

# [Cultural diversity and anti bias practice](https://assignbuster.com/cultural-diversity-and-anti-bias-practice/)

[Art & Culture](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/art-n-culture/), [Cultural Diversity](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/art-n-culture/cultural-diversity/)

Cultureis the learned set of socially acquired traditions, lifestyles and behaviours, that are passed down from generation to generation. (Miller, 2007) These include patterns and ways of thinking, beliefs, knowledge, art crafts, morals , and customs.

In earlychildhoodsettings educators regularly come across children that belong to a different race, ethnicity or religion . (Ramsey, 2004). Children that come from a different cultural and linguistic background can have a positive or negative experience depending on theenvironmentand the teaching practices that early childhood educators provide for them.

When children get to know their own culture and see it that it is respected they develop a sense of belonging (Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2003). Developing strategies where children can be exposed to their own culture and language helps them and their families to gain a sense of belonging.

Promoting an anti bias practice is a strategy that provides children with a solid understanding ofequalityand illuminates positive factors about coming from a different culture. (Miller, 2007). Anti bias practice also promotes self esteem and shows that children have individual differences that should be respected and acknowledge.

Due to the fact that New Zealand is a country of migrants and possesses a multicultural background the early childhood curriculum, Te Whariki, promotes the diversity of cultures. (MoE, 1996) To support children and families that come from different cultures teachers should make use of different strategies to promote multiculturaleducation.

Involving parents that come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds is a way of supporting thefamilyso that the child feels more involved in the centre. (Gerrity, 2003) This could be done by inviting them in to the classroom to teach some basic home language words, or showing pictures of their country along with art, crafts, foodor traditional clothing. Showing the social and developmental progress of their children through profiles which contain photos and art work of the children can be a helpful tool for parents for whom English is not their first language as this allows them to be involved with their child’s education.

Language can be a big barrier for children that do not speak English as their first language. Children may suffer from social isolation when their language is not available. (Tabors, 1998) Using a lot of body language, giving simple instructions and repeating key words and sentences are some strategies that teachers can use to break this isolation. (Tabors, 1998) Other strategies that can be included are playing the child’s home languagemusicand using games that can represent words in both languages like matching games with shapes, parts of the body or clothing items. Teaching children some basic words such as those needed for the toilet, food, drink or sleep is a strategy that makes children feel more secure about themselves and allows them to feel that they belong to the centre community.

Early childhood educators are responsible for teaching children and caring for their development regardless of their cultural and linguistic background. (Elliot, 1999) Teachers can identify the needs of different cultures in New Zealand such as Pacific , Asian communities or refugees by working together with their families and learning from their culture.(New Zealand Tertiary College [NZTC], 2007).

Bringing the culture of the child into the centre is another useful strategy. Physical settings are a tool that teachers can use for children to learn about different cultures.(Ramsey, 2004) These settings can display multicultural environments which display pictures or photographs of landscapes and people, art crafts and language signs so the classroom and staff can learn from the culture and be involved. Books that describe stories, myths and legends and social issues of a culture can be a helpful strategy that promotes language skills and meaningful learning of a different culture.

Educators can also promote a multicultural curriculum by creating classroom environments and providing activities where children can work in a cooperative way and where they can develop a sense of empathy and acceptance of each other regardless of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well ascommunicationand social skills. (Ramsey, 2004)

Strategies that support children’s different linguistic and cultural backgrounds should be woven throughout all curriculum areas and everyday activities (Miller, 2007). Teachers should make sure that all those strategies enable the development of a sense of belonging in children with different cultures should be implemented in the planning, assessment and evaluation cycle to reach a positive outcome in the social development and learning process of the child.

Supporting children and families with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and developing strategies that provide a sense of belonging is a way to acknowledging the unique culture and individuality of each child and therefore it should be celebrated and included into teaching practice.