

ECS 116 Introduction/Children & Prejudice Adapted from Roots & Wings By Stacy York

3 Points are Critical to Understanding the Impact of Diversity on Early Childhood Classrooms.

- \* The United States is a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse country
- \* Most education in the United States does not take this diversity into account, and as a result it is ineffective for students of color.
- \* Professional standards in the early childhood field increasingly require that early childhood teachers view diversity as a strength and provide culturally relevant programs.

Racial Diversity in the U.S. \*Census 2000 data demonstrates America is racially diverse country. Latinos make up 13 % of the total U.S. population, numbering 35.3 million. \*African Americans make up 12.9 % of the total U.S. population, numbering 36.4 million

Racial Diversity in the U.S. Asian Americans number 11.9 million, representing 4.2 % of the total population.

European Americans make up 77 % of the total population.

American Indians and Alaskan Natives make up 1.5 %. There are 28.4 million people living in the U.S. who were born in a foreign country.

Minorities are Becoming the Majority Today the majority of school children in California are members of a minority group .In 1980, 70 % of America's school-age children were European American-- today that number is 64 %. According to the NAEYC (2001), "U.S. babies born today will reach adulthood in a country in which no one ethnic group predominates."

Immigration About One million people immigrate to the United States each year. In the past immigrants came from Europe. Today's immigrants are younger: about 22 % of all immigrants are under 25. One in Five immigrants come from Mexico.

Diversity Is Spreading Historically. inner-city neighborhoods were often home to immigrants. Today's immigrants are settling in suburban and rural areas. English as a Second language (ESL) students are on the rise in these areas.

Teacher-Student Mismatch

Demand is great for bilingual teachers and teachers of color.

In Schools today, 87 % of teachers are European Americans and a mere 7 % of teachers are African American. The U.S. Department of Education stated that only 20 % of public school teachers felt prepared to teach children from diverse cultures or children who are English Language learners.

Unequal Outcomes Children of color score lower on standardized tests and have higher dropout rates They are more likely than white children to be identified as having special needs, more often placed in non-college tracks, less likely to be recommended for gifted and talented programs. Unequal Outcomes Reasons for such unequal treatment and outcomes include the following: You can't teach someone whose identity you are trying to ignore or aren't willing to acknowledge. The classroom, the teaching-learning process, and the curriculum are oriented to European American or white students. Unequal Outcomes Teachers assume children of color or children who are English language learners are inferior and, as a result, set lower expectations for these children. Children of color experience a lack of success in the early grades, which discourages them or alienates them from school.

Redefining Good Teaching National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) states The Profession needs to recruit many more early childhood professionals who share children's cultures and home languages. (2001)  
Candidates demonstrate the essential dispositions and skills to develop positive, respectful relationships with children whose cultures and languages may differ from their own.

### Children and Prejudice

Children ages 2 through 5 asked questions about the following:

1. People with disabilities. 2. Gender Differences. 3. Physical Differences. 4. Cultural Differences. 5. Family Lifestyles.

Stages of Racial Awareness and Prejudice  
Infants- Self-awareness  
Toddlers- Identity self as an individual  
Twos- Identify people with the words me, mine, and you  
Stages of Racial Awareness and Prejudice  
Threes and Fours- Better at noticing differences among people  
Fives and Sixes- Understand cultural identity and enjoy exploring cultural heritage of classmates  
Sevens To Nines- Gender and Racial constancy  
Nines to twelves- Interested in, and aware of, world events

Prejudice / Stereotypes? Prejudice is simply pre-judging individuals based on attitudes and beliefs about an

entire group of people. Stereotypes are at the root of prejudice and discriminatory behavior. Stereotype is another word for an over-generalization or overly simplistic thought. Remember. Children are not born prejudiced. Prejudice is Learned!

Discrimination Prejudice (stereotypes and the feelings they trigger) usually results in behavior known as DISCRIMINATION ! Most people have been discriminated against in one form or another. i.e. on the playground, gender issues.

Passive Discrimination = 1.Ignoreing 2.Avoidance 3.Distanceing4. Silence

Aggressive Discrimination 1. Name-calling 2.Teaching, taunting 3.Rejecting, excluding3. Threatening  
Physical aggression (hitting, beating)4. Destroying Development of Prejudice

Steps in the development of prejudice: Awareness-being alert to Identification naming, labeling. Attitude-  
Thoughts and feelings that become opinion Preference-Valuing, favoring, and giving priority Prejudice  
Preconceived hostile attitude

Development of Prejudice

Children / Pre-Prejudiced Some believe that children model or imitate others when they make discriminatory remarks. Others say that prejudiced behavior is reinforced through the child's environment. Preschoolers are interested in knowing about other people, but they are not able to use logical thinking in their preferences for people.

Young Children's Thinking 1.Children learn by exploring 2.Children are naturally curious 3.Children base their ideas on appearance. 4.Children tend to over-generalize 5.Children's thinking is limited by centering 6.Children base their ideas on their own experience.7. Children have limited information 8.Children easily make false associations 9.Children are trying to understand changes 10.Children are magical thinkers