

## What is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) tool?

This tool is a guide to help researchers, content developers, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) program leaders determine the extent to which a set of resources to be used in ECE settings is effectively supporting *each and every* child's learning. Examples of resources that could be reviewed with this tool include curricula, instructional materials for teachers, guides for family engagement, or professional development presentations. Applying this tool will provide insight as to how a set of educational resources supports diversity, equity, and inclusion in the following ways:

- Represents children, teachers, and families from three specific marginalized groups: (1) Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), (2) people with disabilities, and (3) multilingual or English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Acknowledges and values the differences existing within these three marginalized groups
- Explicitly emphasizes the assets of BIPOC children and children with disabilities, and include multicultural references to welcome multilingual or ELLs
- Explores social justice or equity topics to question the social hierarchy

## Why use the DEI tool?

We recognize and understand that systemic racism and white privilege place BIPOC children, children with disabilities, and multilingual or ELLs at different starting points. Given this context, the DEI tool helps us ensure that we critically examine the set of materials that we have in place to (1) identify unintended biases and (2) make intentional adjustments to early childhood resources. A critical review and intentional adjustment of early childhood resources is a professional responsibility, needed to start dismantling systemic racism and white privilege in early childhood education, and imperative to be responsive to *each and every* child's needs.

## How does the DEI tool work?

This tool was designed to provoke critical thinking around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in ECE and to help guide improvements to resources. The tool was *not* designed to determine an evaluative rating for a resource. Therefore, the tool does not provide a specific cutoff or score to indicate whether a set of resources is "equitable". Rather, the tool outlines a framework and process for researchers, content developers, and ECE leaders to reflect and then adjust those resources to be more equitable, diverse, and inclusive. You will find that the tool includes several criteria, some of which may be more or less relevant given a specific resource's purpose or intended audience.

To use this tool, we recommend that you follow these steps:

1. Identify a set of resources to be used in early childhood education settings.
2. Scan the indicators and examples in this tool to get an idea of what you'll be paying attention to.
3. Read the set of resources from start to finish.
4. Go back to this tool and consider each criterion.

### Structure of the DEI tool:

The tool is comprised of three dimensions, each of which contains several criteria:

1. Representation (3 criteria)
2. Accurate portrayal (4 criteria)
3. Challenge of status quo (5 criteria)

Each criterion (e.g., “*Represent BIPOC children and families?*” for the Representation dimension) includes bullets with examples of how it may look in a set of resources. The examples aim to guide your use of the tool but are not intended to be exhaustive, meaning that you may come up with new ones!

You will rate each criterion using one of the following three categories:

- Good to go, no changes needed: This set of resources meets the criterion and you don’t have any suggestions.
- Minor changes needed: Overall, the set of resources meets the criterion but could benefit from some small improvements or edits.
- Major changes are needed: The set of resources does not sufficiently meet the criterion and requires major work to improve its readiness.

If you rate a criterion as “Minor changes needed” or “Major changes are needed” we ask that you provide specific recommendations in the corresponding box to improve the resource.

### Scoring tips

- Some sets of resources use a neutral approach that does not name specific groups (e.g., use words “children” or “families” without specifying groups), which may make the tool more difficult to apply. As a general consideration, when looking at resources with diversity, equity, and inclusion in mind we do not want the language used across resources to always be neutral or treating all children and families equally. Rather, when applying an equity lens, we want resources to explicitly represent and emphasize the assets of children and families who, historically and presently, have had them the least (i.e., people of color, children with disabilities, multilingual or ELLs).

1. Representation: The extent to which the material represent children, teachers, and families who are BIPOC, have a disability, and/or are multilingual or ELLs to affirm their belonging to the larger community and society.

Does this set of materials:	Ready to go	Minor changes needed	Major changes needed
<p>1.1. Represent children and families who are BIPOC and/or multilingual or ELLs? Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Images of BIPOC children and families</li> <li>• Footage of classrooms with a diverse racial/ethnic makeup, that include BIPOC children and/or learners who are multilingual or ELLs</li> <li>• Written reference to different ethnic/cultural traditions, languages, religions, names, clothing, etc.</li> <li>• Event or experiences are seen from different points of view, highlighting racial and differences</li> </ul>			
Notes:			
<p>1.2. Represent children and/or adults with disabilities? Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Images of children/people using supports that may denote a disability (e.g., wheelchair, glasses, service animals, etc.)</li> <li>• Footage of classrooms that you can tell include children with disabilities (e.g., down syndrome, autism, fragile X, etc.)</li> <li>• Written references to the experiences of children with disabilities</li> <li>• Examples are relevant to families of children with disabilities</li> </ul>			
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<p>1.3. Represent diverse family structures? Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes examples of diverse families (e.g., two parents, single parents, adopted or foster children, same-sex parents, other relatives living within the family, godparents, etc.)</li> <li>• Is careful about the celebration of lifecycle and holiday events so that all families are included (e.g., celebrates “Family Day” instead of “Father/Mother day” so different family structures are included)</li> </ul>			
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2. Accurate portrayal: The extent to which the materials avoid representing BIPOC, multilingual or ELLs, and/or disability groups in ways that are stereotyped and instead acknowledge and value the differences existing within such groups.

Does this set of materials:	Ready to go	Minor changes needed	Major changes needed
<p>2.1. Prevent tokenizing<sup>1</sup> BIPOC people, multilingual or ELLs, and disability groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures, footage, and examples provided are related to and make sense given the topic (e.g. a picture of a child with down syndrome is shown for content related to disabilities)</li> <li>• Marginalized groups (BIPOC children, with disability, and multilingual or ELLs) are not overrepresented in a way that feels disingenuous (e.g., not every single picture is a Black child unless that's expected for the content)</li> <li>• A specific child, teacher, classroom, example, etc. is not called upon to be the lone representative for their entire group (e.g., not all examples of disabilities are autism-related, not all multilingual or ELL videos come from the same classroom, not all pictures of a Black teacher are the same person)</li> </ul>			
Notes:			
<p>2.2. Prevent stereotyping BIPOC people, multilingual or ELLs, and disability groups?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIPOC children and families are not assumed to have low family wealth, low educational attainment and/or low income</li> <li>• BIPOC and multilingual or ELL children are not portrayed in overly simplistic or stereotypical ways (e.g., Asian children not always eating rice; Black children not always portrayed as star athlete)</li> <li>• Children with disabilities are not portrayed in overly simplistic or stereotypical ways (e.g., not sitting on the sidelines watching others)</li> <li>• Images, footage and/or written examples portray different cultures, ethnicities, and/or nationalities within groups (e.g., not all Asians are Chinese; not all Latinx are Mexican)</li> </ul>			
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<sup>1</sup> Tokenism: “The practice of doing something (e.g. showing the picture of a Black child) only to prevent criticism and give the appearance that people are being treated fairly.”

<p>2.3. Prevent stereotyping Black children and families as problematic?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footage that represents “low quality practice” is not always from majority Black classrooms and/or Black teachers</li> <li>• Examples of children’s misbehavior in the classroom or conflicts with the teacher are not limited to Black children (e.g., images, stereotypical Black names)</li> </ul>			
<p>Notes:</p>			
<p>2.4. Prevent stereotyping family structures and roles/expectations within families?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single parent families are not assumed to be headed by a woman, have low family wealth, educational attainment and/or income</li> <li>• Examples of families who work in a variety of settings</li> <li>• Examples of different family members fulfilling parenting roles (e.g., grandparents doing pickups and drop-offs, two-moms attending parent-teacher conference, dads doing read aloud to the classroom, etc.)</li> </ul>			
<p>Notes:</p>			

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3. Challenge of status quo: The extent to which the materials explicitly emphasize the assets of BIPOC people, children with disabilities, and multilingual or English language learners, carefully address topics that are historically problematic for marginalized groups, and/or explore social justice or equity topics to question the social hierarchy. Examples include but are not limited to highlighting cultural practices of marginalized groups, intentionally identifying the strengths and contributions of marginalized communities, acknowledging the communities where practices and strategies come from, or explicitly addressing social justice topics.

Does this set of materials:	Ready to go	Minor changes needed	Major changes needed
<p>3.1. Explicitly include topics and materials that explore equity and social justice and/or include BIPOC children and families in positions of power, having agency, or acting as positive role models?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities and/or examples highlight the roles of BIPOC people in history and social change</li> <li>• Activities and/or examples include discussing topics such as equity or privilege</li> <li>• “Mirror” books are included (i.e., books that reflect BIPOC children, their families, and communities in positive way)</li> </ul>			
Notes:			
<p>3.2. Carefully approaches topics, practices, and/or strategies that are historically problematic for marginalized communities?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not recommend songs, poems, books, etc. that are historically problematic for marginalized communities</li> <li>• Songs, poems, routines, etc. that are coming from marginalized groups are explicitly acknowledged (e.g., talking stick comes from Native Peoples) and demonstrate understanding and respect to their culture</li> </ul>			
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<p>3.3. Explicitly highlight strengths, talents, and/or knowledge of Black children, teachers, and families?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom footage includes Black children positively engaged with teachers, peers, and/or tasks</li> <li>• Footage that exemplifies high quality teaching practices includes Black teachers</li> <li>• Examples use a strength-based approach with Black children in particular (e.g., highlighting their creativity, curiosity, energy, etc.)</li> </ul>			
<p>Notes:</p>			
<p>3.4. Explicitly highlight strengths, talents, and/or knowledge of children with disabilities and their families?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom footage includes children with disabilities engaging in meaningful interactions with teachers, peers, and/or tasks</li> <li>• Recommended strategies use a strength-based approach to work with children with disabilities</li> <li>• Examples provided focus on how things may look different for a child with disability rather than in what they cannot do</li> </ul>			
<p>Notes:</p>			
<p>3.5. Explicitly include multicultural references to welcome and support multilingual or ELLs and their families?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom footage include children/teachers who speak different languages and are engaged in meaningful interactions</li> <li>• Images of classroom signs, schedules, posters, etc. are written in different languages</li> <li>• Different expressions of culture other than language are included when possible (e.g., multicultural holidays, maps, flags, traditional clothing, music instruments, etc.)</li> <li>• Activities and materials from different countries/cultures are encouraged</li> </ul>			
<p>Notes:</p>			