

June Newsletter 2024

Rocking and Rolling, Supporting Curiosity and Inquiry in Early Social Studies.

Leveraging children's natural curiosity. Educators can offer opportunities to learn about social studies principles every single day... Children are becoming more curious about themselves and others and how they fit together.

Please see the attached article for more information.

A Peek at Our Weeks

Wk. 1 Bugs & Insects

Wk. 2 Summer Weather

Wk. 3 Camping

Wk. 4 The Beach



Upcoming Events

Father's Day Celebration (14th) Time TBA

Closed June 19th (Juneteenth)

A Day at the Fire Museum Date TBA

A day of fun at the Children's Museum Date TBA

Birthday celebration for McKenna (1st) Ross Park

June Birthdays

Noah

McKenna

Ms. Penny

Terrence (Diahna's Dad)

Remember when a family is inside signing in let them finish before entering.

Cooking Corner

- Week 1 Fruit Skewers
- Week 2 Popsicles
- Week 3 Candy Necklace
- Week 4 Dixie Cups (Icee)

Rocking and Rolling. Supporting Curiosity and Inquiry in Early Social Studies

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ANNA FALKNER, NOREEN NASEEM RODRÍGUEZ

Authors' Note:

Some style guides, including NAEYC's, suggest using capital letters for both *Black* and *white* when referring to racialized groups. Drawing from legal scholar Neil Gotanda (1991), whose thinking was heavily influenced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, we lowercase *white* when describing the racial category to disrupt the term's historical racial domination, while capitalizing terms like *Black* and *People of Color*, which have deep political and social roots.

Two-year-old Amelia and her classmates are outside coloring with chalk with their teachers, Ms. Dee and Ms. Vivian. Looking from her beige skin to Ms. Dee's sienna-colored skin, Amelia says, "Your knees are brown." Laughing, Ms. Dee says, "Yes, they are." Ms. Vivian adds, "Her skin is beautiful, isn't it?"

Amelia nods, then looks at Ms. Vivian's knees and her own. "We're white," she notes.

Both adults smile, and Ms. Dee laughs again as Ms. Vivian says, "Yes, we're white people. Our skin is a lighter color." Amelia nods and goes back to coloring.

Amelia is learning about phenotypical differences and her own racial identity. She is making assumptions about categories of people within her community and the differences between them. This is just one example of the ways that even very young children engage in social studies by learning about themselves, their communities, and the world around them.

For infants and toddlers, social studies learning occurs as part of their everyday explorations. Crawling up a hill or feeling grass for the first time helps our youngest citizens learn about landforms and the geography of their world. A tussle over a toy is the beginning of understanding about resource scarcity and how people meet their needs. A teacher's gentle scaffolding can model the civic practice of defining and negotiating a rule. Learning to anticipate routine experiences like naptime or meals is the beginning of children's learning about time, and therefore history.

In this article, we (the authors) explore what social studies looks like in infant and toddler settings and how early childhood educators can prepare the learning environment and cultivate experiences to support social studies learning in the very early years.

Big Ideas in Early Social Studies

In its position statement on social studies in early childhood (Vilotti & Berson 2019), the National Council for the Social Studies describes how young children explore and ask questions about social studies in their play, daily experiences, and interactions, using both verbal and nonverbal cues. In our work, we have identified five components of equity-centered social studies that recognize these capacities in young children, including infants and toddlers:

- Early childhood social studies, like all learning in the first three years, spans all domains of development. In other words, early childhood social studies is *transdisciplinary* rather than taught in isolation from other content areas like math and science.
- Early childhood social studies should acknowledge the reality of children's lived experiences and the inequities that exist in daily encounters.
- Young children are knowledgeable and capable, and their ideas should be taken seriously.
- Young children need real, meaningful experiences involving inquiry.
- Educators need not invent problems or scenarios for young learners to solve. There are plenty of real dilemmas that children encounter.

These components are grounded in theory and research related to social studies and young children. They help inform the strategies, activities, and materials educators use to foster social studies knowledge and skills—during the earliest years and beyond.

Five Ideas to Encourage Learning This Summer

Resources / Blog / Five Ideas to Encourage Learning This Summer

GEORGI-ANN CLARKE

05/25/2017

School may be out for the summer, but there are still lots of opportunities for young children to play and learn! Here are five ideas:

1. Take your child to a live performance - Family friendly events are a great way to teach your child about the performing arts. Try these tips to help young children prepare for the experience.
2. Read books about warm weather fun -These stories focus on playing outdoors, visiting relatives, and cooling off in the water. Read a story then try one of the suggested activities with your child! (And before heading to the parks and playgrounds for outdoor play, be sure to review these sun safety tips to keep young children protected!)
3. Turn any walk into a nature walk - Use time outdoors with young children to help them learn about the natural world. Explore your neighborhood, observe the weather, examine plants, flowers, and more!
4. Visit museums and libraries in your town - Find low-cost or no-cost local attractions to visit with young children (zoos, botanical gardens, libraries, and aquariums - to name a few) to assist in their summer learning adventures.
5. Create mini-learning centers at home - Use these ideas to fill boxes with materials and props related to a topic to give children a hands-on way to learn!

How will your child play and learn this summer?

Audience: *Family*

Age: *Infant/Toddler, Kindergarten, Preschool*

Topics: *For Families Blog, Other Topics, Play*

GEORGI-ANN CLARKE

Georgi-Ann Clarke is the Digital Content Manager at NAEYC.