



February 1, 2019

# **Using Fun Activities to Increase Youth Awareness and Appreciation of Cultural Differences**

Thank you for joining.

The webinar will begin at 2:00 p.m. EST.

Audio and video has been disabled for participants. Messages can be sent via the CHAT box.





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# Using Fun Activities to Increase Youth Awareness and Appreciation of Cultural Differences



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# Using Fun Activities to Increase Youth Awareness and Appreciation of Cultural Differences

CYFAR Webinar

February 1, 2019

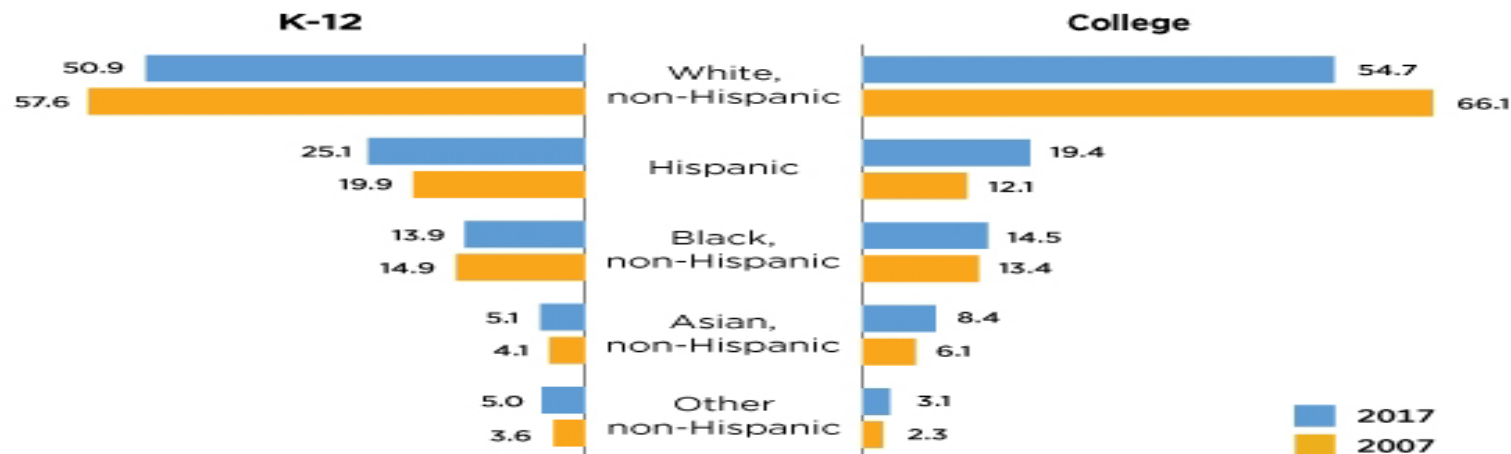


# Why would we want to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in our youth?

- Rapidly changing demographics of our nation

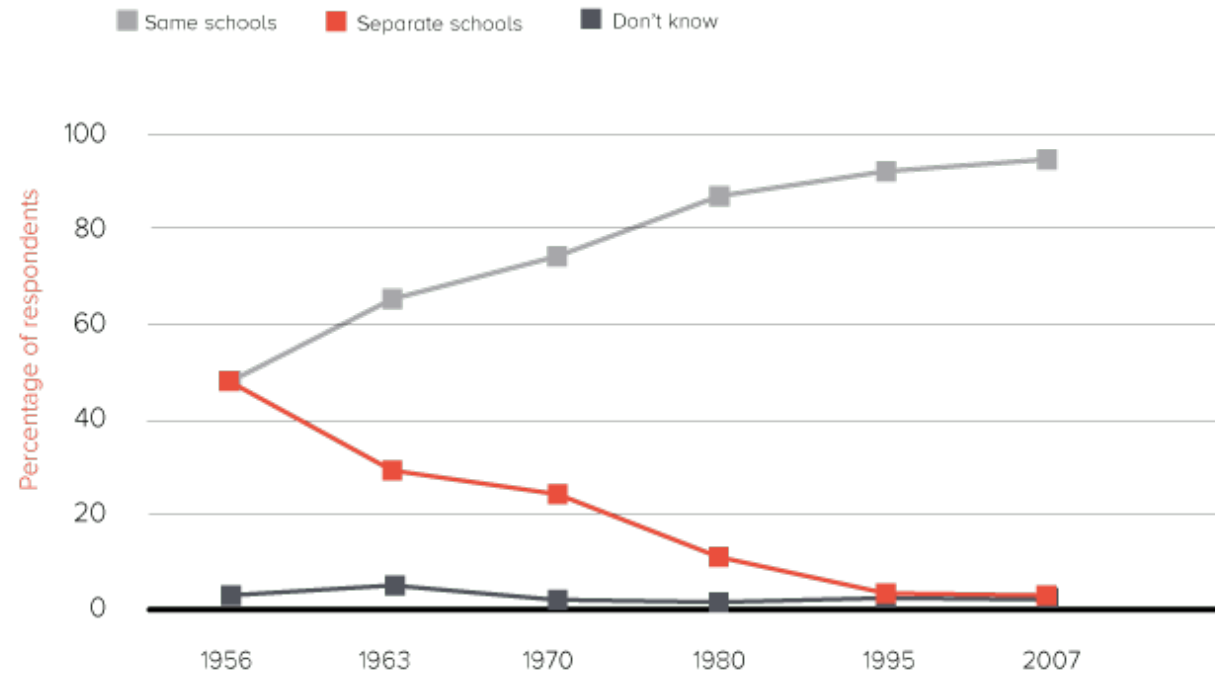


School Enrollment Percentages by Race and Hispanic Origin



# Why would we want to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in our youth?

## GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARD BLACK AND WHITE STUDENTS ATTENDING THE SAME SCHOOL (BY PERCENTAGE), 1956–2007



Source: E. Frankenberg and R. Jacobsen, "The Polls—Trends School Integration Polls," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 788–811, <http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/4/788>.

# Why would we want to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in our youth?

- Other ways in which our country is becoming more diverse
  - Language
    - 1 in 5 Americans speaks a language other than English at home
  - Family Structure
    - There is an increasing number of non-traditional families
  - Socio-economic status
    - There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor
  - Religion
    - Increasing religious/spiritual diversity





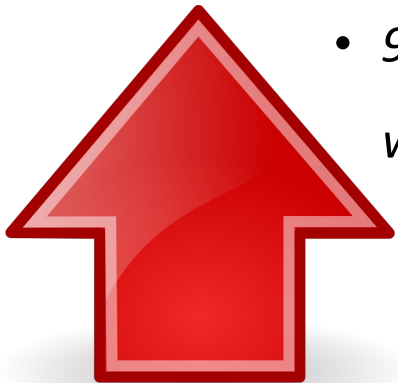
# Why would we want to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in our youth?

- Employment Skill

- Increasingly employers are considering cultural competence (the ability to interact effectively with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds) as an important employment and leadership skill

- *96% of major employers say it is “important “ that employees be “comfortable working with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.”*

- Wells, Fox, and Cordova-Cobo, (2106 )



# Why would we want to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in our youth?

Reduction in tension in our society

- The recent racial tension and unrest in this nation – from Ferguson to Baltimore to Staten Island – may well have been avoided if more of us had been taught to value diversity and to address implicit bias related to racial, ethnic, and cultural differences.



# Diversity Activities and Discussion Starters

- While most of the activities we will take a look at are appropriate for older youth (middle school and above) and adults, some of the activities may be adapted for younger children.
- Debriefing is important for dealing with unresolved feelings or misunderstandings.
- Conducting activities in an atmosphere of warmth, trust, and acceptance is equally important.



# Sample Resources

## Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults



<https://extension.psu.edu/diversity-activities-for-youth-and-adults>



<https://extension.psu.edu/more-diversity-activities-for-youth-and-adults>



<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/4-h/members/projects-resources/diversity/diversityactivities.pdf>



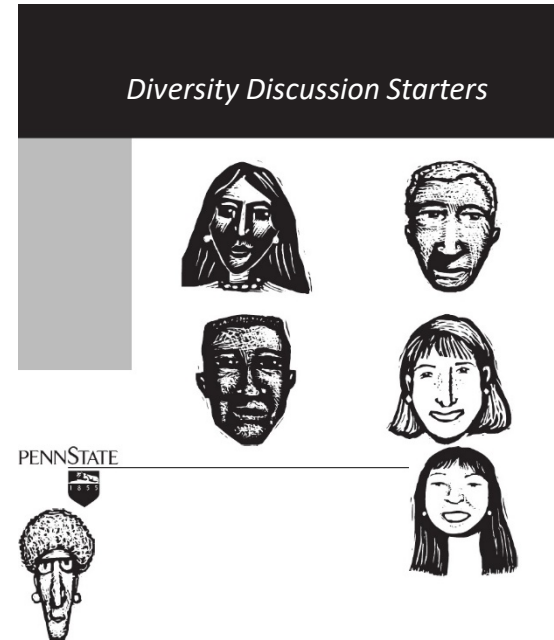
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# Sample Resources

## Diversity Discussion Starters



<https://extension.psu.edu/diversity-discussion-starters>



<https://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Diversity-Discussion-Starters.pdf>

# Potato Activity



- Goal
  - To help youth eliminate stereotyping and recognize the uniqueness of each individual
- Time
  - 20-30 minutes
- Materials -
  - A brown paper bag with enough potatoes for each participant and one for the facilitator
- Procedure
  - Select 1 potato for your demonstration and have a story in mind to describe your potato to the group.
  - Hold up your potato to show the group. Say “I don’t know about you, but I’ve never thought that much about potatoes. I’ve always taken them for granted. To me, potatoes are all pretty much alike. Sometimes I wonder if potatoes aren’t a lot like people.”

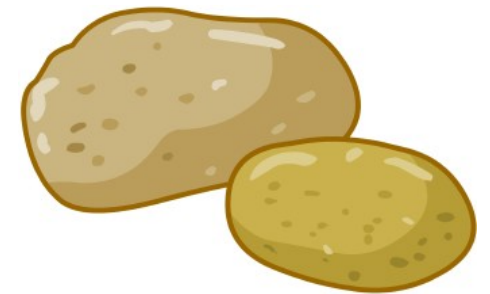




# Potato Activity Continued



- Pass the bag of potatoes around and ask each person to take one.
- Ask each person to *“examine their potato, get to know its bumps, scars, and defects and make friends with it for about a minutes or so in silence. Get to know your potato well enough to introduce your friend to the group.”*
- Start by introducing your friend by sharing a story about how your “friend” got its bumps scars.
- Tell participants that the group would like to meet their friends too. Then ask each person to share their “friend” with the group.
- Ask each person to put their “friend” back into the bag.



# Potato Activity Continued



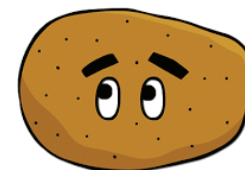
- Ask the class, “Would you agree with the statement “*all potatoes are the same. Why or why not?*”
- Shake up the bag and empty the potatoes onto a table. Ask participants to come up and pick out their “friend.”
- After everyone has selected their “friend” say, “Well, perhaps potatoes are a little like people. Sometimes, we lump people of a group all together. When we think, “They’re all alike, we are really saying that we haven’t taken the time or thought it important enough to get to know the person. When we do, we find out everyone is different and special in some way, just like our potato friends.”

# Potato Activity Continued



## Discussion

- Ask participants to think about the groups at school or in the community that we tend to lump together. If they have trouble thinking of groups you may want to prompt them with groups you know they interact with.
- Discuss answers to the following questions
  1. When we lump everyone from the same group together and assume they all have the same characteristics, what are we doing? What is this called?
  2. Do you know a lot of people from the groups we tend to lump together? Do they all fit the stereotype?
  3. Why are stereotypes dangerous?





# People with Disabilities



- Goal
  - To experience a condition similar to what people with learning disabilities deal with regularly.
- Time
  - 15 – 20 minutes
- Materials
  - One reading sheet for each student
- Procedure
  - Hand out a reading sheet to each youth. Ask for volunteers to read the sheet aloud in small sections. After youth have struggled with this, read the passages from the answer sheet.

# READING

It is difficult to learn to read when  
the words don't stand still. Can  
you imagine what it is like to read  
when words and page letters move up and  
down on the page? Reading is not  
my favorite school activity.

It helps to use my finger or  
ruler to keep my place so I  
can read.

## CHANGES

Changes are all around us,  
Changes are a part of life,  
Changes are a part of growing.

Just look at how a sapling becomes a tree,  
And in the fall, the leaves turn all  
different colors.

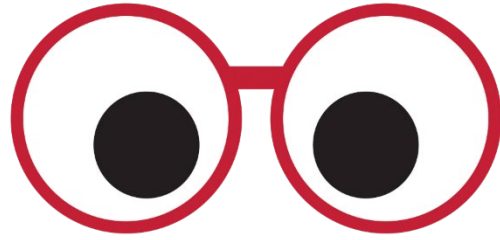
Red, gold, amber, brown, orange and yellow.

Even though they're different colors,  
They are all part of one tree,  
And beautiful together.

And so too, it is with people,  
We are born, and we grow into adults  
Who are all different, but are all part  
of the same family.

If only we could just blend harmoniously  
Like the leaves on the tree.  
Well, there's still room for change.

by Jane Brucker

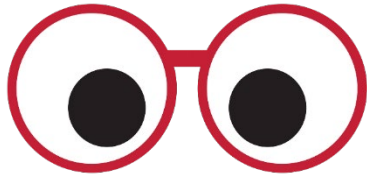


## Reading

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# Changes

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Just look how a sapling becomes a tree.  
And in the fall, the leaves turn all different colors.  
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Even though they're different colors,  
They are all part of the one tree.  
And beautiful together.  
And so, too, with people.

We are born, and we grow into adults  
Who are different, but we are all part of  
The same family.

If only we could just blend harmoniously  
Like the leaves on the tree.  
Well, there's still time for change.

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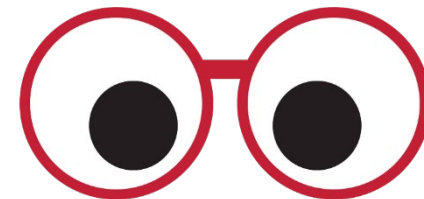
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# People with Disabilities

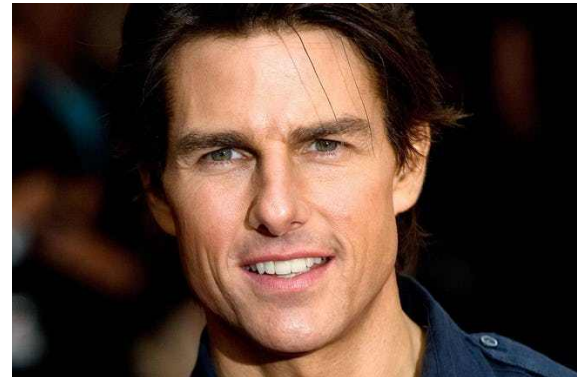
- Discussion
  - Ask students how trying to read this felt.
  - Tell students that this is an example of what reading might be like for people who have learning disabilities.
  - Inform students that experts estimate that 6 – 10% of school-aged people have learning disabilities. For people with disabilities reading can be especially difficult, but these students have average or above-average intelligence.



# People with Disabilities

- Ask students which of the following people has/had a learning disability:

- Tom Cruise
- Walt Disney
- Albert Einstein
- General George Patton



- After they guess, read the description of each of these people. Emphasize that all of these people were very successful despite their learning disabilities.

# People with Disabilities



## Discussion

- Should we judge people based on their learning disabilities?
- Can people with learning disabilities make important contributions to society?
- Can you think of other famous people who have disabilities?



# Discussion Starter – *The Man and the Eagle*



## **The Story**

There was once a man who had never seen an eagle. One day a magnificent eagle landed on his windowsill, and when he saw it, he exclaimed, “What an ugly creature!” The man grabbed the eagle and pulled it into his house. “First, I’m going to fix that curved beak of yours.” He used a file to remove the hook in the eagle’s beak. “Those claws are vicious looking,” the man said as he clipped the eagle’s claws until there was little left. When he finished, the man said, “There, now you look better.” And he put the bird back on his open windowsill and shooed it away. You can imagine how long the newly trimmed eagle lasted in the wild.

# Discussion Starter – *The Man and the Eagle*

## Discussion

- The man changed the bird dramatically in this story. Without valuing the bird's special qualities, the man altered the bird to what he thought would be better.

Can you think of ways in which this story can be used?





# Discussion Starter – *The Man and the Eagle*

## Questions



- Think about the eagle for a moment. How important do you think it is for the eagle to have its claws and sharp beak?
- After hearing the story, why do you think the man changed the bird?
- Did the man know the importance of the eagle's claws and beak? If he knew more about eagles, do you think he would have appreciated the eagle instead of changing it?
- Have you ever tried to change a person who is different from you?
- Are people cruel in this manner to people with whom they are not familiar?

# Discussion Starter – *The Man and the Eagle*

## Questions



- Do you think it is right to change people because you think their characteristics are different or somehow less superior to yours? If so, in what situations do you feel this is justified?
- What happens when people place their beliefs on others?
- What role does a person's preference play in deciding what is beautiful or attractive?
- How do we treat people who don't look like us – have different skin colors; are taller, thinner, or heavier; have braces or glasses; use a cane to walk; have wrinkles, are older, younger, deaf, or blind?

# Complimentary Round Table

## Goal

- To enhance social skills development by illustrating how our words affect people

## Time

- 15 – 20 minutes

## Materials

- Two apples and a knife

## • Procedure

- Seat a group of 6 – 8 participants at a round table. Take one apple, say something mean to it (for example, “I hate you. I don’t want to be around you.”) and drop it to the floor.



# Complimentary Round Table



- The next person picks up the apple, says something mean to it, and drops it. This continues around the table a couple of times as everyone takes turns being mean to the apple and dropping it.
- Cut the apple in half and lay it in the center of the table, allowing it to brown.
- Take the other apple and, as each participant takes a turn holding the apple, have everyone else in the group take turns complimenting or affirming the person holding the apple. Continue until everyone in the group has been complimented by everyone else.

# Complimentary Round Table

## Discussion



- Lead the group in a discussion of how being complimented feels.

Were compliments easy to receive? Why or why not?

Was it easier to be mean or to give a compliments? Why?

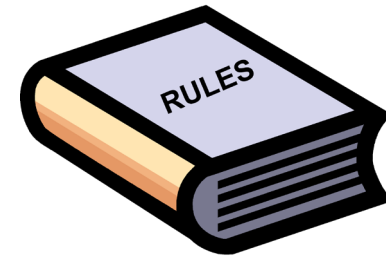
- Ask if anyone wants the brown, battered apple on the table.
- Discuss how a lot of people feel like that apple - all bruised and battered because they've heard mean things all their lives. They feel like no one cares about them and no one wants to be their friend.
- Explain that our words can make people feel like that apple.
- Ask participants how we can help everyone feel good about themselves.



# Additional Resources

- Teaching Tolerance - produces an array of anti-bias resources distributed free of charge to educators <http://www.tolerance.org>
- Keep It Real – a board game that provides an opportunity for impactful conversations about diversity that help players understand themselves and connect to others  
<http://keepitreal.diverseeducation.com/site/home.html>
- Anti Defamation League – provides lesson plans, tools and resources to educators, parent & families with the goal of fighting hate.  
<https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base>

# General Guidelines for Increasing Diversity Awareness



- We must be proactive in helping children construct a healthy, positive racial and cultural identity **and** respectful attitudes toward people of differing racial and cultural identity.
- Expose children to diversity. Children who have little or no contact with people from other cultures learn to think that that is the way it **should** be.
- Draw upon and use the knowledge of the youth in your lessons and activities – making the materials more relevant for all of the youth in your groups.
- Use language daily in your educational settings that values diversity so that youth can begin to model your language. For examples, talk about the important contributions of different cultural groups.

# General Guidelines for Increasing Diversity Awareness

The logo consists of a yellow background with two overlapping circles, one orange and one yellow. The word "Guides" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the circles.

Guides

- Provide opportunities for youth to view both men and women in a variety of roles.
- Help children resist harmful messages about their racial identity.
- Be aware of Unintended Messages.
  - “I don’t see color. I’m colorblind.” or “I don’t see difference. We’re all part of the same race, the human race.” “He didn’t mean it” or “Let’s forget about it.”
- And most of all – maintaining a receptive attitude to cultural diversity.
  - A critical analysis of one’s own cultural assumptions is foundational to culturally-responsive teaching and learning. Critical reflection on tightly held cultural assumptions is necessary to dislodge misconceptions and stereotypes.



# General Guidelines for Increasing Diversity Awareness

- It is important to remind youth (and adults) that none of us were born with stereotypes and biases in our heads. We were taught these things by a variety of people, media and institutions.
- Therefore, we should focus less on beating ourselves up for having them and more on recognizing them when they pop into our heads and making the effort to challenge them.



Please enter Questions in the CHAT box.





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**March 13, 2019**

Training for project leadership on  
using and communicating logic model goals

**April 9, 2019**

Networking calls by funding year



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# Thank you for Participating!



This webinar was coordinated by the Children, Youth, and Families At-Risk (CYFAR) Professional Development and Technical Assistance (PDTA) Center as a resource for CYFAR Sustainable Community Projects (SCP). The CYFAR PDTA Center has been developed in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) through a cooperative agreement with the University of Minnesota and Pennsylvania State University under award number 2018-41520-28908.