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from Maine Roads to Quality

Supporting child care and
early education professionals

Many Eyes, Many Voices:

Talking About Difference Through Children's Literature

A project of Born To Read –Maine Humanities Council



Myrna Koonce & Denise
Pendleton, Co-Directors of Born to
Read

As caregivers, we all may be faced at times by situations such as the following:

A six-year-old boy casually greets a three-year-old girl who shares his younger sister's classroom. As they chat, the teacher overhears the boy say to the girl, "You look Jewish."

This type of remark, with its implications of bias, can literally leave us speechless. What do we say to the child making the remark? What do we say to the child who is the recipient of the comment? Since such situations clearly offer a "teachable moment" around issues of difference and bias, how should we as caregivers and teachers respond? These questions inspired the creation of a literature-based curriculum collection called Many Eyes, Many Voices: Talking About Difference Through Children's Literature, developed by the Born to Read program at the Maine Humanities Council.

Children's literature can provide a strong framework for ongoing conversation around differences, whether sparked by incidents such as the one above or introduced by the teacher or caregiver as a way to open up dialogue. The first step is to explore what a child knows—why does he think a person might look Jewish?—and then to expand the child's concepts through books which depict people of various races, creeds, ethnicity, and life circumstances. For example, *Welcoming Babies* by Margy Burns Knight and Anne Sibley O'Brien offers children a look at the many ways a baby can become part of his or her community. Conversation can then extend the topic to celebrations in general, to other kinds of religious practice, or to whatever seems relevant to the children themselves and addresses questions they may have about their world.

It is a fact that the world is changing, our country is changing, and Maine is changing.

The evidence is everywhere: From the increasing arrival in Maine of refugees, migrant workers, baby boomer retirees and telecommuters, to the changing make-up of families, to the slow demise of the lumber and fishing industries that gave Maine and its people their identity, to the increase in TV, computer and video viewing that brings the world's diversity into our homes. The traditional postcard image of Maine has given

way to a more complex reality. Some of us are delighted with this new face of Maine, some of us are wary and perplexed, and almost all of us find these changes add new challenges to our daily work.

While children on the playgrounds of Maine schools faced differences among themselves in the 1960s, the 1940s or the 1920's, the need to negotiate and respect differences has a new, pressing urgency. According to "Children of 2010,"

"by the middle of the 21st century, demographers forecast that Americans of color will represent a majority of the overall U.S. population...eventually no single racial or ethnic group will constitute a majority of the U.S. population. This means that democracy will require an unprecedented level of cooperation, communication and teamwork among people who are different."

We know that Maine is the least racially and ethnically diverse state in the nation, but there are other kinds of "difference" that are equally significant. Differences in socioeconomic status, education, religious practices and special needs can account for differences in lifestyle, occupation, housing and recreation, all of which can become areas of very real conflict for children now and as adults. Meanwhile, in the southern part of the state, there is greater racial and ethnic diversity with 27 countries and 52 different languages represented in Cumberland County.

In developing Many Eyes, Many Voices, we asked, "What is, and will be, the diversity experience of our youngest Maine children and what collection of books, offered with a training and a resource guide, can best help them explore, discuss and understand the differences they perceive?"

A fundamental assumption of this project is that children need thoughtful guidance and support to understand the increasingly diverse social world around them. Research has shown that children are aware of many types of differences at a younger age than was believed by adults in previous generations.

Another fundamental assumption is that books and stories offer the ideal pathway to conversations about difference. While reading aloud is good, thoughtful conversations that result from reading have a significant impact on many areas of growth, from literacy to emotional development. Sharing stories brings readers and listeners together over a common experience of difference and provides a safe space for children to ask questions, and to express fears, hopes, and concerns.

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Many Eyes, Many Voices

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These resulting conversations can build children's capacity for empathy, respect, and compassion, validate them for who they are, and provide them with strategies for resolving conflicts that may arise from differences.

Picture books offer adults, too, a safe space in which to share information and ideas about the world with children; through fun, delightful prose, and irresistible illustrations, it becomes easier to explore complex, challenging concepts.

"Being able to talk about differences is a skill," say Audrey Maynard, early childhood educator and consultant to the Many Eyes, Many Voices project. Through her work, she has observed how adults tend to launch into long, involved explanations or to avoid topics altogether, when difficult questions are raised. "We tend to make it a huge deal and to avoid questions we think are too complex," she says. "Our explanations need not be watered down so much as be honest."

Early literacy researcher Rebecca Novick notes the importance of offering a variety of titles from diverse perspectives and on diverse peoples to ensure that children see themselves and their families reflected in their caregiving and classroom environments. Also, according to Novick, "using multicultural literature dealing with issues pertaining to race, class, gender, or disability can teach children to think critically and, at the same time, build a democratic classroom and school."

Many Eyes, Many Voices is also addressing the call to action issued by the National Academy of Science in the recent report, "Neurons to Neighborhoods." The report states, "All children are born wired for feelings and ready to learn, and how they feel is as important as how they think, particularly with regard to school readiness." Many children enter school without the social and emotional readiness to succeed, putting them at high risk for early school failure. Many Eyes, Many Voices links literacy with emotional development, using books to help Maine's youngest children understand feelings and develop the vocabulary that enables them to express empathy and acceptance and resolve conflicts. It also helps them develop positive feelings about books and reading that are essential to developing lifelong literacy success.

New Training Opportunities

Trainings will be offered statewide over a three-year period beginning 2002. This project aims to reach at least 6,000 children in 400 child care sites and Head Start classrooms in at least 10 Maine counties, including approximately 2,500 children in the greater Portland area.

Child care providers, preschool teachers, and volunteer readers will receive:

- a literature-based training in anti-bias strategies from MHC staff;
- an activities curriculum guide developed by MHC staff and consultants;
- 12 high quality hard-cover children's books selected especially for this project by a 25-member advisory committee.

The Council's web site will provide information about the project as it develops. In addition, this training will be offered as follow-up to the Weaving Diversity module in the Maine Roads to Quality Core Knowledge Curriculum.*

*Submitted by Myrna Koonce & Denise Pendleton,
Co-Directors of Born to Read*

*See page 7 for more information.

Just Because I'm Different

Just because I'm different
Don't talk about me behind my back.
Don't call me a freak,
Or even a geek,
Just because I'm different.

Just because I'm different,
Doesn't mean I don't have feelings,
Doesn't mean those feelings can't be hurt,
Just because I'm different.

Just because I'm different,
Doesn't mean my family doesn't love me,
And it doesn't mean I don't have any friends
Because I do,
And they like me,
Just because I'm different.

Submitted by Monique Prevost, age 14

Monique is the daughter of Pam Prevost, Education Specialist at Finders/ Seekers RDC in Auburn.



A Maine Program Confronts the Culture of Verbal Abuse

Each of us at some time in our lives has been a target for teasing or a putdown. At some point each of us has made fun of someone else for being different—either privately or publicly. In today’s world, name calling, teasing and putdowns are pervasive in our society. From preschool to the national media, it has become the norm to make fun of difference. It is acceptable and even “cool” to use hurtful, insulting or degrading words to target others in the name of “humor.” Though most of us are sensitive to how this can hurt others, do we truly understand the effect that this type of behavior can have on the lives of those most frequently targeted? Do we understand the significant and lasting consequences of this behavior on peers, co-workers, community members who are particularly vulnerable to exclusion—people of color, members of the non-dominant culture, those who are gay or lesbian, non-English speaking, those who have special needs?

And what are we doing to address the issues of bias and prejudice in our personal and professional lives? As child care and early education professionals, we have a responsibility to the children, families and communities we serve to learn how to become effective leaders and role models for change. It is our responsibility as advocates for quality child care and early education programs to create inclusive and welcoming environments for all children and families. Where can we go to learn more about how to become role models for increasing anti-bias attitudes within our communities and to be effective advocates for creating inclusive environments?

The Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence

A resource that has gained national recognition for the work it is doing to address the issues of hate violence is right here in Maine. The Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence was approved by the Trustees of the University of Maine System in July of 1999. Located at the University of Southern Maine, the Center’s mission statement reads as follows:

The Center is dedicated to developing and implementing training programs to prevent bias, harassment and violence. Our aim is to assist schools, colleges, law enforcement, medical professionals and communities in creating safe environments in which all people are treated with dignity and respect.

The Center has two objectives:

- Develop and implement hate crime prevention curricula and programs.
- Develop and encourage increased research, writing, teaching and dialogue on the history, causes, and prevention of hate violence.

The Center is dedicated to developing and implementing training programs to prevent bias, harassment and violence. Its aim is to assist schools, colleges, law enforcement, medical professionals and communities in creating safe environments in which all people are treated with dignity and respect.

As Director of the Center, Steve Wessler has been the force behind the success of this project. Former Chief of the Civil Rights Unit in the Maine Department of the Attorney General, he is also a Research Associate Professor of Social Sciences at the University. The Center and the work accomplished by the Center has been featured in several national publications.

In a recent article published in *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*, the work the Center does through its Student Leaders Project was summarized in an article entitled, “We Don’t Use That Language Anymore.” In Steve’s presentations to schools, he uses a workshop format that includes lecture, scenarios and small group discussion. The high school participants have an opportunity to:

- understand how very hurtful slurs, jokes, name calling is;
- understand that by remaining silent when hurtful words are used, a message is sent that it is ok to behave that way toward others;
- to learn that a pattern of escalation from hurtful words to physical assault and injury has been consistently found;
- explore the problems that exist in their school/community;
- develop safe and effective alternatives to remaining silent when hurtful language is used.

When students learn to speak-up against putdowns, the results are two-fold. First, when peers challenge hurtful language used, it cuts down on the number of incidences of demeaning and hateful speech. Second, it also creates an atmosphere in which perceptions, stereotypes and biases are challenged and the issues triggering teasing, bullying and violent behaviors are explored by the students.

In an article written by Steve for *Educational Leadership* entitled *Sticks and Stones* he speaks to the increasingly pervasive nature and destructive power of degrading and derogatory language. To quote, “Not every student uses degrading language and violent words: many do not. But all young people today hear hateful words, slurs, and words of violence every day as the background noise of their lives. They hear them in the movies, on television, from radio shock jocks, and on their CD’s. Sadly, some young people hear them from their families. But most important they hear them from one another—on the bus, in the hallway, on the playground, and in the locker rooms, they hear them, 24/7.”

He feels that many students have become desensitized to and do not hear or understand the real meaning of the slurs and derogatory words they use. But he says that for those who are the targets of those words, the toll is profound. “Students from traditionally targeted groups understand that sticks and stones may break your bones, but the words of hate may break your soul. Too many children lose hope: Too many gay and lesbian students drop out of school, too many students of color lose faith in a system that they expect will educate them, and too many girls lose faith and confidence in themselves. Tragically, some of these children become so hurt and lost that they engage in self-destructive behavior. Some do not survive.”

Developing Solutions

Though there is no one solution or program that will stop hate or prejudice, Steve writes “we can begin to change the culture in which the use of degrading language and violence appears acceptable to students.” He continues, “Adults must intervene when degrading language is spoken. Children understand at a very early age that some other children will be mean to them. But at the same time, they trust that teachers and other adults will protect them.”

What does Steve mean by intervention for school age and high school students? He writes, “First, I am not talking about calling in the SWAT Team. I am not talking about sending students to the principal’s office. I am not talking about the 35 minute lecture on the damage created by homophobic, racist, sexist, or anti-Semitic comments. He clarifies, “I am talking about consistent, firm, and low-key interruptions of degrading language and slurs: ‘We don’t talk like that here.’ ‘That word offends me.’ ‘Language, please!’ It is adults modeling for students the courage and skills to intervene and, in turn, those students modeling that courage and those skills for other students.”

He ends the *Sticks and Stones* article, “Our task as educators, as parents, as neighbors, is to help our young people grow their seeds of courage, resiliency, and good will to say ‘No’ to bias, disrespect, and violence.”

Bleazard, Rob. “We Don’t Use That Language Anymore.” *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*. Number 23, Spring 2003.

Wessler, Steven L. *Sticks and Stones*. *Educational Leadership*. Vol.58, Number 4. December 2000/ January 2001.



Steve Wessler is the Director, Center for the Study and Prevention of Hate Violence and Research Associate Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Southern Maine. Mr. Wessler is a graduate of Harvard College and Boston University School of Law. He practiced law, both in the Maine Attorney General’s Office and in private practice, for over 22 years before joining the Center in 1999.

Six Maine C

Terri Lynne Lokoff Child F

Marie Rawley Exemplifies "Getting It Done!"

Marie Rawley has been providing care in her home for 7 years. For the last 17 months Marie has taken full advantage of the Early Learning Opportunities Grant secured by the Mid Coast ACCESS group. She is our "poster child" for the midcoast. Marie has received a Certificate of Completion of the 180 hours of Maine Roads to Quality Core Knowledge training. She has achieved her Child Development Associates degree, which involved 120 hours of training, being involved in a cohort of providers pursuing CDA, being observed by an advisor, taking a written and oral test at the verification visit by a Council Representative, and completing a resource file. If that isn't enough, Marie has completed the training hours, observations, and the final visit to be accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care. She has also been trained as a mentor and is actively helping providers who want help with their CDA competency statements, providers going through accreditation, and providers who have general questions about how to be a family child care provider. It is phenomenal that Marie has achieved all this in less than 17 months. She is an organized woman who, once she puts her mind to something, gets it done!

Starting in January 2003 Marie was accepted as a new student at Kennebec Valley Technical College. She is taking one course this semester and with support from the MRTQ scholarship fund hopes to take 2 courses this summer. She has adult children of her own and has many of her grandchildren and relatives in her family child care home. In fact the reason she started child care 7 years ago was because her daughter was looking for child care and begged her mom to start a child care program. Marie said, "Once I found out about Maine Roads to Quality and all the support that came with it I realized that this is what I wanted to do. It no longer was 'just a job,' it became my career." She now offers a wonderful program for the children and is getting the education that she wasn't able to get in her younger years. She is very pleased and grateful for the support the midcoast area and the state has given her to help her realize her dreams.

As Marie said, "when I was younger I just didn't know what I wanted to do. Now I'm sure, this is my career and I'm going for it!" Thank you Marie for all you have done for the child care providers and children in the midcoast area!



Marie Rawley



Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher Award

The Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation (TLLCCF) was founded in August 1986 by Kay and Fred Lokoff to honor the memory of their daughter Terri, who died tragically in a car accident in July 1986. Terri had a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and worked as a child care teacher. She had an extraordinary sense of devotion and love for her work and strongly felt the need for increased and improved child care. The TLLCCF recognizes the need to raise the status and visibility of quality child care, so they created the Teacher Recognition Awards to both underscore the importance of quality child care and highlight the need for funding and improvement throughout the system.

Maine Roads to Quality strongly encourages providers in Maine to apply for this award as well as other awards that become available. To learn more about The Terri Lynn Lokoff Foundation contact the Foundation:
TLLCCF
320 S. Henderson Road,
2nd Floor,
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Tel: 610-992-1140

Judy and Deborah Sawyer

Judy and Debbie Sawyer are sisters-in-law who run a family child care program in Warren. Judy has been in the field of early education for 26 years and Debbie for 19 years. They have worked for a total of 14 years together. Anyone who has watched them operate their program knows that they are a perfect team. They have worked together for so long that they can almost read each other's minds.

Judy and Debbie were the first family child care home providers in Knox County to participate in the Home Start program through CCAP Head Start. They have been involved with Home Start for 5 years. They received their CDA credential in 2002 after taking 4 college course semesters through a curriculum called the "Home Start CDA Preparation Curriculum." This year, thanks to the Early Learning Opportunity grant in the midcoast area, they were able to join an accreditation cohort that helped them through the process of accreditation. They are now awaiting the notice from NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care) that they are accredited. Judy and Debbie run a very professional, nurturing, caring, and stimulating child care home. When I asked them how their practice has changed over the years they said "It has improved tremendously. We understand best practices with children. We didn't realize how many professional organizations are available to family child care providers until we got out to go to training. Then we found that once out and getting the information that we have been showered with positive opportunities. We always want to get more information to improve our practice and because we are actively seeking more information it just comes to us!"

A good example of this "showering" that Debbie mentioned is the fact that recently they were notified that they had received a The Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher Award. They received \$1000.00 of which \$500.00 goes toward implementing a project called "Science and Nature through the Eyes of a Child," and \$500.00 which can be spent at the provider's discretion. Additionally, they will be flown to Pennsylvania to attend the awards ceremony at Bloomingdale's in the Court, in King of Prussia, PA. This is an extremely exciting time for Judy and Debbie as you can all imagine!! The parents of the children in their care all said "you are going to go aren't you!" So April 2, 2003 they will be in Pennsylvania being recognized.

Judy recently told me that she wishes that all the providers in Maine would realize how important getting training and education is. She stated that since they have received their CDA "doors have opened for them." They truly are a gifted pair of providers. Maine children are fortunate to have them in the system.



Debbie Sawyer



Debbie and Judy Sawyer

Child Care Professionals Receive Foundation National Child Care Teacher Awards

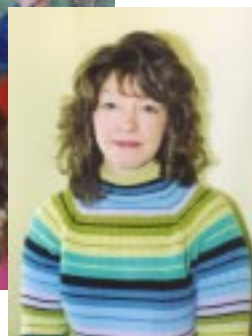
Patricia Leach

Patty has been a provider for 4 years. She is a Home Start provider and is also working towards her CDA. All she has left to do (towards her CDA) is the verification visit. She is also working toward NAFCC accreditation. Patty has been working to achieve these things during this 17-month period which encompasses the Midcoast Early Learning Opportunities Grant. Patty's child care program is in her home. In fact her kitchen table is "child-size" and the kitchen and dining room of her own home is completely devoted to the children. When I visited recently the children had just finished a painting activity and were happily playing in a water table while Patty finished cleaning up the art project. Patty isn't afraid to get the "fun and messy" projects out for the children she cares for. I asked Patty if her practice with children has changed since her training and education. Her answer, "Oh gosh yes! I've learned that the more you learn about child development and about best practice the easier it is to be a provider. I understand children better now. When I first started I naively thought all children were alike. I took my first Maine Roads training because I was having behavior concerns with a child I was caring for. As I reflect back on it now, I know that the child didn't have behavior issues it was completely developmentally appropriate for the child to be acting in that way.

In the four years I have been a provider I have completely changed the environment and how I operate my program based on the training and education I have received. The support I've received from Maine Roads to Quality, CCAP, the RDC, and Home Start have all contributed to my feeling successful."

Like Debbie and Judy Sawyer, Patty learned recently that she won the Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation National Child Care Teacher award. Her project is also nature and science. She plans to use the money to build raised garden beds for a gardening project with the children and to purchase special bird feeders. One of which is the type with a one-way mirror so the birds can't see you but you can see the birds. This will be mounted right on the window for perfect viewing.

Patty has an extra special surprise. Her proposal scored as one of the top 9 in the nation. Therefore she has been invited to apply for the "Teacher of the Year" award given out by this organization. Wait until you hear what the award is if she wins; an all-inclusive trip for two to Montego Bay, Jamaica for 4 days and 3 nights PLUS \$1000.00. We are all cheering for you Patty! It will be great to have such wonderful providers representing Maine at the recognition banquet in Pennsylvania. As Patty said to me, "Child care is my life and that is all I want to talk about these days. I like to surround myself with the people who know and enjoy children. I don't want to be a shut-in, I want to continue learning new ideas."



Patty Leach

Amy Lemieux Nisbett

Amy is the owner/director of the Children's First Montessori Preschool in Bangor. Her proposal requested funds for a puppet theater and puppets. She plans to use puppet play to help children use language to resolve every day conflicts and to "give children a voice." She also plans to use puppets to encourage story writing.

Amy found out about the Terry Lynne Lokoff foundations through the Penquis Resource Development Center's newsletter. Her first reaction to the announcement was, "I can't do this."

She decided to try anyway. Not only was Amy's proposal accepted but she too scored in the top 9 of all the applicants and she has been invited to apply for the "Teacher of the Year" award.

She feels that one major benefit of applying for these awards helped her focus her philosophy and really made her think about professionalism. She also realized what an impact her program has not only on the families that attend her school, but on her larger community. Writing this proposal gave her the opportunity to write her school's story. "Winning this award is really the icing on the cake. This money will help me make improvements in my program."

Amy holds a B.A. in Human Development. She began her career at Bangor Montessori School where she trained for her Montessori certification. She eventually made the decision to open her own Montessori school. Amy plans to pursue a Master's degree as her next professional step.



Amy Lemieux Nisbett

Beth Keenan

Beth is from the Children's Center in Portland and hopes to boost the level of multi-cultural activities in the curriculum using her award from the foundation. She plans to purchase books, instruments, dress-up clothes, puppets, play food, and dolls. The staff will incorporate these materials into their daily activities with the children.

Although Beth wrote their proposal, she collaborated with her co-workers at the Children's Center. Beth strongly encourages other programs to submit a proposal next year. "It really turned out to be quite easy to put the proposal together. Other centers should do this."

Beth holds a BA in Early Childhood Education from the University of Maine at Farmington and has worked in the field for 7 years.

Leslee Harrigan Pierce

A teacher from St. Elizabeth Child Development Center in Portland, Leslee is another finalist for the Terry Lynne Lokoff Award. Leslee's proposal asked for funds to purchase two digital cameras and a computer program to assist staff in preparing children's portfolios. The staff at her center is just beginning to use portfolios as a way of documenting the children's growth over time.

Writing the proposal was a first-time experience for Leslee but she was encouraged to try by her director. "The guidelines were very specific and it was hard to fit all my ideas into the space allowed. We are very excited to be able to use digital photography in the portfolios. The whole center, not just my classroom, will benefit from the grant."

Leslee has been in the child care and early education field for 18 years, all of it at St. Elizabeth Child Development Center. She currently is a team leader, and is pursuing her Master's degree in Early Intervention at the University of Maine.

Essence of Diversity

“Like the blue sky, the self is a matter of understanding and experience.”

– Bateson

Growing up in small-town Maine, everyone I knew looked just like me. We were not what would be considered a diverse community. Then in 7th grade I met Jane and realized that diversity can mean much more than the color of your skin. Diversity is defined by those around us. Jane was petite with a perfect “peaches and cream” complexion that turned a golden honey color in the summer. She had long straight blonde hair. She was head goddess of the gymnastic squad, prom queen, and girlfriend of the captain of the football team. She was everything I was not. Even in small-town Maine, diversity affected me.

“Experience is a wonderful teacher,” my father would say. My parents believed traveling was a wonderful way to experience life, and to foster independence and self-confidence. When I was 18 my sister and I drove cross-country in our Subaru station wagon staying in youth hostels and people’s houses. While we were away my parents received calls from “helpful and concerned” community members telling them “It is unsafe and undignified for girls to travel on their own.” Even in modern times, generational diversity affected me.

My sophomore year in college my roommate and I went to see a Richard Prior movie with two black friends of ours. The theatre, located in Bangor, Maine, was nearly full and the lights had not yet gone down when we arrived. The four of us entered the theatre, laughing and joking, strolling toward the front, carrying our popcorn and giant drinks. As we walked, the surrounding chatter became stilted and then stopped all together. I remember that quiet, it was deafening. Even in a non-segregated society, racial diversity affected me.

When I was 22 my friend Shelida asked me to come stay with her family in Bangkok, Thailand. Shelida grabbed my arm and pointed out the window, “There’s my family,” she said excitedly. We gathered our bags together and headed off the plane. As we neared the door of the plane it was as if Shelida began to shrink. By the time we were off the plane she was shuffling her feet, glancing only out of the side of her face

with her head bowed down, and speaking in a lilting whisper. I quickly learned that if Shelida and I were anywhere in public Shelida became this other person, and I was expected to follow suit. Women were not seen as people; they were to be invisible. Even in “liberated” times gender diversity affected me.

At my 10th year high school reunion I was sitting at a table full of old friends, some of whom I hadn’t seen for years. We were all laughing and joking. One girl leaned across the table and said to me, “Did you know we use to call you the Rich B***** behind your back? You had that cool car that your parents bought for you.” Rich! I wasn’t rich. I had worked for my parents at their two businesses for as long as I could remember, stocking and dusting shelves in their store. I worked and saved for over 3 years to buy that car. I paid for it myself. Even in the nation of “the American Dream” economic diversity affected me.

I believe it is important to see ourselves clearly, and understand and acknowledge how our past experiences influence our present. So, every morning when I look in the mirror, I see how 36 years of stories, experiences, and relationships have intertwined and melded to create my personal and individual essence of diversity.

Some of the things I see cannot be changed; things such as my race, ethnicity, gender, and even the generation I was born in, things that I am born with (or without). There are also conditions imposed by my family and community; things such as economic status or neighborhood friends. There are relationships and experiences I have had that are unique and individual to me. There are people who have touched my life. There are experiences that have shaped my life. These experiences show in the face that is reflected in my mirror every morning. And what I understand as I look in that mirror is that we must learn to understand and respect ourselves in order to respect diversity. Diversity is everywhere...and it is us.

*Submitted by
Julie DellaMattera, Education Specialist,
Child and Family Opportunities RDC,
Ellsworth, Maine*

Early Childhood Learning Results Task Force

Work has begun on the development of Early Childhood Learning Results for preschool children. A Task Force made up of early care and education professionals from Head Start, child care, Pre-K programs, Department of Education, University of Maine at Farmington, Maine Roads to Quality, Child Care Plus ME, and others are meeting on a monthly basis with guidance from Sheila Skiffington from the QUILT Project at the Education and Development Center in Newton, MA.

The stimulus for the development of preschool learning results is the vision of a consistent level of quality in early education services across systems and across the state. The voluntary guidelines will be applicable to both center-based and family child care providers. The document produced will be field tested and revised after completion. It is hoped that the document will provide suggestions for self-assessment and tips on ways to use them to guide program development.

If you are interested in reviewing the Early Childhood Learning Results document as it is being developed, please check our website, call Carolyn Drugge at 207- 287-5060, TTY: 207-287- 5048 or send an e-mail to carolyn.drugge@maine.gov

An open forum to gather input and feedback on the proposed Early Childhood Learning Results, especially from classroom teachers and other interested stakeholders, will be held on May 9 from 10AM to 2:30PM at the Augusta Civic Center. Watch your mailbox for more information.



Resources

Multiculturalism and Families

This issue of Pathways is focused on the issues of working with families today. Because the work is both wonderful and challenging, it is useful to know what books, videos, journals, and websites have been recommended by others in the child care and early education field. The following resources have been cited from the Weaving Diversity training. Some may be found here at Maine Roads, others may be available in your local library or bookstore. We hope you find items that spark your interest, extend your learning and enrich your program.

FMI: Contact Amy Sullivan, 1-888-900-0055

DIVERSITY RESOURCES References and Curriculum Guides

Alike and Different: Exploring our Humanity with Young Children. Bonnie Neugebauer, ed. The National Association for Young Children, Washington DC.

Anti-bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children. Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force. NAEYC.

Celebrate! An Anti-Bias Guide to Enjoying Holidays in Early Childhood Programs. Julie Bisson. Redleaf Press.

Developing Cross-Cultural Competence, A Guide for Working with Children and Their Families. Second Edition. Eleanor W. Lynch and Marci J. Hanson. Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

One Child, Two Languages, A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English as a Second Language. Patton O. Tabors. Paul H. Brooks Publishing.

Our Babies, Ourselves: How biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent. Meredith F. Small.

Starting Small, Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades. the Teaching Tolerance Project with a forward by Vivian Gussin Paley. Southern Poverty Law Center.

Teaching Tolerance (periodical). Southern Poverty Law Center.

Training Teachers: A Harvest of Theory and Practice. Margie Carter & Deborah Curtis. Redleaf Press.

Videos

Essential Connections: Ten Keys to Culturally Sensitive Child Care. Center for Child and Family Studies, California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA.

Starting Small. Teaching Tolerance Project, Southern Poverty Law Project.

Fiction/Autobiographies

And Don't Call Me a Racist! Ella Mazel. Argonaut Press, Lexington, MA.

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, A Hmong Child, her American Doctors, and the Collision of two Cultures. Anne Fadiman. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Children's Books

Blueberries for Sal, Robert McCloskey
Bread, Bread, Bread, Ann Morris
Everybody Cooks Rice, Norah Dooley
How my Aunt Learned to Eat, Ina R. Friedman
On the Day You Were Born, Debra Frazier
Shades of Black, Sandra Pinkney
Stellaluna, Jannell Cannon
Welcoming Babies, Knight and O'Brien
Whoever You Are, Mem Fox

Maine

Island Boy, B. Cooney
Lobsterman, Dahlov Ipcar
Pigs in the Mud in the Middle of the Rud, L. Plourde
Welcoming Babies, Knight and O'Brien

New Diversity Training Offered to Child Care

The Office of Child Care and Head Start, Maine Roads to Quality, Maine Humanities Council and the Resource Development Centers are pleased to announce a unique professional development partnership to offer 12 hours of diversity training to child care and early education providers in Maine. As Maine's children, families and workforce become more diverse, we need to be better prepared to understand diversity in our personal and professional experiences.

The training consists of two 6-hour workshops using a variety of learning strategies to develop understanding of the impact of diversity in our work with children and families and to strengthen skills in teaching tolerance. The two workshops are:

Weaving Diversity into our Work with Children and Families offered by Maine Roads to Quality

Before we can talk to children and parents about differences, it is helpful to reflect on our own perceptions. In this 6-hour training, participants will explore personal memories, be introduced to concepts of the cultural lens and anti-bias approach, and practice responses using work-based scenarios. This training is funded by the Office of Child Care and Head Start, Maine Department of Human Services.

Talking About Differences: Promoting Tolerance Using Children's Books offered by the Maine Humanities Council

Young children are aware of difference – of skin color, body shape, gender, language, family structure, living arrangements – from a very early age. This 6-hour training uses high quality, vividly illustrated children's books as a vehicle for having meaningful conversations about differences. Activities accompanying the children's literature selection are included in a curriculum guide. Each participant will receive 12 books and a curriculum guide. This training is funded by a grant from Verizon.

Contact your local Resource Development Center for delivery dates in your area.



Watch for the Spring issue of *Pathways* which will focus on Literacy and Young Children.

Are you interested in serving on the Maine Roads Advisory Board?

The Advisory Board meets four times per year in the Augusta area. Meetings are about 3-4 hours in length and are held during the day. If you are interested in helping Maine Roads promote professionalism, call Marilyn Russell at (207) 780-5830; or email marilyn@usm.maine.edu.



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Maine Roads to Quality

Child Care and Early Education Career Development Center

How to Reach the Center

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Please let us know what you think.

Feedback, suggestions for future articles, letters of response, questions/concerns are all welcome. We are interested in making this a useful resource for you. You can email Maine Roads staff, or write to us at: Maine Roads/Pathways, PO Box 9300, Portland, Maine 04103, Attn: Faith McMullen