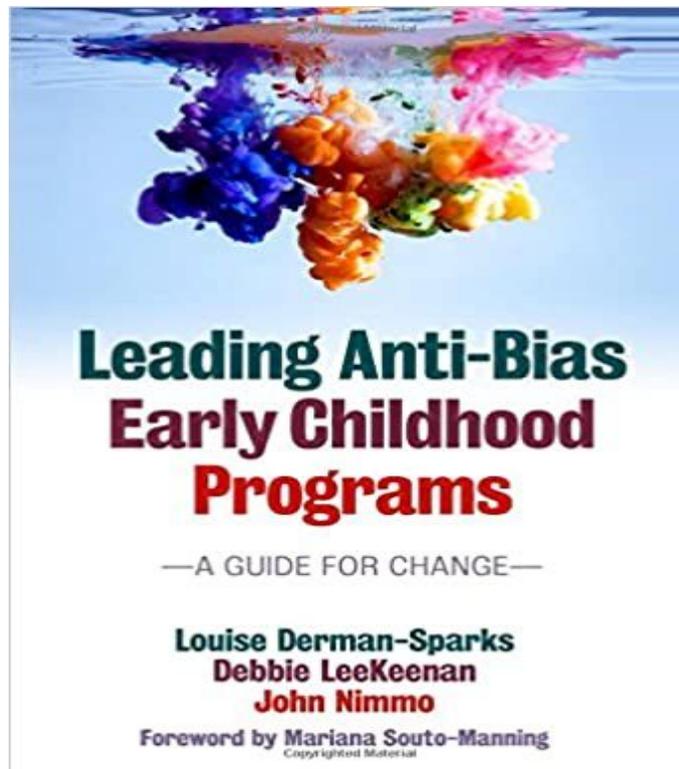


Leading Anti-Bias Early Childhood Programs

-A Guide for Change-

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Book Study Guide
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Part 1:

What are the goals for the book study?

- Understand the ideas underlying the philosophy and importance of anti-bias education in early childhood programs.
- Examine your experience and attitudes toward anti-bias education.
- Reflect on how anti-bias education would look in your program or practice.
- Discuss the conceptual framework, strategies, and tools and begin to implement them in your program.
- Document as you study, reflect, share, and create anti-bias practices in your work.

How do I go about the book study?

This book study is intended for early childhood leaders but is also appropriate for educators seeking to improve their practice with an anti-bias education focus. Ideally, a book study is most effective with a facilitator leading a group but can also be completed as an individual or with a partner. The study guide can be adapted for use in an online format or in-person.

The following considerations are also helpful as you get started.

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- Set expectations, especially for groups. How will you ensure all voices are heard and there is a safe, supportive space for difficult conversations?
- Agree on a schedule. Decide on days and times and how often you will meet.
- Consider having each participant choose a partner to connect with between meetings. This will support collaboration and provide more opportunities for connecting new learning to practice.
- Encourage reflection. In the text, William Ayers was quoted as saying, “Reflection is a disciplined way of assessing situations, imagining a future different from today, and preparing to act.” As you deepen your understanding of anti-bias education, be intentional about “imagining a future different from today” and taking steps to improve practice.
- Journal your reading, and allow yourself time to practice documentation
- Throughout the study, review the goals and think about how this journey is encouraging growth toward an anti-bias education.

Part 2:

Chapter by Chapter

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. -Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Assignment 1

Introduction

After you have read through the Foreword and Introduction sections of the book, think about why you have decided to embark on this study. Make a quick list of reasons you want to learn more about anti-bias education. Circle one of your responses to share with others.

Chapter 1:

Pursuing the Anti-Bias Vision

The Conceptual Framework

Optional Questions/Activities:

1. “An anti-bias program puts diversity and equity goals at the center of all aspects of its organization and daily life. It involves much more than adding new materials and activities into the already existing learning environment.” Page 11

What is your initial response after reading this quote from the text? Are you ready to being the journey of going beyond new materials or special events and move your program toward organizational change?

2. The section of the chapter entitled, Before the Journey Begins explains that teachers may be in denial of the need for an intentional focus on anti-bias education. Do you believe this might be the case with you or other educators in your program? Is your staff ready to begin this journey? What are the ways the text suggests preparing staff for the anti-bias journey? Discuss this with a partner or in your small group.
3. Reflect on the role of early childhood care and education in building connections between society and the child’s family. After reading the first chapter, what are some ways you may already including multiple cultural viewpoints in your program?
4. As an educator or director, read *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael Lopez. This book is recommended for children ages 5-8 but if read or shared with educators, it can provide a view of classrooms through the eyes of children. It is a New York Times Bestseller and featured in the Netflix show, Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices! The following link to the book also includes a video of the book being read aloud.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/299104/the-day-you-begin-by-jacqueline-woodson-illustrated-by-rafael-lopez/>

Assignment 2

Chapter 2

Best Practices of Early Childhood Program Leaders

The Foundation for Anti-Bias Leadership

1. As you consider collaborative leadership and its importance in early childhood reflect on the following statement. “Collaborative leaders exercise power *with*, rather than power *on*, staff and families.” What does this statement mean to you in your work?
2. Facilitating a Shared Program Vision and Mission
Does your program have a vision and mission? How have you engaged key stakeholders in the creation of the vision and mission to make sure it is shared? Share your vision and mission with the group or discuss how you will write or update by including stakeholders using an anti-bias lens.
3. Shared commitments, reflective conversations, and time for collaboration are ways to support a community of learners within a program. What are some ways you establish the organizational culture and create a community of learners?
4. “Respecting the centrality of the family’s role in a child’s life is an enduring ECCE principle.” Most programs would agree with this statement and work to communicate with and involve families in their programs. The quote on page 28 by Lisa Lee, expands this level of involvement to a deeper connection. What resonates with you as you consider building partnerships with families?
5. As you consider the attributes of effective anti-bias education leaders, could you identify one that you would like to focus on?
6. This week, consider how you will broaden your knowledge base. Read through the framework on the bottom of page 30 to guide your thinking.

Assignment 3

Chapter 3

Reading the Program and Preparing for Anti-Bias Change

1. Explain the process for “reading” your program. Is there one area you are interested in examining after considering baseline information?
2. How will you prepare teachers/leaders in your program to begin the journey toward an anti-bias approach?
3. Explain how you might create admissions policies that support a proactive approach to reaching diverse populations.
4. Create (or redesign) a program brochure in a more accessible format to share with the community. Work in small groups or with a partner to support your work.

Assignment 4

Chapter 4

Fostering Reflective Anti-Bias Educators

1. Creating a climate for taking risks involves ensuring that staff feels supported as they go through the process of change. After reading through pages 54-56, what are some steps you might take to begin to create this climate of change and building a community of anti-bias learners?
2. Read through the activities designed to encourage staff members to get to know one another and share their experiences. Try one of the activities with the book study group. Which one would like to you try with your staff? Report back to your study group what you learned about your staff and how these new connections will encourage a trusting environment for change.
3. Introduce Anti-Bias Education
What activities from the chapter would you like to try with your staff as an introduction to anti-bias education?
4. Set Anti-Bias Goals
Developing a mission statement and goals is an important part of the process of creating an anti-bias program. Share how you will begin the process of writing a mission statement and identify initial goals for your program.

Assignment 5

Chapter 5

Engaging Families and Growing Anti-Bias Partnerships

“Families do and don’t feel like they fit in for a whole range of reasons. We want to be heard, valued, and included in ways that seem meaningful and valuable to us.” - Parent

1. What are the Frequently Asked Questions you might include in your handout for families?
2. With your program in mind, ask yourself the questions on page 78.
3. How are you creating family visibility and connection in your program? There are suggestions in the chapter or share your ideas.
4. After reading about the anti-bias education approach developed by Ellen Wolpert, choose one of the examples of topic-focused discussions sessions to try with your staff. Share how it went and if you might use it with families in your program.

5. On page 89, Debbie shares a story from her program. Reflect on similar experiences you have had with holiday celebrations in early childhood programs. How would you approach the creation of a formal policy regarding holidays at school?

Assignment 6

Chapter 6

Deepening and Sustaining Anti-Bias Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills

1. Read through the example on page 93, and reflect on how to see classroom experiences through an anti-bias lens. Share an example from your program or create an experience or invitation you would like to try with children.
2. Explain how you could use the Planning Guide for Teacher's suggestions to be more systematic in how you implement anti-bias education.
3. "Trying to make different members of the community feel respected when their beliefs are in contradiction to my own or others' is difficult." – Teacher
This quote from the text introduces the section on working with families. Recognizing that families' previous experiences impact how they relate to their child's school and teachers. How can you learn more about families and create a deeper understanding between families and schools? How can the ideas shared in this chapter, including the skills shared on pages 105-108 support your work?
4. What concerns or questions do you have about engaging families?

Assignment 7

Chapter 7

Managing and Negotiating Disequilibrium and Conflict

1. Explain the forms of conflict outlined in the text. For each form of conflict, read the examples and reflect on the solutions provided. Share your reaction to the text and your own experiences with disequilibrium in your program. What have you learned how will you handle conflict going forward?
2. According to the text, how can those in leadership positions (and classroom teachers) influence the outcome of anti-bias conflicts?
3. Explain "the third space" and the steps in the process of addressing conflicts with a cultural perspective.
4. Responses to Conflict. Read the examples of conflict between families and programs on pages 121-124. Choose 2 conflicts and write a response based on how you might

address the conflict in your program. You might consider the third-space procedure of “acknowledge, ask, and adapt”, other suggestions from the text, or your solutions.

5. Reflect on the last section of the chapter, “Thoughtful Risk-Taking,” take time to reflect on your comfort level with conflict and risk-taking. Share how you have managed conflict in the past and steps you might take going forward.

Assignment 8

Chapter 8

Documenting the Shift Toward Anti-Bias Change

1. Consider the Indicators of Leader Change and share your responses to the Self-Awareness and Knowledge section on page 131.
2. Explain *Dispositions* and respond to the examples in the Leadership Skills and Dispositions section on page 131.
3. How can you use the Tools for Documenting Growth and Efficacy as a Leader? Start by taking the time to record your reflections, feelings, and actions. If you haven’t already, start a journal to document the journey toward anti-bias practice.
4. How will you provide initial support and professional learning to teaching staff on anti-bias education? Will you try the Indicators of Teacher Change in the Classroom (pages 134-136), to guide observations and documentation?
5. Being consistent and intentional about documentation can encourage growth in classroom practice. Explain how you envision using the tools and processes in the change to support teacher practice.

Assignment 9

Chapters 9 and 10

Anti-Bias Education in a Climate of Required Standards and Assessments

1. If you are using a program assessment tool, share how it addresses diversity issues. If what you are currently using does not address anti-bias education, what steps will you take to ensure cultural diversity is addressed?
2. As you read this chapter, what questions do you have? What are some ways you can connect your work with others in the community and advocate for anti-bias education?

Sustaining the Anti-Bias Vision

How will you tell the story of your anti-bias journey both personally and professionally? As you read pages 158-165, what resonates with you? What combination of dreams and strategies will guide your work and ensure it will be sustained? How can you engage your staff in the work of making the anti-bias education holdable? Share your dreams, strategies, and plans.

Reflect on your experience with this book study:

How did this learning opportunity change your practice?

Discuss the next steps for your professional learning with your group, or a partner.

Set at least 4 goals regarding the implementation of anti-bias education practices. Arrange a time to meet with a partner or small group to share concerns and celebrations.