



# FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

*KC Ready 4s Multicultural Education Newsletter*

The KC Ready 4s Funds of Knowledge Newsletter is a new publication for the Early Childhood Education sector. The name is intentional: to honor the funds of knowledge each person contributes to the teaching and learning environment. We welcome your insights and encourage you to submit questions, future topics for consideration, and things you do to create inclusive and equitable learning spaces for all. Please submit to: [mpeake@kcready4s.org](mailto:mpeake@kcready4s.org)

## Navigating Conversations with Children



### Consider...

Your role in a child's life. Are you the parent/guardian, family friend, or educator? Do you need to consult the parents or guardians before proceeding?

The child's identities and their readiness levels of breadth and depth of the topic.

Your personal values, thoughts, and beliefs, and how they influence your responses and conversations; acknowledging you might not have the necessary knowledge, skills, or relationship to provide an in-depth or appropriate response.

Acknowledging the child's comment or inquiry while also pausing to gather thoughts, consult others, and proceed with a thoughtful response.



### Avoid...

Assuming that your beliefs, values, and thoughts are the "only" or "correct" way, especially if you are not the parent or guardian.

Deciding that what an experience or identity is/was for you and/or your family, is what it is/was for a child and/or their family - even if there is shared group membership.

Confusion in words and actions (committing to one thing yet modeling another).

Seeking information from the same sources, limiting perspectives to consider, and/or perpetuating incorrect or incomplete information.



### Embrace...

Ongoing discussions among the adults in a child's life to clarify expectations and approaches when responding to inquiries.

Preparing instead of repairing. Know oneself, including strengths and limitations. Identify resources and support.

Defining and discussing center and familial philosophies and approaches pre-enrollment. Including understanding who is served, if a center is open to the "public" - that includes any and everyone.

Preparing a response that acknowledges the child's inquiry or statement but also allows time for consideration.



# Exploring Resources for Learning

## Books to support discussions about self, others, and social issues with children

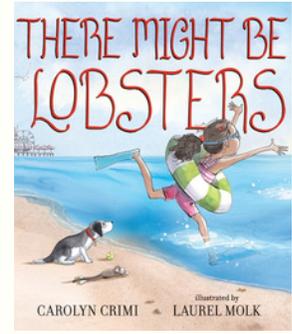
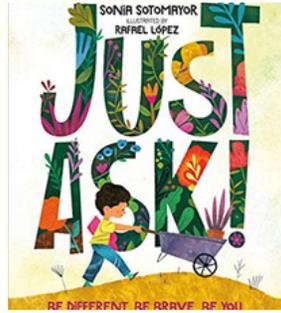
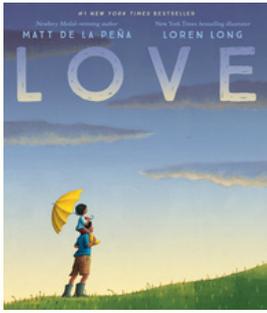


Image description L-R: front cover of the book *Love* by by Matt de la Peña (Author), Loren Long (Illustrator), front cover of the book *Just Ask!* by Sonia Sotomayor (Author), Rafael López (Illustrator), front cover of the book *Something Happened in Our Town* by Marianne Celano, and front cover of the book *There Might Be Lobsters* by Carolyn Crimi (Author), Laurel Molk (Illustrator)

### Self-Reflection Activity

1. If you work with children, review and understand all professional codes of ethics and any employer policies and regulations. If these are lacking or not available, consider requesting and/or discussing at a staff meeting.
2. Self-reflect on topics of conversation that you had as a child. Do you remember topics that were encouraged or discouraged? How did you know these topics were encouraged or discouraged?
3. As an adult, are there topics of conversation you seek and topics of conversation you avoid? What contributes to your willingness to engage or disengage in these conversations?
4. How might the topics you seek or avoid impact how you respond when communicating with children?
5. Engage others: communicate with a colleague or friend about their approaches discussing various topics with children (inquiring about context, relationship, time, place, and more). For example, ask if they think differently about a topic of discussion from a parent/guardian perspective versus an educator perspective?

**Educator Scenario:** a child shares that they went deer hunting and helped skin and eat a deer.

**Helpful:** Acknowledge the child's comment and express interest in learning about them and their family.

**Consider:** The child and family's cultural identities and practices, any recent examples of food sources that have been introduced in the classroom, and note to yourself your internal reactions (consider how they may manifest - for example, frowning at the child's statement because of your own beliefs).

**Internal growth framework:** "I have an opportunity to acknowledge something relevant to this child and their family through conversation."

**Comment:** "Thank you for sharing that with me/us, I like learning new things about you and your family."

**Not helpful:** Hushing, shaming, or ignoring the child's comment or having an over-dramatic reaction that signals agreement or disagreement (including body language, facial expressions, and more).

**Push back on considering:** There is something "right" or "wrong" with a family who legally hunts for food.

**Internal fixed framework:** "This child and family are so odd, who hunts animals for food?" or "All families should teach their kids to hunt animals for food so I am going to encourage it with other kids and families."

**No comment/too much comment:** Ignoring the child due to own beliefs and/or discomfort, or commenting, "It is wrong to kill and eat animals, that is disgusting!"

### Adult Skill Building and Guidance Resources

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-talk-children>

<https://www.strong4life.com/en/parenting/communication/having-difficult-conversations-with-kids>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/bias-starts-early-preschool-can-be-unlearned>

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