The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, that create a dynamic, layered effect. The colors range from a bright lime green to a darker forest green, set against a solid black background.

Advancing Equity in the Early Care and Education Workforce

Today...

- ▶ Is a conversation starter-
please use the chat to
interrupt, ask questions
share thoughts, experiences
and ideas.

Who am I?

- ▶ Assistant Superintendent, Early Childhood Education
Placer County Office of Education
- ▶ Senior Policy Advisor First 5 California
- ▶ Adjunct Professor, Sierra College
- ▶ Contributing Author, Anti Bias Education for Young
Children (2020)
- ▶ Diversity and Equity Educator

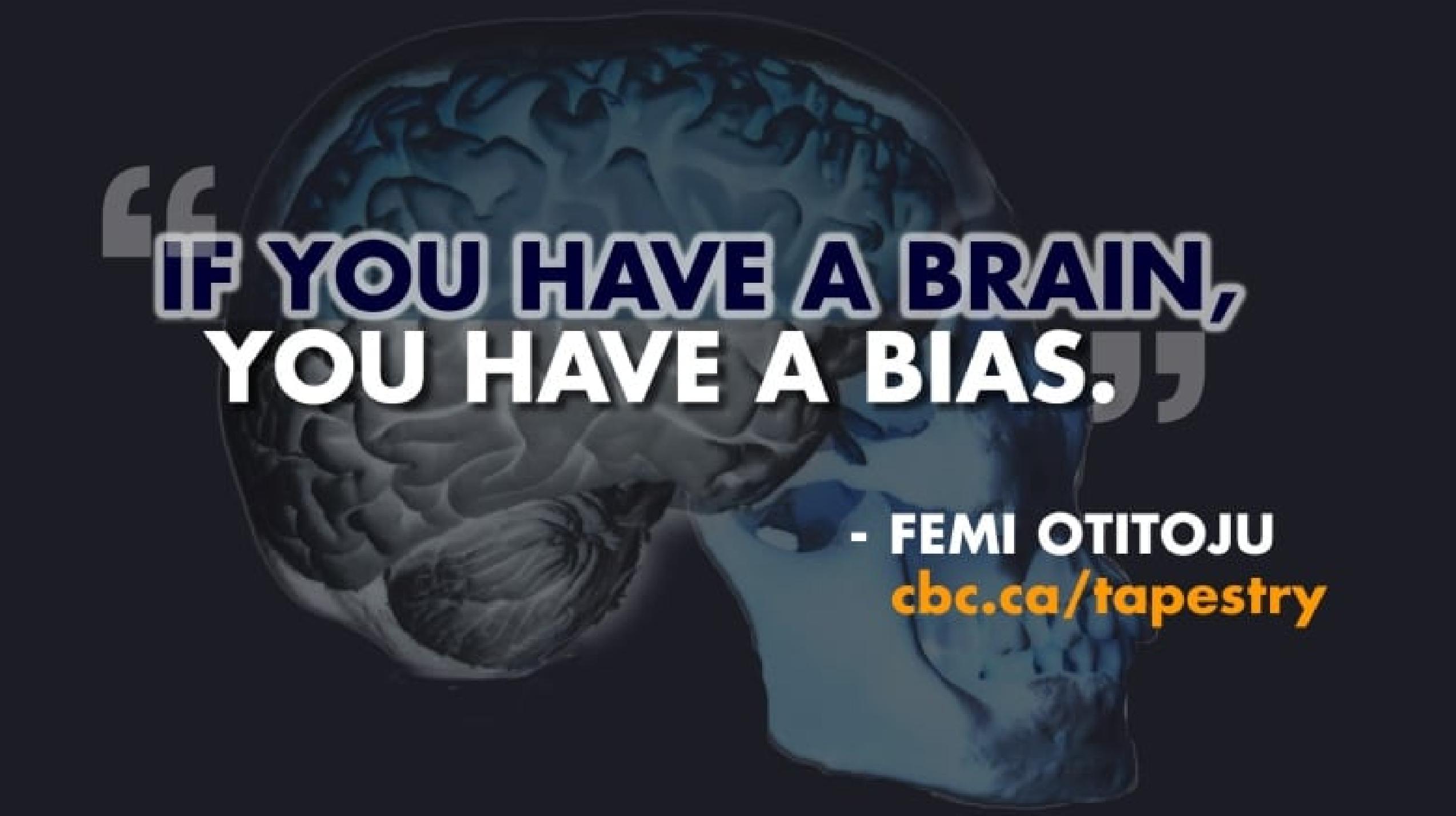


Implicit Bias
It's All Around Us

IMPLICIT BIAS

WHAT WE DON'T THINK WE THINK



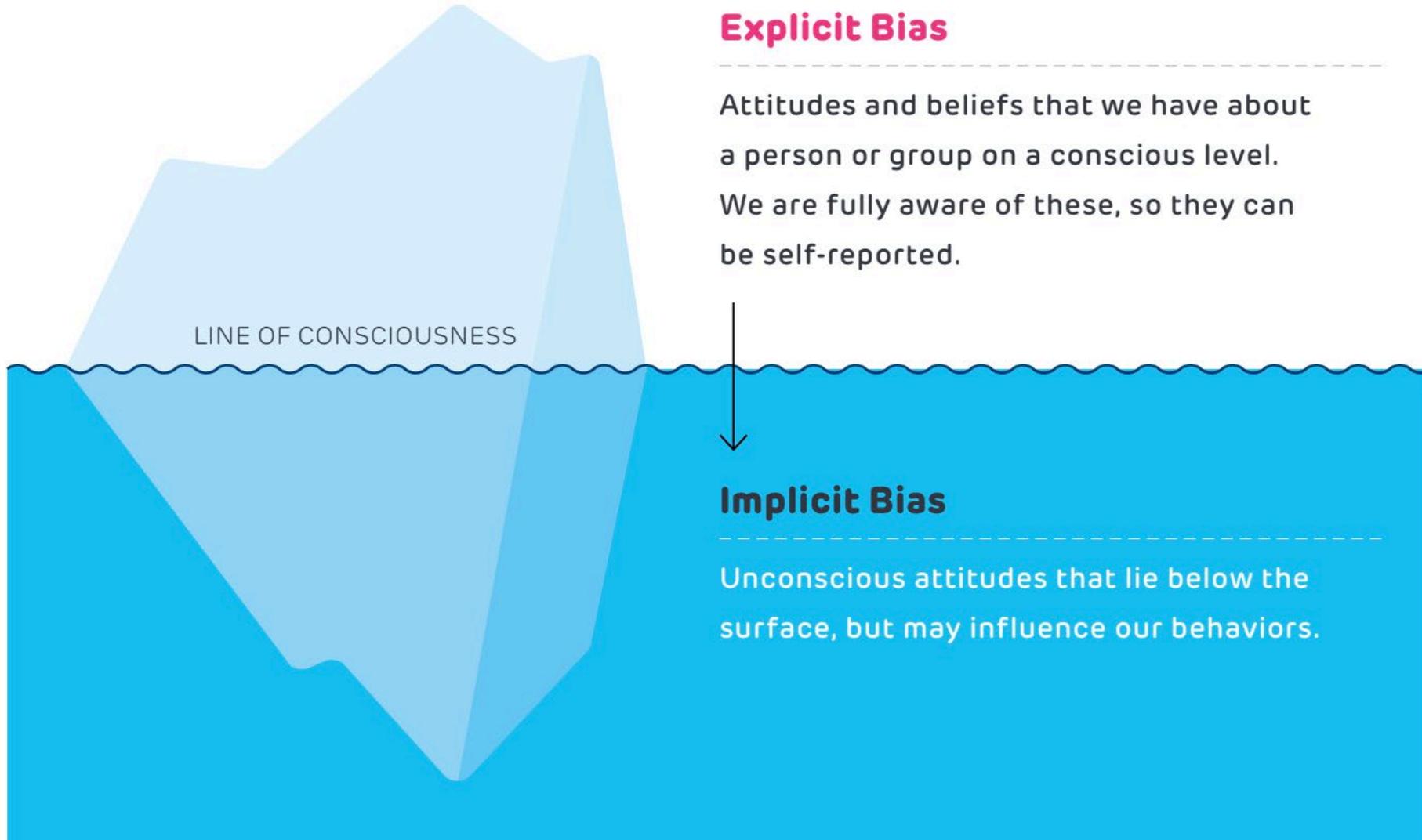


**“IF YOU HAVE A BRAIN,
YOU HAVE A BIAS.”**

- FEMI OTITOJU

cbc.ca/tapestry

Just as COVID-19
revealed inequities in
housing, medical care
and work, QRIS
revealed inequities
within and implicit
bias towards our ECE
workforce



Explicit Bias

Attitudes and beliefs that we have about a person or group on a conscious level. We are fully aware of these, so they can be self-reported.

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes that lie below the surface, but may influence our behaviors.

Implicit Bias can be favorable or unfavorable...

Definition: Implicit Bias

Implicit Bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases can be favorable and unfavorable and are activated involuntarily, without our awareness or intentional control. They reside deep in our subconscious and are not accessible through introspection. Implicit biases develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages.

“ All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. ”

“They can do this best when they are effectively supported by the early learning settings in which they work and when they and their wider communities...

”

“embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and”

“

Work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities.

”

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Position Statement, April 2019

“

Thus, all early childhood educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. ”

“Child Care and Early Education policies are shaped by a history of systemic and structural racism.”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

“As a result, there are major racial disparities in children’s access to quality child care that meets their cultural and linguistic needs and enables their parents to work.”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

“Early care and education workers are overwhelmingly in low-quality jobs with inadequate compensation;”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

“workers of color are often
relegated to the lowest-paid
positions

”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

“According to research, high-quality ECE is critical to children’s development and family economic stability, particularly for low-income families.

”

“It is critical that children of all racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds have equitable access to quality early childhood programs.”

“ Such programs should employ a diverse workforce with equitable access to high-quality jobs... ”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

“that include compensation reflecting the importance and difficulty of their work as well as the field’s increasing qualifications.”

“ Addressing racial inequities in the early childhood system will require increased investments at the state/federal levels and smart policy decisions about expectations for , and delivery of , child care and early education. ”

CLASP, Equity Starts Early www.clasp.org

Placer County Office of Education

- ▶ Stage 1,2,3 and Alternative Payment Program
- ▶ Family Child Care Hones Education Network
- ▶ Local Child Care Planning Council
- ▶ Resource and Referral Network
- ▶ State Preschool
- ▶ QRIS/IMPACT
- ▶ First 5 Placer
- ▶ Head Start/Early Head Start
- ▶ Preschool Development Grant/Parent Cafes



California School

DASHBOARD

Our community data did not tell a good story for many of our children African American, low-income, Latinx, foster children, single parents, teen parents or our isolated rural children.

There was a gap between our vision
and our reality....from the
perspective of our providers and
families

We committed to becoming allies - advocates for and collaborative partners with our marginalized children and families and providers - rather than just doing services to them.

Where did we start in Placer County?



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Advancing Equity





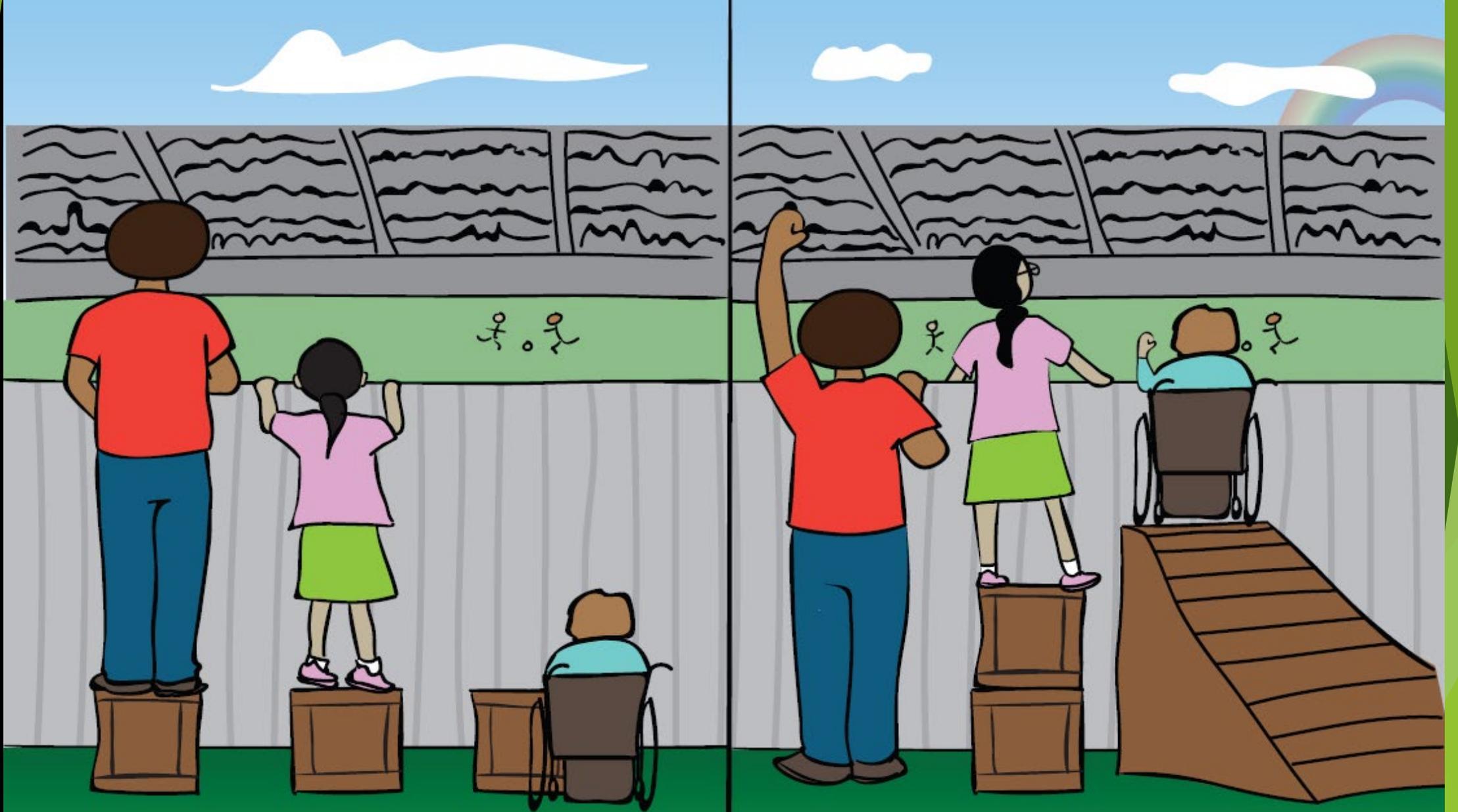
What did it mean for us to focus on equity?



We can't solve
the problems if
we can't see the
problems

We can't close the
opportunity gap
if we can't see
the opportunities...

Community Data...drove professional development and training and where we targeted outreach to and funding for providers



EQUALITY

EQUITY



Diversity of
people,
perspectives



Inclusion:
power, voice,
organizational
culture



Equity = results
from policy,
practice,
position



We had to talk about explicit and implicit bias... and what to do when we, our families or coworkers exhibited it.

Implicit Bias is...



Attitudes, Stereotypes, & Beliefs
that can affect how we treat others.

Implicit bias is not intentional, but it can still impact how we judge others based on factors, such as:



Race



Ability



Gender



Culture



Language

In early childhood settings, implicit biases can affect how providers perceive and respond to children, which can lead to unfair differences in the use of exclusionary discipline practices, such as suspension and expulsion.

Explicit bias

Expressed directly

Aware of bias

Operates consciously

Example -- "I like whites more than Latinos."

Implicit bias

Expressed indirectly

Unaware of bias

Operates sub-consciously

Example -- sitting further away from a Latino than a white individual.

Parents (Families) are a child's first and most important teacher

With accurate information parents make the best choices for their children and its ok if we don't agree with them, we still need to support them and the caregivers they choose.

We believe that the early learning and a childcare field is a continuum, and we honor family choice of childcare setting...follow the child and support them and their caregivers in all settings

- ▶ FFN
- ▶ Family Child Care
- ▶ Private Sector
- ▶ Public Sector

We had to get money into as many of our providers as possible - which ones?



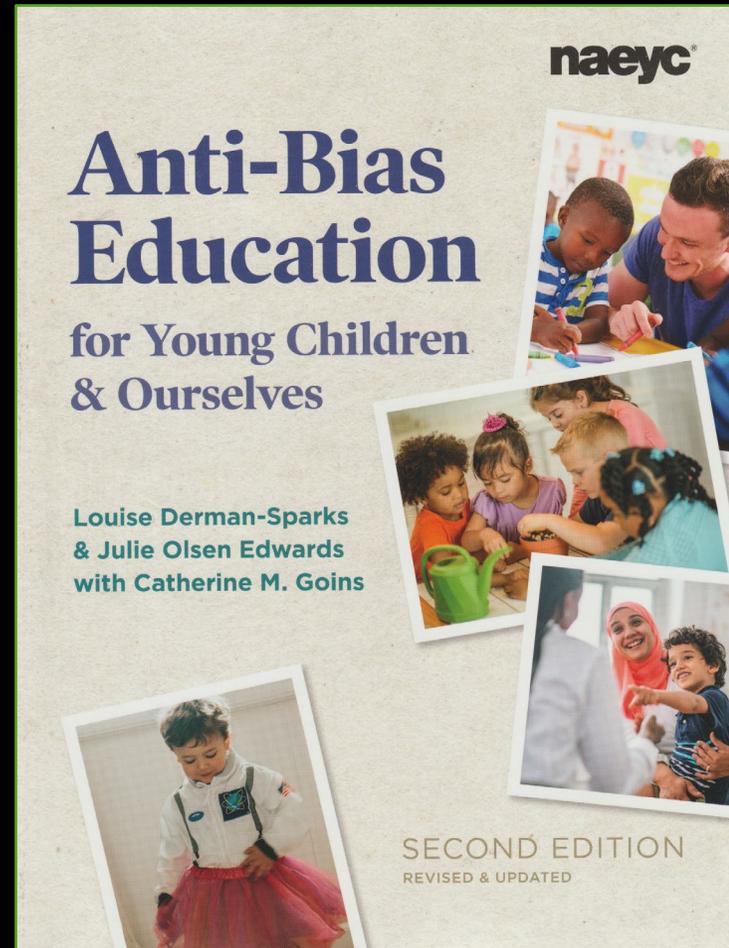
[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

We provided incentives for the process and not the outcomes and that was a game changer...

We kept the focus always, always,
always on the children.

Anti-Bias Education - a hopeful
approach...

2020



4 Core Goals of Anti-Bias Education

- ▶ Identity

- ▶ Diversity

- ▶ Justice

- ▶ Activism

ABE Goal 1, Identity

- ▶ Children and adults will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride and positive social identities.



ABE Goal 2, Diversity

- ▶ Children and adults will express comfort and joy with human diversity, use accurate language for human differences, and form deep, caring connections across all dimensions of human diversity.



ABE Goal 3, Justice

- ▶ Children and adults will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.



ABE Goal 4, Activism

- ▶ Children and adults will demonstrate a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with other or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.



We had to educate ourselves about
social identities...

What is Social Identity?

- ▶ *Social Identity* is the assigned memberships, in groups defined by the society, and shared with many other people.
- ▶ There are many social identities, including economic class identity, gendered identity, ethnic/heritage identities, racialized identity, and religious identity.
- ▶ Social identities have great influence and power in every one's lives in society - providing social, economic, cultural advantages or disadvantages.
- ▶ *Individual identity*, another essential component of children's development, is about an individual's specific personality, interests, abilities, and beliefs about themselves as a specific person.

- ▶ Social Identities and attitudes are externally imposed on *all* children and constructed by them from the inside.
- ▶ The dynamics of systemic racism -- and the many other forms of prejudice and discrimination in each child's society -- profoundly influences all children's social identities and attitudes.
- ▶ Significant adults in children's lives play a crucial role in how children construct their social identities and attitudes.

Social Identities Include

- ▶ Ethnicity/Heritage
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Place of Birth
- ▶ Family Structure
- ▶ Race/Racialized Identity
- ▶ Sexuality
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Economic Class
- ▶ Able self
- ▶ Body Type/Size

Groups defined as the norm; recipient of societal advantages

- ▶ European American
- ▶ English Speaking
- ▶ Born in the USA
- ▶ White
- ▶ Male
- ▶ Heterosexual
- ▶ Christian
- ▶ College Degree
- ▶ Ages 20-50 for women/20-60 for men
- ▶ Slim, fit
- ▶ Healthy, no apparent disability
- ▶ Middle to upper class
- ▶ Male/female married with 1-3 biological children

Groups defined as the norm; recipient of societal advantages

- ▶ European American
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Groups that are marginalized and targets of institutional prejudice and discrimination

- ▶ Indigenous peoples and all other ethnicities besides European American
- ▶ Immigrants
- ▶ Home Language other than English
- ▶ People of color; biracial, multiracial
- ▶ Female, non-binary, transgender, etc.
- ▶ Asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian
- ▶ Children, adolescents, women over 50, men over 60
- ▶ Large, overweight
- ▶ Any form of disability
- ▶ Poor or working class
- ▶ Unmarried, single parents, gay/lesbian parents, foster, blended, adopted, divorced

We had to learn about the social identities of others

- ▶ FROM THEIR EXPERIENCES and STORIES
- ▶ We had to have very brave conversations
- ▶ Sometimes they were uncomfortable
- ▶ They were always necessary
- ▶ We had to talk about institutional Sexism, Racism, Classism on our profession and identify where we could interrupt/disrupt and where we needed to advocate for change
- ▶ We had to interrupt conversations, behaviors and systems that did not meet our goals for children and families

We had to talk about racism...

Obvious Racism

Hate Graffiti Lynching
Racist Fliers Hate Group
Burning Crosses Rallies

America's Iceberg

The Silence of Good People

Racist Jokes Hiring Discrimination Housing Discrimination Believing That We Are "Post-Racial" Confederate Flags

"I'm Colorblind" Assuming That Good Intentions Are Enough Not Challenging Racist Jokes

Anti-Immigration Policies/Practices Racial Profiling "I Never Owned A Slave" Denial of White Privilege English-Only Initiatives

Euro-Centric Curriculum Racist Mascots Bootstrap Theory Mass Incarceration Not Believing Experiences of POC

Below-the-water-line racism



The problem with “color-blind” or being neutral..

When we do not “see” or acknowledge or address people’s social identities and all that it means in terms of how society sees them and how they see themselves you are invalidating their very existence. We can’t treat all children and families the same because they do not all have the same opportunities. This is the opportunity gap.



“I am color blind I don't see color I treat all the children the same”



We had to constantly ask ourselves who was not at the table, whose voice was missing, who was making the decisions...and we sometimes fell short, especially with hearing from parents, but we never gave up and we questioned everything through an equity lens

We had to identify local/state/federal policies that had unintentional consequences for the early childhood workforce

Q.R.I.S.

Q.R.I.S. in Placer County

- ▶ Family Friend and Neighbors
- ▶ Family Child Care Homes
- ▶ Private Sector Centers
- ▶ Public Sector Centers

Providers helped us
write the grant

Parents helped us
define quality

Outside Facilitators
helped us learn the
truth about what FCC
providers really
thought...and we got
better

Lessons Learned

Family, Friend and

Neighbor

Family Child Care

Private Centers

What worked for us

- ▶ Flexibility within the IMPACT /QRIS funding to meet local workforce needs
- ▶ Engaging parents
- ▶ Providing training AND follow up on diversity, inclusion and equity
- ▶ Listening to, Respecting, and Recognizing Providers
- ▶ Not lowering standards, raising individualized supports
- ▶ Supporting Professional Development and Higher Education - recognizing that many of our older workforce does not want to go back to school

What did not work for us

- ▶ Lack of consensus on what school readiness means
- ▶ Limited definitions of quality from the state
- ▶ Lack of ability to track DRDP and preschool suspensions/expulsions by race
- ▶ Lack of county wide data on providers by race and their enrolled children
- ▶ Discussions on trainers needing to be “state certified”
- ▶ Building on an ECE system that reimburses so little
- ▶ Lack of multiple ways for providers to demonstrate competence and effectiveness
- ▶ Multiple funding streams

Advancing Equity for Early Education Workforce

A journey AND a
destination

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