

THEME: DIVERSITY

“We are all the same and we are all different” is a great way to start talking to children about uniqueness and differences. People are all human beings, yet we are all different. The world would be a boring place if everyone and everything looked exactly the same. It is the wonderful medley of individuals, languages and cultures that make the world such an interesting place!

Caring adults can use everyday examples to demonstrate how things around us are both different and the same. For example, apples come in many different varieties—Washington, Granny Smith, Delicious and more—but they all are apples just the same. They have a skin, flesh, seeds and a core. And children can observe the diversity within their own families by identifying the differences and similarities in family members, such as height, hair and eye color, gender, abilities, and more.

Modeling ways to embrace diversity is a cornerstone in the social and emotional development of children. Youngsters need to see the adults in their lives interacting with people of different ages, gender, abilities, religions and cultures. There is no better way for children to learn the value of diversity than for them to observe adults having positive interactions and authentic relationships with a wide range of people. Teaching by example that differences enrich the world in which we live helps youngsters develop respect and appreciation for other human beings.

DOing ACTIVITIES EXTENDS THE LEARNING

Social/Emotional

You are a role model for the children in your care, so it is important that you show appreciation for others. Discourage stereotypes by creating a safe environment for children to have open discussions about how people are different and how they are alike. Give them honest and straightforward answers when they ask questions. When children are allowed to openly explore their thoughts and feelings, they gain valuable insights into themselves and others.

Physical Development

Engage children in learning about others by exploring cultural dance techniques. Cultivate further knowledge of the culture by presenting or researching historical background, customs and traditions.

Language/Literacy

Books are a wonderful way to explore different perspectives and cultures. Choose books that portray characters without stereotypes. Take children to the library and encourage them to research a culture, custom or tradition that is different from their own.

Cognitive Development

Diversity is not just about culture and language. It encompasses everything that makes us different. For example, understanding that children learn and acquire knowledge in different ways is another lesson in diversity. Take the time to find out how the children in your care best learn. Children are visual, auditory or kinesthetic learners. Provide opportunities for children to learn with activities that support their individual learning style.

BOOKLIST

Reading to children is the most important activity adults can do with them to support early learning and literacy skills. Select any of these books, or a book of your choosing, to read and further explore this month's **Diversity** theme.

***Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman;**
illustrated by Caroline Binch (4–8)

Grace is a little girl who wants to be Peter Pan in the school play. She runs into obstacles because she is black and female, but she refuses to give in.

***Silent Lotus* by Jeanne M. Lee (4–8)**

Lotus, a young Cambodian girl who cannot hear or speak, is invited to become a dancer in the king's court.

***Diego* by Jonah Winter (5–8)**

Bilingual text describes Diego Rivera as a boy who loved to draw and who, in time, became one of the great muralists of Mexico and the whole world.

***Apt. 3* by Ezra Jack Keats (4–8)**

One rainy day, Sam is in his family's apartment when he hears harmonica music. He and his brother are curious and explore the building to find who is playing this wonderful music. They discover it is a blind man who listens to all that goes on around him, then expresses his feelings through his music.

***The Brand New Kid* by Katie Couric;**
illustrated by Marjorie Priceman (4–8)

Lazlo is the new kid in school, and he doesn't look or speak like anyone else. The kids make fun of him until one girl discovers that she and Lazlo have a lot in common.

KIDSWATCH RECOMMENDED DIVERSITY-THEME PROGRAMS

November 2, 2007 • 9:30 A.M.

***Dragon Tales* #206**

"A New Friend/Have No Fear"

November 20, 2007 • 10 A.M.

***Sesame Street* #4096**

"Mexico On Sesame Street"

November 30, 2007 • 7:30 A.M.

***Caillou* #209**

"New Places and New Things!"

NOVEMBER EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

November 30 Deadline • Hands On Literacy

Would you like to be a Hands On Literacy Partner and receive free professional development training, children's books and educational materials for the families you serve?

KQED Hands On Literacy trains staff members of family-serving organizations to foster meaningful experiences for parents and their children using award-winning PBS programming and children's literature. For more information and to get an application, call (800) 723-ELMO (3566) or send an email to kidswatch@kqed.org.

Thursday, November 29, 2007 • 6 – 8 P.M. • FREE WORKSHOP

Oakland Licensed Day Care Operators Association 6201 Doyle St., Suite B, Emeryville

Math: 1, 2, 3 and Beyond! A Multimedia Approach to Math Beginnings

"Math is a way of thinking ..." —Church, Miller and Poole

Come to this new and exciting hands-on workshop on math-skills development in young children. Set the stage for learning math the fun way! The workshop includes techniques on how to incorporate into the learning environment children's books, hands-on activities and program clips from *Reading Rainbow* and *Sesame Street* that have math concepts. All participants must register in advance by calling: Dolores Martinez, (510) 658-2449