

“I Am” How Others See Me

The building of self-identity is not a solitary process. While toddlers work on identifying and exploring much about themselves, the actions, words, and thoughts of others play a large part in either supporting certain aspects of their identity or discouraging them.

While children begin to take notice of their peers and their abilities, the support they offer each other is critical in cementing their self-identity. Equally, the language, intentions, and approaches used by adults when interacting with children have a lifelong impact on the building of their self-identity.

For us, educators, documentation of learning moments give us a better perspective of each child. Documentation allows us to slow down to take notice of all that is taking place as we work to build their self-identity. We hope that in sharing these moments with families, that they too can become intentional collaborators as we slowly build a child's positive self-identity.



Large, colorful praying mantis insects have become a sight to see in the outdoor classroom. Their complex bodies, large bulging eyes, and incredible size fascinate the children and make them a popular subject to study. While some children admire them from a safe distance, others like Citlali slowly work up the courage to let the mantis get a little bit closer. Her peers, like Lucca and Nicole, look on in wonder and encourage her sense of bravery by squealing in delight as the mantis climbs up her arm.

Vanelope works on mastering her approach to the Shape Sorter in the games and puzzles area by slowly noticing the shape in her hand and finding the form it matches on the container. When Arlyne approaches, she picks up a block shape and attempts fitting it into all of the openings until she finds the one that works. Soon, Arlyne notices Vanelope's strategy and tries to imitate it. When this strategy doesn't produce the desired result, she begins handing the shapes to Vanelope and cheers her on when Vanelope matches them on the first attempt.

