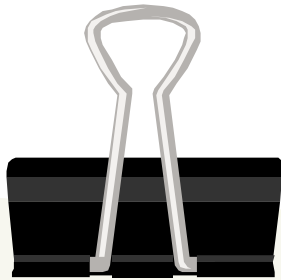


Class Climate and Social Justice



When you explained to Kayla's mother that her daughter has been teasing her classmate, Nikesh, about his stinky lunches. She told you that Kayla is caring at home, always helping her two younger brothers. It made you wonder...

Are we talking about the same child?

(Partner's name has been omitted)

Sarah Wolfman-Robichaud

October 3, 2008

Social Responsibility in the Primary Program

The Primary Program explains development of social responsibilities as the following:

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

A variety of experiences enable the child to

- value and respect diversity and the contributions people make to the community
- contribute to a collaborative environment
- develop an awareness of the roles and responsibilities of a member of a community

Source: BC Ministry of Education. (2000). *The Primary Program: A framework for teaching*. p. 19

According to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Social Responsibility standards by which to assess children from kindergarten through Grade 3 include the following:

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
CONTRIBUTING TO THE CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often unfriendly or disrespectful of others • generally reluctant to participate in and contribute to classroom and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually friendly and, if asked, will help or include others • may need prompting to participate in and contribute to classroom and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually welcoming, friendly, kind, and helpful • participates in and contributes to classroom and group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • welcoming, friendly, kind, and helpful • participates in and contributes to classroom and group activities; often takes on extra responsibilities
SOLVING PROBLEMS IN PEACEFUL WAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in conflict situations, often expresses anger inappropriately; blames or puts down others • has difficulty recognizing problems; may suggest inappropriate strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in conflict situations, tries to state feelings and manage anger appropriately, but quickly becomes frustrated; tends to overestimate or underestimate the need for adult help • can identify simple problems; with help, generates strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in conflict situations, tries to express feelings honestly, manage anger appropriately, and listen politely; most often relies on adult intervention without considering alternatives • can clarify problems and generate and evaluate strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in conflict situations, usually manages anger and expresses feelings appropriately; often tries to solve problems independently, but knows when to get adult help • clarifies problems, generates appropriate strategies, and predicts outcomes
VALUING DIVERSITY AND DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sometimes disrespectful; tends to focus on own needs and wants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually respectful; may not notice when others are treated unfairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasingly interested in fairness; treats others fairly and respectfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fair, respectful; may "stick up" for others when perceiving injustice
EXERCISING DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can often repeat class or school rules, but is unable to think of ways to improve school, community, or world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with support, shows an emerging sense of responsibility for the classroom and may be able to describe simple ways to improve school, community, or world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows emerging sense of responsibility, generally following classroom rules; able to identify simple ways to improve the school, community, or world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows a clear sense of responsibility in the classroom and an emerging sense of idealism—wants to make the world a better place

Source: British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2001). *BC Performance Standards: Social Responsibility: A Framework*.

Method Used for Social Responsibility Education

What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

SEL is a process for helping children and even adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically.

- These skills include recognizing and managing our emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically. They are the skills that allow children to calm themselves when angry, make friends, resolve conflicts respectfully, and make ethical and safe choices.
- SEL is also a framework for school improvement. Teaching SEL skills helps create and maintain safe, caring learning environments.

Skills and Competencies Developed from SEL

Self-awareness—accurately assessing one’s feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.

- Elementary school children should be able to recognize and accurately label simple emotions such as sadness, anger, and happiness. In middle school, students should be able to analyze factors that trigger their stress reactions.

Self-management—regulating one’s emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately

- Elementary school children are expected to describe the steps of setting and working toward goals

Social awareness—being able to take the perspective of and empathize with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources

- Elementary school students should be able to identify verbal, physical, and situational cues indicating how others feel.

Relationship skills—establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed

- Elementary school students should have an ability to describe approaches to making and keeping friends.

Responsible decision-making—making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one’s school and community

- Elementary school students should be able to identify a range of decisions they make at school.

Source: CASEL website. What is SEL? <http://www.casel.org/basics/index.php>

Social Justice

The Community Foundations of Canada defines social justice as the following:

1. Distribution of the social and economic resources of society for the benefit of all people.
2. The process through which society attains a more equitable distribution of power in the political, economic, and social realms.
3. A concept based upon the belief that each individual and group within a given society has a right to civil liberties, equal opportunity, fairness, and participation in the educational, economic, institutional, social and moral freedoms and responsibilities valued by the community.

(Source: Community Foundations of Canada, 2004, *Social Justice: Useful Definitions*)

The Ministry of Education on Social Justice Issues

- *Understanding and valuing diversity* includes “culture, language, gender, race, and ability.” (BC Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 112)
- *Anti-racism education* promotes “the elimination of racism through identifying attitudes and behaviours that spread racism (ibid)

HOW is it taught?

Teachers create the caring community by helping children to “develop a respect for cultural similarities and differences, while recognizing and validating the children’s own cultural backgrounds and experiences, [...] changing [racist] policies and practices, getting rid of bias based on gender stereotypes and providing students with critical thinking skills needed to challenge the stereotypes they observe and experience, [and] promoting equal access to learning for both boys and girls.”

GOALS - Children should be able to...

- Recognize that everyone belongs to a cultural group
- Accept and appreciate cultural diversity as a positive feature of our society
- Affirm that all cultural groups are equal within our society
- Understand that multicultural education is for all of them
- Recognize that similarities across cultures are much greater than differences and that cultural pluralism is a positive aspect in our society
- Affirm and enhance self-esteem through pride in heritage, as well as learn to appreciate the cultural heritages of other
- Develop cross-cultural understanding, a sense of citizenship, and a feeling of racial harmony.
- Learn about their own attitudes on race and anti-racism
- Understand what causes racism in order to achieve equality
- Identify and address racism at both the personal and institutional levels
- Take individual responsibility for eliminating racism
- Work toward removing barriers that marginalize groups of people
- Act to get rid of all forms of racism, including stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination

Source: BC Ministry of Education. (2000). *The Primary Program: A framework for teaching*. pp. 112-11

Social Justice Workshops offered by the BCTF

The BCTF prides itself on being a “social justice union.” They advocate this through conferences, grants, workshops, etc. Some workshops available to “school staffs, districts, locals, parent groups, and conferences/PD days” include:

ADT (Antidiscrimination Response Training) This is a skills-based workshop on effectively responding to discriminatory remarks and incidents of racism, sexism, and homophobia. Based on the ART program, developed by Dr. F. Ishu Ishiyama (UBC), it is a powerful, practical way to promote awareness and empathy, and develop the skills to fight discrimination.	Assertive communication Tired of having bullies kick sand in your face? Want to learn how to stand up for yourself in a direct but non-confrontational manner? This workshop teaches the key principles of communication that allow people to say what they think without losing their cool or reverting to being a doormat.
Rafa Rafa (Cross-cultural simulation game) Participants experience what it is like to live and cope in another culture. After the simulation, participants discuss and compare perceptions of one another’s culture.	Choosing your issues and planning to win Sometimes it’s difficult to know where to begin when faced with a problem or issue. In this workshop, participants will learn how to take an issue and plan a course of action using strategic and analytic tools that will maximize the potential for success without wasting time and energy.
Social justice in every classroom This workshop is designed for teachers to expand and enhance their teaching strategies for dealing with social justice issues in the classroom. These practical activities, which can be used throughout the curriculum, will assist teachers in creating and promoting a safe and caring environment for all.	Global education: In and beyond the classroom This workshop invites teachers to expand and build on the theory and practice of global education in their classrooms and beyond. Participants explore ways to integrate and infuse a global perspective at any grade level and in any curriculum areas. Whether their passion is for environmental issues, media literacy, multiculturalism, globalization, peace, international development, gender equality, or human rights, participants discover the interconnections and possibilities to engage students in action for change.

Source: BCTF. (2008). *BCTF Services Handbook 2008-2009: Building for the Future*. pp. 98-99

Characterizing Social Justice Teachers

Bob Peterson offers the categorization of teachers as traditional, progressive, or critical. By choosing to perform as one of these teachers, we instil that sense of social justice in our classrooms and in the students.

A student brings in a flyer about a canned food drive during the upcoming holiday season.

“The **traditional teacher** affirms the student’s interest – ‘That’s nice and I’m glad you care about other people’ – but doesn’t view the food drive as a potential classroom activity.

“The **progressive teacher** sees the food drive as an opportunity to build on students’ seemingly innate sympathy for the down-trodden and after a class discussion has children bring in cans of food. They count them, categorize them, and write about how they feel.

“The **critical teacher** does the same as the progressive teacher – but more. The teacher also uses the food drive as the basis for a discussion about poverty and hunger. How much poverty and hunger is there in our neighbourhood? Our country? Our world? Why is there poverty and hunger? [...] What can we do in addition to giving some food?

“Participating in a food drive isn’t the litmus test of whether one is a critical teacher. But engaging children in reflective dialogue is.”

(Source: Peterson, 1998, *Teaching for Social Justice*, p. 87)

Promotion of Diversity in the Schools

THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS

Schools greatly influence children's beliefs about the similarities and differences among people whether the subject of diversity is ever openly discussed or not. Children spend much of the day in school, and, for many, it is their main social milieu. They acquire attitudes from the absence as well as the presence of diversity in the student body and staff, in the curriculum, and in the physical environment. They learn by watching teachers who confront prejudice as it occurs and from those who choose to ignore it. Teachers are role models, and their actions say as much as their words.

Studies have demonstrated a high correlation between teachers' respect for diversity and the learning potential of those students with whom schools have traditionally had the least success. It is critical that teachers have the proper preparation and materials to effectively teach respect for differences. By approaching diversity as an ongoing theme in the classroom, they encourage children to develop a lively interest in cultures, religions, ethnic traditions, and ways of being other than their own. This, in turn, will help young people mature into flexible, well-adjusted adults who are curious about their world rather than fearful of it. Teachers must also be encouraged to learn about their students' needs and cultures and to use that knowledge to enhance their students' self-respect and to encourage their success.

Teachers and youth service professionals must work alongside parents and families to ensure that young children feel comfortable talking about and exploring diversity, prejudice, and bias. It is important that in two of the most important places in their lives – school and home – children have ample opportunities to get to know themselves and their own feelings and have a chance to talk openly and honestly about difficult topics. In addition, educators, who seek to challenge stereotypes and biases, can provide factual concrete information and positive interpersonal experiences for students as part of learning. Educators can also learn how to effectively counter biased behavior when it occurs.

The ability to work and play successfully in a diverse society is one of the most important skills that educators can give to students. As young people prepare to enter the workforce today, they recognize that communicating, interacting, and cooperating with people from different backgrounds have become as essential as mastering computer skills.

I don't see why we should have to teach diversity at all. Schools are for academic learning, not for imparting social values.

Children learn social values in school whether teachers consciously teach them or not. Both what is taught and what is not taught alters a child's perceptions of the world. Children who attend a school where the staff routinely neglects or dismisses diversity come away thinking that diversity is not important or that it is somehow bad. In a pluralistic society like ours, omitting the contributions of people from a variety of cultural groups tarnishes those groups and devalues their contributions. Teaching about diversity helps prepare children to live and work successfully in a pluralistic society.

(Source: Wotorson, 2001, *Program Activity Guide: Helping children resist bias and hate*, pp. 29-30)

How to Teach Diversity

How can I find enough time to teach about diversity when I already have so much required material to cover in the school year?

Rather than teach “about” diversity, your goal should be to work it seamlessly into the curriculum by taking a multicultural approach to required subjects. Following are a few examples of how this can be accomplished:

- Include reading selections that have main characters from diverse cultural backgrounds, and avoid books that rely on stereotypes.
- Discuss names, foods, and customs that are mentioned in class materials.
- Encourage students to consider diverse perspectives of historical events about which they are learning.
- Include information about people from diverse groups when studying scientific or technological advancements and accomplishments.

The more I think about teaching my students about racism, prejudice, and diversity, the more nervous I get. I want to do the right thing, but I’m afraid that I will offend someone or say the wrong thing. What should I do?

Before any of us can help children think constructively about diversity, bias, prejudice, and hate, each of us must consider how we ourselves feel about these issues. This process of discovery is an exciting, yet difficult journey. Perhaps the most daunting challenge is facing – and understanding – the roots of our own biases. Examining how we have learned the prejudices that we harbour and why we continue to hold them is a difficult process, but it is one that can make us better role models for all children. It is also rewarding to discuss these questions with other people. You might find it helpful to talk with your fellow teachers about their experiences addressing these issues in their own classrooms. How did they begin? What worked for them and what didn’t? They might be able to suggest some promising resources and approaches. Sometimes professional conferences provide a forum in which to discuss diversity issues in a group led by an experienced facilitator. Some schools are willing to invite speakers or to conduct workshops that enable teachers to discover ways to communicate information about multiculturalism or prejudice. As you embark on this journey, remember that you will make mistakes. Also remember that you and all those around you can learn from those mistakes if you are willing to engage in honest conversations, and that means sharing information, asking questions, and listening to others who know more about certain topics because their life experiences have been different from yours.



Resilience

What is resilience? What gives the people the drive to move on? What makes people push through the tough times? These questions are all very puzzling. The notion that someone can get on with their life after having a traumatic incident happen to them is one that would puzzle most people. When this occurs to a child the question and issues around the question become even more puzzling. What differences are there between the home-life of a child and the school-life of a child?

Mindset of a Resilient Child

“Resilient children are hopeful and possess high self worth. They feel special and appreciated. They have learned to set realistic goals and expectations. They have developed the ability to solve problems and make decisions and thus are more likely to view mistakes, hardships and obstacles as challenges to confront rather than as stressors to avoid.

Resilient children are aware of their weaknesses and vulnerabilities but they also recognize their strong point and talents. They have developed effective interpersonal skills with peers and adults and are able to seek out assistance and nurturance in appropriate ways. They focus on the aspects of their lives over which they have control rather than those over which they have little or no influence.”

Source: http://www.familytlc.net/resilient_children_preteen.html

Helping a Child Develop Resilience

“Potential contributors to resilient outcomes for children that have been the focus of research include three groups:

↳ **Individual psychological characteristics** that allow children to cope effectively with stress, including ‘belief in one’s own self-efficacy, the ability to deal with change, and a repertoire of social problem-solving skills’

↳ **Social and economic factors** such as socioeconomic status, family dynamics, parenting quality, quality and relationships with teachers and other adults neighbourhood effects, and exposure to violence or trauma

↳ **Access to quality educational and recreational opportunities**, such as schools, sports teams, churches, and Boys and Girls clubs.”

(Source: Cove, E., Eiseman, M., & Popkin, S. J., 2005, *Resilient Children: Literature Review and Evidence from the HOPE VI Panel Study*. p. 3)

Bias

“Bias incidents involve behaviour that is motivated by bias based on personal attributes such as race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation [...] While bias incidents are not considered criminal acts, they do nonetheless create tension that can lead to more serious problems is left unchecked.

Bias in 6–8 Year Olds

“Six- to Eight-year-olds continue to recognize other group members and begin to realize that their ethnicity is not changeable. They are beginning to become aware of history, local actions, and attributes for and against cultural groups. Such new knowledge, influenced in part by the media, may foster personal prejudices that may become an integral part of a child’s attitudes and behaviours.

“Children at this age are highly influenced by the way they see people interact and resolve conflicts. Many children in this age group learn about culture and race with greater cognitive depth and emotional connection than they did at earlier stages. They may begin to take pride in their own cultural identities and understand the experiences of others.”

An Action Plan on Teasing

A student of mine is being teased. What can I do?

It is vital to get all the facts so you understand as clearly as possible what is going on with this student and the children doing the teasing. Spell out the rules about hurtful remarks or actions in your classroom. Speak to the target of the teasing, allowing her an opportunity to share her feelings about the situation. Also speak with the children who are doing the teasing to find out why they are engaging in such actions. Encourage them to think about how they have felt when they have been the target of teasing and to consider better ways of interacting or better ways to resolve conflicts. Motivate them to explore the mix of races and ethnic ancestries. Other students probably come from mixed ancestry, too, whether interracial or interethnic.

(Source: Wotorson, 2001, *Program Activity Guide: Helping children resist bias and hate*)

Glossary

Bias - A partiality that prevents objective consideration of an issue or situation. (Source: <http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn>)

Bullying – Repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person. (Source: <http://www.kenrigby.net/define.html>)

Class Climate – The type of environment that is created for students by the school, teachers, and peers. Teachers are continually looking to create a positive climate in which student learning is maximized [...], students feel safe, nurtured, and intellectually stimulated. This type of positive classroom climate allows for students to meet their basic needs of physical and mental health. (Source: http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/classroom_climate)

Discrimination - Discrimination is the restrictive treatment of a person or group based on prejudiced assumptions of group characteristics, rather than on individual judgment. It is the denial of justice prompted by prejudice. (Source: http://www.adl.org/children_holocaust/more_resources.asp)

Diversity - A set of conscious practices that involve:

- *Understanding and appreciating interdependence of humanity, cultures, and the natural environment
 - *Practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from our own.
 - *Understanding that diversity includes not only ways of being but also ways of knowing.
 - *Recognizing that personal, cultural and institutionalized discrimination creates and sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others.
 - *Building alliances across differences so that we can work together to eradicate all forms of discrimination.
- (Source: <http://www.las.iastate.edu/diversity/definition.shtml>)

Marginalization - The feeling of exclusion that is frequently encountered by people who are not part of the majority culture. (Source: ftad.osu.edu/CSP/glossary.html)

Prejudice - The fact of having preconceived, irrational ideas about another person or group (national, ethnic "racial", religious, sexual) who is/are regarded as inferior or perverted. (Source: lrgs.org.uk/page/page/binary/magic/825221/migration%20definitions)

Racism - Racism is prejudice or discrimination based on the belief that race is the primary factor determining human traits and abilities. Racism includes the belief that genetic or inherited differences produce the inherent superiority or inferiority of one race over another. In the name of protecting their race from "contamination," some racists justify the domination and destruction of races they consider to be either superior or inferior. Institutional racism is racial prejudice supported by institutional power and authority used to the advantage of one race over others. (Source: http://www.adl.org/children_holocaust/more_resources.asp)

Resilient Children – A resilient child is highly engaged in school, does not have more than one behaviour problem, does not participate in a delinquent or risky behaviour, and has never been suspended, excluded, or expelled from school [...] This child engages in socially competent behaviours despite stress. (Source: http://www.familytlc.net/resilient_children_preteen.html)

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) – SEL is a process for helping children develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. (Source: <http://casel.org/basics/definition.php>)

Social Justice – The full participation and inclusion of all people in society, together with the promotion and protection of their legal, civil, and human rights. The aim of social justice—to achieve a just and equitable society where all share in the prosperity of that society—is pursued by individuals and groups through collaborative social action. (Source: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/social_justice12/sj12irp2008.pdf)

Social Responsibility – Socially-responsible individuals show “community mindedness” in tier responses to school, local, national, and global issues and events. This attitude is the basis of a fully-functioning and flourishing democratic society. (Source: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/diversity/diversity_framework.pdf)

Stereotypes - A stereotype is a preconceived or oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences. Even when stereotypes are positive, they always have a negative impact and can lead to discrimination. (Source: http://www.adl.org/children_holocaust/more_resources.asp)

Appendix A – Social Studies IRP

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL STUDIES K TO 7 TOPICS

	Kindergarten <i>Self, Family, School</i>	Grade 1 <i>Self, Family, School</i>	Grade 2 <i>Self, Family, School</i>	Grade 3 <i>Communities – Past and Present</i>
SKILLS AND PROCESSES OF SOCIAL STUDIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-operative participation in groups gathering information presenting information orally and visually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple picture maps co-operative participation in groups gathering and presenting information orally, visually, and written strategies for solving problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple maps with cardinal directions, symbols, and legends gathering information for presentation problem solving in the class or school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> critical thinking simple maps gathering information; citing sources appropriately; presentation skills chronological order responses to problems
IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> concept of change groups that are part of their lives places that are part of their lives similarities and differences among families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in their lives similarities and differences among families social structures ways people work together in groups symbols of Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in the school and community ways individuals contribute to a community personal identity language and cultural characteristics of Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in communities over time importance of communities cultural similarities and differences characteristics of Canadian society
GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> roles and responsibilities within the class and school purpose of classroom and school rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> roles, responsibilities, and rights at home and at school purpose of classroom and school rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> roles, rights, and responsibilities within the class and school how decisions are made in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rights and responsibilities and the well-being of the community roles and responsibilities of local governments
ECONOMY AND TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> human needs work in the community technologies in daily life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how basic needs are met types of work in the community purpose of money ways technology is used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work done in the school purpose of money how technology affects individuals and schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how needs and wants are met in communities how technology affects individuals and communities past and present
HUMAN AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> natural and human-built characteristics of environments ways to care for their environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognizing maps of Canada characteristics of environments how environment affects daily life ways to care for their environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> landforms and bodies of water in BC and Canada responsibility to the environment how environment affects human activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> landforms and bodies of water in BC and Canada provinces and territories responsibility for the environment effect of environment on early settlement

Appendix B

Recommended Multicultural and Anti-Bias Books

The Importance of Multicultural Books

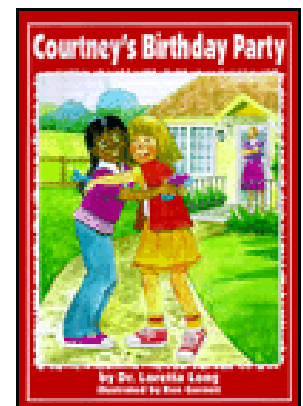
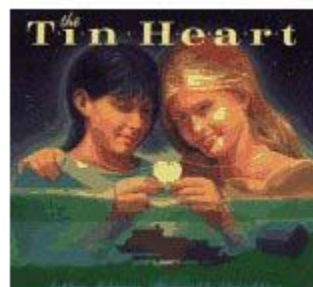
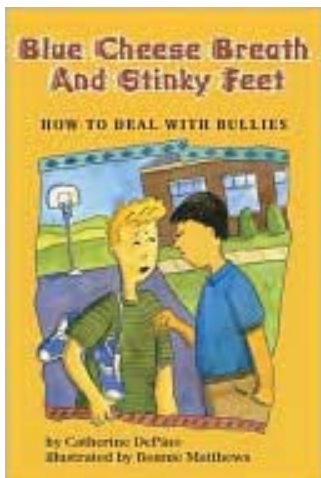
“Children’s books, at their best, invite children to use their imaginations, expand their vocabularies, and gain a better understanding of themselves and others. And, if the titles reflect the diverse groups of people in the world around them, children can learn to respect not only their own cultural groups, but also the cultural groups of others. Children’s literature serves as both a mirror to children and as a window to the world solving problems, and overcoming obstacles.” (Wotorson, 2001, pg. 38)

A World of Difference Institute: Recommended Multicultural and Anti-Bias Books

Book Categories include:

- Ableism
- Ageism
- Anti-Immigration
- Anti-Semitism
- Bullying and Name-calling
- Classism
- Heterosexism/Homophobia
- Human Rights
- LGBT Discrimination
- Racism (96 books about many cultures)
- Religious Discrimination
- Rights: Civil rights, Equal rights, Human rights
- Size Bias

Source: Anti-Defamation League website. A World of Difference Institute: Recommended Multicultural & Anti-bias Books for Children.
<http://www.adl.org/bibliography/default.asp>



Appendix C – Excerpt from
Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice
by Cary1 Stern-LaRosa and Ellen Hoffenheimer Bettman

"I am a brown-skinned girl, a mixture of Spanish, Japanese, and Filipino, who was born in San Francisco. When I started kindergarten, my family lived right in the city and my classmates were of all different colors and cultures. We all got along. In first grade, I moved to the suburbs, and suddenly everyone but me was white. The kids in my class teased me and kept asking me what I was. Finally, I asked my mom, 'What am I?' My mom said, 'You are a cosmopolitan a person of the world.' I went back to school and told my classmates, 'I am a cosmopolitan. That means I am a person of the world.' "My classmates were impressed that I knew such a big word. They stopped teasing me and started treating me with respect. Maybe they wanted to be cosmopolitans, too."

If only it were always that simple. If only we could easily eliminate the pain our children our children experience when what makes them different also makes them the victim of teasing or even more serious acts of hate. Although the above story is true, it does not reflect the experiences most of us have had when we've tried to help our children understand that being different does not make them better or worse than others -- just different. Most parents have faced this task without preparation. Although we want to help our children feel good about who they are and to value diversity, we often have little in the way of explanations or recommendations that will ease their pain.

Every day, in our cities and suburbs, small towns and countryside, in our classrooms and playgrounds and on our streets, our children are experiencing incidents and feelings such as those given below -the words and acts of prejudice and their effects, from the most subtle to the most violent:

When I first came to this country, I had a problem speaking English correctly. I had an accent and they made fun of it. They were talking about ice-skating. I was hoping they would ask me to go with them. But they said, 'She can't ice-skate, she's Chinese.' (Well, I'm actually Korean, but they thought I was Chinese.) I bet I was probably better at skating than them - I was in group skating for two years. But they said, 'Chinese don't like sports. They don't want to go out. All they want to do is school. They want to look good in front of teachers.'"

Kids who have been the victims of prejudice not only suffer deeply themselves, they may also start causing others to suffer in return. Some report on how their own feelings and behaviour toward "different" people changed after they'd been hurt:

"I got punched in the face, but that didn't really hurt me. The wounds heal. But they kept on calling me spic through the whole thing. I walk in the street and I feel lower. All this prejudice is starting to affect the way I feel about other people. I'm starting to be prejudiced myself. I've been through so much where prejudice is concerned, right now it's at the boiling point. It's, like, don't even think it . . . don't start it. You go your way and I'll go mine. After a while I hated anyone who wasn't my color, and I was a bully all of a sudden. Sometimes when the kids single out a person and they start making fun of him, at first I object and I don't take part in it. But then, after a while, I start: thinking like them and I laugh, too. Prejudice is sort of contagious."

Prejudice is contagious. When people are afraid or have actually been hurt, it may be a natural response to want to hurt back. But hurting one another only escalates the hatred and violence - and the differences don't go away. We live in a world of differences -different races, religions, cultures, sexual orientations, abilities. The differences can seem strange and overwhelming, even frightening. In an effort to cope, we may all find ourselves wanting just to stay with. "our own kind," avoiding people who aren't like us, sometimes resorting to hurtful words and actions ourselves to manage our fears. At the beginning of this new century and millennium, we must deal with our differences - in schools and workplaces, in books and newspapers, on television and online, even in our own families.

Prejudice is only one way of dealing with differences. Instead, we can learn to respect differences, to see them as a source of strength in our lives and society, even celebrate them. In place of prejudice, we can teach acceptance and understanding. Meeting this challenge requires both preparation and practice.