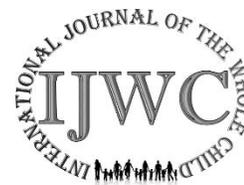# Introduction

IJWC remains committed to extending an understanding of the critical importance of ensuring all children with holistic and inclusive learning opportunities. Each child is regarded as unique; teachers perceive differences as natural and contributing to the overall learning environment. Using professional knowledge, educators intentionally plan experiences integrating both cognitive and affective strategies. This IJWC Fall issue provides readers with relevant and specific information with which to implement learning events which are both holistic and inclusive.

Articles

The IJWC editors remain committed to providing our readers with the most relevant and current knowledge with which to create innovative, holistic, and responsive instructional practices. Yet, in the first article, "Neuroeducation and Early Elementary Teaching: Retrospective Innovation for Promoting Growth with Students Living in Poverty," Karyn Allee-Herndon and Sherron Killingsworth Roberts provide readers with an interesting conundrum. They ask readers to acknowledge the effective learning strategies used by our grandparents generations ago; at the same time, they underscore the relationship between these age-old practices with the most current understanding of the brain. Authors define "education, or educational neuroscience is an emerging field combining various scientific disciplines as it relates to learning to study the relationships between the biological processes of the brain and students' cognitive development." Authors describe the positive benefits for holistic learning, especially children challenged with socio-economic status and other adversities, by recalling many traditional games, songs, and experiences. There may be some contemporary educators not familiar with the practices from a by-gone era; authors discuss what our children might be missing. Creating opportunities to play, use language, and diminish stress enhance all children's learning, but in particular, support children who may be additionally vulnerable. Allee-Herndon and Killingsworth Roberts clearly describe how without additional funding, training, or consulting, educators can nurture children's developing brain, learning, and feeling. In other words, this article provides us with an opportunity, in order to move forward, to step back and reflect on what is best for children.

In the second article, "Educator Perceptions of Student Ownership and Self-Authorship: Building a Connective Framework Between Two Constructs," Brian A. Stone and Kendra Surmitis highlight the role of holistic development by reminding readers of the importance of children's emerging sense of self and other. In addition to the familiar construct of ownership, authors as well underscore the critical role of self-authorship as equally significant for a child's healthy development. Ownership, well defined in the existing literature, refers to ensuring children's

voice in decision-making, involving students in school routines, and legitimizing a child's personal relevance and individual instruction. Self-authorship, in contrast, focuses on the internal self-regarding an integration of 'values, beliefs, convictions, generalizations, ideals, abstractions, interpersonal loyalties, and interpersonal states' (Kegan, 1994, p. 185). Authors discuss how practitioners who seek to understand how to most effectively plan for a range of diverse student populations, will find this content decisive when considering children naturally integrate their "identity, beliefs, and social relationships while critically considering external variables and perspectives."

As teachers nurture children's holistic development, they may be aware of the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions; but may not be as familiar with the epistemological (how a child views the world). In this preliminary study, Stone and Surmitis describe the role of holistic development by reminding readers of the importance of discussing teachers' perceptions of self-authorship with respect to assigned value and classroom manifestation. For some readers, self-authorship may be a new construct; therefore, in order to maximize students' holistic learning experiences, this manuscript affords readers with a possibly new insight.

In the third article, "Exploring the Power and Processes of Friendship through Picturebooks," Patricia Crawford and Kaybeth Calabria affirm the critical importance of friendships in children's healthy development. They describe how, in addition to children's ongoing observations of others interacting as friends as well as their own continuous efforts to initiate and maintain friendships, the role of quality picture books may prove a valuable learning alternative. Crawford and Calabria provide readers with an "overview of the role of friendship in the lives of children and consider ways in which children can develop the skills and habits of mind and heart needed to *initiate*, *sustain*, and *navigate challenging areas* within these types of relationships." This article identifies related texts in each developing area in which children may struggle; a secure friendship requires knowledge, skills, and dispositions in which children potentially lack experiences or competencies. Using quality picture books, children come to understand through the characters, story-lines, and strategies, that they are not alone in their efforts to make and maintain friends. Picture books provide children with examples to both think and feel through issues arising between friends. In addition to several examples of high-quality picture books, authors provide descriptions supporting readers' understanding of children's developing sense of friendship.

Pictures For Reflection

Although thousands and thousands of pages currently describe the critical importance of children's dress-up and role play, in this issue, one picture captures the self-confidence, self-esteem, and sheer pleasure a child experiences when pretending to be someone/something else. This single photograph evidences the thinking and feeling motivating children's dress-up play. Take a look, smile, and wonder at children's imaginations.

Tech Talk

Nancy Caukin, an espoused technology-user enthusiast, describes in "EdTech: Where Do I Start?" how technology affords teachers, students, and parents a wide range of learning possibilities. Most importantly, her content well supports users by describing why not to become overwhelmed, how not to expect proficiency, and where to seek additional information, support, and feedback. She describes a platform to learn, an arena to explore, and the freedom to enjoy.

ETC.

Readers frequently ask the editorial team what is meant by the ETC. descriptor in IJWC. It is true the abbreviation ETC., is not typically used in formal writing. Yet, in reading manuscripts, authors frequently use "etc." as if readers will quickly generate several examples; this is not always the case. In order to support readers' ability to connect research studies with best practice examples, the ETC. section of IJWC commits to clearly demonstrating connections across theory, research, and best practices.

Terri Tharp, with the assistance and collaboration of university and community colleagues, is most successful in securing grant funding to plan and implement numerous family literacy events. She believes this article may support others', particularly teacher candidates', efforts to build upon child and family literacy understanding through school-community partnerships. Terri Tharp identifies the essential components of successful grant funding and as well provides readers with straightforward descriptions to effectively implement family literacy events.