



A Treasure Trove of Free Resources to Support Diversity in Your ECE Program- Libraries and Librarians

There's diversity in early childhood education...

- About 25% of children under age 5 come from a home language other than English
- And they come from many different cultures
- And the other kind of diversity has to do with economic diversity and the differences that causes in how children access literacy and technology.





- This growing level of diversity is placing a growing burden on early childhood programs
- Areas where there is high concentration of languages other than English are more likely to also have higher than average levels of poverty.



Key reasons to support EVERY child's home language and culture:

- Academic/Cognitive advantages
- Identity/Self-Esteem
- Family Strength
- Social Status & Relationships



Key reasons to support digital equity:



- So all children enter school ready to learn with technology
- So families can have access to information that will help them thrive
- So the cost burden of overcoming multiple challenges can be shared more broadly in the community
- So a stronger community can work together to improve child outcomes.



Some of the challenges early childhood teachers face:

- Lack of money for bilingual materials
- Inability to quickly respond when child with new language enrolls
- Hard to find culturally or linguistically appropriate materials
- Lack of info about the families' cultures, countries of origin
- Lack of technology or internet access
- Lack of ability to provide needed supports for parents.
- Many children of immigrant families or low income families may never access high quality preschool to be ready for school - but they might access the local library.



When I work with diverse ECE programs, I suggest they contact their local public libraries because:



- Libraries are in your community and
- They have things you need and
- Things you may not be able to get on your own and
- Their mission is surprisingly similar to yours!



And the more I asked questions, the more I learned:

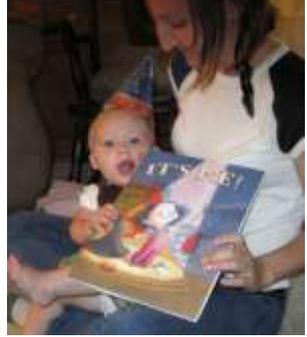
- Many ECE programs have some kind of relationship with their library
- But - some have NEVER THOUGHT of using the library to support their work
- But a few ECE programs have significant, innovative partnerships that we can all learn from...



Tammy DiBartolo, Youth Services Manager at the Rapides Parish Library in Alexandria, LA. wrote:

“at Rapides Parish Library. We have a theme-bag delivery service to 63 Head Start and daycare centers in our area. We also became certified to do training for these teachers and daycare providers so that they could receive clock hours toward their CEUs or CDAs... My staff and I belong to several community organizations that work with children. We often do programs for each other’s groups. This has been an effective way to get the word out about our programs and offer other groups as resources for families with children who may need services.”





So now we will be talking about:

- What can you borrow from a library?
- What kinds of technology can the offer?
- What can librarians do for you?
- What can librarians do for families?
- And what can you do for them?
- How can libraries support ece teacher professional development?



*We'll take some questions then
hand the program over to Lisa
Guernsey...*



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