



## Words Matter

### Using Inclusive Language in the Classroom

By Teacher Susan Eisman

**W**ords are powerful and can be used to affirm or dismiss people's experiences.

Sometimes we inadvertently use language that does not fairly represent everyone. Some words stand for a segment of a group, but are posed as though they stand for the entire group. In this case the words used may be obtuse, but they sting nonetheless. Feeling invisible or misrepresented wounds. Being thoughtful of our language, considering what we're really saying, who we're truly including, or overlooking, is important.

Since we have grown up in a world that favors some people's experiences over others, we are raised with biases. We have all learned bias and our language reflects this flawed learning. In order to avoid passing on our biases to our children, we must address language that favors one group over another. When we bring attention to our words, we can avoid biased language, working toward a bias-free practice. This is a bold process, as we are essentially working against institutional oppression as it affects our school and larger community.

Early childhood educators agree that building children's self-esteem and fostering a strong self image is critical in the growth of young learners. Being thoughtful about our language is one significant way to foster this growth. As we become increasingly conscious of our language, we work toward equitable practices that accurately reflect everyone. Inclusive language gives the message that you are safe here; you belong; we are thinking about you; this applies to you. The board at Tualatin Family Preschool recently drafted a handout on the importance of using inclusive language:

*Inclusive language is using words and phrases that make everyone part of the group. It is communicating in a way that includes all the children... Inclusive language is about understanding the individual child and his/her family, then communicating with him or her in a way that honors differences, rather than ignores them.*

—"Using Inclusive Language" handout, Tualatin Family Preschool



**"Whether we think before we speak or not, our words have an impact and shape our environment, shape how we see the world."**

—Lura Reed, Ph.D.

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HFP is a play-based cooperative preschool that nurtures and supports the individual development of each child with enriching and empowering experiences.



Notes from Board President Carissa (Adriano)

# Building a Strong Community

As the weather begins to turn, my summer memories are still fresh. As I think of planting tulip bulbs into the soft earth, I remember planning my bike route to Grant Park to meet up with old and new friends. Brooklyn Park was particularly nice, with that steep grassy hill for the children to roll down and play ball. Meeting up with new families at the park dates was so helpful for me to get a head start in getting to know the children and their families.

Then came the excitement of the Clinton/Division Parade! The bikes and trikes and wagons were alive with décor and children dressed in their HFP regalia. Queen

Abigail was waving to her fans as she was pulled by her devoted parents. Porter Funk Levenson ('07) was speeding ahead on his two-wheeler, competent and charged. Passengers of the bucket bike were loyally tossing HFP labeled bubbles to prospective playmates. Squirt bottles were the favorite of the day, as it was nearing 90 degrees that morning! Though slightly wilting, the children and parents cheered as we descended Division and turned the corner towards Clinton Street. Cookies and fresh water greeted us under the shade of a tree and ice cream trikes tempted us with their wares.

I liked the summer park playdates. It was a good way to meet people and a great way for friends to stay in touch over the summer. It was great doing a Portland Parks "tour" this summer.  
—Jennifer C. (Astrid)

Looking forward to our HFP campout, Adriano (T/TH/F) made sure I had the marshmallows and graham crackers packed. The weather was perfect and the community banquet was quite gourmet! Children ran every which way, squealing with delight in rejoining old friends and engaging new ones into their games. While the children finally fell asleep with their glow sticks in hand, parents caught up with the events of the summer and life stories were shared. This community has been building and building with each encounter we make. The Ice Cream Social was next with David Hall's music at the center, charming the children and parents alike with well-known tunes.

Now, we have a few parent helping shifts under our belt, Chinook Books are being promoted to our friends and family, and we look forward to each day we can witness our children thriving in this community. With each hand we wash and tear we dry, we know that we are doing the best we can for our children. It's a challenging task we have as parents to raise responsible, respectful, and enlightened children, but I find it's usually our children who teach me so much.

In respect and awe for all you do for your families and this community, cheers!

The summer playdates were a fun way to get to know other families. I also enjoyed the orientation meetings—really informative and fun!  
—Diana (Isabel)

Grampa Hal was so excited about being in the parade this summer. He is already thinking about our costumes for next year.  
—Rick (Sasha)



I really liked the classroom orientation. The ideas of Teacher Susan were clear and well thought out. Some of the talking points turned into discussions that were meaningful and merit further visitation. These early meetings allow us to get to know each other as well as learning about the school.  
—Deborah (Isaiah)

HFP is such an amazing community and I feel so fortunate to be part of it. I remember how fragile both Rayley and I felt last year, timid and nervous for this new venture—and it has been so rewarding this year to see how far she has come. All that hard work has really paid off as I see this evolved little person who is so sure of herself and comfortable in this environment that is her school. And in all the other activities we have been involved in, there is nothing that compares to the intimacy and thoughtfulness of this co-operative environment. — Jenny (Rayley)

## Words Matter (continued from front cover)

Because we want each child to feel safe and affirmed, valued and reflected, we need to pay attention to our words, noting whether or not our words think about each child's experience. We need to be cognizant that each child does not have the same experience. We need to individualize, to address what is relevant for each child, or we need to use phrases that include everyone.

### Who Am I?

Preschoolers primary identity context is within their family. Children are safest and known best in their homes, with the people they love. It is essential that we honor and reflect their families and home life accurately with the words we use.

We need to refrain from making assumptions about each child. Ideally, we get to know each child and family individually, so that we know what words best describes their situation. If we are thoughtful in this way, our intent to connect with each child will be relevant and well-received.

### Who Is In Your Family?: Language Reflecting Real Families

While we know that numerous families are headed by a mom and a dad, many are configured differently. The term "parents" refers to a much broader grouping of people than "mom and dad." "Parents" may include birth parents, adoptive parents, divorced parents, and step parents/blended families alike. In addition, two-mom families, two-dad families, single-parent families and families in which a grandparent is paramount also make up our community of parents. In some cases the terms "parents" or "families" may be preferred over "mom and dad," as they affirm the broader range of family configurations that actually exist. When we're talking to a group of children and we say, "Your families are coming to pick you up soon," we're equally representing the children whose aunt, grandma or nanny is picking them up. Those children are reassured, knowing that we are thinking well about them.

### What Will I Be When I Grow Up?

The workers in our community loom large for young children. Consider a child's awe of a fire fighter in uniform or a puppeteer on stage. These are powerful figures—role models of future possibilities. How we refer to these workers impacts children's self-worth and sense of what is possible for them. If we want children to experience a broad range of options for their future life work, then our language needs to reflect it.

### Learning from Road Construction Signs

Outdated are the orange road construction signs, "Men at work." They have since been changed to "Workers Ahead," emphasizing the job, rather than the gender of the person doing the job. Women construction workers can work



proudly in these work zones, and girls driving by can see themselves in the newly worded signs. At the same time male construction workers are reminded that their female sisters doing the job beside them are welcome and valuable workers, just as they are. Boys passing by can see that their female friends, sisters, cousins, and so on, can grow up and take on this important work, just as they can.

There are a myriad of other widely used gender neutral job titles, such as hair stylist, massage therapist, accountant, basketball player, dentist, garbage collector, mechanic, doctor, teacher, mediator, and so on. We can learn from these examples and follow suit, shifting our language with worker roles that are frequently referred to in a biased way. When we use language that has the word "man" in it, children image a male in that role. It reinforces a limitation, giving the message that only boys and men can take on these jobs. We can easily remedy this, shifting toward gender neutral language. Examples: Firefighter (instead of fireman), Mail carrier (instead of mailman), Police officer (instead of policeman).

We might also choose to steer away from gender specific job titles, recognizing that it's the job, not the person doing the job that is important (Flight attendant instead of stewardess/steward, Server instead of waiter/waitress). Shifting our language in this way, we help convey that it is possible for a woman or a man to take on each job, freeing our children from narrow gender scripts. As we grow more thoughtful of our words, we consider the experience of those around us and gain awareness in the part we play in that experience.

We can be proud of our intent to use affirming language in our school and community. This is a process that takes time, awareness and patience. Thanks for joining me in this endeavor to create a more just school and community. We are making an important difference in the current and future lives of the children we love.

# Shine Up Your Dancin' Shoes!

By Shannon (Elias)



**F**riends, Family and Alumni save the date for April 17, 2010! Please join us at Oaks Park Dance Pavilion for the Annual Auction Party! There will be great deals on local goods for you and a great opportunity to showcase our amazing ever growing community. Keep in mind ideas for donations. All proceeds benefit HFP!



## Book

## Drive



*Every Child Should Have a Book to Call Their Very Own*

**T**he Parent Child Preschool of Oregon (PCPO) annual book drive has returned! The Books for Kids Program collects and distributes books to underprivileged youth in Oregon and Southwest Washington. They are looking for new and gently used book donations. A collection box is located under the sign in sheet at school. Books will be delivered on November 17th. Please see the PCPO bulletin space for more information.

## Let's Stay Healthy!

With the H1N1 virus so prevalent in the state, we can do our best to keep ourselves healthy with regular hand washing, taking your vitamins, sleeping well, and eating well.

More information is available here:  
Multnomah County Health Department website:  
[www.mchealth.org/swineflu/schools.shtml](http://www.mchealth.org/swineflu/schools.shtml)

## Good Eats! By Carissa (Adriano)

### Quinoa & Black Bean Salad with Cilantro

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped white onions
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup quinoa,\* rinsed, drained
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed, drained
- 1 cup frozen or fresh corn
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro, divided
- Crumbled Cotija cheese or feta cheese (optional)

\* A grain with a delicate flavor and a texture similar to that of couscous; available at natural foods stores

#### Preparation:

Heat oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions and red pepper; sauté until beginning to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in next 4 ingredients. Add water; bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until quinoa is almost tender, about 14 minutes. Add beans, corn, and 1/4 cup cilantro; cook uncovered until heated through and liquid is fully absorbed, about 3 minutes. Transfer to bowl; sprinkle with 1/4 cup cilantro and cheese, if desired. You can also add sliced heirloom tomatoes, chopped spinach, any veg you like!

*Recipe adapted from one found on Epicurious.com*



For more info on how to get more vegetables and fruits into your family, check out my website, <http://www.carissatakesjuiceplus.com>

# Dreaming of an Improved Outdoor Play Area

By Kathleen (Ivan)

**O**n a gorgeous Tuesday afternoon, with the sublime fall sunlight falling on us, Deborah (Isaiah), Teacher Susan, and John and I met to brainstorm ways to further improve our outdoor play space. We talked about how things were working and what we could do to stimulate our children's experiences outdoors. Outdoor play is an integral part of Teacher Susan's teaching practice.

Susan on the value of the play yard:

"Fresh air, open space and natural environments are ideal for children's learning and expression. Children are experiential learners, using their full bodies and engaging their senses. Many of preschoolers' natural pulls that unnerve adults indoors—to take physical challenges, move quickly, make "loud" noises and make "messes,"—are given space and respect when performed outdoors. Finally, our wish to nourish each child's connection with nature brings us outside daily so that we can appreciate what cannot be taught in a classroom: the change of light from summer to fall, worms wiggling their way through the soil, a collection of seed pods...and so on. What better place to do all of this than outside? Our main obstacle, is the lack of shelter during the rain. And we're working on that!"

This community has done a tremendous amount, with the support of Colonial Heights Presbyterian, to consider these factors and embellish our outdoor play yard in the past several years. We are eager to build on these efforts and add to them in the upcoming year.

## Overall goals for the space:

- Provide more covered play areas for play in wet weather
- Provide more physical challenges
- Create more intentional outdoor classroom activities
- Add blooming fall plants & have the children help plant them
- Add year-round interest perennials
- Create a visual corridor near storage shed & along the stairs
- Make the spider web more interactive (better utilize this designated space)
- Design a photo board of great ideas for inspiration (add your ideas)



**"One transcendent experience in nature is worth a thousand nature facts."**

—David Sobel

## Some of the ways we could accomplish these goals:

- Take a visit to Sherrit Square for inspiration
- Design a raised and covered organically shaped platform for around the trees (tall enough for adults to stand in)
- Build an outdoor "loft" a low-level tree connection platform to create some climbing opportunities as well as a hang-out spot
- Extend the branch wall up and cover it w/ a temporary cover
- Create recycled wood planter boxes for along the stairs and plant it with bamboo
- Consider adding large boulders, and adding more loose bits for the kids to grab and play with
- Build a structure around the shed that could include open windows that the children could play through, boards with a bean toss, or something to welcome and engage them into the space
- Create a temporary tile border (made by the children) that would sit under the bay of windows and add color
- Brainstorm pulley systems that could support shelter
- Plant taller grass (soft to the touch) for playing between and running through
- Follow-up with the city on the possibility of a rainwater catchment system at the curb that doubles as a learning opportunity
- Construct one to two additional teepees
- Make box drums to play outside

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# Alumni News

Hello there HFP! Our family misses you all. Caden is thriving at Richmond. He loves kindergarten, his new buddies and learning in both English and Japanese. Caden was really ready for kindergarten thanks to Teacher Susan and HFP. His only complaint came on the first day, when he said that his bottom hurt (which I thought both endearing and a testament to his free-spirited time at HFP). We're thinking of you and will visit soon.

—Jen, Caden, Isabel and Todd Mc Ilhenny



**Jen and Caden**

Gus is starting a new year at St. Ignatius with Camila in 1st grade and loving it! He's involved in guitar, basketball, Spanish, and, of course, running around with all his buddies. Camila loves reading to her younger brothers and creating paper computers, mice and all! Zane's at Creative Science with many of his friends from HFP while Rachel (his momma) is in her final year in massage school! She's looking for demo bodies to practice on! Give her a call!

—Carissa St. Onge Carneiro

Zane had a busy summer with lots of camping and moving to a new house. He started kindergarten at Creative Science School which is a big adjustment. His favorite parts of school are morning meeting, calendar time, recess, work time, PE, and wellness. He is currently into snapping his fingers and beat boxing. Zane says, "I like kindergarten and it's going really good. Kindergarten is fun and when you get to kindergarten it will be fun, too."

—Cara Lee

Georgia is loving first grade! Her reading is exploding, and she asks me to make up homework for her. She loves her teacher and learning and friends and she's getting fantastic calluses from the monkey bars. She thinks in math and loves science and nature and still draws all the time. She's been lucky to have nurturing teachers who understand her big, free spirit. And she's actively learning that people who don't live like we do are just people too, that some people are mean but most people are nice, and to tolerate people who have completely different values, even if we don't agree with them. The foundation that HFP and Teacher Susan provided was great for our family for dealing with other kids, resolving problems, and being compassionate about differences.

—Belinda Miller



**Gus and Zane P.**

For both our boys, preschool seems long ago. They both spend a lot of time outside and still play with sticks at Sewallcrest Park regularly. Tucker is now a 2nd grader at Sunnyside Environmental School. He remembers playing outside in the sand lake at HFP. He's playing soccer this year again with old friends from HFP, Noah and Sebastian. Jackson is now a 5th grader at SES. He has HFP buddies Liam and Christopher there with him now. Reading is still his favorite thing (he loved stories with "Samy", which what we called Teacher Amy when she dressed up in a wig and pretended to be someone else).

—Cindi Carrell



**Georgia**

Underneath all my enthusiastic and confident words to Gabriel about starting kindergarten, I worried about the first day of school. How would it be to drop him off without letting him get used to it first like we did at HFP? And can attachment parenting still be practiced in public school? What an affirming sight; Gabriel was so wonderful and happy. On the first day, he settled in right away. He said hello to his teacher, Sally, then found a book and went to the carpet. No good-bye? So I whispered to Sally to say good-bye for me. He looked up, gave me a big smile, waved, and went back to his book. At the end of the day he came running out of the class saying he loved it. And he continues to enjoy school. HFP was so instrumental in preparing him and making him comfortable with a larger community. I really think Susan was instrumental in showing Gabriel that he can trust and love a teacher. He loves his new teacher after one only day and I really think it is because he loved Susan.

—Diana Sticker

## Outdoor Play Area (continued from page 5)

- Create a tea house type structure
- Introduce a boat into the sand lake with three driving wheels
- Have cars and ramps that can attach on to the spider web
- Create a fairy garden
- Dig out some grassy surface, add to another area, creating a rolling mound
- Bring small groups to play yard to explore more delicate items, or to do organized activities



**Sharing wiggly worms!**

If anyone has expertise or ideas about how to further improve our space, please talk with Deborah (M/W/F) or John (T/Th). We will be putting our ideas together and then presenting them to the church property committee in charge of overseeing the improvements.

We're looking forward to working with those of you who signed up for the October and November cleanups. Now let's play outside!

## Kudos to HFP!

Preschool Teacher, Dorothy Krogh, from Sabin-Schellenberg Professional Technical High School is putting together some photo documentation of developmentally appropriate practice. She has observed at numerous preschools including PCC, Mentor Graphics, Clark College, Marylhurst Early Childhood Center, and the Opal school.

Here's what she had to say about HFP:

"I was impressed with the abundance of choices for children, the use of space, and the sense of community. Your newsletters provide quality examples of how teachers communicate problem solving, curriculum, and suggestions."

## New Practicum Students

HFP is glad to partner with Warner Pacific College this year as they place some of their early childhood students to serve their practicum hours in our co-op. These students will become intimately acquainted with our program and will have the unique opportunity to build relationships with many of the students at our school. There are three students this quarter who will each spend 30 hours with us before winter break.

Please join me in welcoming these women to our community:

Tuesdays: Kaiti Harris

Wednesdays: Alyssa Goertzen

Fridays: Gaby Smith



## HFP on TV!

Johanna Wright (Anika's aunt) is a local artist who recently published "The Secret Circus". She came to HFP and shared her book with the children at circle time last year, with Oregon Art Beat was on hand to film. Now you'll have a chance to see the final showing! Check out OPB's Oregon Art Beat on November 5th (the show will repeat on November 8th). It will also be available online after the 5th at [www.opb.org](http://www.opb.org).

Johanna says, "The whole day of filming was so fun, and quite a blur, so I'm really curious to see how it turns out! Thanks again for letting me come to your lovely school."

## 2009/2010 HFP Dates

November 4	Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm
November 11	No School, Veteran's Day
November 12	No School, Teacher In-Service
November 14	General Membership Meeting, 9:30-noon
November 26-27	No School, Thanksgiving
December 2	Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm
December 12	Winter Family Potluck, 5:30-7:30 pm
Dec 21-Jan 1	No School, Winter Break
January 4-5	School Resumes
January 6	Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm
January 18	No School, Martin Luther King Day
January 19	No School, Teacher In-Service
January 20	General Membership Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm



### Back to the Farm!

Each June we pick strawberries and each October we return to pick pumpkins. (Pictured: Returning on the hayride after picking strawberries.)

### Henry measures up!



## Thank you, thank you, Gracias.



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HFP is a nonprofit 501(c)3 and donations (which are tax deductible) are gratefully accepted.

Please share this newsletter.

★ Thanks to Teacher Susan for all your hard work every day, supporting each child so well! And for hosting school...we had a blast at your house!

★ Thanks to local musician, David Hall for a lively, interactive music performance at our ice cream social. <http://www.beepositive.net/>

★ Thanks to Diana for setting up a yummy snack for our meeting!

★ Thanks to Carissa and Teacher Susan for making orientation fun!

★ Thanks to all HFP members for helping Owen have a fabulous first school experience.

★ Thank you Jenny L. for being such a help!