

4. Children need environments that foster positive/healthy identity development.

Advocacy Strategies

*potential for DEY mini-grant funding

1. Speak Up for Inclusive Practices

- **Strategy:** Advocate for environments, policies, and curricula that reflect and respect the diverse identities of children.
- **Suggestions:** Request books, visuals, and materials that reflect varied cultures, languages, family structures, and abilities. Encourage administrators and curriculum developers to include equity and identity in early learning standards.

2. Partner with Families

- **Strategy:** Collaborate with families to understand and honor each child's background, values, and experiences.
- **Suggestions:** Invite families to share stories, traditions, and languages in the classroom. Advocate for school practices that respect cultural differences, including holidays, food, and communication styles.

3. Educate Others About Identity Development

- **Strategy:** Share knowledge about how identity forms in the early years and why it matters.
- **Suggestions:** *Host workshops, discussions, or newsletters for colleagues and parents explaining the link between identity, belonging, and learning. Utilize child development research to support advocacy efforts.

4. Model Inclusive Language and Behavior

- **Strategy:** Be a visible example of respect, inclusion, and affirmation of all identities.
- **Suggestions:** Use children's correct names and pronouns, affirm diverse family structures, and respond thoughtfully to bias or exclusion. Help others reflect on unconscious bias and stereotypes.

5. Advocate for Anti-Bias Training and Equity Policies

- **Strategy:** Push for systemic change that supports identity development for all children.
- **Suggestions:** Campaign for regular anti-bias and equity training for educators. Support policies that promote diversity in hiring, curriculum design, and classroom practices. Encourage people to download and use *DEY's Framework: Fostering Healthy Identity in Young Children*.