

by Docia Zavitkovsky

*Docia Shares a Story
about Taking Time to Talk*

*Enjoy
a
Docia
Story*

When I had surgery on my face, it took a long time to heal. I would go to a center and the children would run over to me to look and to ask me about my “sore.” Always there were three questions — “Does it hurt?” “What is it?” and “How did you get it?” This was always followed by much sharing of cuts, scratches, and bruises. Some of these injuries were so minute that a magnifying glass was needed, and some, though searched for diligently, could not be seen at all. There were also countless requests for bandaids.

We would talk about why it was necessary to keep the wound covered so it would stay clean and not become infected. One time we got into a discussion about germs. One child said that “a germ is something that gets in your hair sometimes . . . it is a flea or something . . . it’s big . . . sometimes it goes in people’s houses. I think my neighbor has germs.”

I am always impressed with how much talking and reacting has to take place when an experience has meaning for a child . . . how curious and full of questions they are . . . how important it is for them to share and to know that someone is listening and will be supportive. Giving them the opportunity to talk, question, and discuss may reduce some of their anxiety and make troublesome situations more manageable for them.

Docia Zavitkovsky has furthered the cause of young children as a practitioner in the field for over 45 years and as past president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Known far and wide for her storytelling, she has traveled extensively as an early childhood consultant, lecturer, and adventurer.