

# Shaping Perspectives About Physical Differences

*Presented by:*

*Katrina Macasaet*

*Senior Professional Development Manager, ZERO  
TO THREE*



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*Inhale*

*Exhale*

*Release*

# Do you see what I see?



# In our time together today, we will:



Identify the development of young children's cognitive capacity to notice similarities and differences



Relate children's growing cognitive capacities to how they are building an understanding of the similarities and differences in characteristics of the people around them



Identify strategies that support and extend children's understanding of people's individual similarities and differences



*Understand that language can hurt or heal.*

# Community Agreement

- Be conscious of the time
- Speak openly
- Seek to clarify
- Share experience and wisdom
- Reflect on the content and be aware of your feelings/reactions
- Engage in "wondering"
- Have patience



*\*Coined by Jeree Pawl and adapted with inspiration from Kandace Thomas, Carmen Rosa Noroña, and Maria Seymour St. John (2019).*

# Babies Notice Similarities and Differences

# Developing Capacities



Babies show us that:

- Their **ability to notice the similarities and differences** emerges early.
- They create increasingly more **complex categories** based on what they have observed.
- They develop an **understanding of the people around them.**

# They Notice Similarities and Differences



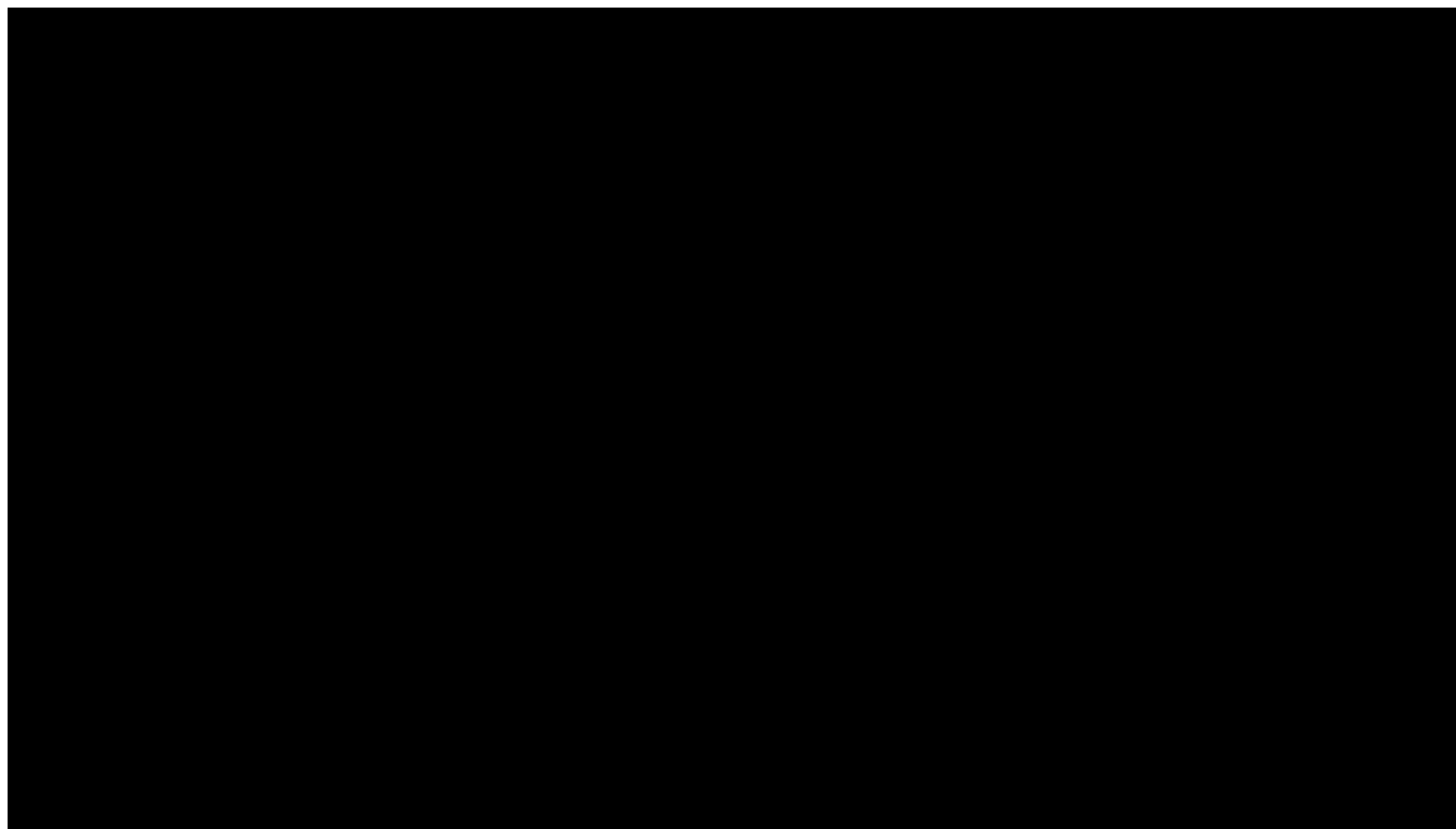
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# Babies and Surprises



# They Create Complex Categories



- Babies use their senses to categorize objects.
- Babies notice similarities and differences among similar objects.

# Growing Understanding of People

- Observing the faces of others can teach us a lot about our social environment.
- Infants start gathering information from faces early in life but must first attend to them.



# Still Face Experiment



- How does the Still Face Experiment show that infants can recognize and differentiate their caregivers' emotional expression?
- What does this reveal about the early social categories infants form to understand their environment?

# Understanding People's Similarities and Differences

# Toddlers' growing memory

Toddlers remember a greater number of familiar people, places, things, and routines.

- They begin to identify patterns.
- They develop clear preferences.



Research also points out that infants exhibit preferences for faces resembling their own racial group, a phenomenon known as **perceptual narrowing**.

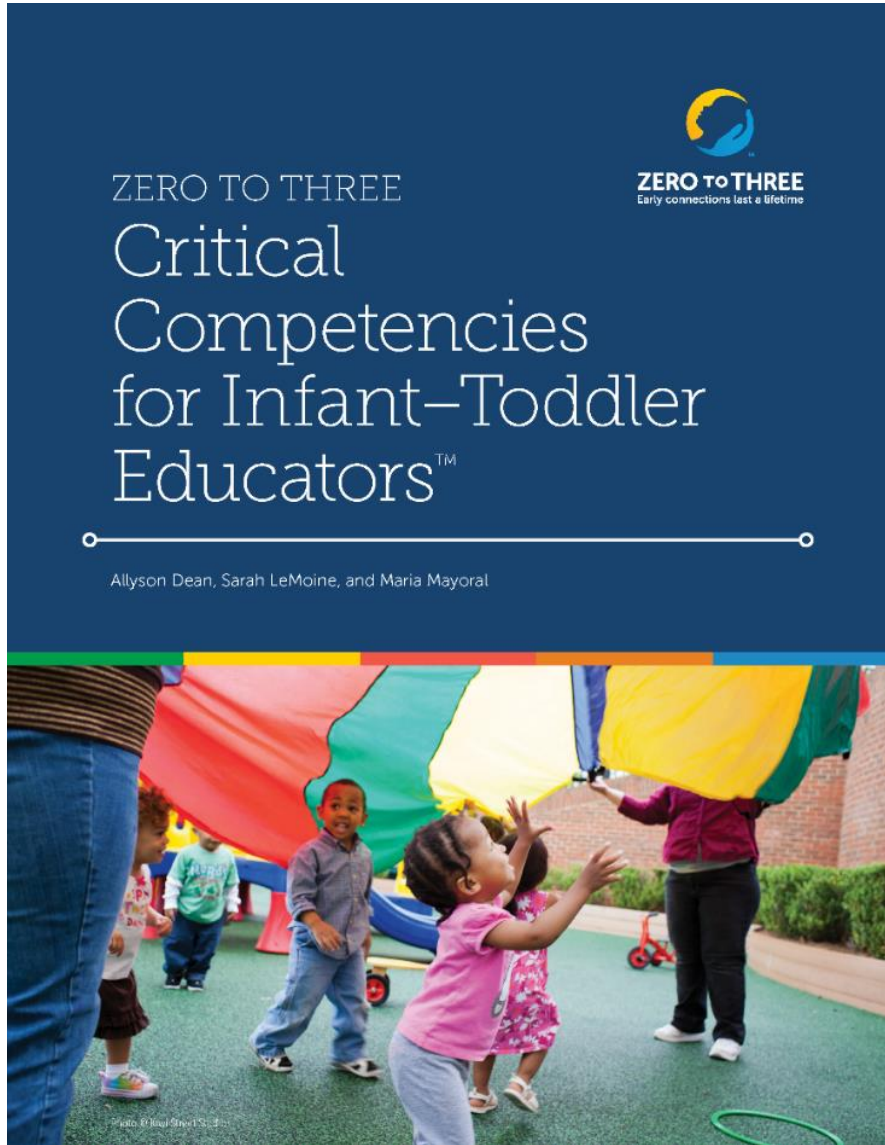


*The meaning that children will eventually attach to race, or any other physical attribute — such as shape, size, age, or ability — whether positive or negative, will be learned primarily from the words and behaviors of the important people in their lives.*

*Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™*

Reschke, K., LeMoine, S., Greene, K., & Macasaet, K. (2017). *ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant– Toddler Educators™ Course Curriculum for Trainers*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE.

# Extending Children's Understanding of Individual Differences



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# Strategies to Extend Children's Understanding

- Talk with children – now
- Use honest and empathetic language
- Understand that language can hurt or heal



# Talk with Children – Now

Dr. Katherine Lingras' ABCD of initiating conversations with young children:

- **A**ccess resources
- **B**e proactive
- (use) **C**oncrete and honest language
- (use) **D**evelopmentally appropriate explanations



# Use Honest and Empathetic Language



# Understand that Language can Hurt or Heal

**Reflection:** *How has language been used to shape the way you understand physical differences?*

**Discussion:** *How can we use language with children that promotes empathy and understanding?*





# Thank You!

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ZERO TO THREE • 2445 M Street, NW, Suite 600 • Washington, DC 20037  
202-638-1144 • [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org) •  
[professionaldevelopment@zerotothree.org](mailto:professionaldevelopment@zerotothree.org)