

# New York State BOOK NOOKs



## All Are Welcome

In a school, diverse families are celebrated where all families are welcome. A community of children play joyfully on the playground, work together in the classroom, and return each day refreshed from their unique and loving families.

**Title:** All Are Welcome

**Author:** Alexandra Penfold

**Illustrator:** Susanne Kaufman

**Publisher:** Alfred A. Knopf

**Date published:** 2018

### Social and emotional Pyramid Model skills that can learned through this book:

This book promotes acceptance of diversity and feelings of belonging.

### Social and emotional words this book can emphasize:

Safe, welcome, together, share, fun, kindness, joy, happy, belonging, love, friendship

### Pyramid Model Activities to do while reading the book that will help promote social and emotional development:

- While reading the book, point out the diversity among the adults and children represented in the book. Be sure to point to attributes that the children share, as well as the differences (gender, age, hair, skin tone, clothing, cultural practices). Draw attention to assistive equipment (wheelchair, cane, glasses) as well as other items such as hijab, turban, yarmulke. Talk about these things in a positive and affirming way.
- Draw attention to the faces of the people in the book and talk about emotions. Describe what the eyes and mouth look like. Mimic the face and say the emotion. For example, point out your raised eyebrows, wide open eyes, and smiling mouth and say, "I feel excited!" Encourage children to copy the faces and say the emotion.
- Encourage children to join in repeating the phrase "All Are Welcome Here" while reading.

### Fun for Everyone! Activities to promote social and emotional development throughout the day:

- Greet every child and adult warmly and by name as they enter the classroom. Encourage children to greet each other in the same manner.
- Create an "All Are Welcome Here" sign near the main entrance with photos of families attached. Display at child's level and use to talk about how all families are welcome.
- Take photographs of children while interacting and playing and create a poster. Display at children's eye level and refer to the photographs as examples of how everyone belongs.
- Display "Feeling Faces" poster and cards throughout classroom. Help children to use them to describe their own emotions during arrival and throughout the day, particularly if they are having strong emotional reactions or exhibiting challenging behavior.
- Point out feelings you see as they are happening in real time (discreetly if the feelings are difficult). For example, "I see Juan and Eve playing together with the dolls. Their smiles tell me that they feel happy to be playing together."
- Have children fingerpaint on similarly sized pieces of paper and display in a way that resembles a quilt. Talk to children about the beautiful new piece of art made up of all the unique and individual pieces of art. Discuss how it is the same with people. We are all unique and special and together, we are even more beautiful.

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- Encourage families to share family or cultural traditions throughout the year. Foster an inclusive environment by consistently using positive and respectful language and tone.
- Make familiar cultural items available to children, as appropriate. For example, keep traditional dress in the dramatic play center, and a variety of musical instruments in the music center. Ask families for input when choosing these items.
- Create a clothing study that incorporates dress from around the world, especially as represented in the classroom community.
- Create classroom books that include photos of each family. Ask families for photos that represent the ways they have fun together, celebrate holidays, cook, etc. Keep the books as part of the classroom library and use them to spark discussion of all the ways we are diverse. Include a wide variety of other books that represent a diverse population.
- Use and display a family's language as much as possible. Ask families to help label the room with their home language. Celebrate the opportunities for everyone to learn each other's language.

### More books that celebrate diversity

- *It's Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr
- *The Big Umbrella* by Amy June Bates
- *Alma and How She Got Her Name* by Juana Martinez-Neal
- *One Family* by George Shannon
- *Thank you, Omu!* by Oge Mora

### For more tips on promoting equity

- Tip Sheet: Talking to Very Young Children about Race  
<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Talking-to-children-race.pdf>
- How to Teach Children About Cultural Awareness and Diversity  
<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-teach-children-about-cultural-awareness-and-diversity>
- Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools  
<https://www.welcomingschools.org/>

Music Video;  
Sesame Street; Anyone Can Be  
Friends Song with Elmo  
<https://youtu.be/XFExA7ytucY>





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### Resources for families

To view a video read-aloud of the book *All Are Welcome*, visit:

<https://youtu.be/mwS3FOn4-Ow>

- Talk with your children about acceptance of people from all backgrounds, including race, gender, culture, orientation, etc.
- Reinforce the idea that all people and families should be welcome everywhere they go.
- Encourage your child to warmly greet others at school. Set the example by doing the same!
- Offer to share your own unique family culture with your child's classroom.
- Be mindful about the media your family consumes. Are the images and dialog inclusive and respectful to all? Use it to start conversations about acceptance.
- Visit your local library to check out books that represent a diverse population. Here are a few other NYSECAC recommendations:

*Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story* by Kevin Noble Mallard

*The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh* by Supriya Kelkar

*Under My Hijab* by Hena Khan

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