



Reflect on your own experiences with children, families, and colleagues. If you are an supervisor, administrator, or adult educator, how might you use these questions and activities to help other adults reflect on their experiences?

Turn Questions into Action

While exploring the previous 5 Keys to Reflection and Inquiry, you have considered:

Your own values and philosophy;

The physical and emotional environments in which you work;

Who you can support and with whom you can collaborate

The ECE Competencies related to special needs and inclusion; and

Inspiration from multiple perspectives.

Try This

Let's explore further, and put your knowledge and questions into action.

Use descriptive, accurate, and respectful language. For instance, the educators of Reggio Emilia use the phrases "children with special rights," instead of our phrasing, "children with special needs." Write down all of the terminology you use or you have heard used to describe people with disabilities. After careful consideration, highlight the words or phrases that you think are descriptive (without judgment or bias), accurate, and respectful. Which do you consider derogatory or dismissive?

In your mind, what is the difference in meaning between these two phrases: "children with special rights," and "children with special needs"?

What messages do you think each of these phrases conveys to, and about, children, to families, and to the community?

Have a conversation with the other adults in your program. Consider together, and agree on, what language you will use to strengthen the view of children of all abilities.

Visit <http://www.inclusivechildcare.org/podcast.cfm> and select a podcast about including all children in early childhood settings. After listening to the podcast, reflect on how the podcast reinforced or challenged my thinking about inclusion.

Identify learning goals for children on which you can focus.

What materials and activities could you offer that would build on inclusive experiences for the children and families in your program?

Once you have identified your goals, materials, and activities, choose one of them to implement. Then, with a colleague or mentor, evaluate how the activity met your learning goals, and what other materials and activities could further expand your goals.
