

# THOUGHTFUL THURSDAYS

## APPROACHING IMPLICIT BIASES

**FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO  
MONITOR IMPLICIT BIASES IN  
THE CLASSROOM TO MAKE A  
MORE INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT  
FOR ALL CHILDREN.**

**Barton Lab**  
**Contact: [bartonlabvu@gmail.com](mailto:bartonlabvu@gmail.com)**



# WHAT IS AN IMPLICIT BIAS?

Implicit Bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

They cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance.

They develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages, including through early life experiences, the media, and news programming (Kirwan Institute, 2015).



# UNDERSTANDING IMPLICIT BIASES

## Acceptance

The first step to understanding implicit biases is to accept that everyone has them stemming from their own lived experiences as well as cultural and structural racism. When we're able to accept and recognize when they occur, we are able to create change to make a difference.

## Reflection

Set aside a designated time to regularly reflect on implicit biases. Ask yourself variations of the questions below and answer them honestly with yourself. Work to recognize these implicit biases when they arise and plan on how you can address them when they happen.



# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- What do I believe about my students' abilities?
- How am I communicating my expectations of my students to them (both verbally and nonverbally) in ways they understand?
- How do my students react and respond to my communications?
- Have I created a caring classroom environment where students feel valued and cared for?
- Do I ever cause harm to my students, even unintentionally, and if so, how do I address them?
- Do I remain strength-based in my perception of my students?

# IMPACT ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

- African-American boys make up 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschoolers suspended more than once.
- Hispanic and African-American boys combined represent 46% of all boys in preschool, but 66% of the preschool children who are suspended.
- Analyses of boys, compared to girls, indicated that boys make up 79% of preschoolers suspended once, and 82% of preschoolers suspended multiple times.



Potential contributors to these discrepancies include uneven or biased implementation of disciplinary policies.

# SHARE WITH US!



How do you apply your reflections to your every day teachings?



How else do you monitor your implicit biases?

Share with us on  
Facebook or Instagram!  
**#bartonlabshares**



**Barton Lab**  
Contact: [bartonlabvu@gmail.com](mailto:bartonlabvu@gmail.com)

# CITATIONS

Milner, H. R., Cunningham, H. B., Delale-O'Connor, L., & Kestenber, E. G. (2019). "These kids are out of control": why we must reimagine "classroom management" for equity (1st ed.). Corwin, a SAGE Company.

Racial Literacy: Key Terms. the conscious kid. (n.d.). <https://www.theconsciouskid.org/racial-literacy-key-terms>.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings . <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>.

