



ANGELA RUSS

SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT

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HIGH, LOW, PICCOLO

My name is high, low,
Piccolo
Piccolo, high, low
High, low, Piccolo
Piccolo, "Hello!"

WARM-UP THE BODY

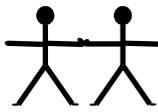
To "If You're Happy & You Know It"



Bridge
Una puente



Tunnel
Un tunel



Road
Una calle



Cave
Una cueva



Tower
Una torre



Wall
Una pared

HOW DO WE BUILD BRAIN PATHWAYS?

- Nurturing / Social connections
- Sensory learning: see, hear, touch, smell and taste
- Novel experiences
- Reading aloud
- Musical rhythmic play / Clapping games and finger plays
- Physical activities / Fine & gross motor
- Vestibular activities
- De-stressing / Mindfulness

Cross-lateral movement also builds brain pathways. Whenever you cross the mid-lines of the body, the two hemispheres of the brain communicate across the **Corpus Callosum**, and work in tandem. **Neurons** and **synapses** are struggling to connect!

▶ Left / Right ▶ Top / Bottom ▶ Back / Front

The more connections made in the brain, especially before the age of 6, the faster we are apt to learn, and the more information we are likely to retain when we are taught.

The **left to right ability** is necessary for the brain to be ready to **read** and **write!** And moving as directed will help children learn the **concept** of **beginning**, **middle**, and **end** understand **different sizes** and **shapes** - and **map shapes** and **symbols**.

"Children should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time."

(NASPE 2002 - Nat'l Ed. for Sport and Phys. Ed.)
www.aahperd.org

CLAPPING GAMES

Age-appropriate clapping games can offer wonderful benefits, including crossing the midlines. Use them when the children are in waiting, counting, saying their alphabet, chanting the days of the week, etc. There are no steadfast rules on how clapping games are played. Make up your own age-appropriate variations.

WHEN CHILDREN ARE INVISIBLE

When you ignore a child's identity, you make them invisible. There is emotional damage done when young children...

- ... think they aren't normal because of their skin color
- ... feel they have to edit who they are to belong.
- ... think the dominant way is the right way.
- ... feel less important because they aren't like someone else.
- ... feel they don't have the "right" kind of family.
- ... feel their parent's jobs aren't important if they aren't professionals.

What children do not see around them, teaches them as much as they do see. Denying our differences, affects children who don't have the social identity of the dominant group. Examining unconscious bias is imperative to improving educational outcomes, particularly for low-income students, minorities, and women in STEM. We must broaden children's awareness with specific learning experiences around issues or areas that matter to them all year long.

It is not human differences that undermine children's development but rather unfair, neglectful and hurtful treatment based upon those differences. - NAEYC

The Doll Test (1940)

Children attributed positive characteristics to the Caucasian dolls but negative characteristics to those of color.

Diverse materials, toys, displays, dolls, dramatic play items, and experiences should encompass families of color, mixed race, single-parent, foster families, kinship families, divorced parents, homeless families, those unemployed, incarcerated, LGBTQ families, or those with disabilities or special needs? Cultural representation should not be **supplanted** by animal or insect characters.

Cultural appropriation is the inappropriate or unacknowledged adoption of an element or elements of one culture or identity by members of another culture or identity. Children should not pretend to be a member of another ethnic group. They can pretend to be doctors, lawyers, firefighters, sanitation workers, chefs, and other professions.

What you say sends messages that either support or harm children's beliefs about themselves and their families. What messages are you sending?

Teacher: "He has a shiny new car, and is very successful."

Teacher: "Her daddy worked hard to buy their house."

Teacher: "People sleep in beds." vs "Everybody sleeps somewhere."

Teacher: "You look very pretty in your new dress."

Respond to what children say with teachable moments.

Child: "You can't be a nurse, you're a boy."

Child: "Why is my skin this color? Can I change it?"

Child: "I'm the daddy, so I drive."

Child: "Why does she put grease in her hair?"

Child: "Why is he dancing around with feathers on his head?"

A TOURIST CURRICULUM Usually includes costumes and drops children into a strange, exotic land superficially, rather than making diversity a routine part of the ongoing, daily learning environment. It undermines respect for different ways of living. This includes:

- Tokenism: Doing something only to show you are following the rules, i.e. one person asked to represent their entire culture.
- Trivializing: making something seem insignificant
- Misrepresenting: giving a false or misleading account
- Stereotyping: believing that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same

If you are going to introduce an aspect of a culture, such as instruments or costumes, you should share the research that goes with them, and even experiment with ways to broaden understanding across all cultures. i.e. Batik (wax stamped) style of Ghanaian fabric.

HOW DO WE EQUIP OUR CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS AND SUPPORT EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING?

Like bricks and mortar, emotional well-being and social competence provide a strong foundation for emerging cognitive abilities. They are as much a part of development as cognitive learning because the brain is a highly integrated organ. - Harvard.edu

We help them by...

1. Building strong relationships between staff and families with family engagement.
 - Complete an intake interview
 - Use their home language
 - Invite participation and involvement
 - Offer EC training sessions on development
 - Create a resource library of support services
 - Make the room accessible to the disabled.
2. Exposing children to a diverse social network of friend, professionals, and community events - and diverse products / materials / toys / characters / stories.
3. Fighting for equal representation: television programming, commercials, movies, computer games, emojis, books, toys, etc.
4. Helping them recognize prejudice and feel empowered to act against discrimination and unfairness because it hurts.
5. Expanding their interests and concerns beyond their immediate world, so adaptation becomes easy. - City and county programs
6. Using accurate language for human differences and similarities. We all need food, health, shelter, love. Use "parents" instead of "mom and dad" - "home" instead of "house."

MEMORY & RETENTION

"Music prompts greater connectivity between the brain's left and right hemisphere and between the areas responsible for emotion and memory, than does almost any other stimulus."
- Dartmouth, Petr Janata, *Science* 2002

Academic success is about understanding and retaining information on which to scaffold new knowledge. We remember more when we make connections to experiences and emotions. We hold **new information** in our **short-term**

memory for about 15 to 30 seconds while the brain consolidates it and **prepares** it for **long-term storage**. Children will remember more when they participate or physically practice doing, see a demonstration, discuss the subject in a group, hear the subject in song, see the subject dramatized, and finally, teach the subject themselves.

(Teaching Students to Read Through Their Individual Learning Styles, Carbo, Dunn, Prentice-Hall, 1986)

How do we improve retention? We do so by creating interesting **episodes** and **novel/new** experiences during the day, not by forcing rote learning (memorizing facts). If children take a novel experience home and repeat it, or teach it to a friend or relative, our work is done.

Grab a child's attention and they won't let go!

- Dress up: Wear a mask / prop / costume
- Ask for predictions "What is it?" "How is it used?" "What do you think?"
- Take a poll and chart responses
- Give a wrong answer: Make children the experts
- Guessing games - when given clues using the senses
- Storyboarding: Begin a story / add to it /change it / finish it
- Riddle me this: Put an item out-of-place
- Play *Charades*
- Whisper
- Turn the lights out
- Invite an expert to speak

TAKE CHILDREN "SOMEWHERE"

Choose a variety of songs styles, rhythms, vocals, and tempos for your music library to give children a rhythmical and culturally diverse musical experience. Take songs that you know and love and expand on the lyrics and movement. What are the many ways lyrics, rhythm, or subject matter can be interpreted using the voice, the body, an instrument, or prop?

"When you teach a child something. You take away forever the chance for him to discover it himself."

- John Piaget

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Before they walk and talk, children interact with caregivers. These interactions help build neural connections and lay the foundation for all subsequent development. Strengthening positive relationships is absolutely critical for improving child outcomes. Whereas, stress floods the developing brain with potentially harmful stress hormones.

"Healthy brain architecture depends on a sturdy foundation built by appropriate input from a child's senses and stable, responsive relationships with caring adults."

Center on Developing Child – Harvard Univ.

MUSIC REFERENCE LIST:

- ♫ "Build a Bridge" CD: "Smart Moves 1 & Smart Moves 2"
- ♫ "In My Body" CD: "Smart Moves 1"
- ♫ "High, Low, Piccolo" CD: "Clapping Games & Chants"
- ♫ "Follow the Leader" CD: "Smart Moves 3"

**Thank you for listening,
and welcome to the CLUB!**