

Introduction



The mission of the International Journal of the Whole Child is to provide both the researcher and the practitioner communities with current data as well as to illustrate real-life examples of “best practices.”

“Best practices” refer to learning strategies that engage the whole child. This means each child is respected as unique in their own person and as well, regarded as members of larger communities. Building upon the cognitive and affective dimensions of child development, IJWC content respects children’s creativity, problem-solving, and inquiry. In order to move forward and connect theory with practice, IJWC authorship includes researchers, community representatives, and classroom teachers.

In this third publication, in addition to quality manuscripts, IJWC introduces a new section titled “Tech Talk.” As you recall, in the second issue, Volume 1, No. 2, a new column was introduced titled “Book Review.” In reflecting upon the needs of the IJWC reader, the editorial team expanded this critical review to include, in addition to books, a range of technical and media information. In the future, we look forward to hearing from our readers in identifying apps, websites, YouTube videos, movies, games, and other technical and media alternatives to invite children to engage in innovative learning.

Articles

In the first article, “Chinese Migrant Children in Crisis,” Yajuan Xiang, Miao Li, and Gina Berridge describe the serious plight of Chinese migrant children. In a search for work and an improved way of life, millions of Chinese families move from rural areas to relocate in urban centers. However, because of governmental policies, migrant children cannot attend Chinese public schools. In addition to the daily stress of living in over-crowded conditions, children are also undermined by governmental paperwork and systematic discrimination. Authors call for equitable access to education for all Chinese children.

In the second article, “Literacy and Education as Correlates to National Stability and Human Development,” Larry Burriss provides a statistical analysis of existing databases across nearly 200 countries dealing with national/human development and literacy/education policy. Data suggest high correlation between literacy and national development. Correlations were highest between national literacy scores and human/national development; correlations were lowest when comparing percentage of gross national product spent on education with literacy and education. The analyses indicate countries

with higher literacy and better education policies tend to have improved human development and national stability.

Note how the first two articles connect and support one another on behalf of providing all children with access to an equitable education.

In the third article, “Music in the Classroom,” Heather Blackburn discusses using background music as a strategy to enhance students’ learning experience. Despite the fact there are minimal data in this area, she makes a convincing argument to support the relationship between music and memory. In particular, she describes the connection between music and emotion. To extend appreciation for this possibility, hyperlinks are embedded to enrich the reading experience.

Pictures for Reflection

For the toddler, the world is a place of adventure, exploration, and wonder. Adults afford children with a variety of safe and risk-free opportunities to experience a range of materials in different ways. Children construct their personal understandings of the world; they make meaning through their experiences. First-hand exploration is critical as young children learn to compare and contrast. What is hard and what is soft? What is hot and what is cold? What is gushy and what is sticky? When do I use a spoon and when do I use a fork?

Tech Talk

In preparation for a safe and memorable total eclipse experience this summer, Larry Burriss provides important information describing how to safely view the event as well as identifying strategies to create photo memories.

ETC.

The ultimate goal of scholarly research is to improve the lives of children. As well as providing readers with theoretical arguments and research frameworks, through the ETC. section, IJWC expands learning by highlighting “best practices” with relevant artifacts.

Hilary Nelson, a multiage teacher, describes in her classroom newsletter, the integral role of play for her students. Through play, their risk-free experiences with objects, language, and friendships nurture social

competence, emotional confidence, and intellectual inquiry. Play is a powerful strategy for promoting children's initial learning and long-term development. Through her newsletters, she provides ongoing information and creates a network of play advocates with her students' parents.