

## **PRACTICE**

### *Multicultural Group Activities*

#### **Create a world map**

Learning about people and customs around the world is a lot easier if you know where different countries and regions are located. A political map, one that shows national boundaries, is especially helpful.

- Maps can be found in atlases, encyclopaedias, books and on the internet. A large wall map is a particularly handy reference tool you'll use over and over again. At a glance, you can see which countries are located below the equator (who experiences different seasons and when?), or why fish is an important food source in Japan? (this country is a series of islands). A world map also illustrates how environmental problems in one part of the world can affect the entire globe.
- Hang your map where the children can get right up close to it. You may wish to mark certain places that you are learning about with map tracks - tiny, round-headed pins designed especially for maps.

#### **Start an international collection**

Start collecting items that relate to different cultures around the world. You'll find a lot is available at little or no cost.

- Children could check in magazines for pictures of people dressing in regional styles of clothing. Cut the pictures out and save them. Add any actual items of traditional clothing from other countries that you may have in your wardrobe.
- Children who speak English as a second language may have access to newspapers and other written materials in a different language or alphabet.
- Older children could establish pen-pals in other countries (e-mail or snail-mail) and ask them to send food packages and labels to add to a collection of food from around the world. Stamps from the mail can form another kind of collection.
- Encourage families to send postcards from holiday destinations and bring back an item as a souvenir from the holiday.
- Leaf through gift catalogues for pictures of world art and crafts. Save examples of traditional designs to inspire you. You never know when some items come in handy for arts and craft projects or inspire a new collection (hats, bags, designs, etc.).

#### **Paint a mural of the world's people**

Celebrate the differences and similarities of the world's peoples with a painted mural. This would be a good group project to decorate the outdoor fence or as a feature wall within a room painted/drawn on paper.

- Sketch your figures lightly in pencil so that their whole bodies show, from head to toe.
- "Dress" them in different styles. Traditional costumes vary considerably around the world, as do some everyday outfits.
- Complement the clothing styles with appropriate hair styles, eye colour and skin tones.

- Have fun colouring in the intricate designs found on much of the world's clothing.

### **Create a mini-museum**

As the collection of cultural items from around the world grows, you'll be able to create displays to show off your discoveries. Set up a mini-museum, one with changing exhibits.

- Turn a corner or wall of a room into an exhibition, taking advantage of features such as window sills and the back of doors.
- Come up with creative display and storage solutions such as using oversized cardboard boxes as freestanding dividers (give the outsides a coat of paint).
- Lightweight items could be hung from string stretched between two points.
- Create other displays to tie in with various holidays. Use your mini-museum to show how much we all have in common.

### **Make up songs with what you know about another culture/language**

A great way to share experiences and reiterate learning is to make up a song. Songs can be themed around new words learned, foods eaten, celebrations and festivities or about your latest collection.

- Make instruments from around the world available to the 'band'.
- Chanting and repeating words is a good way to 'remember' newly learned expressions and languages.
- Melodies can be made up as you go or start with a melody that the children know and go from there.
- Encourage improvisation.
- Record the children and re-play their music.

### **References:**

1. Braman A.N.(2002), *Kids Around the World 'Play', 'Create'* . John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
2. Milord S. (1992), *KIDS CAN! BOOK Hands Around the World; Williamson Books*
3. Hart & Manell (1993), *KIDS CAN! BOOK Kids make Music*