**The Vermont Guiding Principles: Activities**

**Initial Activities (when introducing the Vermont Guiding Principles for the first time)**

1. **What’s the Difference?** (Camille Catlett)

* Provide a copy of the Vermont Guiding Principles to each participant and ask them to read it.
* Ask each participant to find a partner, then discuss one of the following questions.
  1. What’s the difference between “all children” and “each and every child”?
  2. What’s the difference between “inclusion” and “full participation”?
  3. What contributes to each child having a “sense of belonging”?
  4. What contributes to each family having a “sense of belonging”?
* Debrief by asking for volunteers to share their insights. Reinforce the core values of the Vermont Guiding Principles by emphasizing the following points for each topic.
  1. The phrase “each and every child” underscores how much attention needs to be paid to individualizing learning for each unique learner rather than approaches in which one size is intended to fit “all.” This phrase connects strongly with the commitment in Vermont’s [Early Childhood Action Plan](http://buildingbrightfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/VT-Early-Childhood-Action-Plan.pdf) to “*recognizing the promise of every Vermont child*.”
  2. To many people the word “inclusion” only refers to children with disabilities. The intent of the Vermont Guiding Principles is twofold:
     + to acknowledge that each and every child needs to be included, regardless of language, culture, ability, life circumstances, or whatever.
     + to underscore that children with disabilities also have different languages, cultures, and life circumstances that merit consideration in supporting their learning and development.
  3. While there are many answers to this question, some basic components are seeing and hearing things that are familiar in terms of images and language and being able to access and fully participate in all learning experiences.
  4. In addition to what is mentioned above, for families a sense of belonging is also increased when they are welcomed warmly, treated respectfully, and supported to understand how to contribute to and participate in their child’s learning and development experiences.

1. **Juicy Words** (Camille Catlett)

* Provide a copy of the Vermont Guiding Principles to each participant and ask them to read it. Ask that, as they read, they circle words that to them are particularly significant or important to the idea of supporting each and every child. These are the “juicy words” in the document.
* Ask what participants to share the “juicy words” they noticed. Ask that they also describe why they thought that word or phrase was important. (NOTE: This part of the activity can be done in pairs or as a whole group).