

What is diversity?

Transcript

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Viki Rozsas

Understanding and responding to diversity can be complicated at times, but we all know that diversity and how we embrace, embed, and include it matters. It matters for determining how children, families, and educators feel they belong, and ultimately, maintain positive mental health and wellbeing. This is because feelings of belonging, connectedness are central to our social, emotional wellbeing, to our behaviour, our learning, and our relationship. Let's move on now to explore diversity and inclusion in more depth.

Maree Kirkwood

First, let's have a look at what we actually mean by diversity. Diversity is about difference. From the Collins Dictionary, it's defined that diversity of something is the fact that it contains many, very different elements. Australia's population is considered to be diverse, with the Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander people, and migrants from almost every corner of the globe. A learning community will likely be culturally diverse with representatives from all or some of these groups. However, today, we're not only talking about cultural diversity, which refers to people who identify with particular groups based on their birthplace, ethnicity, language, values, beliefs, or wellbeing.

Differences can also include age, religion, gender, and gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexuality, education and literacy, family arrangements and circumstances, personality, interests and abilities, ways of thinking, values, mental health status, impairments and disabilities, and physical attributes. It is also important to always remember that as well as the diversity existing between groups, there is always diversity within that group. Even when we identify as being from a group, we have characteristics that set us apart from each other. Sometimes we can even identify or be identified as belonging to multiple groups.