

The Four Anti-Bias Education Goals Are for Adults Too

One of the great gifts of teaching is the ongoing learning that it requires. Quality ABE relies on teachers who embrace the four core goals as tools for their own growth. Understanding who you are—and how you came to be the person you now are—gives you a deeper understanding of how children develop and what shaped them. This is a lifelong process. Teachers are on a continual journey of self-discovery as they work with children, families, and staff, who sometimes reflect their own experiences and sometimes challenge them.

ABE goals for teachers parallel the four core goals for working with children:

Adult Goal 1, Identity: Increase your awareness and understanding of your own individual and social identity in its many facets (race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, family structure, economic class) and your own cultural contexts, both in your childhood and currently.

Adult Goal 2, Diversity: Examine what you have learned about differences, connection, and what you enjoy or fear across all aspects of human diversity.

Adult Goal 3, Justice: Identify how you have been advantaged or disadvantaged by the isms (ableism, classism, heterosexism, racism, sexism) and the stereotypes or prejudices you have absorbed about yourself or others.

Adult Goal 4, Activism: Explore your ideas, feelings, and experiences of social justice activism. Open up dialogue with colleagues and families about all these goals. Develop the courage and commitment to model for young children that you stand for fairness and to be an activist voice for children.

Stop & Think: Your Own Expectations for ABE

- What do you hope ABE could do for the children you teach? For their families? If your hopes are realized, how will it benefit them?
- What anxieties and concerns might you have about doing ABE in your particular setting or community?
- Where could you find support for doing ABE within or outside your program?
- What seems most interesting and inviting about becoming an anti-bias teacher? Which anti-bias goal interests you most right now?



You Have Already Begun

Whether you are an experienced teacher or a beginning student, ABE offers the opportunity to expand your understanding of how the social forces of systemic oppression and biases shape children. Deepening your knowledge of the dynamics of bias, fear of differences, and institutional inequity in the society at large and in your own life provides insight into your role as an early childhood educator in countering prejudice and discrimination. So too does coming to fully understand the four core goals of ABE as they apply to children and educators. This is urgent work that calls on all the best hopes you have for children, for the world, and for yourself. It is work that matters. Keep reading and learning! There's more to come.

