

What You Can Do to Grow Self-Esteem in Young Children: Strategies that Support EVERY Child



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When Does Identity Begin? At Birth

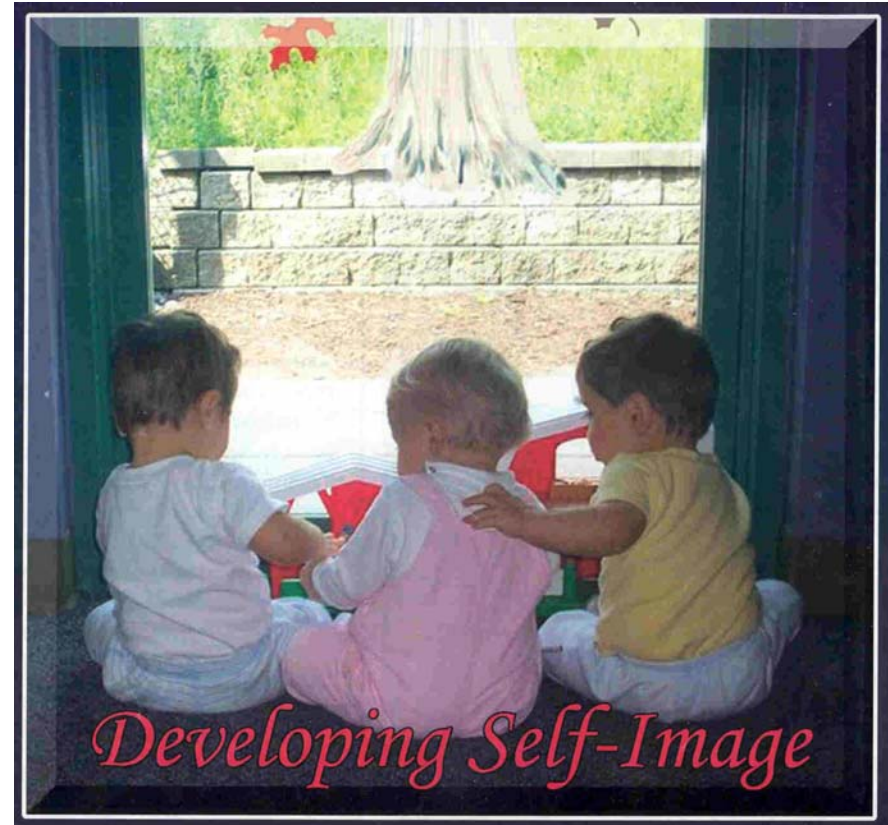
Lack of birth registration is a violation of the child's inalienable human right to be given an identity at birth and to be regarded as a citizen within their community and nation.

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2005, Paragraph 25



Gender, ethnicity, and religion are among the factors that shape how children view themselves in relation to others.

Morrow & Connolly, 2006



One way children establish their own identity is through comparing themselves with other children.

Brooker & Woodhead, 2008, p. 8



A sense of individuality
and a sense of belonging
contribute to positive self-
identity

Brooker & Woodhead, 2008, p. 12



We Each Have Personal and Social Identities

Personal identity – name, age, talents, personality, interests

Social identity – group categorizations assigned by society, such as race, religion, economic class

Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010, p. 12



Children growing up as members of excluded or dominated groups may have difficulty achieving a positive sense of self.

Brooker & Woodhead, 2008, p. 12



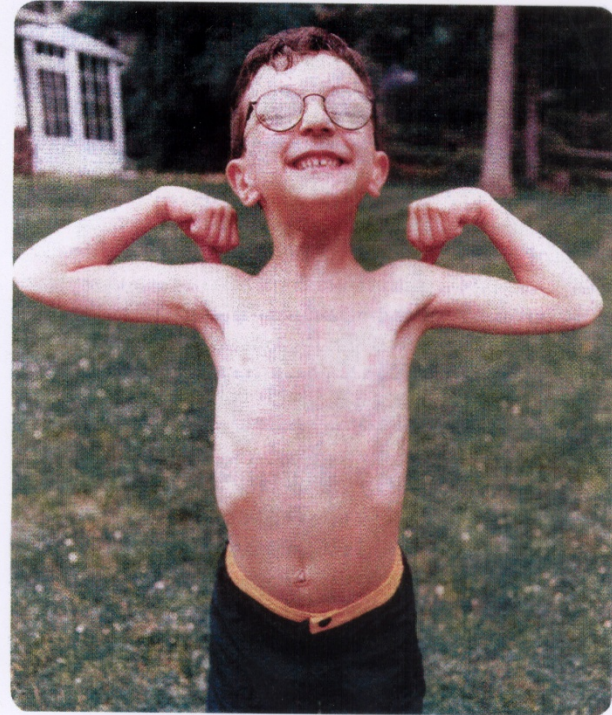
What's Happening? The Lens of a Young Child

- They are curious about their own and others' physical and cultural characteristics.
- They are learning about who is and isn't important
- They learn about their own and others' social identities through both overt and covert messages.
- They try to make sense of all that they see and hear.
- They develop pre-prejudice as they absorb negative attitudes, stereotypes, and misinformation about various aspects of human diversity.
- They begin to construct their own versions of who belongs – and who doesn't.
- They begin to be aware of the power dynamics linked to social identities.



Strategies for Helping Children to Feel Good About Who They Are

- Respectfully and Responsively Collaborate with Family Members
- See and Support Each Child's Capability
- Become a More Intentional Professional

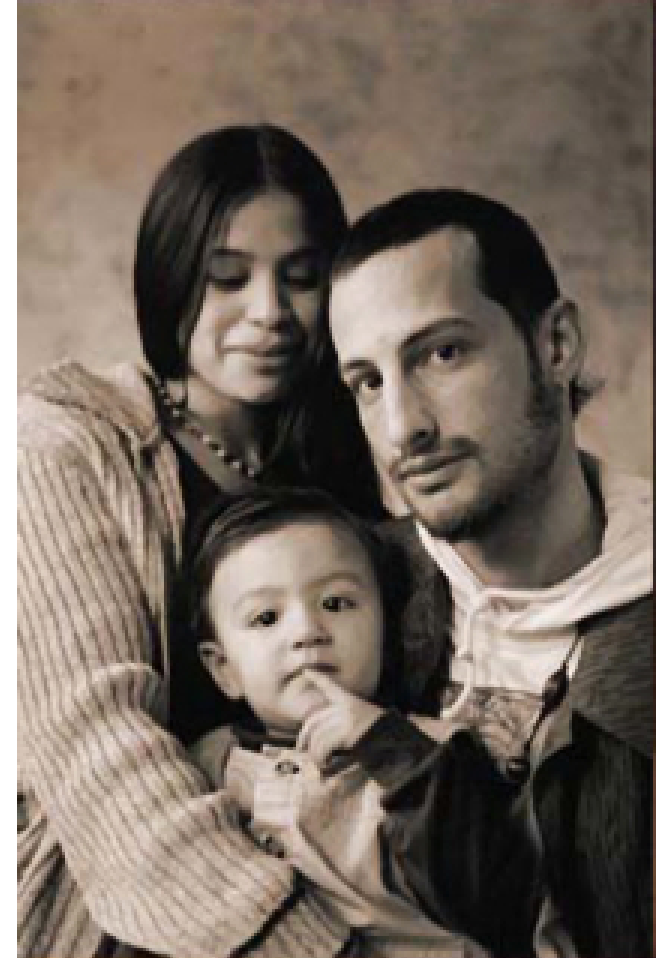


Knowledge is power. Feel free to flex.

Respectfully and Responsively Collaborate with Family Members

WHY

- Respectful engagement with families can promote long-term benefits for children
- Acknowledges the funds of cultural knowledge that families bring to child rearing
- Helps children to construct a positive social identity based on family culture and values





2010

- The We Love Kids Preschool held a Lunch and Learning event
- 5 parents came

2011

- You're a new teacher at the We Love Kids Preschool.
- You've been told to coordinate this year's Lunch and Learning event AND to do a better job than last year.
- In your classroom there are children who speak 3 different languages, 15 children who qualify for free or reduced means, and several children who live with relatives other than their parents



Here's the flyer from last year.

Moms and Dads

HOLD THE DATE

For

Open House Orientation
“Lunch & Learning”

12 – 2 Next Wednesday

Come support your child!

Please bring enrolled children only.

Respectfully and Responsively Collaborate with Family Members

HOW

- Examine forms, policies, and practices for ways in which to be more responsive. Consider engaging families to help you do that.
- Communicate in ways that are respectful of and responsive to the languages and cultures of the families you serve
- Engage families in conversations about their values, customs, and traditions, as well as how to incorporate those ideas in the classroom
- Take a genuine interest in parents' wishes and concerns



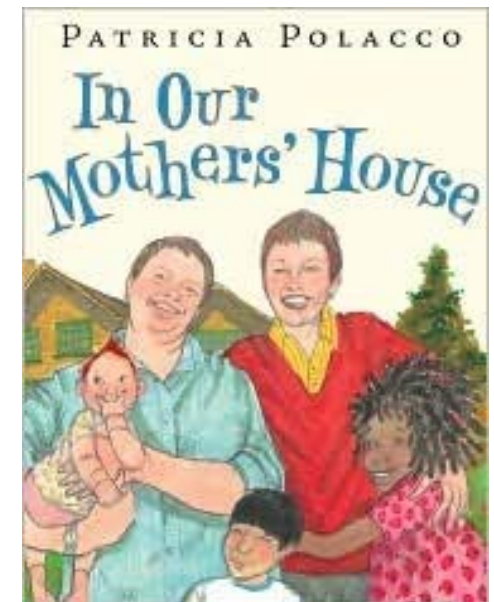
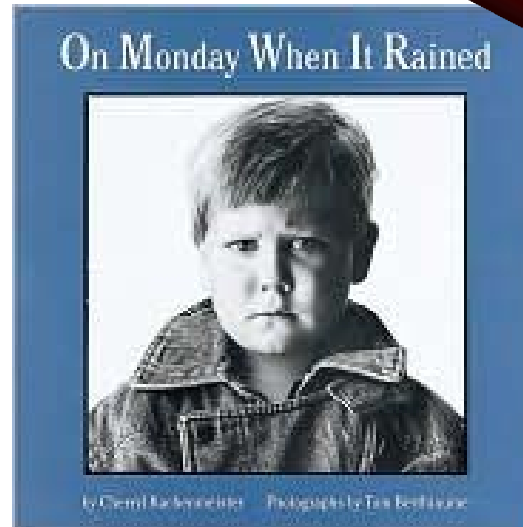
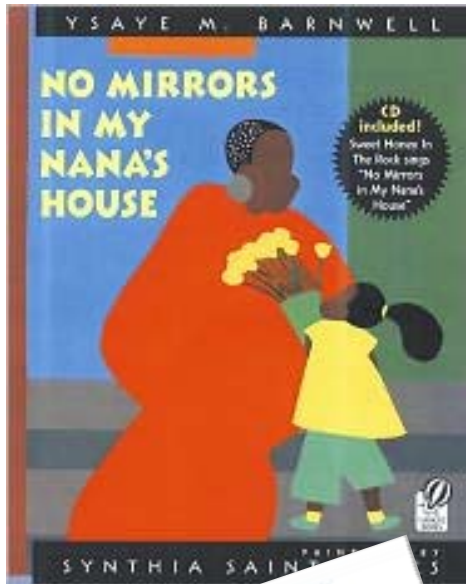
Help Children to Construct a Positive Social Identity Based on Family Culture and Values

WHY

- Children who see themselves, their family, and their community reflected positively in visual and verbal messages feel better about themselves

HOW

- Use authentic images of children, families, and communities
- Monitor the images and artifacts you use to make sure they do not convey stereotypes
- Monitor your verbal and non-verbal language
- Use recyclable materials whenever possible to underscore that learning is not tied to the capacity to buy new toys and materials
- To the greatest extent possible, strive for approaches that are consistent with those used by the families of your children



See and Support Each Child's Capability

WHY

- Children who are living in adverse circumstances, or in communities that are stigmatized, may need additional support in developing positive self-identity



What would it be like to view every child as exceptional?



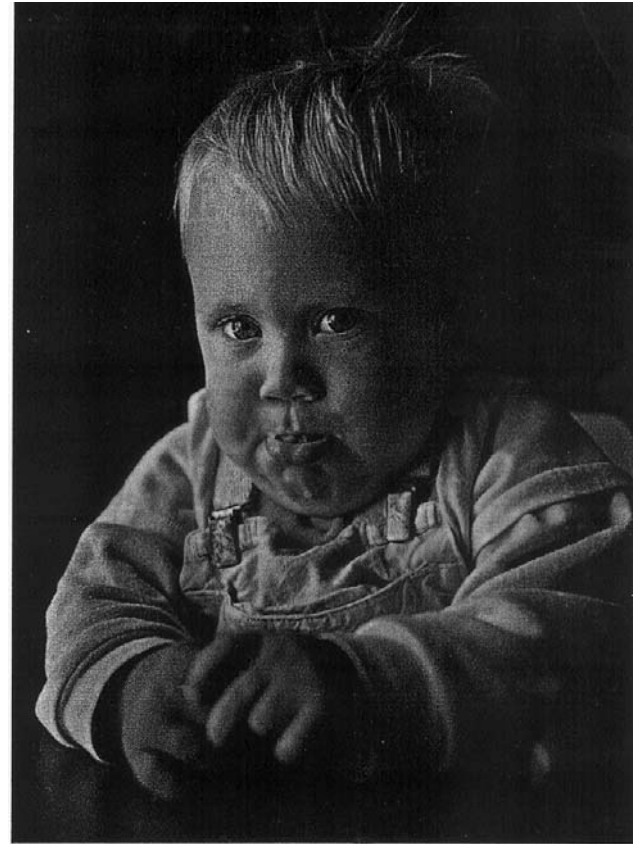
BIZARRO

In my 23 years of teaching, your son is my favorite student to have absent.



Think of a child who has challenged you as a teacher, parent, or administrator.

Identify two of that child's strengths or talents.



Where there is a will,
there is a way.

Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914)

See and Support Each Child's Capability

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HOW

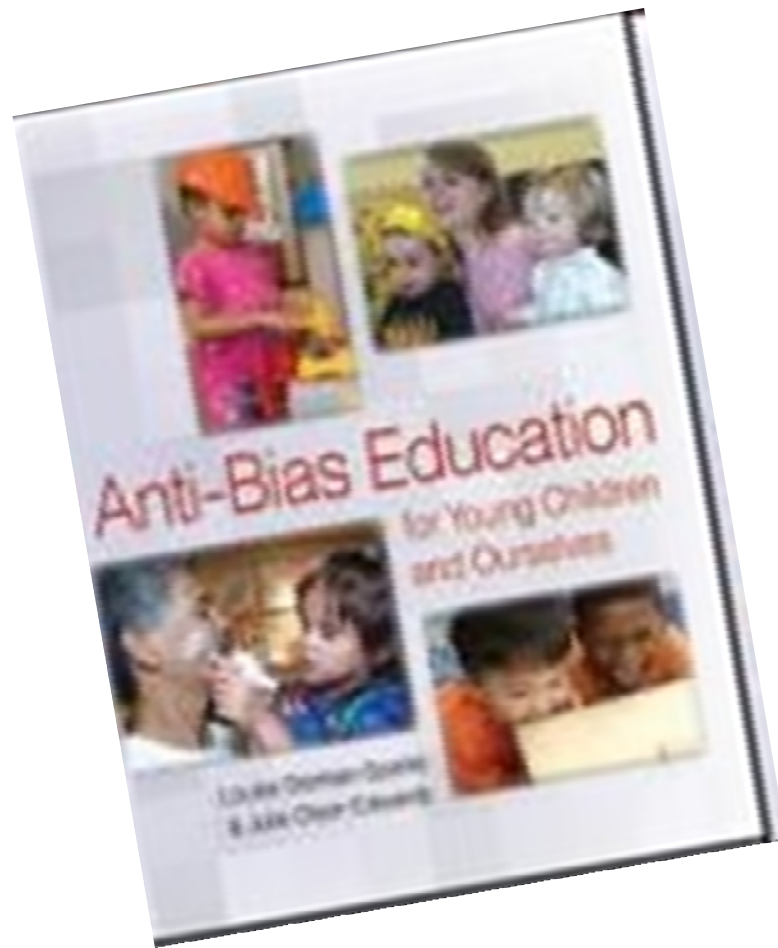
- See each child as “at potential” instead of “at risk”
- Maintain high expectations for each child
- Become more intentional teachers
- Use the talents of all adults to help support each child
- Instead of questioning whether a child is ready to for school, focus on whether the school is ready to support each child
- Examine program policies and practices

Looking at Program Policies

- Is the curriculum accessible to all children regardless of ability, needs, or background?
- Can all children fully participate in the curriculum regardless of ability, needs, or background?
- Can children demonstrate what they know and are able to do regardless of ability, needs, or background?
- Does the program have curriculum goals that are clear and shared by all?
- Is the curriculum comprehensive?
- Are successful partnerships built and maintained?

(DEC, 2007)

A Fabulous Resource



Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves

- Louise Derman-Sparks & Julie Olsen Edwards
- NAEYC Item #: 254

The Wisdom of Hot Chocolate

A group of graduates, well established in their careers, were talking at a reunion and decided to go visit their old university professor, now retired.



During their visit, the conversation turned to complaints about stress in their work and lives.



Offering his guests hot chocolate, the professor went into the kitchen and returned with a large pot of hot chocolate and an assortment of cups - porcelain, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the hot chocolate.



When they all had a cup of hot chocolate in hand, the professor said:



Notice that all the nice looking, expensive cups were taken, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones.



While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress.



The cup that
you 're drinking
from adds
nothing to the
quality of the
hot chocolate.
In most cases it
is just more
expensive and
in some cases
even hides
what we drink.



What all of you really wanted was hot chocolate, not the cup; but you consciously went for the best cups.



And then you began eyeing each other's cups.



Now consider this:



Life is the hot chocolate;
your job, money and position
in society are the cups.



They are just tools to hold and contain life.



The cup you have does not define nor change
the quality
of life you have.



The same is true for each child. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the life that comes with each child.



Children don't choose their cups.



www.kutefun.com

The happiest people don't have the best of everything.



They just make
the best of everything that they have.



Don't get fooled by the cups. Get intentional
and enjoy the hot chocolate!!

