



Promoting and nurturing early learning communities where families and children thrive.

EQUITY, INCLUSION AND RACIAL JUSTICE FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Kind and compassionate service to others

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Well, fall has arrived with the rain, cooler temperatures and children returning to school. For CCAC, it's a time when all of our programs are up and running again. It's nice to have all of our staff back after the summer break for ECEAP classes.

It's been several years since we began focusing on equity, inclusion and racial justice at CCAC. Since quite a few staff have joined the organization in the time since we first began this work, I thought this would be a good time to revisit why this is a priority for us and where we are headed.

In the first EIRJ newsletter, I wrote "we commit to listen and honor the children, families and early childhood educators in the communities we serve. We pledge to support staff, educators and families in understanding bias, prejudice, and discrimination, in all its forms in our efforts at advancing equity, fostering children's positive self-identities, and promoting cultural humility."

As individuals and as an organization, we engage in this effort. We hold trainings, make resources available and engage in conversations. Many of our staff have taken an active role in moving many pieces of this work forward. We've also been working with a Racial Equity Consultant to help guide us in our work. We have also had challenges with this work recently. For example, some have expressed concern with some of the trainings that we have held. Now is a good time to do some reflection on this work and for us to gather input from staff on how we should move forward. That's part of the reason why we have taken a pause the last few months with a break in our Extended Equity Learning Opportunities conversations and with the EIRJ Committee.

To help us re-focus and re-set our course, we will be sending out a survey to all staff in the next few weeks. We want to get your thoughts on how best to move forward with this work. We want the things that we do to be helpful to you and your colleagues and to the children and families we serve. I hope you'll review the survey and provide your thoughts for us.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ☑ [Growing Our Future Leaders: Spotlight on Diego Diaz](#)
- ☑ [Service to Others as a way of Healing](#)
- ☑ [How America got Mean](#)
- ☑ [The LOVIT Way](#)
- ☑ [Ohana means Family Book + Resources](#)
- ☑ [What our agency has done for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity](#)
- ☑ [Reflections from Kristen Gomez](#)

GROWING OUR FUTURE LEADERS SPOTLIGHT ON ON DIEGO DIAZ, ECEAP TEACHER



We caught up with Diego at the end of the first week of school and he began our conversation by reflecting on the kindness of the ECEAP Team.

“

Who was kind to you this week? How might you reciprocate?

“The ECEAP team was kind to me. They have been mentors to me. I notice how they read each other, even with just a look, they communicate. They all have different strengths and I get to learn from them. I can reciprocate by being present, being consistent, doing right by the team, I can help.”



What are three of your values related to your work with children, families, and your community?

“I will start with respect. I value **respect**. We have to respect one another to work together. We need each other. We have to respect families and their culture. **Open Mindedness**. We need new ideas; we need to be collaborative to expand and meet our goals. We have to take initiative and use our voice to provide support and lead. **Confidence**, I am growing into this field. Mistakes are okay and how we learn. It is okay to ask questions. I ask myself what steps I can take to improve. This leads to competence and that leads to confidence.”

Staying connected to others in healthy relationships leads to resilience and healing. How do you stay connected with friends, family, and coworkers?

“We can use technology. I use technology to communicate with families and share resources. If you have a problem with someone, we have to communicate to connect. We have to talk and commit to figuring it out together. Be consistent. Do it 100% every time. Most important is to build trust. We build trust through commitment and consistency.”

What do you do to manage stress?

“I listen to music; I like instrumental music. I take a break and take a breath. Breathing.”

If there is someone you need to forgive, how do you go about forgiving?

“I reflect. I give time to think about what I want to say. I don't hold a grudge. I would say how I feel that something hurt me and ask if we can talk about it. Get it out respectfully. Holding it in is harmful.”



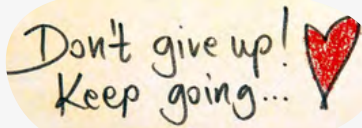
”

What is important for CCAC staff to know about you?

“The ECEAP team is hard working. I want to support them in any way I can. If I mess up, I will keep trying until I get it right and get the job done. I will adapt and be persistent, and I will grow.”

What does justice and mercy mean to you?

“Justice means being fair, having equality. No matter a person’s background, race, or culture, we are all human and can co-exist together. Mercy is to show compassion and to be gracious.”



Last question, imagine yourself in the future as a very old man. What advice would you give to your present self as a young man? Keep going, don't stop, don't ever give up

SERVICE TO OTHERS HAS A WAY OF HEALING OUR OWN HURTS AND FEARS *by Debbie Roberts*

If you journal regularly as I do, consider writing about when you have helped another person soothe their pain. Why do you suppose being a helper is so healing for the helper?



That is what compassion does. It challenges our assumptions, our sense of self-limitation, worthlessness, of not having a place in the world. As we develop compassion, our hearts open.

~ Sharon Salzberg



Who in your family, workplace, or community needs a helper now? Imagine helping that person. What would that look like?



MORAL KINDNESS (BROOKS,D.) THE ATLANTIC

submitted by Debbie Roberts

An antidote to social pain is to show love and care deeply for others, becoming better versions of ourselves, becoming our moral potential through service to our neighbors, co-workers, and in our communities. But too many of us – in our workplaces, communities, and all over our country - feel sad, alienated, unseen and unheard, and disrespected. According to David Brooks in the article, *How America Got Mean*, these feelings of bitterness present as behaviors which are passive-aggressive, or just plain aggressive, and self-centered. What does it mean instead to behave in ways that help other people feel included, seen, and respected? Brooks says, we have to give to receive, to lose ourselves in a common cause to find ourselves.



To develop our collective moral muscles, Brooks asks us to think about how we learn the moral skills necessary for civilized and compassionate communities. How do we cooperate with people who are unlike us, and how do we show up every day when progress is slow? How do we do work that is generous and hard? To listen to an interview with the author, David Brooks, click the button below.

[FULL ARTICLE >](#)



[INTERVIEW >](#)



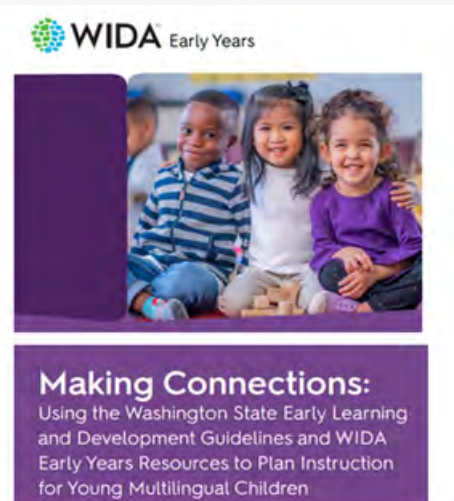
SUPPORTING DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

ICCAC's professional development team has begun offering a class on instructional strategies to support dual language learners, taught by Natalie Chavez.

According to Natalie, A dual language learner is any child learning more than one language. All of us, regardless of our own language skills, are able to support the dual language development of children. Doing so increases not only a child's language acquisition but also their cognitive development and self-esteem.

- For more information about instructional strategies to support young dual language learners:

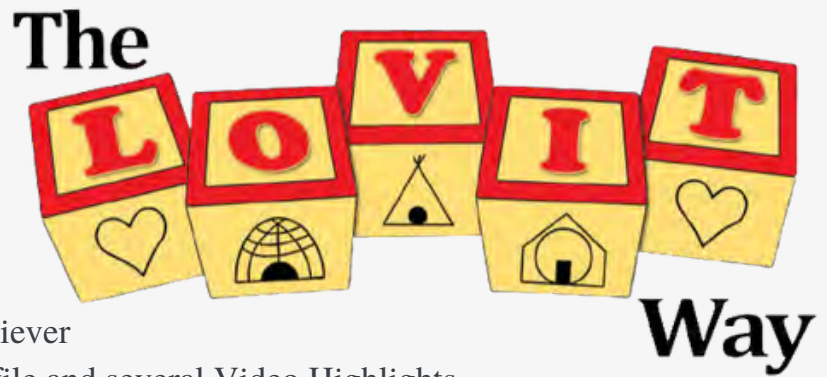
[FULL GUIDE >](#)



THE LOVIT WAY

What is the LOVIT Way?

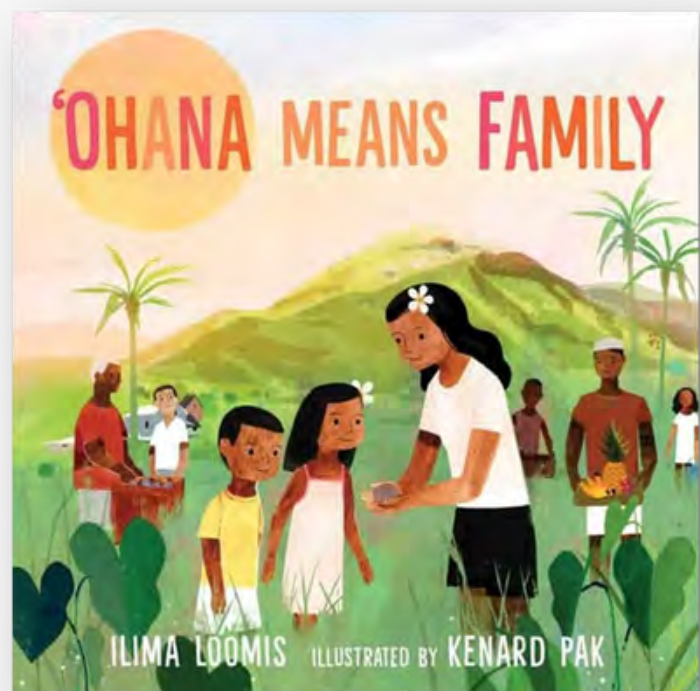
This is a tribal culturally sensitive evaluation tool that is optional for tribes to use in their Early Achievers Quality Recognition Process. Currently, Early Achiever participants need to submit a Program Profile and several Video Highlights.



With the LOVIT Way the Tribal Early Learning Sites can choose to do the Program Evaluation Process (PEP). The PEP is a tool based on 9 components and 33 questions that reflect the Tribe's Principles and Guidelines. Sites will have a conversation with staff, parents, Elders and the community to celebrate successes, discover areas that need action and plan the changes programs want to make. The LOVIT way is a self-assessment tool that can be used with other environment rating scales, such as ERS-3, CLASS or on its own. So far, in our Oly Penn region, eight of the tribes we work with have chosen this option for their Early Achievers Quality Recognition and are waiting for the state to fully implement this option.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND ACTIVITIES FOR PROVIDERS AND FAMILIES *submitted by Melinda Luark*

OHANA MEANS FAMILY, by Ilima Loomis and Kenard Pak, is an award-winning children's book about the love of family and community. Poetic and lyrical phrases describe the collective work to grow taro for poi to prepare for a traditional luau celebration. Readers feel the human connection to the land, to family, and to community. The roots of produce and the roots of cultural and familial ways of being are celebrated in this joyful children's storybook.



Children's Storybook Activity: Materials Needed:

- Book: OHANA MEANS FAMILY
- White Construction Paper
- Box of multi-color crayons and box of people color crayons.
- Laminating material

Book Discussion:

- Ask children about who are in their families.
- Ask children to share about some of their family celebrations, like birthdays or special holidays.
- What foods do families prepare for special celebrations?

1. Ask children to draw a picture of a family celebration, including what special foods they eat at family celebrations (birthdays, special holidays).
2. Dictate or engage children in shared writing about who is in their picture, what they are celebrating, and what special food they are eating.
3. Create a class book by gathering all the children's drawings together, create a storybook cover, and read the story aloud to the group. Consider laminating the pages of drawings children have contributed.

There is no such thing as tough love. Love is kind, love is compassionate, love is tender." – Heather Wolf

WHAT HEALING WORK HAS OUR AGENCY DONE FOR EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND DIVERSITY?

- *Book Totes*
- *Equity Glossary*
- *Land Acknowledgments*
- *New Hiring and Equity Policies*
- *Extended Equity Learning Opportunities (EELO)*
- *Consultation with IJUMAA and Affinity Groups*

We are part of something important that is far greater than anything we could have done alone.

BOOK TOTES:

Book totes are part of the book lending libraries at CCAC office and site include insightful volumes on social justice, equity, and diversity, as well as other topics supporting children, families, and community. Nancy Hobson is the person to reach out to if you want a book from a different office. She will make the delivery of the book happen, either through another staff member bringing it along on a visit to another office or through the mail.



EQUITY GLOSSARY:

The EIRJ committee works to develop a glossary of terms and phrases, a living document of ideas, and concepts we use to understand equity more fully in the workplace and to support us in our dialogue regarding equity and diversity. To access the CCAC

Glossary: *Go to BOX, Folder: S Drive, Folder: Equity Inclusion Racial Justice and document: CCAC Glossary of Racial Equity Terms.docx*. Currently, our glossary work is focused on a few new terms and phrases which are often misunderstood and misused in conversations. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is one such phrase that has become emotionally loaded, as people try to discuss equity and diversity without a shared understanding of the actual meaning of the phrase. The lack of shared understanding causes frustration and gets in the way of productive dialogue and moving forward on racial justice issues

CCAC Beginning Draft Definition of Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory is the factual acknowledgement of racially motivated and discriminatory policies and practices in systems of government, business, and social institutions which occurred in the past and which still occur today, and which negatively impacts people of color. Other terms that may be misunderstood are neurodiversity. The idea that our neighbors, coworkers, and community members who are differently abled or who have special needs are part of a protected group and who may also suffer bias and discrimination because of their difference in ability is new to many of us.

We eagerly invite any CCAC staff person to join us in our work on the glossary. For more information about joining us on our glossary work, please reach out to Shelly Knight at shelly.knight@ccacwa.org

BEAUTIFUL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CCAC has been intentional about Equity, Inclusion and Racial Justice. One of the projects the leadership funded is to display a beautiful Land Acknowledgment Canvas in our six offices and two of our home offices in the Oly Penn region. This was a team effort. The staff in the offices voted on the pictures, others put collages together, still others ordered these 30x20 canvas' to hang in a prominent spot at the entrance of each office (*pictured below*). Our main office in Olympia where many trainings and meetings take place will display an artistic drum made by a 5-year-old from the Squaxin Island Tribe, next to the Canvas.



We, The Child Care Action Council, acknowledge and accept that we work within the land boundaries of the Salish Peoples, specifically the Lower Elwah Klallam, Neah Bay Makah, Chehalis, Nisqually, Skokomish, Squaxin Island, Shoalwater Bay, Quinault, Hoh, Quileute, Jamestown S'Klallam, Port Gamble S'Klallam, and Suquamish.

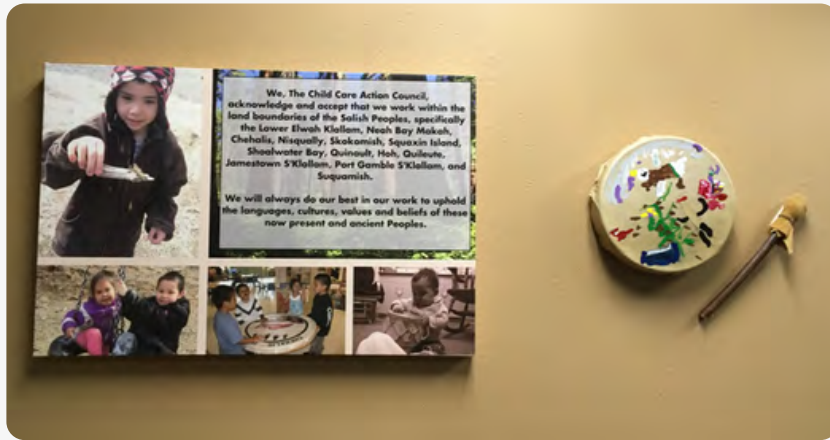
We will always do our best in our work to uphold the languages, cultures, values and beliefs of these now present and ancient Peoples.

“I had the honor to attend the Tribal LOVIT Way conference/training in British Columbia this spring. This is where I met Shane, an Elder and Knowledge Keeper, from the Salish Nation. I told him of our Land Acknowledgment project and he gave me ideas on the display and wording. He said to get a picture of tribal children for the Canvas and put a short concise statement (*illustrated above*).” - Shelly Knight



This drum will be displayed at the main office. It is from Oakland, a 5-year-old from Squaxin Island tribe.

WATCH OAKLAND
IN THIS VIDEO CLIP



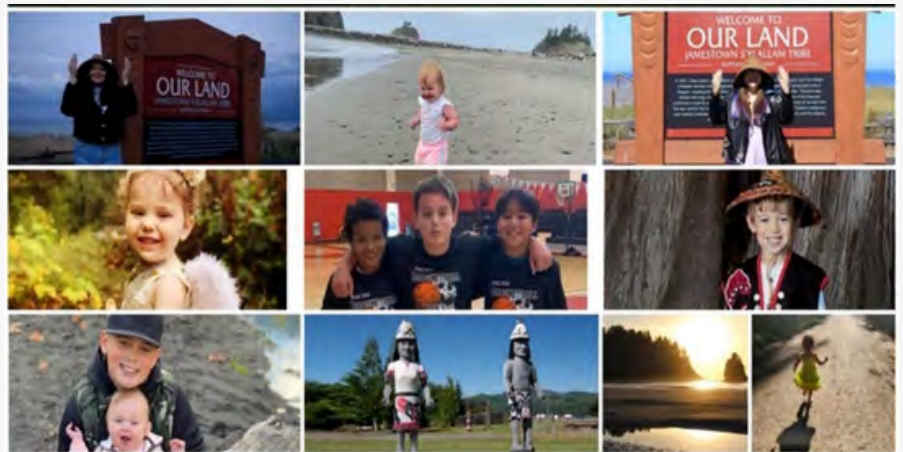
This is the Main Office Wall Display with Oakland's Drum.

The visual land acknowledgement project has taken several months to coordinate and complete with the offices. I believe we can take pride in honoring our native nations and the land that we work on through these beautiful art displays. I know I do!



On the left, is a picture of the piece of art we purchased from the Suquamish Museum Store by Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal artist and Master Carver, Jimmy Price. We have included the Land Acknowledgement, hanging below. Our intention is to continue to support local tribal artists to add to this area.

Below is the collage from the Port Angeles office. Each of these pictures represent the staff who work in our Northern Office.



We, The Child Care Action Council, acknowledge and accept that we work within the land boundaries of the Salish Peoples, specifically the Lower Elwha Klallam, Neah Bay Makah, Chehalis, Nisqually, Skokomish, Squaxin Island, Shoalwater Bay, Quinault, Hoh, Quileute, Jamestown S'klallam, Port Gamble S'Klallam, and Suquamish.

We will always do our best in our work to uphold the languages, cultures, values and beliefs of these now present and ancient Peoples.

REFLECTIONS FROM KRISTIN GOMEZ ON POLICY AND SERVICE

What inspired you toward growing policy and practices in our Agency to reflect the mission of Equity for CCAC staff and new hires?

“When our EIRJ group formed and we began the journey to expand and grow equitable practices at CCAC, I sought a more practical avenue of impact and one for which I am also directly responsible for: hiring and policies. In this area, I felt we could identify quick and tangible ways of changing CCAC practices and policies that could positively impact our staff, both current and future.”

In what way did participating in Hiring and Policy Making sub-group promote growing your practice to reflect equity?

“As the “chair” of this group, I tried to ensure all voices were respected and all members contributed to the work we shared. I feel we succeeded together in growing equitable practices for the entire agency by creating a greatly revamped and improved hiring process/checklist, a new staff orientation protocol and an updated harassment policy.”

I feel proud to have helped develop new approaches to hiring that seek to reduce barriers to access as well as potential bias in hiring decisions. Equity work takes needed time via reflection, conversation, and collaboration, but action is what really fills my bucket! - Kristin Gomez

This Newsletter is published by the Equity, Inclusion Racial Justice Team with special thanks to Sheila Kavanaugh for formatting the Newsletter.

