

EPCC Newsletter



You Don't Know My Story

BY LOLA CORNISH

I've worked for years in the field of early childhood education and social service, and there is one truth that I have always held on to - whether providing services myself or training staff on how to do so - it's that you never know what someone went through before they walked through the door. How many hoops have they already had to jump through? Even the circumstances of a situation don't tell the whole story. So I try to be mindful that I should approach each individual in a strength-based way that acknowledges what they've already done before addressing why they came to us. Now that I'm a trainer and consultant, I apply this concept in my training. I call it "You don't know my story."

My philosophy of "You don't know my story" has been developed over time. You'll hear me use this phrase in every single training for a reason. Embracing this philosophy helps me to suspend judgment, meet people where they are, and support them as individuals.

A person's story begins at conception. Humans are born with different temperaments which are coupled with early experiences to develop into an individual identity. Eberhard Arnold once said "Raising children should mean helping to become what they already are in God's eyes." I am a firm believer that every person is who they are and that there is no one else in the world quite like them. Past experiences and temperament affect how we perceive the

world around us and its inhabitants.

Each person's story is influenced by culture. This involves a mindfulness that every individual that I encounter has their own culture. Part of their culture may be based on their ethnicity, race or religion. These are macro cultural influences. But every individual family also has its own familial culture. When a larger familial culture that includes extended family comes in to play, it adds yet another level. Think about it: my brother does not parent the same way that I do, even though we both had the same upbringing. We have chosen to value different things. And my cousins celebrate holidays differently than I do when we are separate, even though when we celebrate together we hold to our parents' or grandparents' versions. Some things we all embrace, such as my extended family's practice of saying "That doesn't look good on you" if someone is contemplating purchasing an item that you've already purchased for them as a gift. This stems from a day when we were on a shopping trip and my mother tried on the very dress my cousin had just bought her for her birthday, so we all convinced mom that it didn't look good on her so she wouldn't buy it.

I'm sure that you can think of examples from your own life and familial culture. But this is just one aspect of "You don't know my story."

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Share multicultural holiday traditions with young readers! See a list of recommended titles on Page 3.

How can I get involved?

We are honored that you have opened and perused our quarterly newsletter.

We value your input and support for our peace education work that is so close to our hearts and minds. There are many ways that you can support our work with educators, families and communities across the country.

Here are a few ways you can get involved:

- Share your training or workshop experiences with others.
- Think about what you see on our website (educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org) that you might be interested in organizing for your community or sponsoring/funding or participating in yourself
- Tell others about the training opportunities we offer
- Refer others to our website
- Grant writing support, or leads
- Offer leads for training or speaking opportunities
- Offer leads for funding sources
- Offer leads for marketing our project

Please share this newsletter and refer others to our website, educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org. If you have any questions email us at pambonzvo@gmail.com.

Image courtesy of Freepik.com

BOOK REVIEW

"You Can't Celebrate That!"

By Nadia Jaboneta, Published by Childcare Information Exchange

BY WILMA GOLD



We found this journal of a teacher's journey led by her students supports the learning and personal growth of children, families and educators. Jaboneta demonstrates through telling her story, what it takes to provide children with the tools to act with empathy, respect, and fairness in the face of diversity. When two children are in conversation and Nadia hears one tell the other "You can't celebrate that," she decides that she must walk with the children through understanding bias and diversity in their everyday life. We now know from research that children as young as 15 months recognize differences and begin to take on biases that they see. The story walks us through what it takes to provide children

with the tools to act with empathy, respect, and fairness in the face of diversity.

You Can't Celebrate That! goes beyond anti-bias activities and reveals the critical thinking and process that goes into social justice education. Jaboneta models the self-work we all need to do as anti-bias educators—she is curious, reflective and takes risks as she engages the families and her colleagues into the dilemma. It moves us forward to transformative teaching and learning.

Julie Bisson shared "Nadia approaches her teaching with a set of values as her steady friend and guidepost and is a model to all of us, showing how true humility, honesty and openness can build bridges with families and co-workers and provide fertile soil for anti-bias education to blossom."

Lastly, Gab Sussman, Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED Project), shared, *You Can't Celebrate That!* reinforces how important it is that we begin talking with children about race and racism at a young age. If it is our mission to prepare our students to live and succeed in our diverse and globalized world, our work begins here with intentional teaching about inclusion, equity, and identity.

Family Traditions: Creating Bonds with Those We Love

BY SUSAN HOPKINS

At Cal State Fullerton Children's Center Thanksgiving has always been a celebration of good food, traditions, and bringing the Children's Center community together. One year, in staff meeting, we were having a discussion about our own family celebrations and sharing our traditions. Folks told about the usual, expected ways they celebrated the holiday with turkey, all the trimmings, etc. Then one teacher spoke up and said, "In our family we always have to have noodles." What? Whoever heard of noodles for Thanksgiving! Upon being asked how that tradition came about, the teacher replied that one year at Thanksgiving when her children were all quite small the whole family came down with the stomach flu. No one wanted anything to eat except noodles! Hence, noodles became an essential part of every Thanksgiving from then on. The one time the noodles were forgotten, the family held up the dinner until the noodles were prepared

and served! The tradition was official!

For children, and adults, traditions and rituals help create positive memories that bring family members closer to one another and provide a sense of belonging. They nurture family connection as the family practices them time and again.

The article by Julie Bisson and Louise Derman-Sparks, *Holidays and Anti-Bias Education: Being Thoughtful and Creative*, from Child Care Information Exchange provides an in depth discussion about holidays, traditions, and incorporating the anti-bias goals in planning. Key questions are covered and ideas for getting started help you put together inclusive programming to help meet the needs of young children and their families. We invite you to explore this topic further with the digital article below:

CLICK HERE
To read the full article.

Or go to: <https://bit.ly/31YS86T>



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OUR ORGANIZATION

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andcommunities.org](http://educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org)

Image courtesy of Freepik.com

You Don't Know My Story

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A person's story is influenced by crises, stresses and behaviors that are often unmentioned. We can never know what goes on behind the closed doors of family homes. Is there food insecurity? Job loss? Abuse? A new baby? Twins? Triplets??? Debt? Illness? The list goes on and on. "You don't know my story" means that you don't know what I have to face when I get home. It means that you don't know how worried I am. It means that I'm not sure how much I can take or how to ask for help. It means that there are physical and mental illnesses that you can't see. It means that the smile you are looking at could be a mask for so much pain.

There is also a situational component to "You don't know my story." What actually happened before this person entered my space that might be affecting their behavior? What's happening in this moment? I can recall one day when I was at the market. I was unloading my quite full cart. An older woman behind me in a motorized wheel chair was sighing and muttering under her breath about how slowly the checker was working. She was behaving quite rudely. I noticed that she had only a few items in her basket, so offered to let her go ahead of me. Her demeanor changed instantly! She was very thankful and explained that she needed to use the restroom and didn't want to have an accident in the store - that's why she was impatient. "You don't know my story" means that your co-worker may be being

short with you because she had a big fight with her husband last night. Or her mom was diagnosed with cancer. It means that a rushed parent may have just received bad news that she needs to deal with. It means that a child shows up to your program after witnessing a scary car accident. Or their parents just separated. Or there were cupcakes for breakfast.

"You don't know my story" means that I have no right to judge you, no matter how much I dislike your actions, words or behaviors. It's a concept that we can apply so that we can actively and empathically listen to what's going on, even if the delivery vehicle is rudeness or anger. It provides a potential source of challenging behavior that we can empathize with. T. Berry Brazelton says we should "value passion wherever we find it" and sometimes it's in challenging ways that we witness this passion.

"You don't know my story" helps me to mindfully approach each human I encounter with a fresh and open set of eyes and no judgement. It makes me check my own biases and not succumb to them. In fact, it helps me to combat them. It keeps me from assigning labels to people based on my own assumptions and perceptions. It helps me to see each person as a perfect individual, regardless of how many imperfections I may be able to identify. I can enter into a collaborative relationship with anyone I encounter, if I choose to be authentic.

EPCC at Solano College 2019



"Setting the Stage for a Peaceful Classroom" was the topic for EPCC's workshop at the Quality Counts Early Childhood Education Conference at Solano Community College on September 21. About 20 people attended the workshop which focused on peace education and its importance, the teacher's role in creating a peaceful classroom, the physical aspects of a peaceful classroom as well as the psychological aspects, and how to include families in creating this environment. There were several people who expressed an interest in the work of EPCC and several who asked to receive our newsletter. It was a beautiful, almost fall day in a country setting for sharing our work.

Image Credits

*Above: Kathryn Clark Silveira, Facebook
Below: www.naeyc.org*

New NAEYC Equity Position Statement

Available in time for the NAEYC Conference November 20-23, 2019 | Nashville, TN



Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education is the name of the newest position statement developed by NAEYC. Many NAEYC members provided input and feedback on drafts as the statement was being developed. This new foundational document will be promoted at the upcoming NAEYC Annual Conference in Nashville in November. At least six sessions, including the

opening keynote, will be focused on equity issues.

"Position: All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that enable them to achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society." Page 5 of the Position Statement.

"This position statement is one of five foundational documents NAEYC has developed in collaboration with the early childhood profession. With its specific focus on advancing equity in early childhood education, this statement complements and supports the other foundational documents that (1) define developmentally appropriate practice, (2) set professional standards and competencies for early childhood educators, (3) define the profession's code of ethics, and (4) outline standards for early learning programs.

"These foundational statements are grounded in NAEYC's core values that emphasize diversity and inclusion and that respect the dignity and worth of each individual. The statements are built upon a growing body of research and professional knowledge that underscores the complex and critical ways in which early childhood educators promote early learning through their relationships—with children, families, and colleagues—that are embedded in a broader societal context of inequities in which implicit and explicit bias are pervasive." Page 3 of the Position Statement.

CLICK HERE
To read the full position statement

Or go to: <https://bit.ly/2mpSKT4>

DIGITAL FEATURES

Books and Videos on Holiday Traditions

THE BORROWED HANUKKAH LATKES

by Linda Glasser

A delightful community building story in which a young girl finds a way to include her elderly neighbor in her family's Hanukkah celebration. A recipe for making latkes included.



WATCH ON YOUTUBE
<https://bit.ly/2MpEP8N>

NIGHT TREE by Eve Bunting

A family makes its annual pilgrimage to decorate an evergreen tree with food for the forest animals at Christmastime.



WATCH ON YOUTUBE
<https://bit.ly/2EsWnzo>

GIVING THANKS by Jonathan London

A father teaches his son to celebrate the interconnectedness of the natural world through daily words of thanks.



WATCH ON YOUTUBE
<https://bit.ly/2p20MTu>

PABLO REMEMBERS, THE FIESTA OF THE DAY OF THE DEAD

by George Ancono

Mostly great photos about a boy and his family's celebration especially remembering Abuela, grandma. Includes a trip to the special market in Oaxaca, how the children make their own alter, food preparations with family working together, english/spanish vocabulary, Preparing the adult alter, family visit to the cemetery where Grandma is buried and description/pictures of families ritual there. Note from author with more information for adults to use with children.



WHAT IS THE DAY OF THE DEAD?
<https://bit.ly/2hAfjPs>



10 Books For Parents Who Want To Raise Kind Kids

BY CAROLINE BOLOGNA

Raising kids who will show empathy and kindness toward others is, understandably, a big priority for parents today. There are many ways to teach children to be forces for good in the world, like reading them books that promote positive messages.

Just as children's books can be powerful tools, parenting books may also help caregivers learn how to instill lessons of compassion, acceptance, kindness and friendship in their kids.

We've rounded up 10 parenting books that promote emotional intelligence, empathy and kindness.

CLICK HERE



To get the book list.

Or go to: <https://bit.ly/2MfoSmZ>

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Alumni Corner

IF YOU HAVE COMPLETED LEVEL I & II THIS ALUMNI CORNER IS FOR YOU!

Good news! The EPCC Brochure has been updated and consolidated from two copies to one with revisions explaining a host of custom workshops, content of Level I and II, as well as ways to be involved in the organization. You may know someone who is looking for professional development for teachers or community volunteers? You are welcome to request this brochure for sharing and promoting our Peace Work.



TO REQUEST BROCHURES
Contact Marilyn Pearce
mpearce4104@gmail.com

A GLOWING ENDORSEMENT

"At the end of Level 1 I couldn't wait for Level 2 and I was not disappointed. These educators have studied and thought so deeply about peace education. It's not only an elevating experience, it's practical information and tools to go home with and make our own worlds more peaceful and inspiring. I am now working with EPCC to further the work. It is exciting and an honor to be a part of this project."

-Shira Coleman

Images courtesy of The Noun Project