

## WHAT IS IDENTITY SAFETY?

**Identity safe classrooms are those in which teachers** strive to ensure students that their social identities are an asset rather than a barrier to success in the classroom. Acknowledging students' identities, rather than trying to be colorblind, can build the foundation for strong positive relationships. This, coupled with challenging opportunities to learn, can help all students begin to feel they are welcomed, supported, and valued as members of the learning community

Dorothy Steele and Becki Cohn-Vargas

*Identity Safe Classrooms: Places to Learn and Grow*

## **Stanford Integrated Schools Project**

### **Components of Identity Safety**

- I. **Child (Student)-Centered Teaching** promotes autonomy, cooperation and student voice
  - a. Listening for Student Voice
  - b. Teaching for Understanding
  - c. Focus on Cooperation
  - d. Classroom Autonomy
  
- II. **Cultivating Diversity as a Resource** provides challenging curriculum and high expectations for all students
  - a. Using Diversity as a Resource For Teaching
  - b. High Expectations and Academic Rigor
  - c. Challenging Curriculum
  
- III. **Classroom Relationships** based on trusting, positive interactions with the teacher and among the students.
  - a. Teacher Warmth and Availability to Support Learning
  - b. Positive Student Relationships
  
- IV. **Caring Classroom Environments** where social skills are taught and practiced to help students care for one another in an emotionally and physically safe classroom.
  - a. Teacher Skill
  - b. Emotional and Physical Comfort
  - c. Attention to Prosocial Development

Key: The Components are in **bold**. The elements associated with that component are lettered beneath.

Adapted from *Identity Safe Classrooms, Places to Learn and Grow*, by Dorothy Steele and Becki Cohn-Vargas. For more information go to: <http://identitysafeclassrooms.org>