

Got Bias?

Exploring Implicit Bias in Early Childhood Education

Presented by Tina Sykes, M.Ed.

During our time together

You are encouraged to:

- Be curious and open to learning
- Show respect and suspend judgement
- Find common ground and note differences
- Be authentic and welcome that from others
- Acknowledge discomfort

Objectives

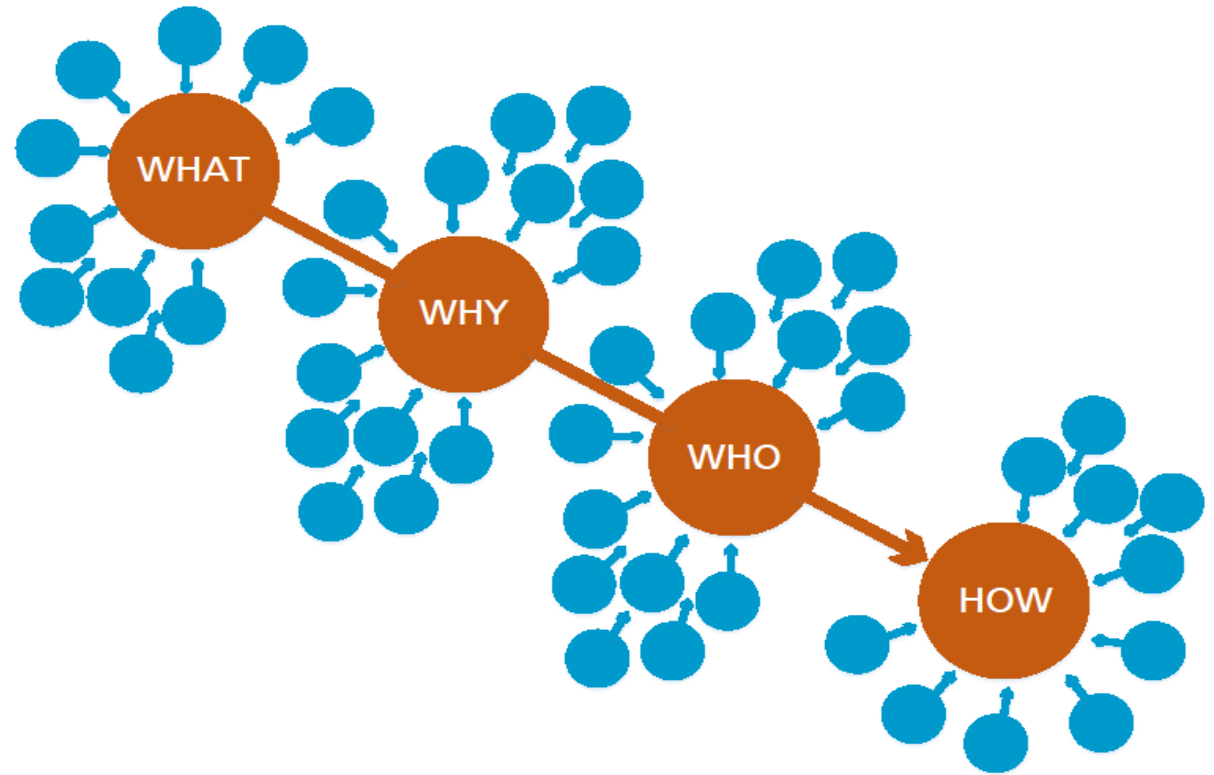
Participants will:

- Define implicit bias
- Explore how bias shows itself within the classroom and home childcare settings
- Identify strategies to counter bias



WHEN YOUR
WHY
IS BIG ENOUGH
YOU WILL
FIND YOUR
HOW

Why do we do this?



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Let's recreate Maslow's pyramid.



Here is a hint: There are **5 (five)** levels to the pyramid



The definition of culture:

“The sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another.

Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art, from one generation to the next.”



What do you know about Implicit Bias?

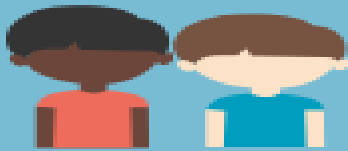


Implicit Bias is...

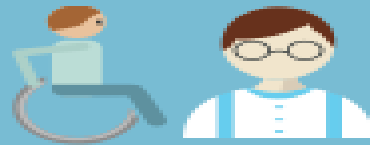


Attitudes, Stereotypes, & Beliefs
that can affect how we treat others.

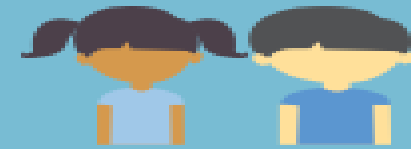
Implicit bias is not intentional, but it can still impact how we judge others based on factors, such as:



Race



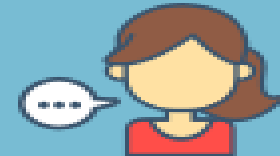
Ability



Gender



Culture



Language

<http://preventexpulsion.org/overview/>

Examples of bias found in classroom settings

- Girls receive less attention and are asked lower level questions than boys (Sadker & Zimmerman, 2009)
- White students are asked more questions and given more encouragement than students of color (Tenebaum & Ruck, 2007)
- Children with special needs are shown less respect and attention than students without special needs (Heinrichs, 2003)
- Children of color are perceived as less capable or less well behaved than other students (Grissom & Redding, 2016)
- Latino students are suspended at almost twice, and African-American students at more than three times, the rate of white students (Losen & Martinez, 2013)





“Indeed, implicit attitudes- which can be activated simply by being in the mere presence of a person of a particular ethnicity, race, religion, social status, ability, and/or gender - can dominate a situation.”

(Peterson, Rubie-Davies, Osborne, & Sibley, 2016)

Initial Strategies to Counter Implicit Bias

**Cultivate an
Awareness
and Concern**

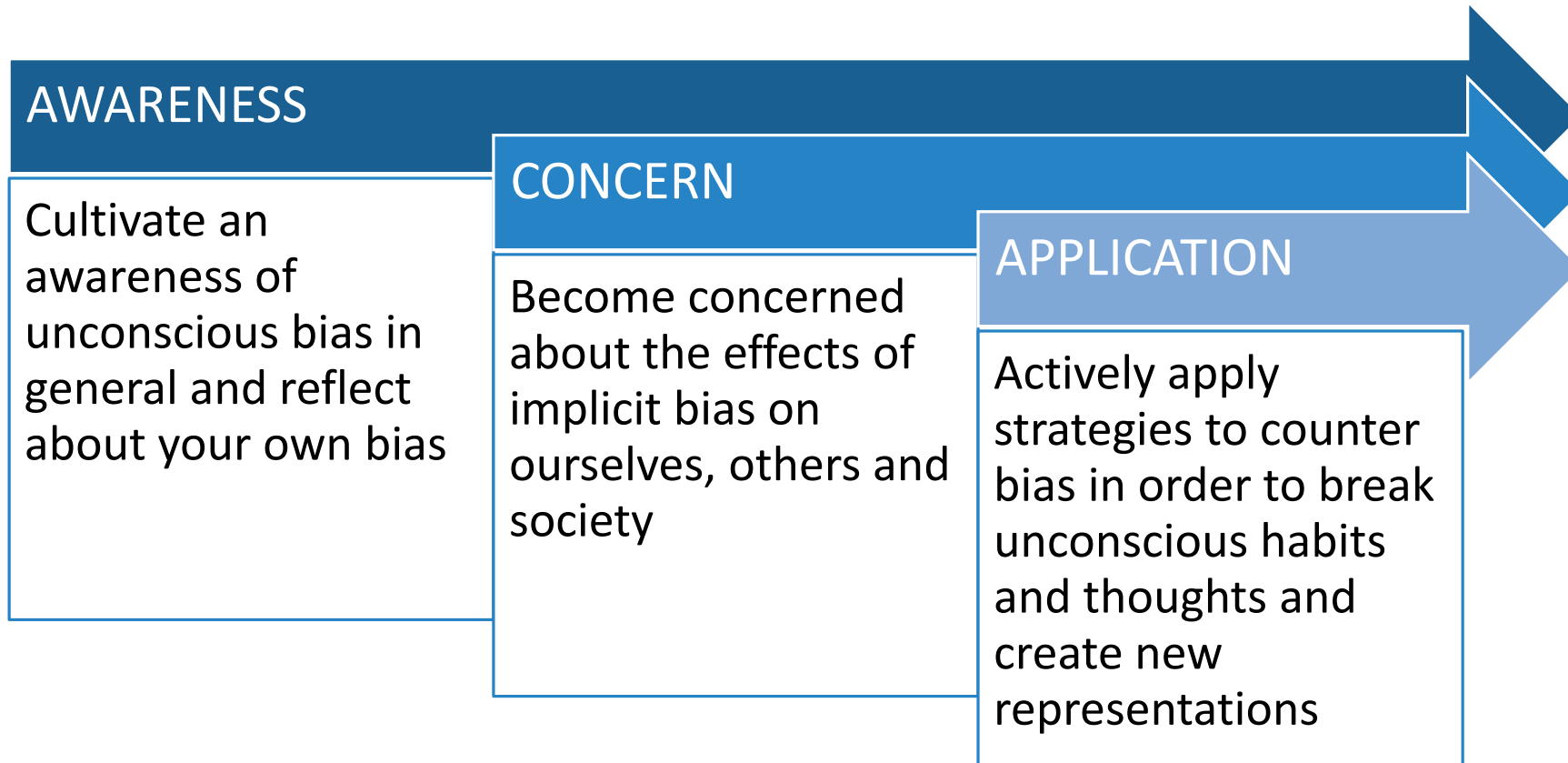
**Practice
Mindfulness**

**Engage in
Perspective
Taking**

**Actively
Engage
Families**

**Raise Your
Expectations**

To Counter Implicit Bias: Cultivate an Awareness and Concern



To Counter Implicit Bias: Cultivate an Awareness and Concern

But wait, since implicit bias is unconscious, how do I cultivate an awareness?



- ❑ Consider taking the **Implicit Association Test** to become aware of unconscious associations you may have.
- ❑ Meaningfully engage with individuals whose identities differ from your own.
- ❑ Become familiar with examples of counter stereotypes – people who contradict widely held stereotypes.

(Staat, 2016)

To Counter Implicit Bias: Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a state of being—often practiced through meditation—that involves an increased awareness of our emotions, thoughts, and surroundings, accompanied by a sense of acceptance and non-judgment.



Several studies have suggested that practicing mindfulness can reduce prejudice, implicit bias, and the biased language we use.

To Counter Implicit Bias: Practice Mindfulness

Three Ways Mindfulness Can Reduce Bias:

Mindfulness plays a role in decreasing the bias we use to pigeonhole people, which could benefit all social relationships, but particularly cross-group interactions.

Mindfulness can decrease our emotional reactivity to negative events, potentially leading to less social friction in more uncertain anxiety producing situations.

Mindfulness helps us keep a strong sense of self while also increasing our empathy with and care for those who are different.

To Counter Implicit Bias: Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness utilizes practices that increase attention span, amplify focus, build resiliency to stress and promote empathy.

KEY COMPONENTS TO PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

- Slow down
- Pay attention to your breathing
- Notice what you are sensing in the moment
- Recognize that your thoughts and emotions do not define you
- Pay attention to your thinking

To Counter Implicit Bias: Engage in Perspective Taking



Looking at a situation from another's point of view reduces bias, as does the exercise of focusing on what others have in common with us rather than focusing on their differences.

Perspective-taking refers to a person's ability to consider a situation from a different point of view.

It requires you to put yourself in the other person's position and imagine what you would feel, think, or do if you were in that situation.

To Counter Implicit Bias: Engage in Perspective Taking

Three types of Perspective Taking:

Perspective of SELF

- This is how the situation is interpreted from your own experience, based on your own thoughts and feelings in that situation.

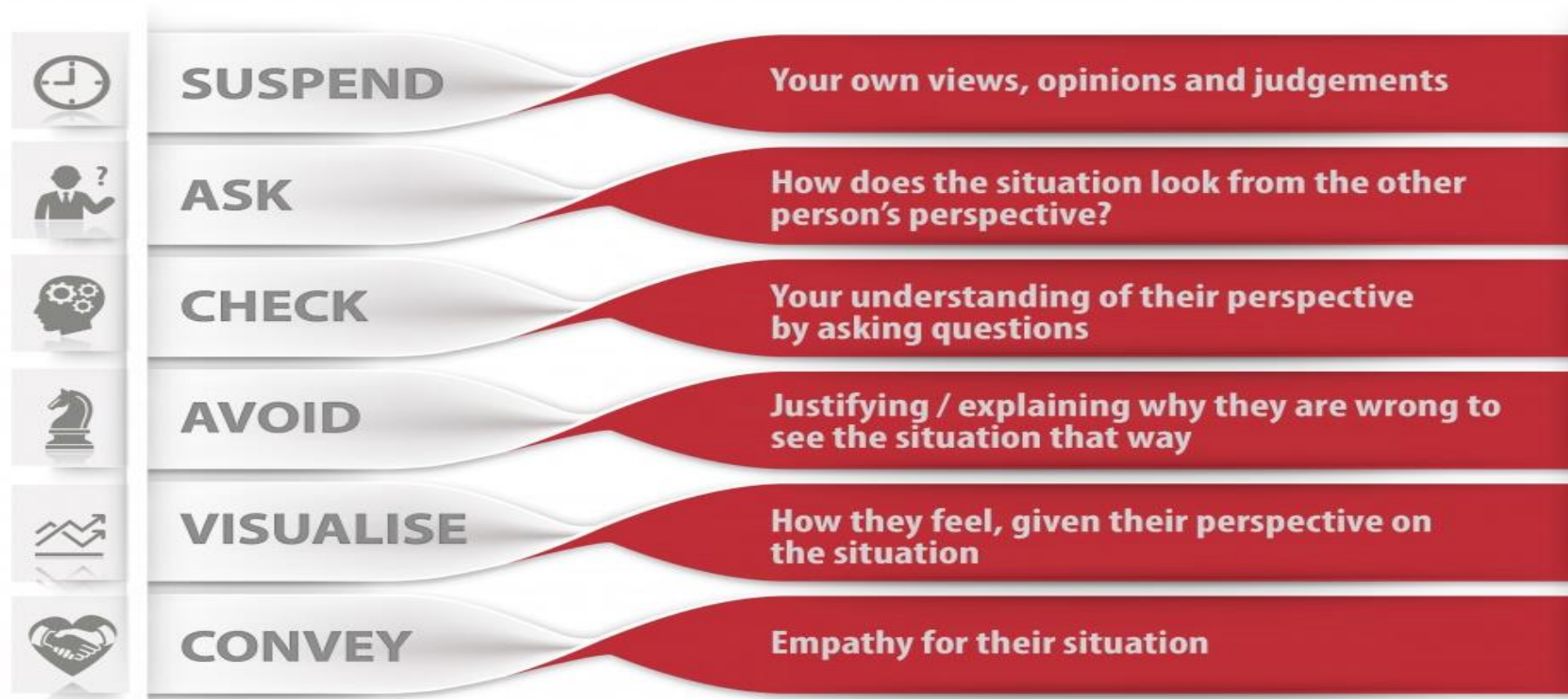
Perspective of OTHER

- This is how the situation is interpreted from the experience of the other person involved in the situation, based on their thoughts and feelings.

Perspective of THIRD PARTY

- This is how the situation is interpreted from someone who isn't involved in the situation, but instead looking from a neutral, outside perspective (the "the fly on a wall" approach).

To Counter Implicit Bias: Engage in Perspective Taking



ADAPTED BY BINNA KINDOLA 'THE VALUE OF DIFFERENCE: ELIMINATING BIAS IN ORGANISATIONS 2009

© 2016 Cultural Synergies. All Rights Reserved.

To Counter Implicit Bias: **Actively Engage Families**

Family engagement is a collaborative and strengths-based process through which early childhood professionals, *families*, and children build positive and goal-oriented relationships.



Acknowledging and addressing behaviors that result from unconscious biases has the potential to improve teacher-family relationships.

To Counter Implicit Bias: Actively Engage Families

Relationships between parents and teachers are driven by unconscious biases that affect student learning

FAMILIES CAN FEEL:

- unwelcomed and uncomfortable
- their needs are not being met
- misunderstood



TEACHERS CAN FEEL:

- Families are not committed to their child's education
- Families do not recognize the teacher's hard work
- Families "make-up excuses" for not participating



To Counter Implicit Bias: **Actively Engage Families**

Three tips to Actively Engage Families

Start with looking at YOURSELF

- Challenge your own assumptions.

Acknowledge families as equal partners

- Constantly revisit and revise plans based on input from families.

Meet parents where they are

- The ways families contribute to their child's education may differ.

To Counter Implicit Bias: Raise Teacher Expectations

Teacher Behavior for Students with Low Expectations

- Wait less time for students to answer questions
- More likely to give the answer than probe
- Tend to reward inappropriate or incorrect responses
- Pay less attention/or do so privately more often than publicly
- Call on less frequently
- Seat student further away
- Smile less/less eye contact
- Offer less learning material
- Criticism as a means of degrading them, cutting them off from attempts to complete work



To Counter Implicit Bias: Raise Teacher Expectations



High Expectation teachers:

- Use flexible groupings
- Create a warm socioemotional climate
- Use goal setting with students to foster
 - MOTIVATION
 - ENGAGEMENT
 - AUTONOMY

(Peterson et al., 2016)

Countering Implicit Bias results in:

- respect for differing viewpoints
- the capacity to consider diverse perspectives
- the potential to reconsider one's own perspective
- the ability to explore diverse perspectives, cultures, and world views
- **improved student outcomes and allowing students to reach their full potential**

(Dey, 2010)

Self-Reflection Questions to Help Counter Bias

How would I respond if this person were a different gender/race/ethnicity/etc.?

**What is the basis for my assumptions about this person?
How can I challenge my assumptions?**

How can I be an ally when stereotypes come up in interactions?

What can I do to educate myself more so that I am aware of my own assumptions and bias?



Got Bias? We all do.

Countering our biases will not happen overnight.

Our implicit biases are not reduced by good intentions, being told by others to reduce bias or by trying to suppress our bias.

However, we can modify our practices and apply strategies that will help our biases gradually be replaced with new mental representations.