

Family Explore!



Exploring Identity, Uniqueness and Brilliance with Young Children

Young children are discovering who they are - their likes and dislikes, their characteristics, their interests and preferences for play, fun and relaxation. They are becoming aware of their emerging skills and talents - things they are learning to do and master. They are also beginning to discover how they (and their families) are similar to and different from others. When you talk with your child about their emerging understanding of who they are, you are helping them **think creatively and reflectively**. This type of thinking is regularly asked for in school settings.

- *I noticed you really enjoyed climbing on that play structure. What else are your favorite things to do?*
- *You know a lot about bugs! I wonder where we could find more bugs?*
- *You are so good at zipping coats. Could you help your brother with his coat?*

When children notice differences between themselves and others and between their family and others in the community, adults can help children feel proud of who they are. Adults can also help children understand that everyone is unique and everyone has ideas or skills to share. Feeling good about oneself and appreciating the differences of others contributes to **positive self-esteem** and a **willingness to collaborate with others**, two important elements of school success.

- *We speak two languages in our family. Lots of families speak more than one language. This gives us lots of ways to talk about things!*
- *You are named after your grandmother. Your name means "wisdom." Your grandmother was a wise woman and I see wisdom in you as well.*
- *It sounds like your friend lives with her mom and her auntie. There are lots of different kinds of families. How would you describe our family?*

