

Practice Guideline on Child Development – Section 4

Pause and reflect on how bias can influence practice

Children’s identities are either supported or hindered through their early experiences with societal ideals. With colleagues or a community of practice, critically reflect on the following passage: Researchers Farley, Sonu, Garlen and Chang-Kredl (2021) remind us that educators were also, at one time, children themselves and carry memories of their own experiences with educators, peers and schooling. Their research shows that educators’ early experiences influence their practice, particularly whether they challenge or don’t challenge inequities in education settings. For example, when educators remembered caring educators and protected childhoods filled with play, they had the tendency to assume that all children had these experiences. Here, it was important to realize that childhood innocence has historically protected the interests of mainly white children, middle class, able-bodied ‘worthiness’. Western theories of the developing child have been used to unjustly exclude and punish children who do not fit inside normative expectations of learning and development.

To understand more about beliefs and biases and how early experiences influence the practice of early childhood educators, read and reflect on the following resources:

- [*How teachers remember their own childhoods affects how they challenge school inequities*](#) (2021)
- [*Practice Note on Beliefs and Biases*](#) (2022) and the [*Reflection Guide*](#).

You can add your thoughts and reflections in the space below.