

Presentation from 2018 NAEYC Annual Conference

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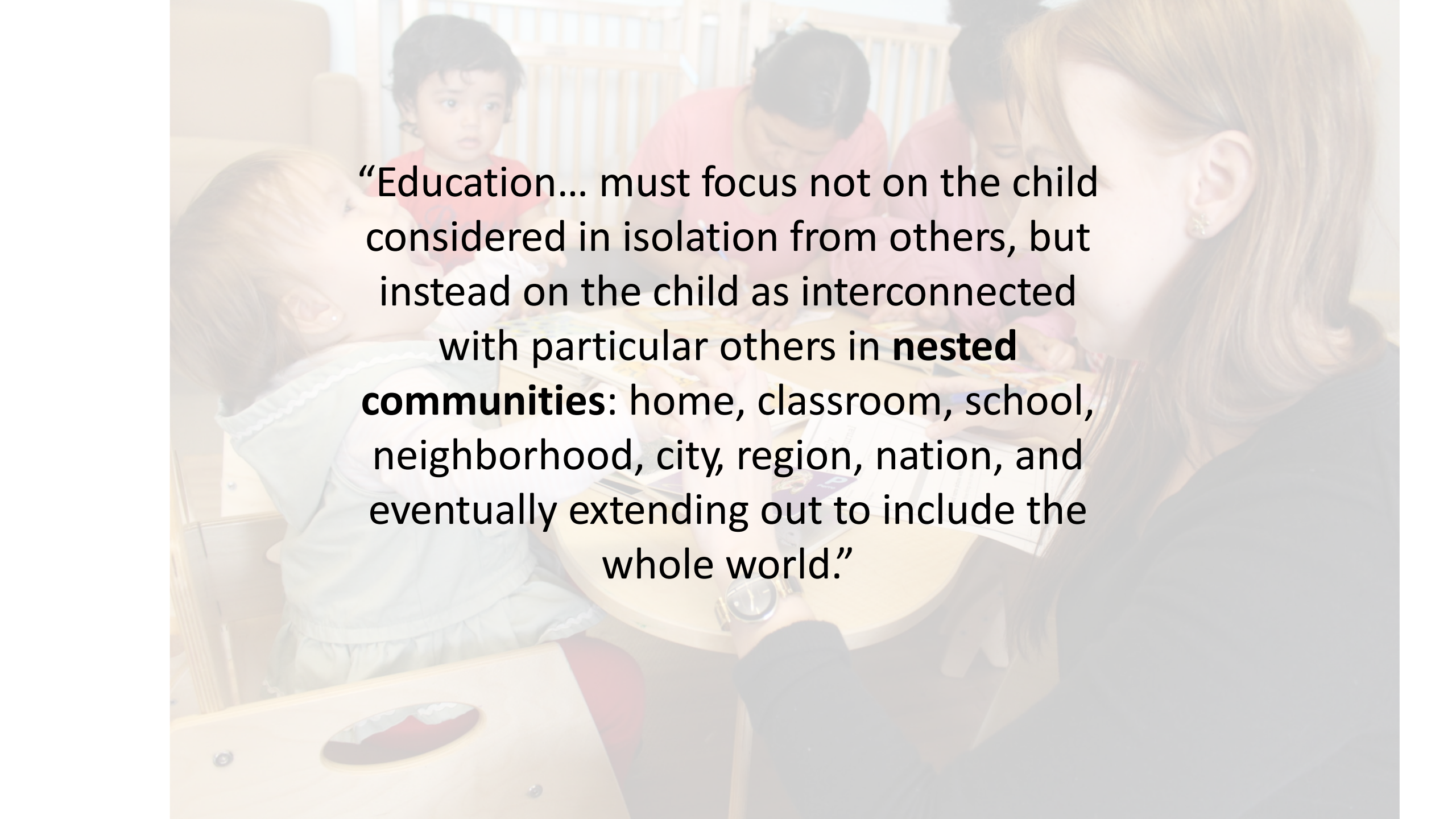
Nested Communities

Relationships in Context



Laura Jackman

DC Reggio Emilia Alliance

A faded background image showing a woman with long brown hair and a watch on her left wrist, sitting at a round wooden table. She is looking down at some papers or a book. Two young children are also at the table; one is a girl with blonde hair in a light blue dress, and the other is a boy with dark hair in a red shirt. They appear to be in a classroom or library setting with wooden cribs in the background.

“Education... must focus not on the child considered in isolation from others, but instead on the child as interconnected with particular others in **nested communities**: home, classroom, school, neighborhood, city, region, nation, and eventually extending out to include the whole world.”



“...schools are nested inside a graduated series of circles--the communities of neighborhood, city, region, country, and world, that **together provide the moral maps, connections, and supports without which what goes on in the classroom and school becomes, precisely, meaning-less.**”

Briya Public Charter School

- Originally served the influx of immigrants from Central America and Vietnam who sought a better future for their families in DC.
- Formed a partnership with Mary's Center around a shared model of social change: improving family outcomes through access to education, health care, and social services.
- Two generation model of education: career training programs for adults with an early childhood program.



With the opportunity to expand into a new building, Briya was inspired by the environments of Reggio Emilia, and felt a connection with the values of the Reggio Approach. As they continue to explore this approach, they are examining their values and how their rituals, traditions, and routines embody these values.



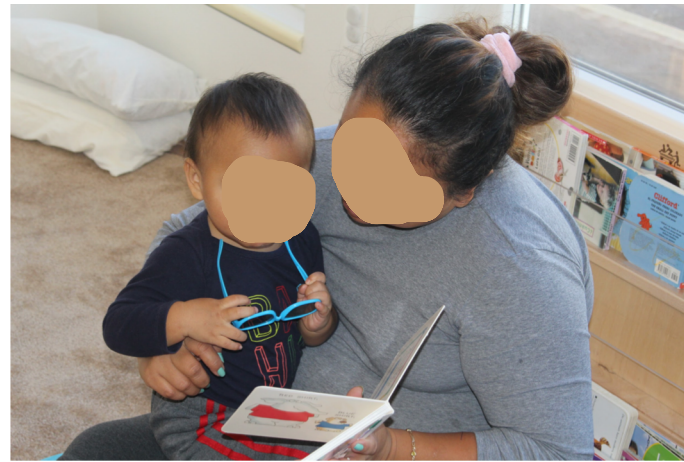
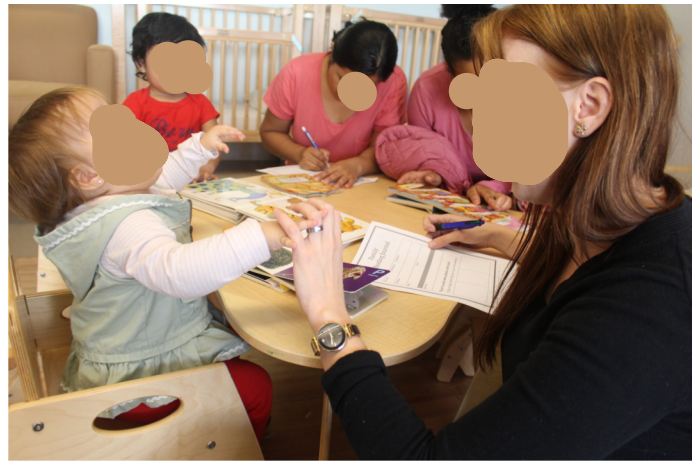
What drew Briya to the Reggio Emilia Approach?

“The **history and origin** alone, is significant to us in our work with a multicultural population, with lower levels of resources. Last year our ECE staff had some wonderful conversations about some of Loris Malaguzzi’s ideas, after reading the article “The Image of the Child” it made so much sense to us how RE was the natural place to ground our present and future work and made so much sense given where we were at in our own organizational history, development, and readiness...

“...Some of the things that really resonated for teachers were the **aspirational nature of the kind of school and schooling that we hoped for**, for children. We appreciated the focus on not separating the child from her reality and it fit with **how we valued the experiences, feelings, and relationships** that children bring with them into the school. ... Briya staff often work and stay here because of this ability to enjoy relationships as we work together. We enjoy being with each other, celebrating together, eating together, caring for each other.”

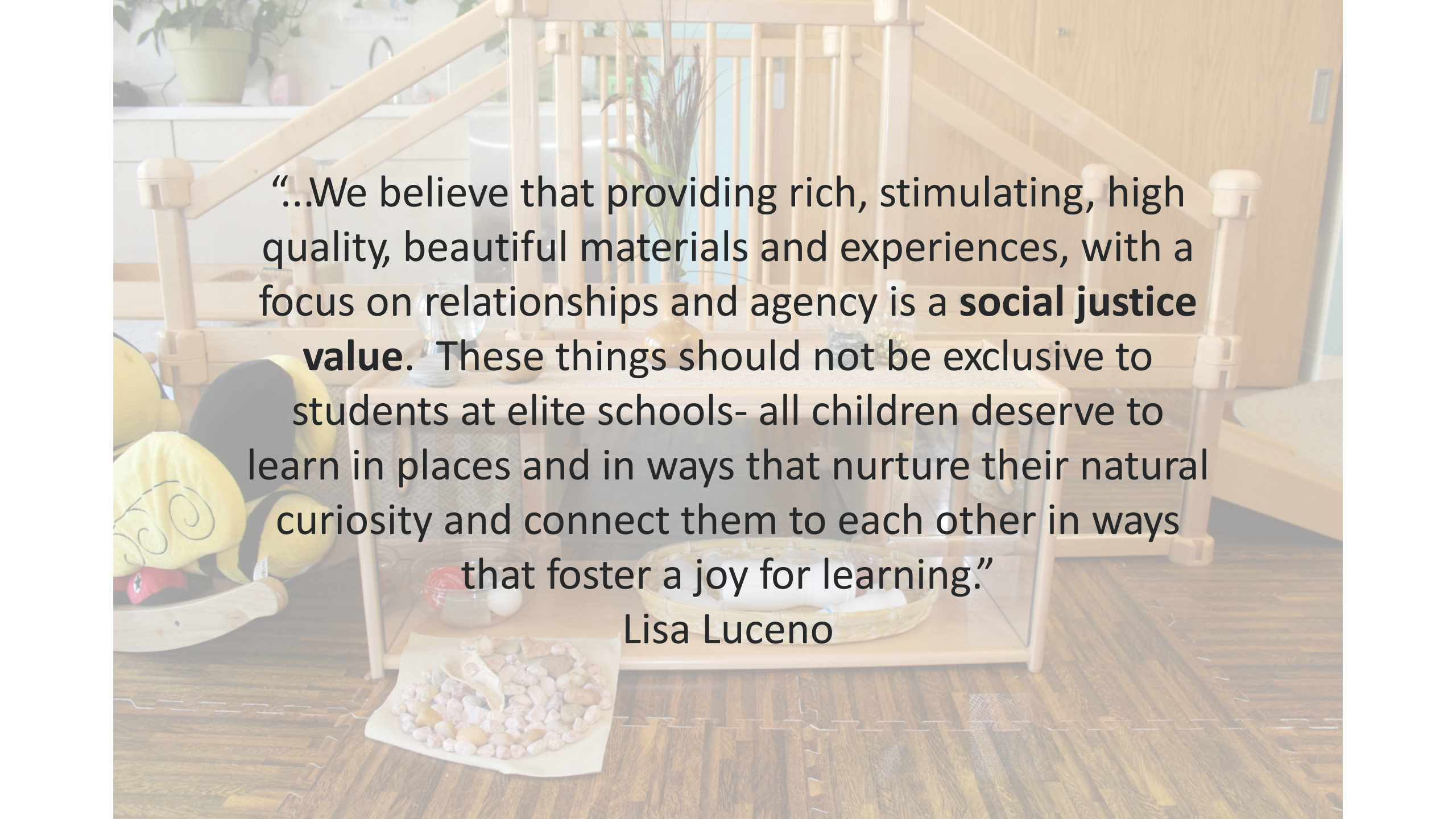
At Briya children,
parents, and teachers
are all protagonists.





Environments built for interaction between parents, children, and teachers are central to the mission of Briya. Part of the environment is the schedule that prioritizes moments of encounter between all protagonists throughout the week.





“...We believe that providing rich, stimulating, high quality, beautiful materials and experiences, with a focus on relationships and agency is a **social justice value**. These things should not be exclusive to students at elite schools- all children deserve to learn in places and in ways that nurture their natural curiosity and connect them to each other in ways that foster a joy for learning.”

Lisa Luceno