

**NURTURING GROWTH:  
STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION IN THE PRESCHOOL  
CLASSROOM**

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE  
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# Agreements

How can we make this a space that is comfortable and brings a level of security by allowing all participants to share openly and honestly without fear of judgment?



# Opening Activity



or



# Objectives

- Participants will demonstrate an understanding of inclusion through participation in small group discussions.
- Participants will list barriers to inclusion.
- Participants will develop strategies to overcome barriers to inclusion.

# One on One Activity

- Find a partner
- Each partner gets 2.5 minutes to share their response to the question below
- When you are listening, please just listen, use non-verbal gestures, but no words, please

**When have you been somewhere and not felt included?**

**How did it make you feel?**

# Inclusion

What do you think of when you hear the word inclusion?



# Inclusion

According to NAEYC...

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.

# Activity



What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 2 minutes and record the answers to the question:

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights

**What are some barriers to inclusion?**



# Barriers to Inclusion

- **Attitudes and beliefs**
- **Lack of communication**
- **Lack of awareness**
- **Curricula/Materials**
- **Lack of resources**
- **Personnel capacity**
- **Transportation**
- **Personal bias**

# Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment

- Recognize and respond to each child's unique needs, interests, experiences, and strengths
- Ensure that every child feels that they belong and can fully engage in their learning community
- Promote a sense of belonging, membership, and positive social relationships

# Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment

- Acknowledge and celebrate individual differences
- Provide opportunities for each child to participate and have agency in their learning and interactions
- Ensure that each child feels physically and psychologically safe to be who they are

# Activity – What is This Space Communicating?

View the image or a learning space on your table. Discuss the following with your tablemates:

- Who is included here?
- Who might not feel included?
- How might children feel in the space?
- How does the environment foster a sense of community or how does it not?

# Photo 1



# Photo 2



# Photo 3



# Photo 4





# Discussion



What's needed:

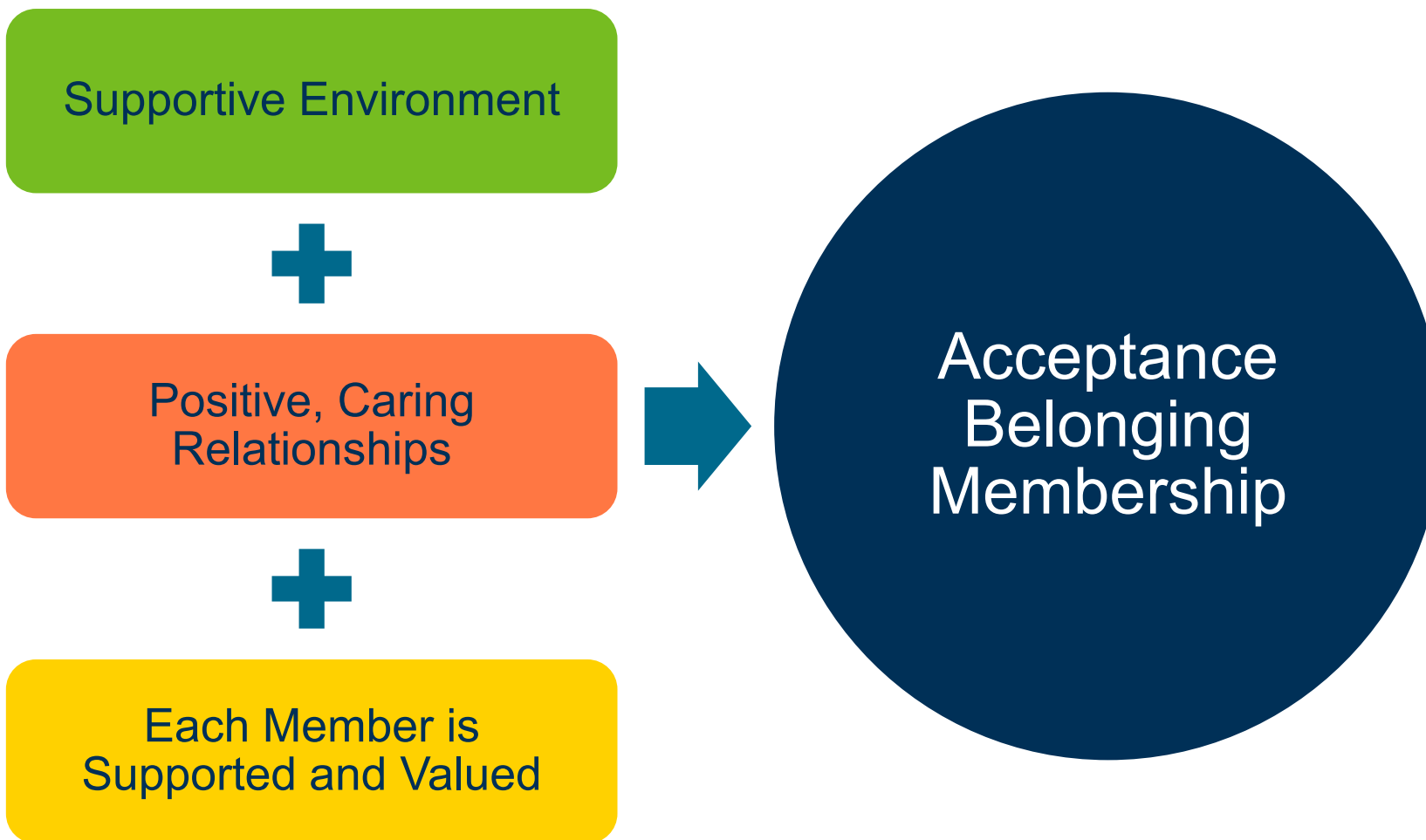
- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 5 minutes and discuss the question at your table.

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights

**What advice would you give a young teacher about creating an inclusive environment?**

# What Is a Caring Classroom Community?



NAEYC, 2020



# Creating an Inclusive Caring Community

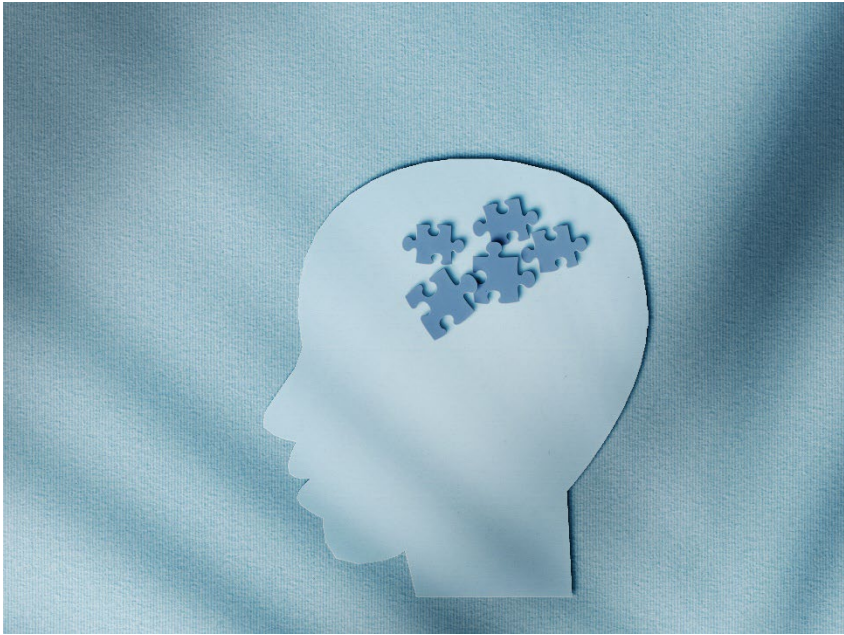
- Group members see themselves and learn from the environment
- Promoting positive identities
- Including families
- Representation
- Accessibility
- Creating relationships with children

# Self-Reflection

Think about your classroom environment:

- What messages does the environment send about who belongs and what is done there?
- How does the environment foster a sense of community?
- How are families represented in your classroom?

# Action Planning



- How can you make your environment/program more inclusive?
- What do you need to make it happen
- What's the estimated date of completion?

# Think, Pair, Share

Take 5 minutes and discuss the question with a partner.

Think about your action plan/self-reflection.

**What do you do well and what can you commit to doing better in creating a more inclusive culture?**



# Questions/Comments



Questions/Comments

## Contact Information

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# References

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