

# Teaching in the Neighborhood

Early Summer 2023

A monthly dose of teaching ideas, updates, and inspiration for teachers across the Neighborhood EBSOC, Ellis Early Learning, Epiphany Early Learning, Horizons for Homeless Children, Nurtury

## Upcoming Workshops and Opportunities

\* **Monthly Webinar:** July 10th 7-8pm. Topic: Facilitating Learning Through Play: Play is the work of children! We will discuss brain science, the 12 types of play and concrete ways to increase children's learning. [Click here to register](#) or visit Neighborhood Villages website!

\* **Reflective Practice Workshops** - We heard you! The timing of our RPWs has not been helpful for educators to attend. We have decided to change the timing so that more of you are able to join virtually, if you would like! New time: 2-3pm Stay tuned for the date of our next RPW!

## Helping Kids Thrive With Healthy Risks!

TEACHER TALK!

As educators, we are all skilled at keeping children safe while encouraging them to build confidence and self-esteem. *Did you know that cultivating healthy risk-taking habits during unstructured play has a range of benefits for developing brains?* It's important to teach children how to differentiate between **safe risks** (such as climbing an unfamiliar structure, or helping an adult prepare food with real utensils) and **hazards** (such as touching something sharp or hot). Here are some things to try:

- **Assume all children are competent.** Research shows that adults might differentiate risk-taking based on gender or size, so it's important to be aware that you are allowing everyone in your care to take reasonable risks, tailored to their unique personality!
- **Have conversations about risks.** Even when children are pre-verbal, use vocabulary that helps them assess risks without fear, for example: "This structure looks high. I wonder how you plan to climb it?"
- **Stay close, but allow autonomy.** Children will notice and appreciate the safety of having a loving adult nearby, but don't hover-let them experiment as much as possible.



# Great Ideas from Great Teachers!

## Toddler Curriculum Classroom Highlight How are bodies the same and different?



*In the teachers' words...*

**"We asked the children to identify their own colors. The children were able to identify them!"**



One of the Toddler classrooms piloting curriculum recently engaged in studying this question during through learning experiences inside the Our Bodies exploration from the toddler curriculum they are piloting.

One classroom in particular decided to follow the strong interest of their children in investigating one particular facet of our bodies: skin color.

**Little People Play House**, a toddler classroom at Nurtury, entered into a many weeks-long study of skin tones through paper, painting, playdough, texture experiences, and read alouds of texts including *Bodies Are Cool*, *Shades of Black*, and *Every Body*.

The classroom is filled with the children's artwork related to this exploration, with beautiful handprints of many shades of brown, colorful faces and people, each one painted by and representing a specific child in the classroom.

We are looking forward to seeing where the children bring this investigation next!



## Welcome, Summer! Fun things to do in Boston this summer:

- Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum: Free First Thursdays
- Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA): Free every Thursday 5-9pm
- Boston Children's Museum: \$1 admission Sunday afternoons during time slot 1:30-4:30pm - online reservation required
- Jeff Jam Kids Singalong - 7/14/23 @ Boston Public Market
- Vital Village Network July Children's Storytime - 7/5/23 @ Fields Corner Branch (1520 Dot Ave)
- Check out Eventbrite.com and search 'free kids' for more events!

Do you have ideas to share with the Neighborhood?

Share your ideas with us: [pthompson@neighborhoodvillages.org](mailto:pthompson@neighborhoodvillages.org)