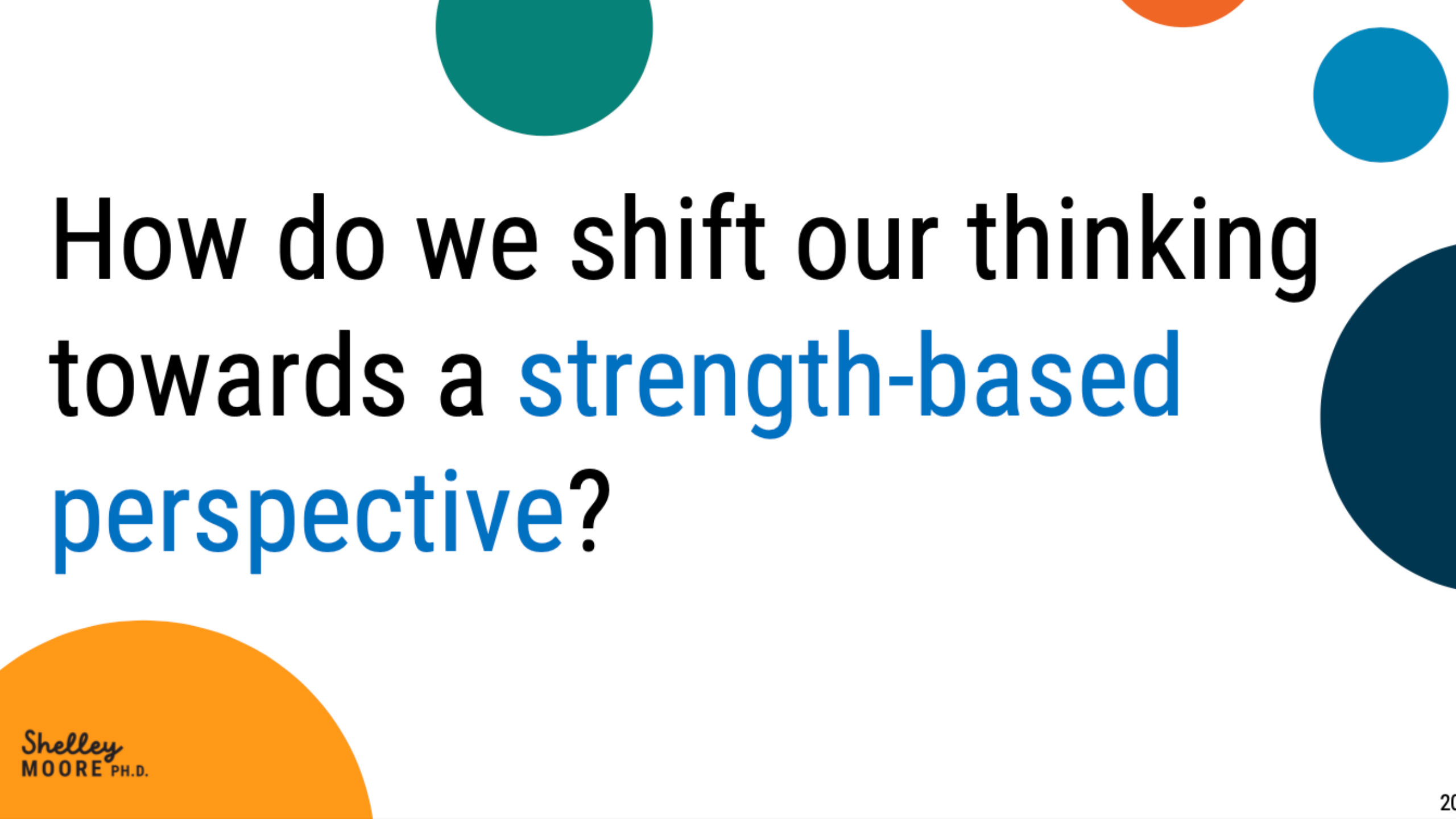
are **PRESUMED**  
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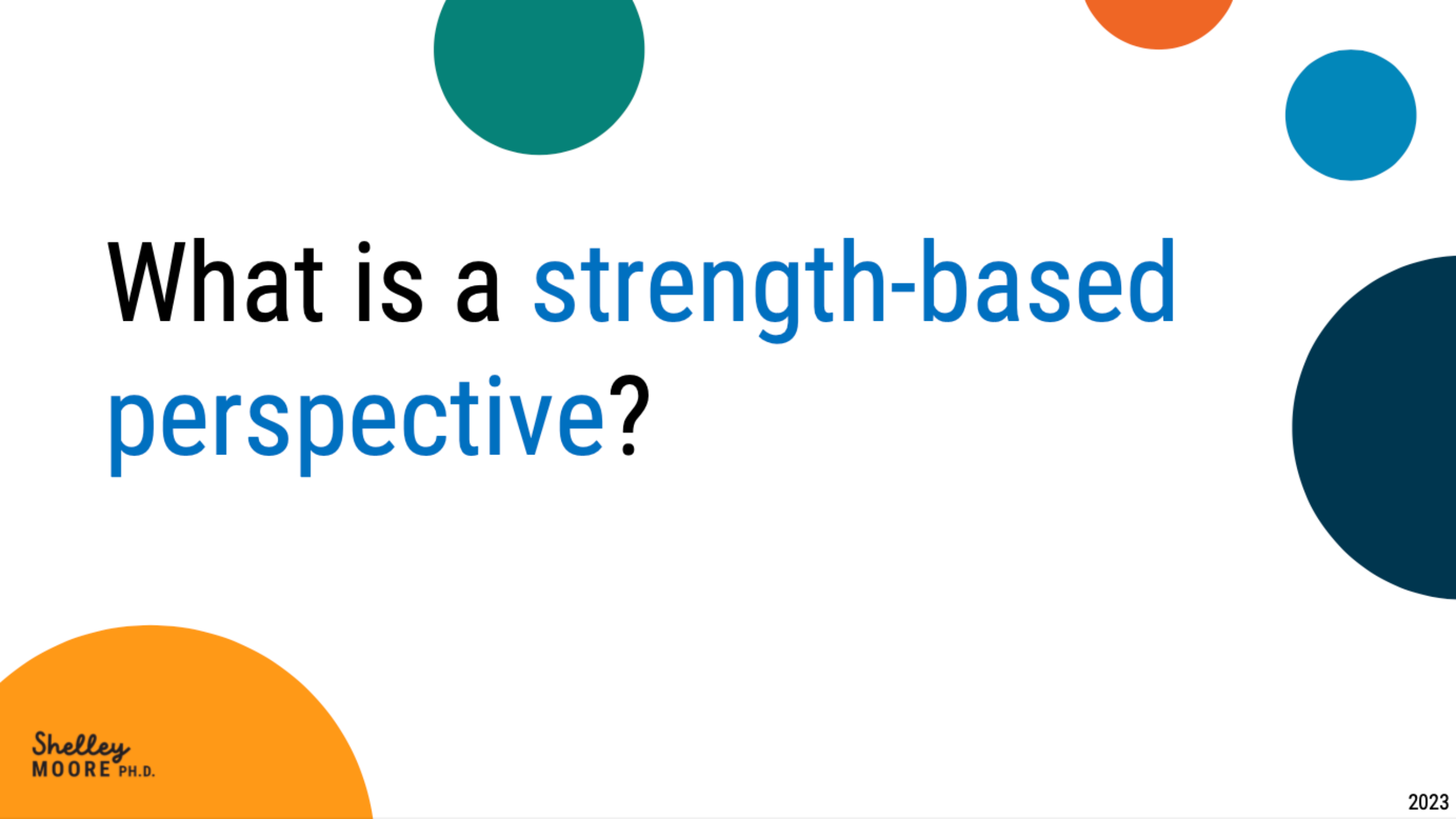
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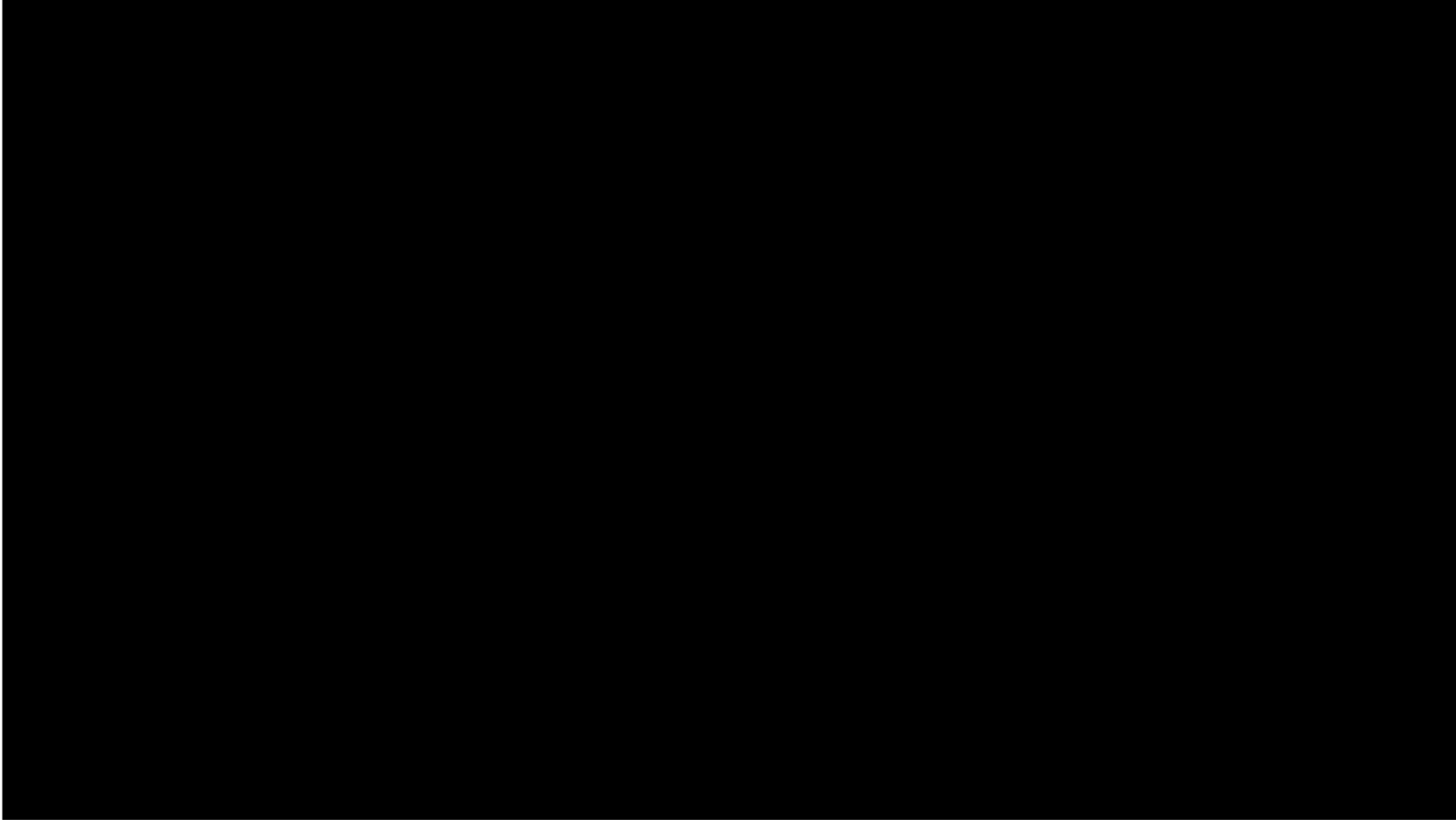


How do we shift our thinking  
towards a **strength-based**  
**perspective?**

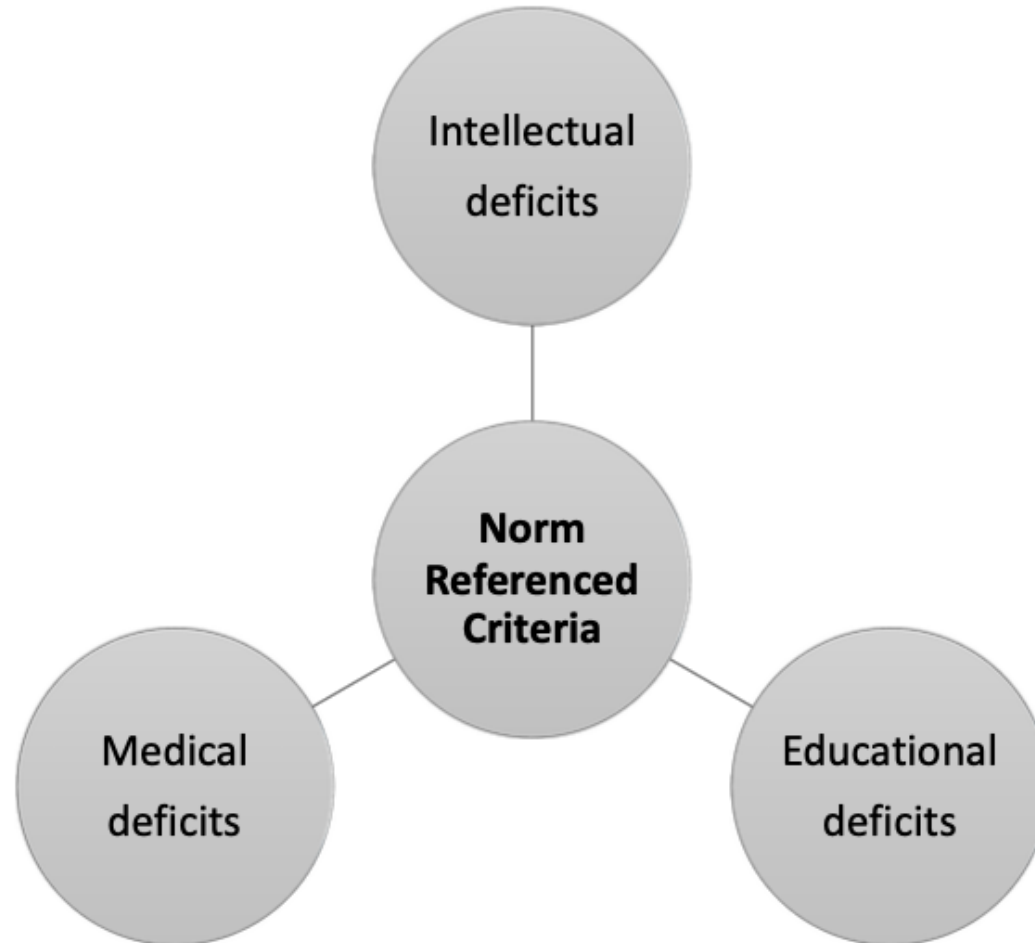


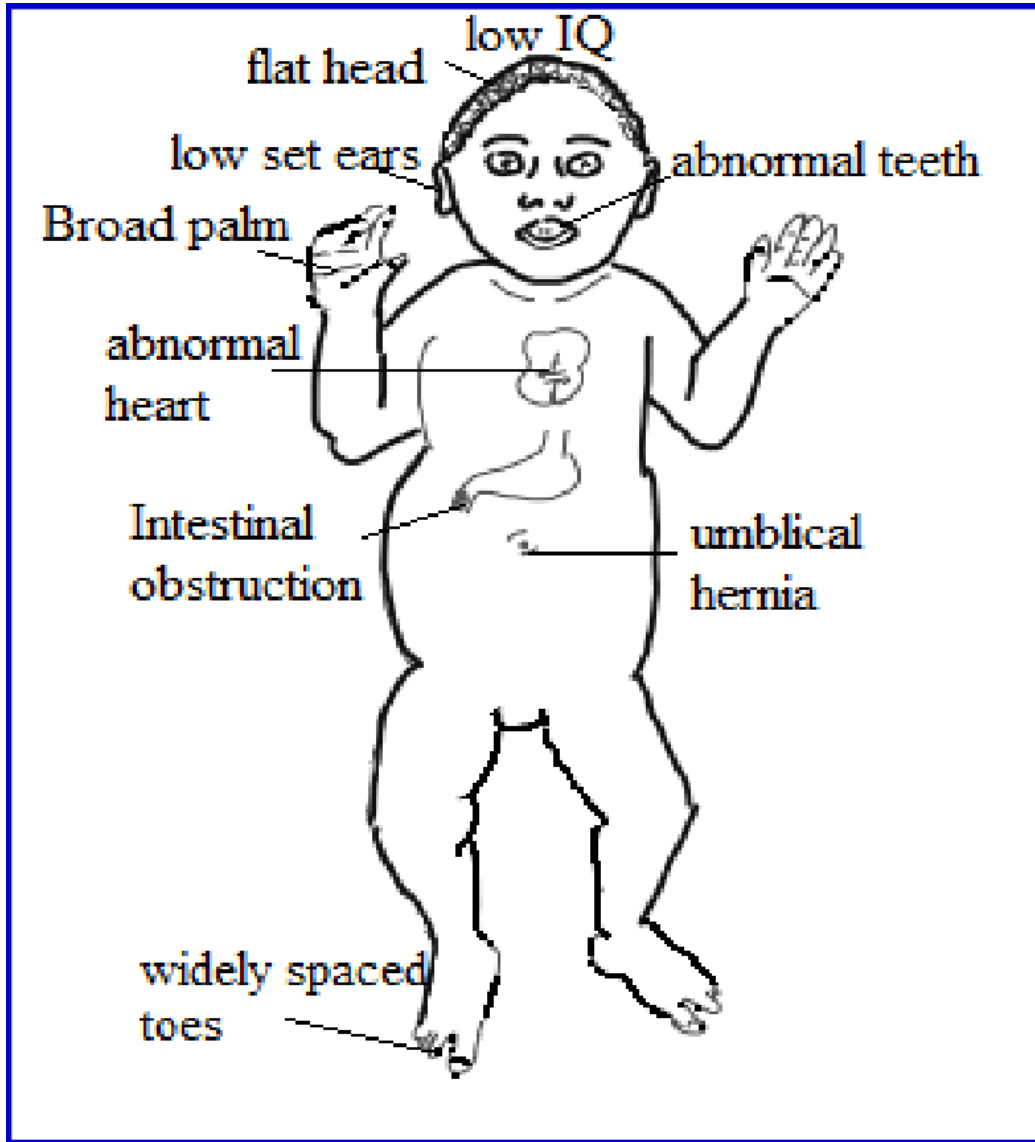
# What is a **strength-based** **perspective?**

# What is a **strength-based perspective**?



# Why are students not often viewed through a **strength-based perspective**?





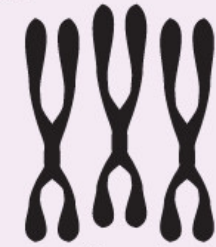
## Down's Syndrome

Trisomy of chromosome 21.

Alzheimer's disease can occur.

Dysmorphic Round Face

Learning difficulties & Developmental Delay (Mean IQ of 50%)



Epicanthic folds

Brushfield spots on iris

Small Ears

Flat occiput

Protruding tongue (not macroglossia though!)

Abundant Neck Skin

Atlantoaxial instability

Hypothyroidism

Single palmar crease

Incurved little fingers (Clinodactyly)

Cardiac defects in 50% (Ventricular septal defect, Patent ductus arteriosus, Atrial septal defect)

Respiratory infections



Gap between 1st & 2nd toes (Sandal toe gap)

Duodenal atresia (double bubble sign on AXR)

# Down syndrome



Has a laugh that will  
make you laugh

Will make you see the  
beauty in difference

Knows strength  
and determination

Will always greet you like he  
hasn't seen you in years

Finds his joy and doesn't  
care what others think

Makes you want to be  
a better person

Has great rhythm with an  
awesome booty shake

Sassy, funny, sassy, kind,  
sassy, empathetic, sassy



# What happens when there is a perception that a child “can’t”

We **assume** that children with disabilities **will not benefit** from being in **community programs** with their peers



We **assume** that students with disabilities **are unable to** be successful in community programming



So we put students with disabilities into **programs outside** of community programs learning “**skills**”



Even if children are enrolled in a community programs, they are **still not often expected to access** activities, and focus is placed on **behaviour skills aimed to normalize them**



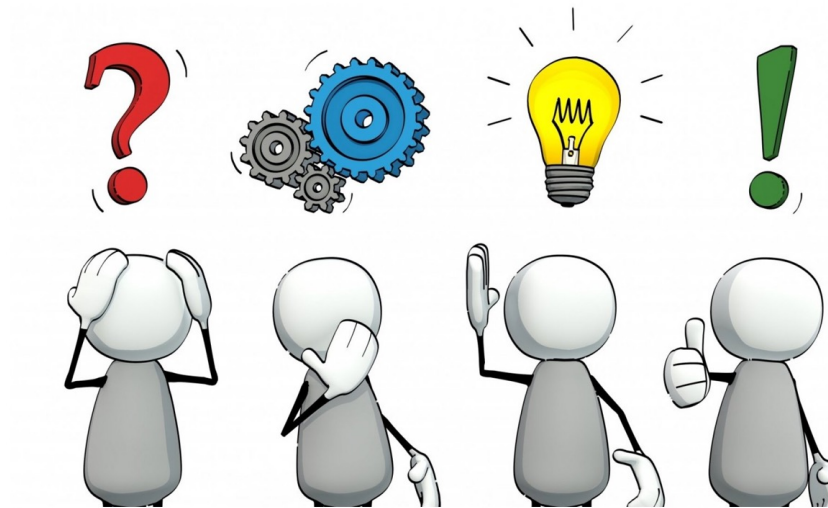
Children with and without disabilities **do not get** the opportunity **to learn/play with** and from **each other**



Non disabled children & families **do not get** to see what children with disabilities are **capable of** or what they can contribute



Which would **lead to a shift in perception** in the competence of disability



Getty Images

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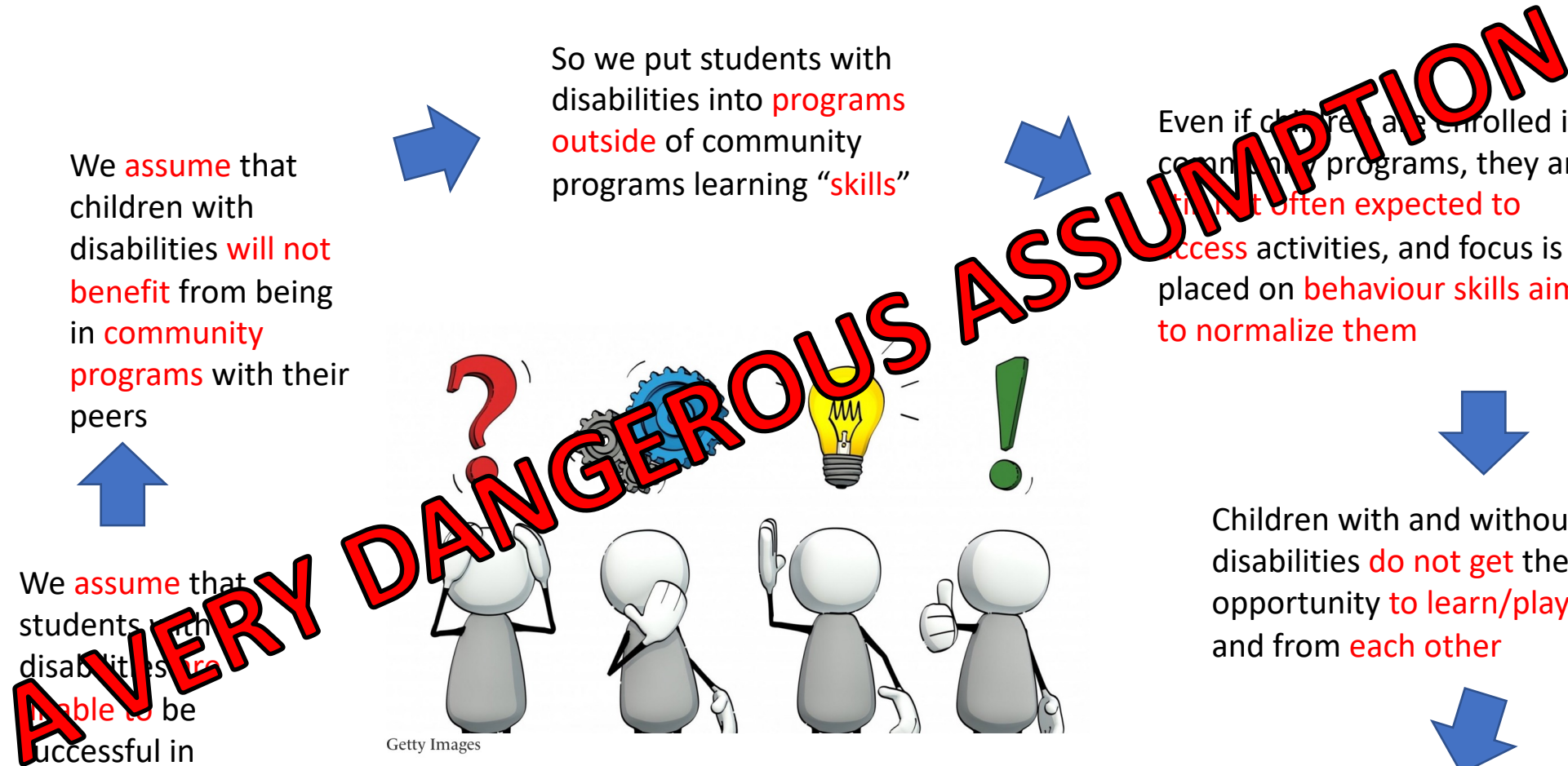
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# Why is Presuming Competence Important?

Changing our mindset about disability will change how we respond and make decisions about educational and community programming.

Access to inclusive community programs, promotes learning, inclusion, achievement and quality of life after schooling, for both children with and without disabilities.

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THE LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

# Why is Presuming Competence Important?

Even if **we are wrong** about a child's **capability** to have access inclusive community programs with their peers, **the consequences** of that presumption **being wrong** are **not as dangerous** as the **alternative**.

Cheryl Jorgenson



# How can we Presuming Competence?

- Children with disabilities so often **need** to “**prove**” that they can behave **before given access** to community programming
- Biklen & Burke suggest:
  - Rather than proving their ability, presuming competence is **assuming that all** children have **ability** in any and **all places**



# How can we Presuming Competence?

- Focus more on **strengths, interests, abilities** and **need** and less on deficits
- Provide children with a **means to communicate** other than words (visuals, gestures, voice)

Jorgenson, McSheehan & Sonnenmeier



# How can we Presuming Competence?

What Self Advocates say:

- **Talk to me**, not my support dog, or my support staff, or my parents
- **Do not** call me “**low functioning**” or refer to me as a developmental age, E.g., “**like a 2-year-old**”
- Use **age-appropriate** tone of voice, inflection, vocabulary, and conversation topics when **interacting** with me
- **Respect my privacy** when talking about my personal care, medical needs and/or personal and sensitive information

# Presuming Protentional

“I thought I would explain that I will be using the term **presume potential** instead of presume competence. I will quote AAC specialist Kate Ahern as she does an amazing job of explaining that this small wording difference can change the outcome for many students. When we say presume competence people might give someone an AAC system and expect them to magically use it, without any real teaching. But when we say **presume potential** we don't give a pass to others, we are saying, like all people, this person has the capacity to learn and grow, they aren't static and they won't magically know how to do things they haven't learned or been taught. **Presume potential** puts the onus of teaching/learning on the teachers, therapists and caregivers instead of expecting the disabled individual to already know how to do things without education. **Presume potential** is inclusion in the expectation of learning we place on ALL people. **Presume potential** means we don't dismiss anyone because we think their diagnosis means they can't learn or because we think they are low. Instead we believe that just like all children and adults their brains are plastic and they have boundless potential with the right teaching, supports and high expectations.”

# Taking Action: Choose your Challenge

- Your team:

Everyone

- **Needs** watch the 5MM video and have a conversation with your team about your reflections
- **Must:** choose an article or a video from the resource list. As a team eat lunch together one day and have a discussion about what you are learning

Choose your challenge

- **Can:** choose another resource and talk to someone not on your team about what you are learning
- **Could:** to share a summary of what your team learned with your staff at a staff meeting or a professional development session
- **Can try** go and visit a specialized program or site and reflect on what you notice about what students can do
- **Have another idea?** Let me know in your google form



The Five Moore Minutes' Podcast  
Shelley Moore

▶ Resume Episode

✓ SUBSCRIBED

1. The Infrastructure of Inclusion: Presuming Competence with Mabel & Joanne: Welcome back friends! This podcast is the first in a five part series, in partnership with the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) and is looking at five guiding principles of inclusive education (the 5 P's). This month's focus is on the first P: presuming competence.

My Episodes

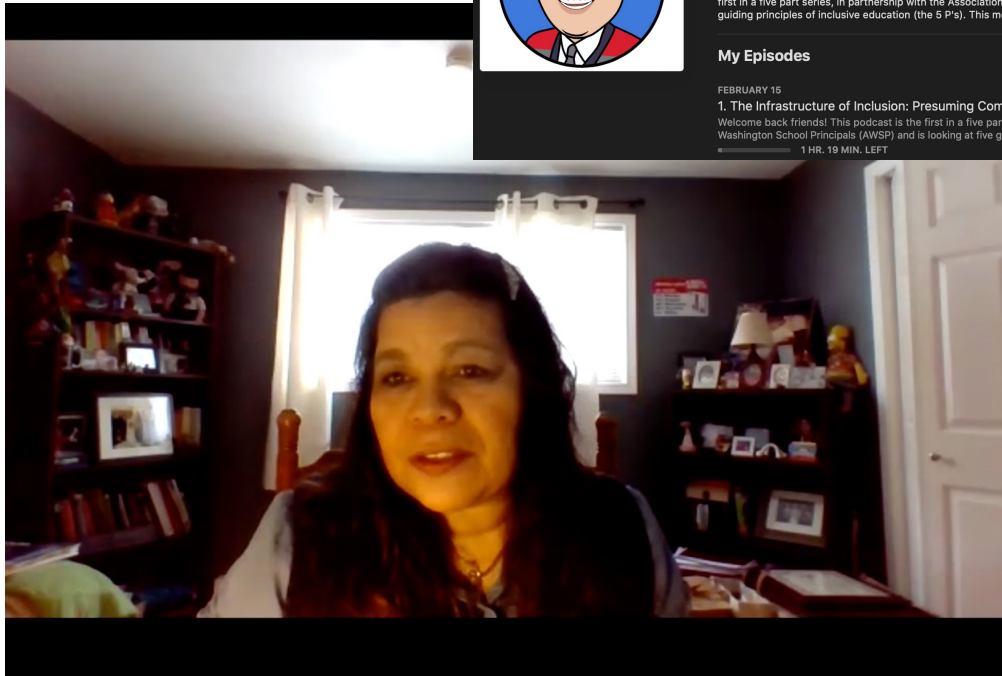
FEBRUARY 15

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1 H 21 MIN.

1 HR, 19 MIN. LEFT



Shelley Moore, 2021



# Resources

- Articles:

- Abbott, A. C. (2020). Presuming competence and capability. In A. C. Abbott, A. Bourdeau, R. Seidman & E. Cruz-Torres (Eds.), (1st ed., pp. 14-31) Routledge.
- Douglas Biklen & Jamie Burke (2006) Presuming Competence, Equity & Excellence in Education, 39:2,166-175.
- Biklen, D. Presuming competence, belonging, and the promise of inclusion: The US experience. *Prospects* **49**, 233–247 (2020).



# Resources

- Website Commentaries
  - Presuming Competence: What it is, and what it looks like
    - <https://blog.brookespublishing.com/presuming-competence-what-it-is-what-it-looks-like/>
  - 21 Tips for Presuming Competence
    - <https://the-art-of-autism.com/21-tips-for-presuming-competence/>
- Videos:
  - **Under the Table - Shelley Moore**
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGptAXTV7m0>
  - **Disabling Segregation – Dan Habib**
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izkN5vLbnw8>
  - **Presume Competence! – Nate Trainor & Jean Trainor**
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qMdNsYVpVI>
  - **In my language**
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnylM1hI2jc>



# Research & Literature that Supports this Session:

- Biklen, D., & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming competence. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39, 166–175.
- Carter, E. W., Sisco, L. G., Melekoglu, M. A., & Kurkowski, C. (2007). Peer supports as an alternative to individually assigned paraprofessionals in inclusive high school classrooms. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 32(4), 213-227.
- Donnellan A. The criterion of the least dangerous assumption. *Behavioral Disorders* 1984; 9: 141–150
- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2001). Access to the core curriculum: Critical ingredients for student success. *Remedial and Special education*, 22(3), 148-157.
- Giangreco M. F., Dennis R., Cloninger C., Edelman S., Schattman R. “I’ve counted Jon”: Transformational experiences of teachers educating students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children* 1993; 59((4))359–372
- Harrower, J. K. (1999). Educational inclusion of children with severe disabilities. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 1(4), 215-230.
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- Jorgensen, C., Michael McSheehan & Rae M. Sonnenmeier (2007) Presumed competence reflected in the educational programs of students with IDD before and after the Beyond Access professional development intervention, *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability*, 32:4, 248-262
- Jorgensen, C. M., McSheehan, M., Sonnenmeier, R. M., & Mirenda, P. (2010). *The Beyond Access model: Promoting membership, participation, and learning for students with disabilities in the general education classroom*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Pub.
- Kliewer C., Biklen D., Kasa-Hendrickson C. Who may be literate? Disability and resistance to the cultural denial of competence. *American Educational Research Journal* 2006; 43((2))163–192
- Kunc, N. (1992). The need to belong: Rediscovering Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. *Restructuring for caring and effective education: An administrative guide to creating heterogeneous schools*, 25-39.
- Maras, P., & Brown, R. (1996). Effects of contact on children’s attitudes toward disability: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 26, 2113- 2134.
- Thousand, J. S., & Villa, R. A. (1995). Managing complex change toward inclusive schooling. *Creating an inclusive school*, 51-79. Thousand, J., Rosenberg, R. L., Bishop, K. D., & Villa, R. A. (1997). The evolution of secondary inclusion. *Journal for Special Educators*, 18(5), 270-284.



Is Presuming Competence Enough?

Nope!

Now we need to **focus** on the **decisions** that we make that are **based on our perceptions** and assumptions about students

## Guiding Conditions of **iNCLUSION** describe that all children & youth...

are **PRESUMED**  
competent and  
as having  
**POTENTIAL**

are **PLACED** in  
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**What is one useful idea?**

**What is one thing you want to try?**

**What is one thing you want to think about?**

**What is one thing you want to learn more about?**

**What is one thing you want to share with someone  
who is not here today?**



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