

Preschool Scenarios

Case Study #1

You are a playgroup facilitator. You are approached by a parent, of a preschooler participating in your parent child playgroups. Their child, whose sex assigned at birth is female, would like to be called Max, and identify as a boy. They want to make sure that the learning environment is supportive to their child.

- What are the issues at play here?
- What can you do to make sure Max is safe and feels affirmed at playgroup?
- What support or resources might you need to best help Max?
- How might some additional lessons and discussions build upon what families and participants in your playgroup already know and lead them to a deeper understanding and practice of respect?

Case Study #2

You are supervising a parent child playgroup. Robert, a preschooler often acts and dresses in a traditionally “feminine” manner. One day, Robert wears a skirt and blouse to playgroup. Some parents attending the playgroup with their child comment under their breath and roll their eyes in a negative manner. One of your playgroup facilitators sends Robert’s parents to see you so you can help him “stop calling attention to himself.”

- What are the issues at play here?
- How do you respond to Robert’s parents?
- What do you do in the moment? Short-term and long-term?
- What information and support might your entire staff need to ensure that trans and gender non-conforming students are able to enjoy a safe, respectful and healthy learning environment?
- How might your follow-up build upon what students already know and lead them to a deeper understanding and practice of respect?

Case Study #3

Drawing materials are out at your art table and children are being encouraged to draw pictures of themselves. The conversation among parents and children veers towards drawing different boys and girls. One child, Samantha is drawing a picture of herself as a boy and proclaims she is a boy. A parent at the table says, you are not a boy, silly. Samantha’s parent appears uncomfortable but ignores the parent’s comment.

- What are the issues at play here?
- How do you initially respond to this situation? How can you follow up to ensure that Samantha and all students can express their gender without others commenting on it.
- How might your additional lessons and discussions build upon what students already know and lead them to a deeper understanding and practice of respect?

Case Study #4

A group of children are playing house in the dramatic play area. You overhear a discussion among the children. “Why do you have two moms? You can’t have two moms!” “I do” said Melissa. Another child asks, “Where is your daddy?” “I don’t have a dad.” “Everyone has a dad!” says one child. “Well I don’t” said Melissa and the children went back to playing and laughing. A parent that overheard the discussion expresses concerns to you that she does not want her child to learn about any family compositions that do not consist of a mother and a father.

- What are the issues at play here?
- How do you initially respond to this situation?
- How can you follow up to ensure that Melissa and all participants can talk about their families?
- How might your additional lessons and discussions in your playgroups build upon what parents and children already know and lead them to a deeper understanding and practice of respect?

Case Study #5

You have a family that consists of two moms. Each mom brings their child to playgroup on different mornings. One mom meets with you to share that her daughter is transgender and would like her to be referred to as a boy and be called Franklin instead of Abby. You change Abby’s name on your circle time name chart to Franklin and begin to use the pronouns he, him, his when referring to Franklin. The other children and parents appear to be confused. What are the issues at play here?

- How do you initially respond to this situation?
- How can you follow up to support the child, and parents?
- How might you handle this with program participants?