

Scheinfeld, D.R., K.M. Haigh, & S.J.P. Scheinfeld. 2008. *We Are All Explorers: Learning and Teaching with Reggio Principles in Urban Settings*. New York: Teachers College Press. 191 pp. ISBN 9780807749081. \$27.95.

Over a period of 12 years, teachers and administrative staff of a large early childhood program in Chicago changed the way they engaged in teaching and learning. This book shows how they represented the principles and spirit of the Reggio Emilia approach and yet responded to the reality and uniqueness of their own community. The authors describe all the components of the program reorganization, including teaching practices, professional development strategies, learning environments, parent collaboration, and administrative organization.

At the heart of this amazing programwide transformation is the new way staff, children, and families forged relationships with one another. Classroom projects, children's work, and excerpts from transcripts of discussions in the preschool classrooms and in monthly program and weekly centers' meetings help illustrate the critical role of documentation, dialogue, reflection, and collaboration between teachers, teachers and children, and teachers, parents, and administrative staff. Detailed examples of children's in-depth studies and interactions between children and teachers show how teachers learned to engage in moment-to-moment dialogues with children. They learned how to coconstruct curriculum and knowledge based on children's interests.

Haigh describes how a Reggio-inspired program meets the challenges of school readiness, state and federal standards, and the accountability required by its funding organizations. For those interested in applying Reggio principles and practices in their own programs, the book is an invaluable resource.

Wittmer, D.S. 2008. *Focusing on Peers: The Importance of Relationships in the Early Years*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE. 170 pp. ISBN 9781934019276. \$29.95.

The purposes of this book are to increase teachers' and parents' knowledge and appreciation of the remarkable capacities of infants and toddlers to enjoy peer relationships and to improve the quality of peer experiences in early care and education settings. Wittmer summarizes and interprets research that documents the way peer relationships enhance development and contribute to the success or failure of child care experiences for infants and toddlers. She examines peer behaviors at four levels of social development: (1) within the individual child, such as the child's unique temperament—shy, assertive, or so forth; (2) experiences with relationships, such as a repertoire of social skills or peer interactions; (3) past relationships, such as attachment to significant adults; and (4) relationships within a unique group, such as participation in the group dynamics.

The author explores how interactions with peers help children develop a sense of self as well as of other children. Chapter topics address aspects of the early development of peer relationships: how peer relationships are formed, the effects of children's attachment to parents and teacher, and understanding and addressing peer conflict. Each chapter includes strategies to help teachers enhance the peer experi-

ences of infants and toddlers and set up environments that support their interactions. This is a superb resource for experienced infant/toddler teachers and those conducting professional development.

Kovach, B., & D. Da Ros-Voseles. 2008. *Being with Babies: Understanding and Responding to the Infants in Your Care*. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House. ISBN 9780876590621. 195 pp. \$24.95. Available from NAEYC.

The authors show that in being with babies, the underlying thread throughout the day is the caregiver's relationship with children, coworkers, and families. The brief chapters (3 to 5 pages) give a wealth of information about establishing two-way relationships that are sensitive to the needs of infants and toddlers and in which teachers and children can communicate and respond to one another. Captivating photographs and vignettes of interactions in actual caregiving situations in infant/toddler centers help portray the challenges caregivers face and the practical solutions.

This how-to approach includes expected topics, like diapering and feeding, as well as topics, such as how to provide meaningful, unhurried experiences during a busy day when the caregiver can establish a special connection with the child and make a conscious effort to "stay in the moment." The experienced authors communicate complex ideas with clear, easy-to-understand language and introduce new ideas in chapters by building on the meaning in the previous chapter. This book is an excellent guide for teaching children 6 weeks to 18 months old in group care settings and a useful professional development tool for directors and teacher educators.

Good, L. 2009. *Teaching and Learning with Digital Photography: Tips and Tools for Early Childhood Classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 229 pp. ISBN 9781412960762. \$30.95.

An early childhood educator offers concrete examples and techniques for using digital images to promote development and delight children in pre-K and primary classrooms. She presents creative ways that photos can help teachers manage time, space, and materials and promote self-concept, a sense of community, and security for children in the classroom. Teachers will learn how to use photos to create materials that support learning throughout the curriculum, in all areas of the classroom, and on field trips in the community.

The author provides techniques for integrating photos into PowerPoint presentations and assessment portfolios and for communicating with parents through photographic and electronic portfolios, computer slide shows, and the Internet. The use of photographs throughout the book and easy-to-follow illustrated instructions will help teachers learn general photography techniques and the basics of PowerPoint. The book includes an overview of the digital cameras, printers, scanners, software applications, and consumables, such as printing supplies, needed to get started. An accompanying CD includes forms and templates, like a photo release and record-keeping and organizing systems for the photographs. This useful tool will enhance teachers' work.

Titles are selected from the many new books received by NAEYC. Educator **Gail Perry** writes the brief annotations. The books are available from the publishers listed, your local bookstore, or online retailers.