
Recognizing Bias and Promoting Equity to Support Children's Sense of Self

INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the video “Recognizing Bias and Prompting Equity in Early Childhood Settings.” The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

Goals

- ◆ Recognize that young children’s cultural identities influence who they are and their experiences with teachers and peers in the classroom.
- ◆ Understand how implicit biases prevent teachers from empowering every child to embrace their identities. Acknowledge how implicit biases also limit teachers’ expectations of children’s growth and success.
- ◆ Consider ways to engage families to build continuity between children’s home and school lives.

Activity

- ◆ Watch the video.
- ◆ After watching, use the questions below to reflect on how you can embrace children’s cultural identities to support their emerging sense of self.
- ◆ Implement your plan and adjust as needed to foster continuity between children’s home culture and school to support their emerging sense of self.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ◆ What caught your attention from the video? What made that fact, idea, or example meaningful to you?

- ◆ Young children typically begin developing a sense of self around 18 months. As caregivers, teachers can support their development early on by learning about and embracing children's cultural identities.
 - With what culture(s) does each child and family you serve/work with identify?
 - What do you already know about the cultures represented in your classroom community?
 - What would you like to learn more about? How will you do that?

- ◆ In the video, Carol Brunson Day mentions how powerful it is for teachers to think about children's "potential." However, she says, "too often, teachers see children as lacking when they are coming from a variety of cultural groups."
 - How often do you focus on what children in your classroom are "lacking" rather than on their interests or assets? Why do you think this happens?
 - Are there certain children for whom you focus more on what they are "lacking?" Are there any patterns in who these children are (e.g., English language learners, children with disabilities, children of color)?
 - Put yourself in those children's shoes. How would you feel if your teacher was constantly focusing on what you're "lacking" or "missing?" How would that impact the view your view of yourself?

- ◆ Carol Brunson Day also explains the importance of consistency and continuity between home and school for children's learning and their development of sense of self. Teachers can smooth that transition while embracing children's cultural identities with strong family engagement.
 - How does providing continuity between a child's home culture and school life support their development of sense of self?
 - Identify one specific way you could foster continuity for children in your class. What resources or supports do you need to put this idea into action?
 - How can you partner with families to promote children's sense of self?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about supporting children's sense of self:

- ◆ **Source:** Zero to Three
- ◆ **Article:** Who am I? Developing a Sense of Self and Belonging
- ◆ **Link:** [https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2648-who-am-i-developing-a-sense-of-self-and-belonging - chapter-1702](https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2648-who-am-i-developing-a-sense-of-self-and-belonging-chapter-1702)
- ◆ **Description:** This article describes the many perspectives that inform children's early development of sense of self. It will help you learn more about sending messages that build feelings of self-esteem and belonging.

- ◆ **Source:** Center for Inclusive Child Care
- ◆ **Podcast:** Inclusion Part 1 – The Foundation of our Practice
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.inclusivechildcare.org/podcast-inclusion-matters/inclusion-part-1-foundation-our-practice>
- ◆ **Description:** This podcast describes ways to help every child in your class feel connected to you and their peers by acknowledging differences through modeling and reassurance.