



# ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

## Roots ConnectED

The Anti-Bias Education model targets biased attitudes through curriculum, classroom practices, and deep community building to transform communities to be more just, equitable, and connected.

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## OVERVIEW

Roots ConnectED addresses systems of oppression at the root. Their Anti-Bias Education model uses curriculum, classroom practices, and deep Community Building with all stakeholders to identify and dismantle the thinking and ideology that contributes to bias and discrimination before it gives way to harmful acts of oppression. The Anti-Bias Education model is centered on identity and inclusion, and acts as a means for transforming communities to be more just, equitable, and connected. The framework and its tools are holistic and intended for long-term integration throughout the curriculum and environment.

The Anti-Bias Education model seeks to build towards a new reality, where all feel seen and accepted as their authentic selves, and systems are equitable and enable access across differences. A dual process of personal and collective transformation supports students and adults in developing the attitudes and behaviors that dismantle oppression and sustain hope for a new reality. [Dual Process for Change](#) [Tree of Love](#)

While it is too early to measure outcomes from Roots ConnectED's 22 coaching partnerships, satisfaction data is promising. They offer various professional development through coaching, institutes, and [online workshops](#) to schools interested in implementing the model. [Anti-Bias Education Overview](#)



## What Makes This Model Innovative?



### Affirmation of Self & Others

Anti-Bias Education helps all students, families, and faculties to deeply understand their identities and to honor everyone else in the school community.



### High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities

The Anti-Bias Education model supports educators in reflecting on their biases and working consistently to address them so that all students are met with high expectations and have equitable access to various learning opportunities. Similarly, educators encourage students to reflect on their own identity and biases, creating space for children to ultimately see the humanity in one another.



### Social Consciousness & Action

Anti-Bias Education allows students and educators to develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to take anti-oppressive actions that disrupt and dismantle racism and other inequities in classroom and school practices.

## DESIGN

### Goals

The Roots ConnectED Anti-Bias Education model gives tools and practices for developing an attitude of wonder and the skills needed to care for others in search of justice, unity, and a new reality, where all feel seen and accepted as their authentic selves, and systems are equitable and enable access across differences.

The Tree of Love conceptualizes this vision and expands the definitions of each aim. [Tree of Love](#)

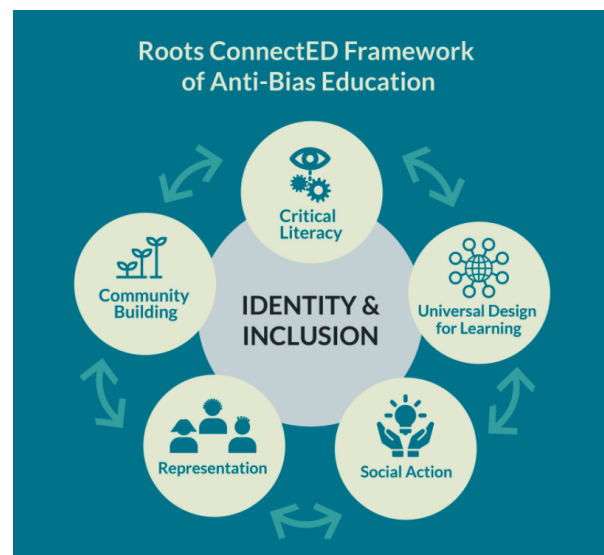
#### Attitude of Wonder

Understanding one's stories, identity, and intersectionality. Maintaining a learning stance (even about one's own mindset), listening to the stories of others without making assumptions, and genuinely seeking diverse perspectives.

<b>Care for Others</b>	Understanding interconnectedness and the importance of building community. Creating authentic relationships with people from all walks of life, feeling empathy for others, and seeking out ways to be of service in one's community.
<b>Justice Seeking</b>	Engaging in continual critical analysis and self-reflection. Seeing one's role in social action, addressing biases, and speaking up against harm.
<b>Unity</b>	Operating from a deep understanding that all humanity is part of one human family. Committing to a culture of trust, empathizing with and supporting one another in challenges, celebrating one another's successes, and orienting around community.

## Experience

Roots ConnectED has deepened the work of Anti-Bias Education and created a framework (on right) that shows what Anti-Bias Education looks like in schools. The Anti-Bias Education model is centered in Identity & Inclusion. Individuals in school communities must have a deep understanding of their intersecting identifiers and recognize their biases, prejudices, power, and positionality. They emphasize the intersectionality of identity and design for diversity across identifiers from racial diversity to neurodiversity, with the foundational recognition that each individual's actions impact others and that they are all integral parts of a community. Centering identity work connects students to the curriculum in deep and meaningful ways. It is through the tools of Community Building, Representation, Critical Literacy, Social Action, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that they work toward the desired outcomes of personal and collective transformation for students and adults.



## Community Building

Community Building is closely tied to the ongoing identity work being carried out by adults and children in school. Community Building involves creating brave spaces where children can take part in story-telling and forge connections across lines of difference. [▶ Community Building Overview](#)

In a class where meaningful Community Building is taking place:

- Students demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.
- Students recognize the value of honoring others' stories and perspectives.

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- Teachers are intentional about setting class norms that create a safe and brave environment for open conversations. [Community Building Elements](#)

As part of the Community Building process, students explore the tension in how they view themselves and how others view them, and how that tension impacts their experiences. Through genuine sharing and introspection, their Community Building work allows them to tap into experiences other than their own and practice honoring others' stories.

## Representation

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Anti-Bias Education involves actively creating opportunities to learn from those who identify in a variety of ways. Students listen to others' experiences and perspectives with the aim of building understanding and connection, as well as informing and widening their own perspectives. They are mindful that they don't rest any group's experience or perspective on a single person. Instead, they seek to understand an experience from multiple perspectives. [Representation Overview](#)

Through Representation, teachers aim to build empathy in their students, who when exposed to multiple perspectives and stories, will:

- Express comfort and joy with human diversity
- Use accurate language for human differences
- Form deep, caring connections across all dimensions of human diversity

Children build empathy for the people around them when they are given an opportunity to understand their story and experiences. Children feel empowered to bring their full authentic selves to class when they see themselves represented in the curriculum.

## Critical Literacy

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Critical Literacy in the classroom begins with teachers interrogating their own implicit biases and considering power, positionality, and perspective in reading the world around them. Teachers foster the capacity to critically identify bias in classroom texts and other resources by giving students the tools to question what they read, see, and hear. [Critical Literacy Overview](#)

Through Critical Literacy:


- Students have language to describe what injustice looks like and how it impacts people.
- Students recognize power, positionality, and perspective in texts they read.
- Students push back on generalizations they see being made about groups of people.
- Students deconstruct unjust ideas and reconstruct the world they want to see.

When children are given the tools to think critically about their surroundings, they can dispute systems of power that are oppressive. Critical Literacy encourages reflection, transformation, and action in children as they work to promote a more just and equitable world.

## Social Action

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A core goal of Anti-Bias Education is to empower children to become active agents of change—to realize that their actions, big or small, have the power to transform interactions as well as systems and structures. ► [Social Action Overview](#)

Children have an innate desire to create positive change in their communities and the world at large. They have a keen sense of justice and want things around them to be just and fair. Educators must nurture that inclination in children by allowing them to take part in actions, small or large, that lead to transformation.  [Teaching Social Action](#)

In a class where Social Action is nurtured and encouraged:

- Teachers expose students to various forms of action.
- Teachers cultivate students' ability to stand up for themselves and others in the face of bias and injustice.
- Students understand that they can stand up against discriminatory words or actions in a variety of ways to make a change.


## Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

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Through the lens of UDL, educators cultivate all students' understanding of themselves as learners. This is done by creating choice and access throughout the curriculum and physical space. Through UDL, students understand that each person learns in different ways and can make informed choices for their learning and social-emotional development. ► [UDL Overview](#)

In a class where UDL is being implemented:

- Students can make a plan for their learning because the goal of their work is clear and they have the means to achieve that goal.
- Students see themselves as members of an interdependent community.
- Students see their success and liberation as tied to their peers, not in competition with them.

If children cannot access the curriculum, it does not matter how well thought out the curriculum is—it will not serve them. Implementing UDL informs how students are grouped, options for learning, and the development of empathy for others. It helps to ensure classrooms are safe spaces for kids to take risks, academically and socially, when we subscribe to the belief that there is no average. Access to learning ceases to be a barrier to understanding, growth, and building community.  [The Myth of the Average Learner](#)

## Supporting Structures

This model can be integrated into a school's existing overall design but will require shifts in curriculum and instruction, as well as shifts in adult mindsets, school culture, and family engagement.



### CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

#### **Anti-Bias Education is not an addition to curricula, but it is an underpinning lens that permeates all aspects of a school.**

The Anti-Bias Education model helps schools integrate notions of justice and power, as well as the examination of history from multiple perspectives, throughout the school day and within the curriculum, as opposed to these things being isolated to one month or one class during one hour of a day. It helps schools develop curricula that are culturally relevant and that provide routine opportunities for students to examine their biases. They created a curricular scope and sequence that achieve these goals for the model's learning site, Community Roots. [📄 Social Justice Scope & Sequence](#)

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#### **Anti-Bias Education requires a shift in both culture and mindsets, and this takes both individual and collective work.**



### SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE

In addition to the shift in curriculum, instruction, and professional development, Anti-Bias Education requires a shift in culture and mindsets. Such a shift requires ongoing work to understand one's own biases, power, and positionality. Culture shift requires committing to working collaboratively toward collective transformation. [🖥️ Dual Process for Change](#)

Because mindset and culture shifts require deep, ongoing work, schools and educators who wish to work with Roots ConnectED must believe in and commit to the long process and deeper work rather than quick fixes to create transformational, systemic change. In addition, they must see the role of deep personal transformation as critical to the work of collective transformation.

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#### **Adults must have meaningful learning experiences that connect to practice in order to shift pedagogy and culture.**



### ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

Across all their offerings, Roots ConnectED focuses on the parallel experiences of all stakeholders in a school community while also recognizing that adults are a key lever in shifting schools. This means that, during professional learning offerings, teachers and other adults have the same experiences they aspire for students to have—Community Building, Representation, Critical Literacy, Social Action, and UDL—and engage in similar activities. These activities include exploring their own identities and biases, as well as how systems of oppression can appear within schools,

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and then moving into strategies for building an Anti-Bias curriculum and school culture. These activities enable adults to transform personally and collectively.

Roots ConnectED facilitators model practices like co-teaching and utilize UDL to create learning opportunities. All of these elements bring the school community together to collaboratively imagine, design, and implement practices and curricula that honor and center students' personal, cultural, and community experiences. All trainings include connection to research and theory, community building and deep human connection, seeing theory in practice, and reflection and application to individual classrooms and school sites.

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**Deep community building with all families is critical to fostering the trust required to engage in difficult conversations.**



**FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Roots ConnectED believes that deep Community Building with families is critical to fostering trust and enables school communities and families to engage in difficult conversations. Roots ConnectED uses their INTENT framework to provide a structure for creating and sustaining family programming that builds authentic community. [INTENT Framework](#)

Community Roots—Roots ConnectED's learning site—has reimagined parent engagement and moves beyond a PTA and the large school events typically seen in parent programming. They intentionally create intimate spaces for families to connect, build community, and participate in the culture of the school in a very real way. [Ways to Engage and Include All Families](#)

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**The physical space must be accessible so students drive their own learning.**



**SPACE & FACILITIES**

Roots ConnectED recognizes the power of space to foster and provide access to learning. They are intentional and strategic about how classrooms and physical spaces are set up for both independence and interdependence. The classroom layout allows students to access their own learning and support others to do the same.



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Supports Offered

[Roots ConnectED](#) offers the following supports to help you implement their model.

### Coaching

*Cost Associated*



One-on-one coaching gives schools deeper support and strategic planning around practices of Anti-Bias Education and inclusion. Coaching is catered to the individual needs of the school. Roots ConnectED offers three models of short- and long-term coaching options across a wide range of topics and can include a train-the-trainer model. [► Coaching Testimonial](#)

[Learn More](#)

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### Institutes

*Cost Associated*



Educational Institutes are designed to share theory and practice with small working groups from school sites who are in a place to shift school practice in an intentional way. Strategic working teams of 3-5 individuals spend time together in 1- to 3-day intensive trainings designed to share school integration practices. Roots ConnectED offers the following institutes:

- Centering Our Humanity: Anti-Bias Culture and Curriculum Institute
- Inclusive Practices Institute
- Community Building Institute
- New Leader Training Institute

[Learn More](#)

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### Workshops

*Cost Associated*



Educator Workshops are one-time immersion opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of Roots ConnectED's work and approach. Workshops span a number of different topics and allow educators, school leaders, and/or school support staff to do a deep dive into one area of focus. Roots ConnectED also offers online workshops that you can access anytime asynchronously. [► Workshop Testimonial](#)

[Learn More](#)

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## School Visit

Cost Associated



The Creation of Roots ConnectED was inspired by the work of Community Roots, an intentionally racially and economically integrated public charter school in Brooklyn, NY, which continues to serve as the first learning site for the model. Their relationship is cyclical as the work of each informs the other in practice. School visits are often embedded into other programming offered at Roots ConnectED.

[Learn More](#)

## Reach

22

Partnerships

49,000+

Students

4,000+

Educators

500+

Families

## Impact

Although it is too early to measure outcomes from Roots ConnectED's multi-year coaching partnerships, satisfaction for professional development programming, as measured by participant surveys, is extremely high:

- 93.9% of Institute participants responded 5 (on a scale from 1 to 5) when asked, "How likely are you to recommend a Roots ConnectED Institute to an interested colleague or friend?"
- 89.6% of Educator Workshop participants responded 4 or 5 (on a scale from 1 to 5) when asked, "How likely are you to recommend a Roots ConnectED Workshop to an interested colleague or friend?"

In addition, at the founding school, Community Roots Charter School, results are promising ([NYC DOE, 2019](#)):

- In 2018-2019, 98% of families said school staff works hard to build trusting relationships with families like them.
- In 2018-2019, 100% of teachers said that they trust each other (versus 83% citywide).
- In 2018-2019, 97% of the school's former eighth graders earned enough high school credit in ninth grade to be on track for graduation.
- In 2018-2019, 89% of students said that CRCS offers a wide enough variety of programs, classes, and activities to keep them interested in school (versus 76% citywide)

# Contact

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# RESOURCES



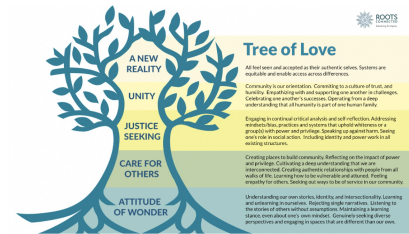
## [Roots ConnectED Website](#)

This is the Roots ConnectED website where you can learn more about the model.



## [Anti-Bias Education Overview](#)

An overview of Roots ConnectED's approach to create growth and change in a school community.



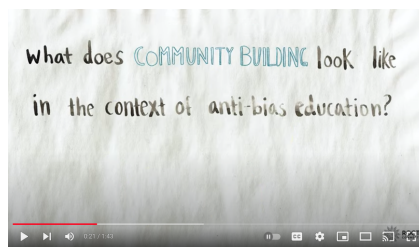
## [Tree of Love](#)

The Tree of Love conceptualizes Roots ConnectED's vision for change and contributing towards a new reality.



## [Dual Process for Change](#)

A resource that explains the dual process of personal and collective transformation.



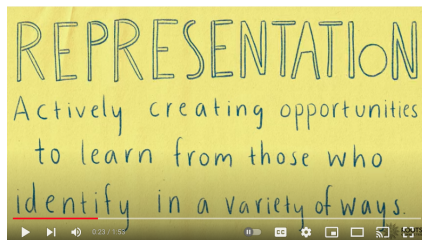
## [Community Building Overview](#)

An overview of Community Building in the Anti-Bias Education model.



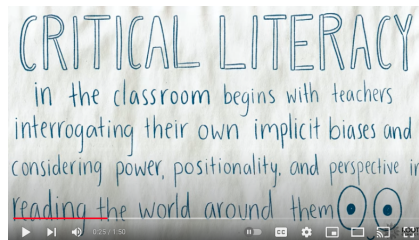
## [Beyond Ice Breakers to Community Building](#)

This resource shares three key elements for strong Community Building to create spaces of belonging.



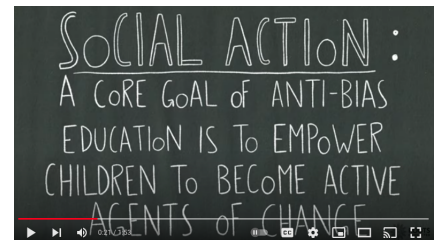
## [Representation Overview](#)

An overview of Representation in the Anti-Bias Education model.



## [Critical Literacy Overview](#)

An overview of Critical Literacy in the Anti-Bias Education model.



## [Social Action Overview](#)

An overview of Social Action in the Anti-Bias Education model.

