

Teaching Children to Love Who They Are and Respect Who Others Are

Through Just As It Is!, longtime educator Janice Kenyatta transforms a lifelong commitment to learning into an enduring lesson about self-worth, diversity, and understanding.



Long before children fully understand the meaning of culture, identity, or difference, they begin forming ideas about themselves and the people around them. The messages they receive during those early years can influence how they view their appearance, background, abilities, and place in the world.

For retired educator and school administrator **Janice Kenyatta**, these formative years provide an important opportunity. Her children's book, **Just As It Is!**, was created to help young readers develop two values that she believes should be taught together: genuine love for themselves and sincere respect for people who may look different or come from different cultural backgrounds.

Written for children between the ages of three and ten, the multiple award-winning book encourages readers to recognize their personal worth without viewing differences as something to fear or reject. Its message is simple but far-reaching. Every child deserves to feel valued, and every child should learn to extend that same sense of value to others.

A Message That Begins Early

Janice Kenyatta believes self-love and cultural appreciation should not be treated as lessons reserved for adolescence or adulthood. Instead, they should become part of a child's earliest education.

Parents, teachers, caregivers, school administrators, and other positive adults all play a role in shaping how children understand themselves and interact with others. By introducing ideas such as self-respect, kindness, acceptance, and appreciation at a young age and reinforcing them consistently, adults can help those principles become natural parts of a child's character.

Waiting until children are older may allow insecurity, prejudice, or fear of differences to take root. The approach encouraged by **Janice Kenyatta** is preventive and constructive. Begin early, repeat the message, and give children the emotional foundation they need to become confident and compassionate adults.

"Children are our future," **Janice Kenyatta** has said. Her work reflects the belief that the quality of that future depends partly on what children are taught about themselves and one another today.

A Manuscript That Waited More Than 25 Years

The story behind **Just As It Is!** is also one of patience, rediscovery, and perseverance.

Janice Kenyatta originally wrote the manuscript more than 25 years ago. Its purpose was much the same as it is today, but life circumstances delayed the book's journey toward publication. The manuscript was eventually rediscovered following a major personal transition involving separation and divorce after 35 years of marriage.

Although decades had passed, the central message had not lost its relevance. Continuing social divisions and cultural misunderstandings around the world made the manuscript's themes feel increasingly important.

Rather than believing that the opportunity had passed, **Janice Kenyatta** recognized that children still needed encouragement to love themselves and understand others. The manuscript became an opportunity to revive a deeply held purpose and transform it into a lasting legacy for future generations.

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Book

For **Janice Kenyatta**, **Just As It Is!** is not intended to exist only as a reading experience. She has created companion products that allow children to engage with its message in different and meaningful ways.

The Abena Doll is a self-love plush companion created in the image of the book's main character. By bringing the character into a physical form, the doll gives children another way to connect with the story's ideas of identity, confidence, and acceptance.

Janice Kenyatta has also introduced a 48-piece puzzle featuring the cover of **Just As It Is!** She is currently developing a children's activity book containing practical activities designed to help young readers apply what they have learned after reading the story.

Together, the book, doll, puzzle, and forthcoming activity book form an educational collection centered on reinforcing positive values through reading, play, reflection, and participation.

Reaching Children in English and Spanish

Just As It Is! is available in both English and Spanish.

Publishing the book in Spanish enables its lessons to reach a wider audience and supports Janice Kenyatta's belief that the message belongs to children from every ethnic and cultural background. Her goal is not to speak only to one community but to encourage understanding between many communities.

The themes of **Just As It Is!**, including confidence, self-acceptance, respect, diversity, and cultural appreciation, are not limited to a particular region. They address experiences that occur throughout the world and remain relevant wherever children are learning how to understand themselves and relate to others.

More Than Four Decades in Education

The values behind **Just As It Is!** are closely connected to the professional life of **Janice Kenyatta**.

She has more than 40 years of experience in career and technical education. Her career has included teaching high school Business Education, serving as an adjunct business instructor at multiple community colleges, and working as the Experiential Learning and Internship Manager at Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Janice Kenyatta also made history as the first African American and the first woman to serve as Supervisor of Career and Technical Education at Essex County Vocational and Technical Schools in northern New Jersey. In that position, she supervised 70 teachers across 31 career and technical education programs.

She holds a master's degree in Business Education and postgraduate supervisory certification in Career and Technical Education in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. She is also the coauthor of **Black Folk's Hair Revisited: Secrets, Shame, and Liberation**.

These professional achievements provide important context for **Just As It Is!** The book is not separate from her career as an educator. It is another expression of her commitment to helping people learn, grow, and see possibilities beyond fear or limitation.

A Legacy Centered on Understanding

Now retired, **Janice Kenyatta** has devoted her purpose and passion to promoting the message of **Just As It Is!**

She has made it clear that the project is not primarily about fame or financial recognition. Instead, it represents her desire to play a meaningful role in making the world a better place for children and for the adults they will eventually become.

Her personal motto summarizes the philosophy behind both her educational career and her writing:

“The more we learn, the less we fear.”

For families, educators, and communities, **Just As It Is!** offers more than a story. It provides a starting point for conversations about identity, confidence, diversity, multicultural understanding, self-worth, and mutual respect.

By helping children appreciate who they are while remaining open to who others are, **Janice Kenyatta** hopes to encourage a future in which young people can live, learn, work, play, and grow together with greater understanding.

Just As It Is! is available in English and Spanish on Amazon:

[Amazon](#)

Learn more about **Janice Kenyatta**, her books, and related educational products:

[Website](#)

Just As It Is! and the **Abena Doll Gift Sets** are available on:

[etsy](#)