

Diversity in Children's Social Worlds*

The purpose of this exercise is to begin thinking about your own level of interaction with people of multiple different races and ethnicities, and how that is linked to the opportunities children have to experience diversity in their social worlds. For each question, think about the race or ethnicity of the person or people you identify. Create a visual representation for yourself by writing their names in different colors (for example, **Asian/AAPI**, **Black/African American**, **Hispanic/Latinx**, **Indigenous or Native American**, **Multiracial**, or **White**) or using any other method you like.

For everyone:

- Who are your three best friends?
- Who was the last guest invited to your house for dinner?
- Who was the last person you went out with socially?
- Who is your current or most recent romantic partner?
- Who is your current or most recent boss?
- Who is your spiritual leader?
- Who are your closest neighbors?
- Who is your favorite actor? Singer? Author? Podcast host?
- Who is the mayor or council of your town or city?

For parents and families:

- Who are your child's three best friends?
- Who is your child's teacher? Doctor? Dentist? Coach?
- Who does your child consider "family"?
- Who was the last person your child saw you hug?
- Who makes up the majority of your child's classmates?
- Who is the main character in your child's favorite movie or show?
- Who is the author and main character of your child's favorite book?

For educators and care providers:

- Who makes up the majority of students you teach?
- Who makes up the majority of your colleagues?
- Who is your center director or school leader?
- Who wrote the last 3 books you read with your class?
- Who is in the photos you put up in the learning environment?
- Who is represented in the special days in history you observe?
- Who is represented in holidays you celebrate?

Reflection Questions

- 1 How did it feel to do this exercise?
- 2 What does your visual representation show you? Are you interacting meaningfully with others from multiple different backgrounds? Are your children?
- 3 If you or your children have little exposure to people from a different racial or ethnic group, how can you make an effort to be more authentically involved with others?

Remember...



- Individual people are not "diverse" -- **groups** are diverse!
- Always strive for **meaningful**, rather than superficial cross-racial relationships
- There is vast diversity **within** our racial groups, not just between them!