



Welcome... to Our Space

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Many of the spaces in which we live and work are shared—shared by family members and friends, colleagues, and even people we've never met before. How can we make everyone, no matter who they are, feel more welcome in our personal and public spaces?

Here are some suggestions based on Whole Person Modalities: the acknowledgement that all people are developing and changing emotionally, socially, physically, intellectually and spiritually.

Emotionally and Socially:

- Do we greet each person as if we were being handed a gift – for each person is a gift. Remember: your smile may be the only smile that person receives that day.
- Do we greet the person's family and friends, recognizing that they are an extension of our guest?
- Do we take the time to check in with the person, learn her name? Find out what's new in his life? Do we meaningfully focus on the person, trying not to be distracted by our to-do lists or phones?
- If someone new walks in, do we take the time to show them around and introduce them to at least one another person with whom they might connect?

Physically:

- Do we have chairs where someone can sit and catch his or her breath? Are there chairs for people of different sizes – different heights and widths, and chairs with strong armrests so someone can push off to stand up? What about a rocking chair that might be comforting for new mothers, little children, or people with memory impairment issues?
- Is our entryway lit well?
- Are there tables and chairs where people can gather and chat?

Intellectually and Socially:

Do we provide items to help stimulate minds of all ages *and* encourage engagement with others? For example:

- Puzzles: 1000-piece, 100-piece, five-piece (for little hands)
- Books: areas for book swaps with adult books or child-friendly books, some of which can be read aloud. (Check out some of our [favorites](#).)
- Board games: perennial favorites such as Scrabble, Pictionary, Trivial Pursuit, a deck of cards, Boggle, checkers, chess, and new ones such as Banagrams or Sudoku.
- Put out Legos and watch people congregate. Legos come in multiple sizes--chunky for preschool hands up to little pieces.
- Materials for drawing including paper (perhaps of different sizes), pencils (both traditional and colored), washable markers, crayons (both preschool size and traditional). Make sure to include some of Crayola's

multicultural markers so that guests can more accurately portray their skin tone and better reflect who they are. Also, paper to make origami and how-to books.

- A plastic doll with some accessories (clothing, bottle, blanket) is often nice for both girls AND boys.
- 3-D craft materials like Play-Dough, Floam, Wikki Stix (wax-like sticks that bend into fun shapes), pipe cleaners, rolls of decorated duct tape and maybe a book of things to make from duct-tape.
- A box of conversation starters that can be created or purchased at a gift shop.
- Go “old-fashioned” and offer some scraps of fabric, thread, needles, buttons—or yarn and knitting needles or crochet hooks, perhaps with some beginner how-to books.

And to welcome your youngest guests: what about some stickers or a treasure box with little items you can purchase inexpensively at [Oriental Trading](#) company?

Choose one or two things to try out and see what happens. Talk to your colleagues or family members and make some decisions on how to welcome people. Be cognizant of how people welcome YOU into their spaces. Enjoy the presence of others and observe the transformation that occurs!