

## Support, responses, and reflections from my community

April 16, 2020

Isauro. First, I am certain that your writing will continue to simmer in my brain, connecting to many things I have experienced also, will experience, or support others through. I think that people are connected in the most amazing ways and as I read this there were so many things that resonated with me. There is a loss that is occurring that is present among the children, families, teacher, communities and the world. It is deep and present and like all grief, it hits us in waves. It strikes us when least expect us. One of my students was choked up discussing her documentation from the lab as she said "I hope I see him again." Even unfinished goodbyes are being mourned. As I read this, I was reminded of a quote received from a daily email service I receive which said this:

*Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.* -Thich Nhat Hanh

I think that connecting with the children will indeed bring about the connection that you and they are looking for. I have been on reflective dialogues with early educators and they admitted feeling frenzied to implement "curriculum" and that this new online platform was not in line with their philosophy or pedagogy.

I heard this large group discuss that they all (from places across the US with different age groups - infant to preschool) they turned to a curriculum of WE. The children just wanted to see where their teacher was, their friends are, sing a familiar song...or do what they can to return to the relationships and connections - the curriculum of We.

- Jeannette,  
Jeannette Mulhern, Faculty. Early Childhood Education, Family & Consumer Science, & Education/Teaching. Cosumnes River College

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April 17, 2020

Jeannette, thank you for your reply and for helping me to put things in perspective. I really appreciate the depth of your reflection, the examples you provide, and the quote that captures so much in just a few words. Have a wonderful day! 😊 Isauro

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April 17, 2020

Oh Isauro, this is so powerful. Thank you for sharing and trusting us with your story. You are so good with your prose. I do not have that gift 😊 but I learn so much from you. I think writing out your feelings is an effective strategy for coping with this pandemic.

I'm sorry you are feeling so sad and out of sorts. I do believe children would not even notice your worry. They would just be so happy to see you and I know they would make you feel better. You don't have to sing, you can ask them to tell you about what they have been doing. Even if

it's just through facetime. Their stories will lighten up your day. You know families will be so grateful for your time.

I know this is hard and is really weighing on you but you are coping with it as best you can. Things may not get back to normal for a while but we will see each other soon. I cannot wait to give you a big warm hug.

Love,  
Iliana

- Iliana Alanis, Ph.D. Professor of Early Childhood/Elementary Education UTSA College of Education and Human Development Department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching. NAEYC Governing Board Member.

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April 17, 2020

Hola Isauro Michael. Gracias por compartir su historia, me emocionó mucho leer y ver la forma en que expresa sus sentimientos sobre esta situación. A todos nos afectado mucho en diferentes maneras esta pandemia. A mi por ejemplo, me pone triste el no poder ir a México a celebrar la misa para mi papá por su primer aniversario luctuoso. Gracias al apoyo de mis hijos, familia y gato no me ha afectado tanto creo.

Escribir lo que usted siente y añadir las fotografías y escribir sobre los bonitos recuerdos de los niños, creo es una buena forma de alivio para su estado emocional y mental. Ojalá que nos pongamos de acuerdo para conectarnos con los niños y sus familias. Estoy segura que a los niños les dará mucho gusto vernos y sus papás agradecerán el que nos preocupemos por ellos. Como dice usted, todos necesitamos de todos. Y tal vez, el ver otra vez la cara y sonrisas de los niños nos regresen las ganas de seguir adelante aunque ahorita estemos todos en pausa. Yo también deseo mucho que ya todo esto termine y poder regresar a la rutina de antes. Extraño mucho a los niños, la compañía de usted y de Alicia. Y las bromas de Edwin y demás maestros. Con mucho cariño y admiración.

Hello Isauro Michael. Thank you for sharing your story. I was very touched to read and see how you express your feelings about the current situation. We are all greatly affected by this pandemic. For example, it makes me sad not to be able to go to Mexico to celebrate mass for my father on his first-year-of-passing anniversary. I think that thanks to the support of my children, my family and my cat, it has not affected me as much.

I think that writing what you feel and adding the photographs and writing about the beautiful memories of the children, is a good way of relief for your emotions and state of mind. Hopefully, we'll brainstorm and agree on how to best connect with the children and their families. I am sure that the children will be happy to see us and their parents will appreciate our concern for them. As you say, we all need each other. And maybe, seeing the children's faces and smiles again will make us want to keep going even if we are all on with right now. I also wish that all this is over with soon and that we can return to the routine we used to have. I miss the children a lot, your company and Alicia's. I miss Edwin's jokes and all the other teachers.

With much love and admiration.

- Sahara Gonzalez-Garcia, SFUSD Early Childhood Educator, Las Americas Early Education School.

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April 17, 2020

Hi Isauro Michael,

I appreciate so much you sharing your experience, reflections, and feelings with us. There is so much uncertainty, anxiety, and fear floating around these days-- I think it is a brave thing to open yourself up to make space for how you are really feeling, to name the experience you are having. Thank you so much.

You are naming something honestly in our situation that is so absolutely refreshing for someone to speak that it made me cry. I feel so caught up and pushed to do, and make, and produce and perform in response to this crisis. But the thing we truly need is simply trust and our relationships, our connection to one another and to ourselves. Our relationships with children are absolutely precious to us, that bring us joy, that inspire us to forget our self-doubt for long enough to laugh and sing with our whole hearts.

We have in common that we chose a profession that would have us spending our days with young children. And now, we are isolated at home, so close while so far from any children. It's a bit quiet and dull sometimes, a bit spooky. Your pictures are absolutely gorgeous, and I agree-- lonely and somehow off.

I am sure that when your students see you, you're right-- they won't see all the things you're worried about. They'll see you, their teacher, a beloved, soothing presence in their life. They will see all the beauty, all the colors-- like they so often do.

Lauren,

Lauren Boyles, M.Ed Program Specialist. Early Education Department, SFUSD

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April 17, 2020

Hello Isauro Michael,

Thank you for sharing your learning story with us. I want to thank you Michael, for being so true to yourself and aware of how you feel. Reading your story brought tears to my eyes and also helped me reflect on what I've been doing and feeling for the last few weeks.

It is true that there are many uncertainties with what will happen next right now. There is certainly fear as we hear different stories or facts of how aggressive this virus can be. Because of the media, being Chinese, I am very careful of where I actually go shop or take walks for the last few weeks.

Yet, Michael, in your story I hear the recurring hope and joy you have from the relationships you have built with the children, your colleagues and the families. The importance of your role (and all teachers' roles) in the lives of the children (and how parents more than ever see and appreciate what you do). I trust that when you are ready to take the step to meet with your students virtually, you will forget what's happening outside for a bit. Their voices and faces will for sure bring you joy and remember why we teach or willing to learn to go online to connect with them. Maybe that too will bring some sort of normalcy in your life and the children's.

Penelope,  
Penelope Ho. Program Specialist/ Instructional Coach, Dual Language Program. NBCT.  
SFUSD Early Education Department

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April 17, 2020

Thank you for your kind words, support and reflections, Lauren and Penelope. I think that what worries me a little bit among other things, as expressed in my LS, is that we preschool teachers in general spend so much time trying to create a home-like classroom atmosphere; for example, having lunch family style, hanging pictures of children's families on the walls, making sure we have objects from home that represent the children' families and cultures, etc...and now suddenly; we teachers, in the name of education, academics and kindergarten readiness, in some uneasy sort of way, try to insert ourselves in their real family life with our fragmented classroom schedules, our ditto sheets, our pre-planned curriculum, and information to links and apps that promise to advance the children's education. I wonder where we can find that balance of bridging schools and homes, teachers, children and families during these challenging times.

I hope we can be more thoughtful about how to best connect with children and their families and hear and learn from them, instead of us coming in as experts to save the day. I'm sure we'll have more to discuss next week.

Thank you so much for helping us during this transition process.

Warmly,

Isauro Michael Escamilla

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April 17, 2020

Hola Isauro Michael, Me gustó mucho la historia que escribió acerca de sus sentimientos por esta pandemia. Creo que es una buena idea escribir como se siente y expresar los sentimientos. Expresar todo lo que le afecta lo va hacer sentir mejor y me parece buena idea escribir una historia de lo que sentimos y nos afecta. Creo que hasta puede ser como una terapia.

Hi Isauro Michael, I really liked the story you wrote about your feelings on this pandemic. I think it is a good idea to write how you feel and express your sentiments. Releasing what you

feel and what impacts you, will make you feel better and it seems a good idea to write a story on what we feel and what upsets us. I think it can even be like therapy.

- Alicia Alvarez, SFUSD Early Childhood Educator. Las Americas Early Education School.

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April 17, 2020

Gracias Alicia! Que bueno que le gustó la historia. En este caso creo que fue como bajar la guardia y presentarse con vulnerabilidad. Tiene razón, a veces el acto de escribir puede ser un proceso terapéutico para expresar lo que lleva uno dentro. Como dice el refrán, *nadie sabe lo que hay en el fondo de la olla, más que la cuchara...*

I.M. Escamilla

Thanks Alicia! Great that you liked the story. In this case, I think it was like letting my guard down and presenting myself with vulnerability. You are right, sometimes the act of writing can be a therapeutic process to express what we carry inside. As the saying goes, “Nadie conoce el fondo de la olla, más que la cuchara.” (“No one knows what is at the bottom of the pot than the spoon that stirs it”)

I.M. Escamilla

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April 17, 2020

Dearest Isauro,

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts and reflections in such a deeply personal way. I was deeply touched by your honesty. The sadness and anxiety that you are feeling just streamed out of the photographs and your thoughtful writings. The tenderness with which you spoke of the children so touching.

Given your personal feelings in these moments, your courage to take a bus and head towards your school demonstrates such an enormous commitment that you have for the children and their families in your care. It was so lovely that you were able to get the affirmation from the families at this time. There is no doubt in my mind that there will be huge grief and sorrow in families unable to bring the children to your care during this very challenging time. Not to mention the enormous sadness and anger that the children will be experiencing themselves. The fact that you were able to support them with a richness of materials to help the children in their isolation is so fabulous.

I think there is tremendous pressure on teachers to ‘perform’ at this time, especially on the internet. I think teachers can have a wonderful role to just support parents to enjoy their children and not feel that they need to be teaching them. I think the sort of pressure being put on parents will cause more stress and damage in these children’s lives and more importantly their relationships. As teachers I think sharing your thoughts around parents getting into conversations with their children. For example, telling their children stories of their childhood. I agree there is also something very special about this time of families being so closely connected. It has both dark and light. Letting their children follow their own interests. You also talk about this in your writing and the wonderful things that they can learn from their parents and your support of their

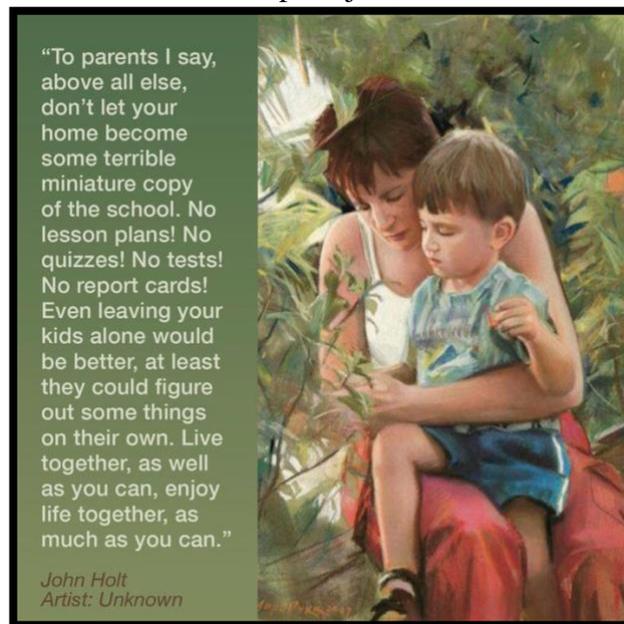
ways of being. As a student in early childhood at the end of the 1960's one of my favourite writers was John Holt. He knew about children following their own bliss, learning about themselves and the world they live in. I will attach a photograph with a quote from John Holt.

I know you will find your own way through this Isauro. I love the idea of just a one on one conversation with a child. One child at a time! How fabulous for your children to have an opportunity to just talk to you and share with you what is happening in their lives. It does not have to be 'teaching', in my view it is connection that is much more important at this time. Your empathy is palpable as is your love. I feel very privileged to have heard you.

Much love

Wendy

Wendy Lee, Director; Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand.



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April 17, 2020

Dear Wendy,

Thank you for hearing me out. Sometimes that's all we need...Thanks so much for your kind words and insights. Needless to say, I really appreciate the quote by John Holt.

I think that what worries me quite a bit among other things, as expressed in my LS, is that we preschool teachers in general spend so much time trying to create a home-like atmosphere in the classroom, for example; having lunch "family style", placing photographs of children's families on the walls, collecting objects from home that represent the children's families and cultures, etc...because we value home life so much and now suddenly; we teachers, for the sake of

education, academics and formal school readiness, in some uneasy sort of way, try to virtually insert ourselves in their real family life with our proposed fragmented classroom schedules, our pre-planned curriculum, daily / weekly lesson plans, and information to links and apps that promise to advance their children's education.

I wonder where we can find that balance of bridging schools & homes, and more importantly, bridging teachers, children & families during these challenging times. That's a conversation that we teachers, administrators and instructional coaches need to have. And we need to hear the parents' perspectives, otherwise we might make unilateral decisions that might not be fair for everyone.

Like you so wisely expressed, it doesn't necessarily have to be "teaching" but an opportunity for connection, to exchange and share what is happening in their lives, in our lives, if we are capable, willing and ready to share. And perhaps from there, many teachable / teaching moments will organically emerge.

As I shared with our school district's instructional coaches today, I just hope we can be more thoughtful about how to best connect with children and their families and hear and learn from them, instead of us coming in as experts to save the day.

I'm truly thankful for the feedback I have received.

Abrazos,  
Isauro M. Escamilla, Early Childhood Educator

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April 18, 2020

Isauro,

Your story is full of sincere emotions. You are a teacher who works from the depths of his heart. It is clear that you love your job and your little pupils to an incredible extent. Personally, despite my being a high school teacher, I enjoy working with kids I do so whenever I get the opportunity.

You have given the reader a sad image of the teacher whose day planning and activities have all changed. Anxiety and sadness have become the color of his eyes and face. Sleepless nights have become his companion. Leaving your safe home for going to school in order to meet kids' parents and relatives at school with your colleagues is so brave of you.

What has particularly touched me is the way in which you remember each kid and how their families have told you about their kids' questions about when they will go back to school, or about you and your colleagues. Indeed, families have realized how hard teachers work, how they spend the day looking after kids, doing activities with them, and how teachers are the pillars of education. This recognition is crucial for teachers to improve, innovate, and continue fighting for educating their pupils effectively. The relationship between the teacher and kids has different dimensions. It is human, educational, and social. Missing your kids and feeling that your day is beautiful and colorful when you see them, play, run, do a lot of activities together.

I think that parents can replace the teacher in some activities and can also use the different ways communication; but the teacher is irreplaceable. Playing in the school yard or doing artwork plays a crucial role in kids' life to prepare them for the future.

I think also that empathy between teachers and setting up teachers' learning communities to collaborate and find new and effective way for confronting unexpected events such as Covid-19.

To conclude, I would suggest you to emphasize the fact that online learning, even if you record videos and audios, cannot replace school and the teacher for kids' psychological, physical, and social development. Instead of making teachers work online, parents should be trained to do activities with their kids and look after them until getting back to school. Accordingly, teachers can guide parents in ways of dealing with kids instead of making them learn online, which is unhealthy for both kids and teachers. The focus should be put on training parents to work in synergy with teachers.

Karima Ouerjani  
Teacher, Morocco

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April, 19, 2020

Hi Isauro - This is beautiful! I started my Sunday morning by reading your story and, once again I am in awe of you! Even when frightened and worried you made your way to take care of your children. I do believe it is actions such as these that remind us of how much human-ness has been missing and how much we all need it! Thank you for giving us this example. You have lived this fear...you have had sleepless nights...you have been worried for your life before. Perhaps the difference here is that you can have confidence that we will get through this together and you will not have to uproot your life and move to a different country to have safety and happiness and peace. You will have it here, again. I hope it is soon! I agree with Iliana, you have a gift in how you use your words to tell a story. This should be shared far and wide! Love and hugs and sending positive thoughts your way! Elisa

Elisa Huss-Hage  
Professor, Owens Community College and NAEYC Governing Board Member

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April 20, 2020

Isauro- I had hoped to reply sooner to your lovely, heartfelt Learning Story. I have been "camping" in my yard with my family. I realized that though I can not change our circumstances, I can change how we shelter in place. I am very fortunate to live on property. It is spring and we have enjoyed the weather and hunkering down in our tent.

I deeply appreciate your thoughtful and authentic reflection of your experience with dealing with isolation, missing your children, questioning online “teaching” and all the unknowns you/we are facing. Thank you for allowing us the honor to read about your process and experience during this uncharted time.

Your words struck such a chord within me, as I am trying to navigate the required “online teaching” with Ariana. Online learning is really challenging because our family values include very little screen time. In the past, we only watched family videos with Ariana as a rare, special occasion, including comfy blankets and Jim’s homemade, very flavorful popcorn.

Now we are being asked to have Ariana learn online. I am so overwhelmed with all the online resources. Maybe I feel even more overwhelmed because I am not a digital native. My head is swimming with all the online resources available. So many people and organizations have provided great children’s resources yet, when I step back and think about what I want for my granddaughter to remember from this time, none of it includes online teaching materials.

Instead, I want her to remember making shadow puppets in the tent, sharing stories, sitting around a campfire and roasting hotdogs, eating s’mores, and taking long walks alone in the woods.

I realized I had to be true to myself and let go of the school district and educational systems expectations for my granddaughters learning during this time.

I think Wendy gave me the courage to let go and focus on seeping our relationship with each other. This will be our most important learning experience.

I hope you will be gentle with yourself and treat yourself as kind as you would a little kitten. I’m wrapping you up in a warm blanket and surrendering you my thoughts and prayers today, my dear friend!

You are valued and loved by us all!

Annie,

Dr. Annie White, Assistant Professor CSU Channel Islands

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April 20, 2020

Isauro,

I can feel your sadness welling up in my bones. Thinking about all the little people who will be shaped by this event in history and the families which are holding the strings of our communities together through sheer will and love makes me also yearn to make connections in as many small ways as possible. I live in a densely urban area and many people walk past our home doing daily walks or jogs... we are in somewhat of a food desert area as well since the closest grocery is about miles 3 away and have many elderly who live close without means of mobility. I've taken to leaving fruit from my trees on the road in boxes for anyone to take and am considering leaving packets of easy to grow seeds pinned to cardboard as well... also thinking about creating a little library with books people are welcome to take...

The world is an amazing place... we've received a thank you card and a bouquet of flowers in thanks for the fruit so far.. it has my adult children so inspired, they now pick fruit like crazy once it's ready just to give back.

Your idea of creating a video or recording of yourself singing to your children is a lovely and powerful gesture... one that would be a gift to all if you felt able... but from my recent experiences, it's the little things that matter.. a postcard, a note via email, a photo sent... children and families return the love exponentially, and help to heal our hearts as well...

Here's a quote I got of FB... just to remind all of us that our na'au (gut.. but really..our "knowledge center" in the Hawaiian way of thinking and being) is and always has been intact.. it's those who desire to make us adhere to rigidity and conformity which are out of step with nature and life..

Much love to you my dear friend!

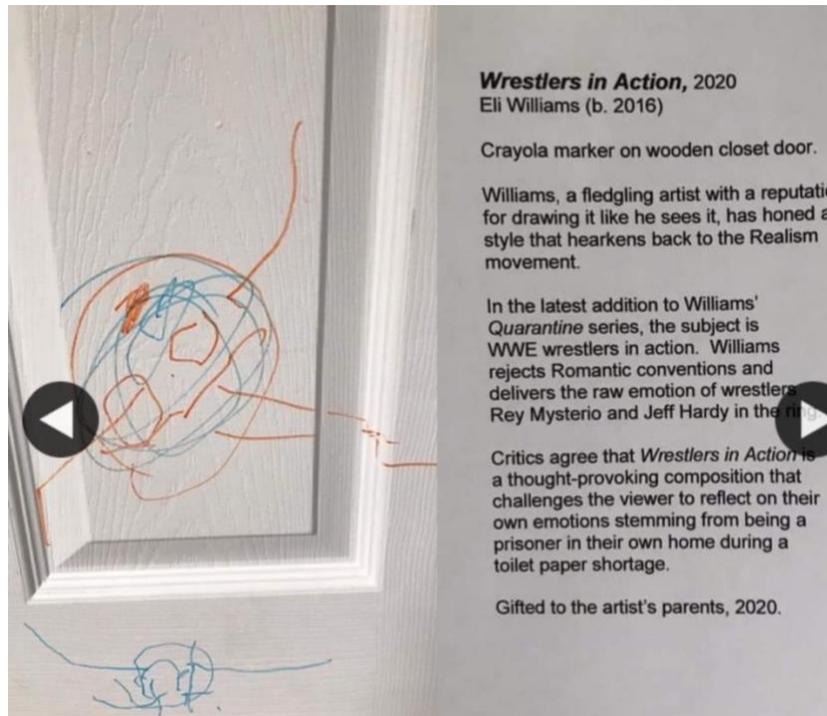
A Hui Ho!

Janina Martin, Professor in the Education Department at University of Hawaii: Honolulu Community College

## IT WAS NEVER THE TEACHERS.

The schools are broken," they said.  
"It must be the teachers," they said.  
And so they came for us.  
They gave us scripted curriculum so we would know what to teach. Creativity and individuality couldn't be trusted.  
They imposed state testing so they would know how well we taught. Otherwise, we might just sit at our desks all day.  
They demanded SMART goals and evaluations so that we would constantly improve. Without them, we would never strive to get better.  
We were monitored. We were graded. We were told we were lacking.  
AND THEN. The world shut down.  
"Get rid of standardized tests!" they cried. And they did.  
They dropped the scripted curriculum. The SMART goals. The evaluations.  
And you know what?  
The teachers are still teaching.  
They're using Legos to teach arrays and cookie recipes to teach fractions. They're infusing creativity and passion.  
They're staying up all night researching new ways of teaching. They're connecting with students like never before.

And this home quarantine learning story made my heart sing!!!



Nina.

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April 21, 2020

Thank you Dr. Annie for writing in detail your thinking process and stance on distance learning for young children. I love the camping-at-home photographs! Ariana will certainly have great memories of these times together with you and Jim.

Nina, we are very fortunate to be a part of your community! Your generosity sets a great example of how kindness prevails in challenging times.

Wendy, thank you for sharing ideas for art activities from the Tiny Studio. Thanks for taking the time to keep in touch with us.

I love the feedback I have received from you all and from my extended community, which are in many ways, part of my own extended family.

Each one of us has to make what we consider the best decision depending on our contexts and roles, our individual and community values, and our beliefs about education for (with) young children. We, or better said, \*I\* have to reflect on what this education means now that children, families and teachers have to follow stay-in-shelter orders due to Covid-19. We will have a teachers' zoom meeting this Wednesday and hopefully, we'll have an opportunity to express our questions & concerns and share ideas & strategies to come up with a plan on how to create and sustain a sense of connectedness with children and families during these trying times.

Thank you for all the love, insights, supports, ideas and encouraging words. You have truly brightened up my day and I look forward to brightening up someone else's day tomorrow. Even though we are apart I feel you close my heart. Gracias!

Thank you so much. Abrazos!

Isauro M. Escamilla

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April 21, 2020

This is certainly a very different place, but lovely to keep in touch with different perspectives around the world. Much love Wendy

<http://www.bilingualbackpackbaby.com/home/2020/4/19/why-i-sent-my-child-back-to-kindergarten-after-the-corona-lockdown>

This week our NZ early childhood services are preparing to return to work. This will be limited to the parents of children who need support in order to go to work. There will

however, be no judgement made by teachers as to who and who cannot come. This will be the parents' decision. Many services have sent letters to all parents after the announcement of when the country would return to alert level three. Services then began by surveying parents to find out who would need to access our services in alert level 3 and the services asked teachers who would like to work in alert level 3. Then they have begun the process of figuring out how those might look in these new "bubbles."

People are trying to handle this in a way that leaves everyone in the community feeling supported. Teachers have been missing these important relationships and know the importance of these reconnections with children and their families. We will have two weeks in level 3 before decisions are made by government on moving to level 2. Our numbers continue to drop but the government wants to make sure that we do not lose all our gains by moving too fast out of the protection of lockdown.

Love, Wendy

Wendy Lee, Director; NZ Educational Leadership Project

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Wendy- Are you saying that leadership could take in the science and compassion and lead in a thoughtful and consistent way? Imagine that!

- Jeannette,  
Jeannette Mulhern, Faculty. Early Childhood Education, Family & Consumer Science, & Education/Teaching. Cosumnes River College
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Hi All. I'm at the point of this pandemic that I don't have the mental energy to put together a super thoughtful and heartfelt message. But I want you to know I'm reading all your messages and appreciate them. I see you. I hear you. I am with you in spirit.

Isauro- Your learning story brought me to tears. Thank you for writing it. I sense it was a cathartic experience for you and am happy to see how learning stories can be a tool to support our mental well-being and healing processes.

Wendy- I appreciate you upholding us with your positivity, compassion and humor.

Annie- I love that you're finding creative ways to make this a fun experience for yourselves and Ariana. I can empathize with the online learning struggle. I'm managing this for 4 kids! We do what we can and forget the rest. I'm not going to stress it. If the kids would rather play outside or do something creative, I don't force them and we try again later. I have also changed some of the assignments to be more hands on and took a photo and sent to the teacher :)

Miss you all!

Julia,

- Julia Koumbassa, M.Ed. Director, North Campus Children's Center & Practitioner Institute University of Michigan
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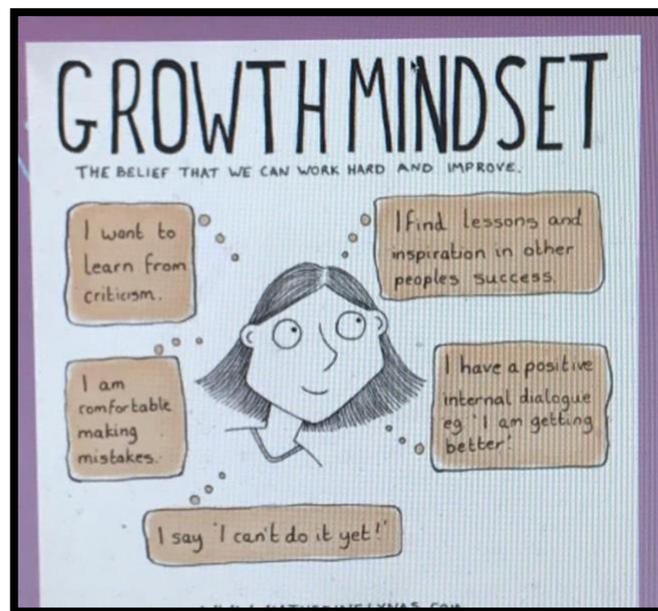
April 29, 2020

So much of what you said resonated with me Julia! We are working to find some sort of balance... compromise(that seems like the wrong word)? To find what works best for our family right now. School is 100% online 😞 and we are all feeling it! Missing everyone, thinking of you all and wishing we were sitting around a table having some tea! Maybe a tea time zoom reunion is in order?

Sending my love!

Karina Ramos. Early Childhood Educator, Patagonia Children's Center

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April 29, 2020

There's so much wisdom in every entry! Julia, I agree with Karina, you summarize our overall feelings. Let's do what we can...

Thank you all for your compassion, understanding and feedback. All your words, love, cariño, and comments helped me get over my anxiety and self-doubts. Thanks to your support I'm finding that elusive balance that sometimes resembles a compromise...From now on, I'll do the best I can; that's all I can do.

Muchas gracias. Abrazos!

You certainly brighten up my life!!





“Out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope”  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial  
Washington, DC January 2020

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Isauro,

I think you should be a guest on this podcast! A podcast about men of color working in ECE, Hosted by our friends from Hilltop, our next conference hosts.

Julia

<https://hilltopcc.com/institute/napcast/>

Julia Koumbassa, M.Ed. Director, North Campus Children's Center & Practitioner Institute  
University of Michigan

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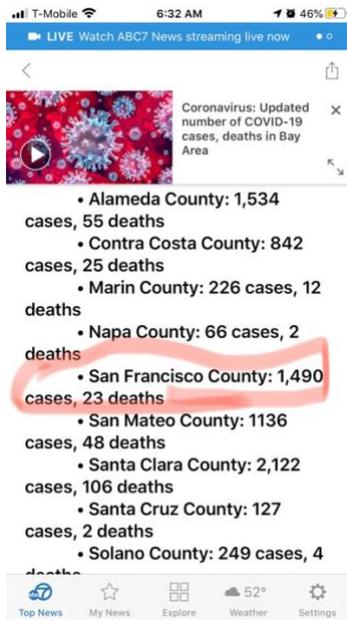
April, 30, 2020

Isauro ❤️ uncertain times bring to the surface new challenges. Thank you for your candid thoughts and responses. Checking in with you all has been a bright spot. Times seems to have slowed down and now I'm able to reconnect 😊

Yes, Julia 🙏 you have such great ideas. And I would totally tune into a podcast to hear Isauro share more! Karina,

Karina Ramos. Early Childhood Educator, Patagonia Children's Center

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In the meantime, as of April 30, 2020 the number of Covid-19 cases in San Francisco has increased to almost 1, 500 and 23 deaths...

I pray that everyone in our respective communities is and remains healthy...I thank Dr. Daniel Meier, Professor at San Francisco State University and Chair of my Doctoral Dissertation Committee for helping me when I most needed emotional support. His and his wife's kindness made me realize that in this world there's more empathy, compassion, and generosity than I ever thought existed. I will never forget those delicious pastries that they dropped off by my apartment building door on a Sunday afternoon to lift up my spirits...I think the pastries did the trick! 😊

With much love,

Isauro M. Escamilla  
[imescamilla@gmail.com](mailto:imescamilla@gmail.com)