



Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Children's Books

A Resource

The children's books offered in the J.E.D.I orientation package are for program sites to use with children and as an educational resource for both children, families, and educators.

Books were chosen with themes of inclusion, belonging, social justice, gender identity, ability, culture, indigenous culture, and the various types of families. One of the criteria that IIQ used to select books was that it celebrated diversity and different ways of being without judgement.

As with any book we share with children and families we encourage you to read the books before sharing them to first determine how you feel about the book and then secondly to predict the types of questions the stories might generate for children and families.

Think about how you might answer these questions. Consider the key message(s) of the book and how to highlight these with the children. It's important you are comfortable talking about the themes in the book and you have honest and age-appropriate conversations.

These books can also be used to reflect together as a team, and we encourage the JEDI advocates to bring a book to a staff meeting to unpack together. Together you could explore:

- What are the key messages in this book?
- What personal judgements and biases might be coming into play for us?
- How might we confront our discomfort?
- Will our children, families and educators see themselves in the book?

- What might be some important messages and/or questions to emphasize with children?
- How could we share and engage families with this/these books?

You might find that individual educators and families have different views about these books. Consider how you will navigate these conversations and our role as educators to promote a just world. How will you decide what you share?

This might also be a good time to do a book audit of the children's books in your program. Some themes you might consider when reviewing these books:

- Does the story rely on stereotypes or present complex characters?
- Does the author share the same identity as the main character?
- Are the characters powerful in the story? Who has the power?
- Do your books share more than one way of being within a racial or cultural group experience?
- Do you notice any tokenism in the stories?
- Who is **not** represented in the books?
- Do the books represent the four anti bias education goals?
 1. Identity
 2. Diversity
 3. Justice
 4. Activism

Some further resources to consider:

[Understanding Anti-Bias Education: Bringing the Four Core Goals to Every Facet of Your Curriculum |](#)

[NAEYC](#)

[Reflecting on Anti-bias Education in Action: The Early Years - Anti-Bias Leaders in Early Childhood](#)

[Education \(antibiasleadersece.com\)](#)

[Goals-of-ABEMisconceptions.pdf \(antibiasleadersece.com\)](#)

[AntiBiasCurriculumIntro-English.PDF \(teachingforchange.org\)](#)

[Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books - Social Justice Books](#)

[IBBY Canada – Canadian Chapter of the International Board on Books for Young People \(ibby-](#)

[canada.org\)](#)

[Another Story Book Shop](#)

[The Other Is, My Mother: An Interview with Juniper Fitzgerald, author of HOW MAMAS LOVE THEIR](#)

[BABIES - Mutha Magazine](#)