

"What kind of world do we want
to create with our children?"



FAMILIES EMBRACING ANTI-BIAS VALUES

A FILM BY
Debbie Loekeeman • John Nimmo • Filiz Efe McKinney

Portland State   Brave Sprout
ANTIBIASLEADERSECE.COM

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I believe that to truly feel seen, we need to actively participate in creating a world that reflects both our unique identities and our shared humanity. This involves building safe spaces where we can grow without fear, both as individuals and as part of a collective. In these environments, something transformative happens: we begin to connect on a deeper emotional level, and a simple, universal message resonates – 'I've got you.' It's a promise of support and understanding, a reminder that we are not alone and that we are truly seen in our shared journey.

In my native Turkish, we have a saying: *gönül teline dokunmak*, which means 'touching the heartstrings.' Just as a gentle touch can stir the strings of an instrument to life, my goal as a filmmaker is to evoke empathy and spark meaningful dialogue, helping us see and be seen in the truest way possible. Filmmaking allows me to put my heart out there, form deep and far-reaching connections, and participate in a greater discussion where we learn from one another and shape the culture we create together.

In the film, families with anti-bias values embrace positive social identities, respect and affirm differences, and take a stand against unfairness. While facing diverse challenges, these families are united by one central question: *'What kind of world do we want to create with our children?'* Gabrielle, a participant in the film, shares, *'When you surround your child with a supportive community, there are so many different ways for them to be reflected back to themselves. And in turn, when they have that confident sense of self, we hope that they're able to give that to other people.'*

Directing ***Families Embracing Anti-Bias Values*** has been a time of personal growth as I've embraced my own anti-bias journey. I've been inspired by the courage and openness of the participant families while connecting with them through our shared intersectional experiences and vision. I hope the film touches the heartstrings of many others, helping them feel truly seen, and that it inspires us all to build a fair and compassionate world where everyone is valued, cared for, and encouraged to lift up those around them.

Filiz Efe McKinney, *Brave Sprout*
Director, *Anti-Bias Early Childhood Films*

Filiz Efe McKinney is a documentary filmmaker whose work sparks empathy and dialogue, guided by a vision for a more just and compassionate world. Rooted in her Turkish heritage, where old and new, East and West intersect, she focuses on cultivating a culture of inclusion by telling stories that challenge deep-seated biases.

Filiz has directed the **Anti-Bias Early Childhood Films** series, which explores the role families and educators play in fostering anti-bias values. ***Families Embracing Anti-Bias Values*** (2024) raises the voices of families as they help their children develop positive social identities, embrace differences, and form meaningful connections. Its companion film, ***Reflecting on Anti-Bias Education in Action: The Early Years*** (2021), takes viewers into diverse classrooms, demonstrating teacher reflection on identity, context, and practice. The film earned a Northwest Regional Emmy® nomination for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and won the Silver Prize for Documentary Feature at the Social Justice Film Festival.

Shaped by her multicultural experiences and education in communications and film, Filiz brings a heart-centered approach to filmmaking. She holds a Master of Communication in Digital Media, a Master of Arts in Communication Strategies and Public Relations, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Cinematography.

