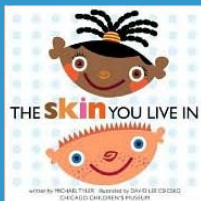


Celebrating Black History Month

Wouldn't it be terrible? Wouldn't it be sad?
If just one single color was the color that we had?
If everything was purple? Or red? Or blue? Or green?
If yellow, pink, or orange was all that could be seen?
Can you just imagine how dull the world would be?
If just one single color was all we got to see?

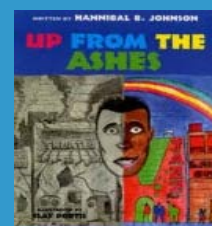
Connecting Through Books

THE CRAYON BOX THAT TALKED, by Shane DeRolf, is a charming poem that uses a box of crayons to illustrate the beauty of all colors. When the colors clash, a little girl brings peace by drawing a picture. The colors see that when they work together they can create a masterpiece. Each color is unique and beautiful. This book was the theme for the Ad Council's 1997 National Anti-Discrimination Campaign for Children. A book for all ages.



THE SKIN YOU LIVE IN, by Michael Tyler and published by The Chicago Children's Museum, is told in rhyme and delivers an important message of social acceptance to young readers. Themes associated with child development and social harmony, such as friendship, acceptance, self-esteem, and diversity are promoted in simple and straightforward prose. This delightful picture book offers a wonderful venue through which parents and teachers can discuss important social concepts with their children. Ages 4-8.

UP FROM THE ASHES, by Tulsa author Hannibal E. Johnson, takes a 9-year old boy's perspective of Tulsa's dynamic Greenwood community and its destruction before, during and after the Tulsa Race Riots. This positive, life-affirming book helps readers discover what it means to be part of a community, demonstrating virtues of faith, determination, integrity, humility and compassion. For ages 8 and up.



Connecting Through Our Differences

By Allyson Jannotta

The playground's slides, outdoor sunshine and swings, can be loads of fun, but for some kids the school playground is scary. They are victims of teasing because they are too tall, too short, too fat, too skinny - or maybe it's the color of their skin. For whatever reason they are different, and because of this they are teased.

Bullying and teasing continues to be a problem in schools and the Oklahoma Conference for Community and Justice (OCCJ) is doing something about it. In schools throughout the Tulsa area, Tulsa second graders go through diversity training with the program, "Different and the Same."

Children watch clever videos produced by Fred Rogers' company Family Communications, and see likable puppet characters experience the same kind of name calling, bullying and stereotyping that they may encounter on the school playground. The videos stimulate classroom discussion that is led by volunteer moderators.

Nancy McDonald, Member of the Board of OCCJ and Chair of the "Different and the Same" committee, has seen the direct impact of the videos on the Tulsa community. "The children are teaching the adults," she said. One child, after hearing an adult make a derogatory remark, stood up and said "that is not appropriate, that statement was very hurtful."

What makes the program so effective is that children are innately fair and are very interested in fairness. "That's not fair!" is a classic childhood line, yet kids still tease other kids.

"Many times the bullies are those children who have also been discriminated against and for whatever reason may feel inferior and so one of the reasons that they engage in bullying is that it gives them a sense of power," McDonald said. "Look at Columbine - those two kids were bullied and so what did they do, they decided they were going to have power and act out."

In order for children to embrace societal differences, McDonald says it is important for them to be exposed to all different kinds of people. This will help them develop a sense of awareness of other cultures.

Children's Museums across the country are taking the initiative to have more exhibits and programming that celebrate people of all backgrounds, with each museum creating its own diversity statement. In 2004, The Association of Children's Museums set up a Diversity Taskforce comprised of children's museum professionals who are committed to honoring, practicing and promoting diversity in children's museums.

Some of the programming that has resulted from that effort includes:

- "One Peace at a Time," where ethnically diverse Chicago students at children's museums and afterschool programs create quilt squares to express their thoughts on world peace. Professional quilters create

finished quilts, which are then donated to children in Iraq.

- "We are Maine" at The Children's Museum of Maine in Portland is a collection of videos that explores the daily lives of 20 diverse Maine families. Narrated by a young family member, the videos explore how they celebrate cultural traditions through food, holidays, language, music and dance. Visitors can record their own family traditions that can be added to the exhibit.
- "Dream Keepers" at The Children's Museum of Oak Ridge, Tennessee teach the Civil Rights Movement and the work of Martin Luther King Jr. through music, storytelling, crafts and other activities. The museum also hosts an annual International Festival with booths representing more than 30 countries.
- "Inside/Outside: Skin Deep" at The Curious Kids Museum in St Joseph, Michigan is an exhibit that examines the science of skin color and avoids using racially charged language to describe the physical differences between people.

McDonald applauds these efforts, "as we become a more diverse culture anything that we can do as a whole to help youngsters develop the necessary skills for an appreciation of differences is a plus for all of us."

Parents can help too, by encouraging self esteem in their child and acting as a good role model.

"Adults need to be careful about what they say and how they respond." McDonald said. "What you do, where you take your kids, how you respond when you hear something inappropriate and derogatory - you role model it for your kids all the time."

If you see a child teasing another, McDonald suggests taking a direct approach. "I get engaged in it - I stop the kid and say just listen - listen to what you're saying - that is very hurtful - just stop and think about what is going on here."

Victims of bullying can get help. Parents can file a formal report with the principal and through Oklahoma's School Bullying Act, each school district is required to adopt a policy for controlling bullying. Parents can request a copy of their child's school policy.

Connecting Through Diversity

The Association of Children's Museums set up a Diversity Taskforce comprised of children's museum professionals who are committed to advancing the inclusiveness and diversity of children's museums.

Their goals are to:

- Engage children and families in exploring and appreciating their own cultures and the diverse cultures and lifestyles of others.
- Enhance children's cultural competency, their skills and ability to be active and successful in an increasingly diverse and global society.

- Play an active role in building inclusive communities through exhibits, programs, advocacy and partnerships that reflect and celebrate our diverse communities.
- Enhance staff and organizational capacity to attract, welcome and serve a diverse audience and membership.

The Tulsa Children's Museum is deeply committed to creating an environment where children value themselves as unique individuals and as important members of a diverse community. Exhibits that focus on diversity will be an important part of TCM's programming.

Connecting Through History

Garrett Morgan invented the gas mask in 1912. It was used in World War I to protect soldiers from chlorine gas fumes. Morgan later invented the traffic signal.



Charles Drew revolutionized the medical profession after discovering how to store blood. He became the first director of the

American Red Cross blood bank.

Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman elected to Congress and in 1972 became the first major party African American to run for U.S president.



In 1993, Carol Moseley-Braun became the first and to date, the only African American woman elected to the U.S

Connecting Through Art

Art can be a wonderful way to teach a child about diversity:

- Take a box of colorful crayons.
- Give a child one color from the box and ask her to draw you a picture.
- After the picture is done, give the child the full box of crayons and ask her to draw the same picture using all the colors.
- Talk about the difference between the two.
- Read [The Crayon Box That Talked](#) for further discussion.



If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please email us at:

info@tulsachildrensmuseum.org

or visit our website at:

www.tulsachildrensmuseum.org

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