



2026 Monthly Notes & Chronicle

January 2026

Happy New Year!

I can always get carried away with the newsletter. At first it seems like too much and then I get sucked into interesting information and spending hours.

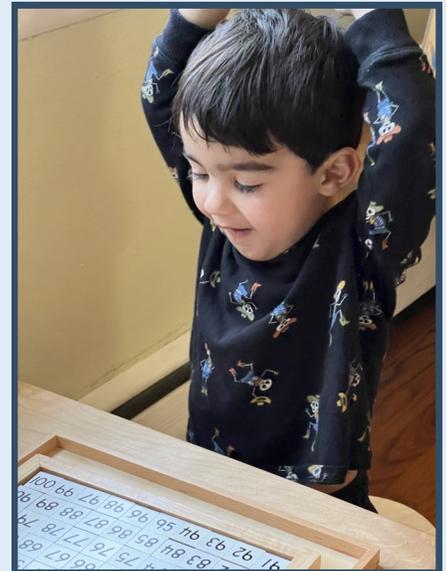


I'm trying to be done. It's 12/31 and I want to say there is so much in here. A lot of it is links to information that I think is reputable where you can learn more. I haven't read all of it, but have skimmed it and find it interesting.

There are many quotes because otherwise I would take even longer making it mine. When we meet again, please let me know what intrigues you about the topics covered this month:

- ◆ Nurturing Humility
- ◆ Combatting the Sugar-ful Diet

- ◆ Boredom... and Mattering
- ◆ Learning About Race— and Our Own Implicit Biases



Off to Germany!

Let's be Pen Pals!

We think it would be fun to send letters, stories, a pic two back and forth...

Write to Ansel and family!

**Am Sandwerder 17-19,
14109
Berlin, Germany**



January Dates

1/1 & 1/2 CLOSED

New Year's

1/9

Ansel's last day in Germany until 6/8

1/15

Zeffie's 4th Birthday

1/19 CLOSED

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (Birthday 1/15)

January					
M	T	W	Th	F	
				1	2
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30	

Curriculum Ideas for January

- ◆ Tracks and Tracking
- ◆ Migrators, Hibernators and Adaptors
- ◆ Light, Rainbows
- ◆ Equity, Race, Racism
- ◆ Printmaking
- ◆ Weaving
- ◆ Germs—and staying healthy
- ◆ Snowflake cutting
- ◆ Snowflake matching

Nurturing Humility

So many of “our” kids seem to be correcting each other, arguing yes/no, yes/no, I’m right, no me, no ME! to the point of exhaustion. I was recently asked about this, and about how we support the development of humility.

Cultivating humble kids and fostering empathy and kindness in the preschool years includes: ([1](#), [2](#))

1. Listening
2. Modeling empathy
3. Emphasize process over product
4. Encourage independence and self-motivation
5. Avoiding comparisons and praise for intelligence or achievements
6. Support healthy self-expression ([great guide with developmental info](#))
7. Encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and emotions
8. Create a peaceful and respectful (home) environment
9. Emphasize teamwork
10. Promote a culture of sharing, encourage acts of kindness, helping others, maybe community service
11. Gratitude, practice thankfulness
12. Develop awareness of the world and global interconnections

“Being humble means your child understands they are not better or worse than anyone else. They can accept praise without boasting and admit mistakes without feeling ashamed.” ([mommysembrace.com](#))

Ideas for activities [1](#), [2](#)

- ◆ Learning from mistakes journal pairs perfectly with;
- ◆ Reading, stories with humble heroes (*Willa the Whale Made 32 Mistakes* is a great book!)
- ◆ “Compliment” ball



Fun in
the
Snow!



Combating the Sugar-fal Diet CACFP Recommendations Add Limit for Added Sugars

Recently after a conversation about low-sugar breakfasts, I realized that I neglected to let you know about changes to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regarding added sugar.

Primarily to promote child health and academic performance, on October 1, 2025, new CACFP standards went into effect, limiting the amount of added sugar can be served. At this time, cereals, yogurt and flavored milk limits are in effect. Beginning July 1, 2027, there will be additional changes to other foods that contribute added sugars (such as grain-based desserts and bars), that limit added sugars to less than 10% of calories across the week in school lunches and breakfasts.

Besides health and academic performance, the factual reasoning also compelled the changes.

(From [USDA Added Sugars](#), edited for readability):

“The [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) (*Dietary Guidelines*) recommend limiting added sugars to less than 10 percent of calories daily, yet“

- ◆ school breakfasts (were) providing about 17 percent of calories from added sugars
- ◆ school lunches provided 11 percent
- ◆ Further, the *Dietary Guidelines* indicate that the diets of about 70 to 80 percent of school-aged children exceeded the recommended limit for added sugars.

Current Limits for Preschool and Elementary Meals

- ◆ **Yogurt:** No more than **12 grams (g)** of added sugars per **6 ounces (oz)**
- ◆ **Cereal:** No more than **6 grams (g)** of added sugars per **dry ounce (oz)**
- ◆ **Flavored Milk:** No more than **10 grams (g)** of added sugars per **8 fluid ounces**

Resources—Learn More!

[Provider’s Resource on Creditable Cereals and Yogurts](#)

(Wegmans Greek Nonfat Vanilla is also ok, Trader Joes is not)

[Choose Yogurt That is Lower in Added Sugars in the CACFP](#)

[Identifying Added Sugar Limits in Cereal](#)

[USDA: Reducing Added Sugars at School Breakfast](#)



[“It’s more than OK for kids to be bored – it’s good for them”!](#)

I was raised in child care and when the weekend came, if I said “I’m bored” my mom would exclaim something about how she could never have all the activities they have for me...

“Boredom is uncomfortable—Tolerating boredom is a skill that many children resist learning or do not have the opportunity to develop. Even many adults would [rather shock themselves with electricity](#) than experience boredom.” An estimated 91% of youth in North America report experiencing boredom “often” and boredom avoidance is a primary reason young adults pick up their smart phone.

When a child complains how bored they are, we may have many reactions—we may feel frustrated, guilty or just bad because nothing we do or suggest works. It is particularly hard when we’re just trying to cook dinner, finish a call, something that seems brief to us. Maybe we try to solve the boredom for them, it’s so much easier for us. But what if we don’t?



We all experience boredom. Even though it might feel like it is dragging you down, boredom actually has many benefits including cultivating curiosity, imagination and creativity, resulting in many benefits like discovering new interests, activities or places. But boredom can also be solved with negative actions and consequences. Learning to productively deal with boredom is important for us throughout life.

As I am summarizing and thinking about this topic, I find myself thinking that boredom may at times be about wanting connection. That’s why Magda’s practice of providing [“want’s nothing time”](#) helps parents to get some time of their own. But there is something more...

I recently received an email from the *Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University* focused on the concept of mattering. Mattering is described as “our sense of whether or not we matter—the feeling that we are valued and have value to add to the world.” A sense of mattering begins in the earliest days of infancy and brings lifelong well-being. I find myself wondering, if in wanting to be seen or to have (more) contact, children feel lonely and like they don’t matter. Full circle, I find a Psychology Today article stating that mattering “is associated with positive relationships, satisfaction and purpose in life, and protection from social isolation and loneliness.”

Resources—Learn More!

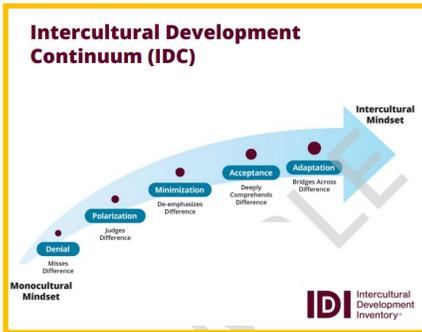
- ◆ [How To Help Your Kids Embrace Boredom: Age-appropriate ways to help your kids beat boredom—without the help of screens.](#)
- ◆ [Why Boredom is Good for Your Kid](#)
- ◆ [On Boredom: A Guide for Parents and Educators](#)
- ◆ [Why It’s OK for Kids to Be Bored](#)
- ◆ [Why Hearing “I’m Bored” Is a Good Thing for Your Child’s Brain](#)
- ◆ [The Benefits of Boredom: What kids can learn from handling more free time](#)
- ◆ [Mattering in Early Childhood, Building a Strong Foundation for Life](#) (also a [podcast](#))
- ◆ [Why Mattering Matters](#)
- ◆ [Jennifer B. Wallace website](#)

Learning About Race—and Our Own Implicit Biases

I have been holding onto the idea of sharing this information with you for awhile and it struck me that since we have an additional emphasis on equity with Martin Luther King's birthday this month, that it is as good a time as any. Learning about race and gender identity development has been a focus of mine and this information was really interesting to me.

Preschool is not too early to learn and even un-learn about race and racism.

"The research literature shows us that children begin to distinguish faces by race early in infancy [2](#)" ([embracerace.org](#)) "Research documents the ways that young children take notice of racial differences and note that as early as preschool, children may begin excluding their peers of different races from play and other activities (Winkler2009)." ([naeyc](#)) "Without [a real conversation](#) about why they might think this way or how to counter these ideas, children don't unlearn bias; they just learn **not to say it out loud.**" ([scientificamerican](#)). "[They're Not Too Young to Talk About Race](#)": [The Science of Early Racial Learning](#) is well researched article about children's learning.



Meanwhile... *How does our own learning about race impact our parenting? How well do we know ourselves?*

While working at the Child Development Council and Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, I learned about a couple of different ways for adults to think about where they might be on the scale of biased or inclusive.



Project Implicit

- Skin-tone IAT** (Light-skinned - Dark-skinned IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize light-skinned faces and dark-skinned faces as well as positive and negative words.
- Weapons IAT** (Weapons - Harmless Objects IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize White and Black faces as well as images of weapons and harmless objects.
- President IAT** (Presidential Popularity IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize photos of Donald Trump and one or more previous presidents as well as positive and negative words.
- Race IAT** (Black - White IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize White and Black faces as well as positive and negative words.
- Asian IAT** (Asian - European American IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize White and Asian-American faces as well as positive and negative words.
- Gender-Career IAT** (Gender - Career IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize typical male names and typical female names as well as words associated with career and family.
- Arab IAT** (Arab-White IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize names that likely belong to Arab Americans and names that likely belong to White Americans as well as positive and negative words.
- Asian-Perige IAT** (Asian - European American IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize White and Asian-American faces as well as images of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.
- Muslim IAT** (Muslim People/Jewish IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize images culturally associated with Muslim people/Jewish and other Christian people/Christianity or Jewish people/Judaism (randomly assigned), as well as positive and negative words.
- Sexuality IAT** (Gay - Straight IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize words and symbols representing gay and straight people as well as positive and negative words.
- Native IAT** (Native - White American IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize last names that likely belong to Native Americans and last names that likely belong to White Americans as well as words associated with the past and the present.
- Jewish IAT** (Jewish People/Judaism IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize images culturally associated with Jewish people/Judaism and other Christian people/Christianity or Muslim people/Islam (randomly assigned), as well as positive and negative words.
- Transgender IAT** (Transgender People - Cisgender People IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize photos of transgender celebrities and photos of cisgender celebrities as well as positive and negative words.
- Gender-Science IAT** (Gender - Science IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize male-associated words and female-associated words as well as words associated with liberal arts and science.
- Weight IAT** (Fat - Thin IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize silhouettes of people who are fat and people who are thin as well as positive and negative words.
- Disability IAT** (Physically Disabled - Physically Able IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize figures representing physically disabled people and physically able people as well as positive and negative words.
- Hispanic IAT** (Hispanic American - European American IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize typical Hispanic names and typical European American names as well as positive and negative words.
- Age IAT** (Young - Old IAT). In this IAT, you will be asked to categorize older and younger faces as well as positive and negative words.

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Curious about your own implicit biases?

Take a test!

It is interesting and can be quite surprising.

The Harvard Project Implicit tests are free and available immediately, the IDC/IDI process is much more extensive and can be done for individuals or groups.

Click on one of the gold bordered IDC/IDI or Project Implicit image on this page.



Kids are processing race
4.5 years
earlier than adults think they are.

