

# 13 Guiding Principles of the Black Lives Matter at School Movement for Young Children

**Restorative Justice** is the commitment to build a beloved and loving community that is sustainable and growing.

"We know that if you knock down someone's block building, you have to help them rebuild it, you can't just say, "Sorry," and walk away. Another way to say that is restorative justice, and it's the idea that we have to help people when something happens to them, even if it was by accident."

**Empathy** is one's ability to connect with others by building relationships built on mutual trust and understanding.

"It's so important to think about how other people feel because different people have different feelings. Sometimes it helps to think about how you would feel if the same thing that happened to your friend happened to you. Another way to say that is empathy."

**Loving Engagement** is the commitment to practice justice, liberation, and peace.

"It's so important to make sure that we are always trying to be fair and peaceful. We have to keep practicing this so that we can get better and better at it. Another way to say that is loving engagement."

**Diversity** is the celebration and acknowledgment of differences and commonalities across cultures.

"Different people do different things and have different feelings. It's so important that we have lots of different kinds of people in our community and that everyone feels safe. Another way to say that is diversity."

**Globalism** is our ability to see how we are impacted or privileged within the Black global family that exists across the world in different regions. "Globalism means that we are thinking about all the different people all over the world and thinking about the ways to keep things fair everywhere."

**Transgender Affirming** is the commitment to continue to make space for our trans siblings by encouraging leadership and recognizing trans-antagonistic violence, while doing the work required to dismantle cisgender privilege and uplift Black trans folk.

"Everybody has the right to choose their own gender by listening to their own heart and mind. Everyone gets to choose if they are a girl or a boy or both or neither or something else, and no one else gets to choose for them."

**Queer Affirming** is working towards a queer-affirming network where heteronormative thinking no longer exists.

"Everybody has the right to choose who they love and the kind of family they want by listening to their own heart and mind."

**Collective Value** means that all Black lives, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status or location, matter.

"Everybody is important and has the right to be safe and happy. Another way to say that is collective value."

**Intergenerational** is a space free from ageism where we can learn from each other.

"It's important that we have spaces where people of different ages can come together and learn from each other. Another way to say that is intergenerational."

**Black Families** creates a space that is family friendly and free from patriarchal practices.

"There are lots of different kinds of families; what makes a family is that it's people who take care of each other. It's important to make sure that all families feel welcome."

**Black Villages** is the disruption of Western nuclear family dynamics and a return to the "collective village" that takes care of each other.

"There are lots of different kinds of families; what makes a family is that it's people who take care of each other; those people might be related, or maybe they choose to be family together and to take care of each other. Sometimes, when it's lots of families together, it can be called a village."

**Black Women** is the building of women-centered spaces free from sexism, misogyny, and male-centeredness.

"There are some people who think that women are less important than men. We know that all people are important and have the right to be safe and talk about their own feelings."

**Unapologetically Black** is the affirmation that Black Lives Matter and that our love, and desire for justice and freedom are prerequisites for wanting that for others. These principles are the blueprint for healing and do not include nor do they support ignoring or sanitizing the ugliness and discomfort that comes with dealing with race and anti-race issues.

"There are lots of different kinds of people and one way that we're different is the color of our skin. It's important to make sure that all people are treated fairly, and that's why we, and lots of other people all over the country and the world, are part of the Black Lives Matter movement."