

**COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
TRAINING**

Community and Culture

**A Multidisciplinary Curriculum for Improvement of
the Child Welfare System**



Community and Culture

A Multidisciplinary Curriculum for Improvement of the Child Welfare System

By Michelle Howard, M.S., LPC



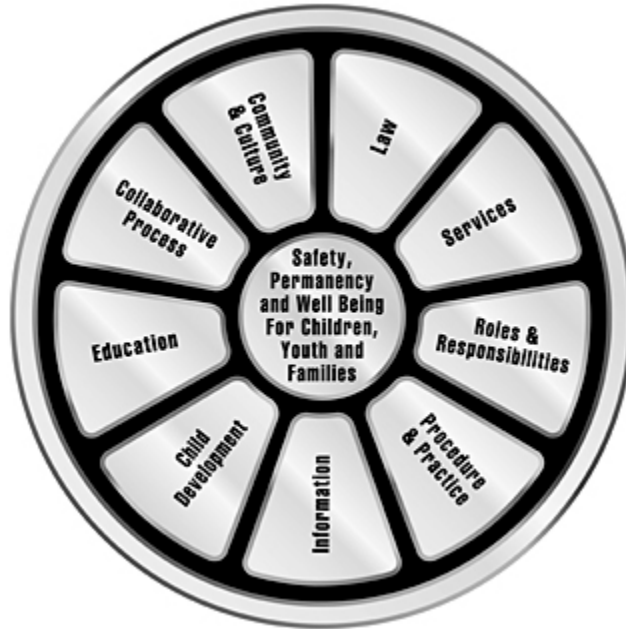
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**Court Improvement Program
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Colorado Court Improvement Program Training Wheel Curricula

It is not surprising that the diverse culture of the child welfare system creates knowledge and experience gaps for child welfare participants and practitioners alike. This leads to the following question: How can individuals who are involved in the child welfare system know about that *system as a whole*, as well as the roles of others involved in it?

The Colorado Court Improvement Program (CIP) is in the process of designing training to answer this very question. The Training Wheel Curricula is made up of nine separate modules, each representing a discipline or service area associated with the child welfare process. The purpose of each module is to assist multidisciplinary Best Practice Court Teams in building a foundation of core knowledge within each discipline or service area. While each discipline or service area may have a required professional knowledge and skill base that exceeds core knowledge, it is core knowledge *in all areas* that creates an understanding of the child welfare process as a whole.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Competencies and Learning Objectives	1
Materials	3
Expectations of Trainers	5
Preparation	6
Welcome and Introductions – Session 1	8
Exploring the Dynamics of Culture in Child Welfare – Session 2	15
Building Blocks for Culturally Competent Practice – Session 3	29
Managing the Dynamics of Difference – Session 4	33
Transfer of Learning: Wrap-Up and Evaluations – Session 5	43

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

Time	8 hours
Purpose	The purpose of this training is for child welfare stakeholders to increase their awareness and knowledge of issues related to culture and bias and understand how these issues influence interactions, services, treatment and decisions in child welfare. Culture is the embodiment of who we are; how we live our lives; shared history and experiences; and our world views. Attention to characteristics of culture will increase stakeholders' understanding of their own perspectives and biases, as well as those of the families with whom they work. The training will also help stakeholders reflect on and understand the cultural needs and values of those families that are culturally different.

Competencies/
Learning Objectives

Competency 1

Understand the meaning of “cultural competence” and the importance of being aware of the diversity in one’s child welfare practice community, with emphasis on those disparately represented in child welfare.

Objective 1a: Able to define “cultural competence.”

Objective 1b: Able to describe the cultural competence continuum.

Objective 1c: Able to define and describe disparity in child welfare.

Objective 1d: Able to articulate the need to be culturally aware and open to learning about other cultures in one’s practice community.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Competency 2

Aware of personal perceptions and behaviors that influence interactions and assessment of youth and families involved in Child welfare.

Objective 2a: Able to articulate one's own values and world view.

Objective 2b: Able to describe how one's world view, values, beliefs and biases could influence decision making and service delivery in child welfare.

Objective 2c: Become more aware of how expressing one's own values and beliefs affects interactions with youth and families.

Competency 3

Aware of professional cultural perceptions and behaviors that influence decisions made about youth and families involved in child welfare.

Objective 3a: Able to identify specific cultural features reflective of child welfare and legal professionals and other key stakeholders involved in child welfare.

Objective 3b: Able to describe some of the key attributes of one's professional culture and how these attributes influence decisions.

Competency 4

Develop sensitivity to the needs of culturally different youth and families and awareness of the need to engage in culturally respectful and responsive practice.

Objective 4a: Able to demonstrate basic understanding of important cultural characteristics among youth and families that may be living in poverty; members of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning community; members of an urban or rural community; members of certain racial or ethnic communities; and those with undocumented immigration status.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Objective 4b: Able to describe the implications of Indian Child Welfare Act and importance of partnering with tribal communities.

Objective 4c: Able to identify some ways that personal experience or history may influence cultural viewpoints and stereotypes.

Objective 4d: Able to describe how personal assumptions may impact an individual reaction or response to a situation or someone else's behavior.

Objective 4e: Able to articulate how to demonstrate greater sensitivity, respect and responsiveness to the cultural needs of youth and families in practice.

Competency 5

Demonstrate how to manage the dynamics of difference with culturally different youth and families.

Objective 5a: Able to identify the practice principles of cultural humility.

Objective 5b: Able to identify the critical components of building successful partnerships with culturally different families.

Objective 5c: Able to articulate cultural strengths of the cultural groups discussed in the training.

Objective 5d: Able to demonstrate successful practice efforts to working with culturally different youth and families.

Materials

All materials, including this curriculum, are provided in electronic and printed format.

Faculty Resources

Faculty Resource 1: "A LITTLE FRIENDLY COMPETITION" CARD GAME INSTRUCTIONS

Faculty Resource 2: HYPOTHETICAL CASE SCENARIO

Faculty Resource 3: CULTURE KEY FOR HYPOTHETICAL CASE SCENARIO

Faculty Resource 4: INSTRUCTIONS FOR "FAMILY" IN THE HYPOTHETICAL CASE SCENARIO

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

- Faculty Resource 5: INSTRUCTIONS FOR “OTHER GROUPS”
IN THE HYPOTHETICAL CASE SCENARIO
- Faculty Resource 6: COMMUNITY AND CULTURE POWERPOINT
SLIDE
- Faculty Resource 7: EVALUATION TEMPLATE

Power Point Presentation

Handouts

- Handout 1: AGENDA
- Handout 2: COMPETENCIES AND OBJECTIVES
- Handout 3: THE CIRCLE OF CULTURE
- Handout 4: DISPROPORTIONALITY CAUSATION
THEORIES
- Handout 5: CULTURAL COMPETENCY CONTINUUM
- Handout 6: ASSESSING YOUR PRACTICE
ENVIRONMENT
- Handout 7: WHAT DO YOU THINK?
- Handout 8: CULTURAL AWARENESS HIERARCHY
- Handout 9: CULTURAL STUMBLING BLOCKS
- Handout 10: CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION
- Handout 11: MANAGING DIFFERENCES: PRACTICE
STRATEGIES
- Handout 12: HYPOTHETICAL CHILD WELFARE CASE
SCENARIO
- Handout 13: MY NEXT STEPS
- Handout 14: RESOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

EXPECTATIONS OF TRAINERS

Trainers of this curriculum should have experience in facilitating discussions about race, ethnicity, culture, values, beliefs and various other differences among the children and families involved in the child welfare system. Trainers should be open to inviting questions and encouraging dialogue about cultural issues, even when those issues may be uncomfortable. Discussion about culture and diversity will likely afford opportunities for the growth and cultural development of participants. The following should be considered in preparing to deliver this training:

- The trainer should establish a climate in the room in which all voices are heard and respected. The goal is to allow for a richer learning opportunity. Conflicts may stem the flow of thought, thus hindering the learning and growth of participants. Trainers must be able to successfully navigate through any conflicts.
- The trainer should demonstrate willingness to go along on a journey with participants by sharing personal strengths and challenges related to the topic.
- The trainer should be comfortable in challenging thinking that is inaccurate and potentially offensive.
- The trainer should foster an atmosphere in which the trainer and participants can challenge perspectives without launching personal attacks on individuals or groups.

The trainer should model culturally competent concepts supported in this curriculum. The trainer should use opportunities as they are presented to demonstrate to participants that discussions about culture need to occur regularly in practice, not just in the training room. Following these guidelines should help the trainer facilitate a rewarding and enriching experience for participants.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE PREPARATION

Facility. The ideal environment for this training is one that provides necessary training equipment, such as flip charts and flip-chart stands; a projection screen or clean wall to display PowerPoint slides; speakers with good sound quality for video; and LCD equipment (unless the trainer has an LCD available for use). Training tools are valuable to adult learners, as they accommodate diverse learning styles. These may include puzzles, coloring sheets, Play-Doh, Legos, etc. The training room should be large enough to accommodate multiple round tables or a U-shaped table set up with enough space in the room for groups to do small group work or have available rooms in the facility for groups to use for small group work.

Recruitment. A diverse group of stakeholders is essential to the success of this training. For this reason, slots should be reserved for stakeholders representing various groups, including judicial officers, court staff, family court facilitators, guardians ad litem, respondent parent counsel, county attorneys, court-appointed special advocates (CASAs), Department of Human Services caseworkers, supervisors and managers, parents and grandparents, educators, foster parents, visitation supervisors/therapists, mediators, psychologists, mental health and drug and alcohol treatment providers, tribal representatives, etc. *If advance registration does not reflect sufficient diversity of stakeholders, the lead trainer must take steps to assure recruitment of an appropriate blend.*

Pre-Training Preparation. *The trainer will need to do the following prior to the start of training:*

- *Ensure tables are set up either in round groupings or a U-shape.*
- *Place toys or manipulatives on tables for easy access by participants.*
- *Post “Parking Lot” flip chart on the wall.*
- *Ensure index cards are available or purchase them for participants to place their name and profession on during Activity #4, Recording a New Tape.*
- *Preview the instructions for “A Little Friendly Competition” (a-g, pp. 9-10).*
- *Ensure that the card game instructions are in order (five per table).*
- *Reconstitute four decks of cards according to the instructions (#4, p. 11).*
- *Prepare flip chart, “The Circle of Culture,” which will appear as a pie shape to be filled in during the brainstorming activity (#3, p. 15).*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**


- *Prepare the Cultural Competence Continuum on the flip chart. Draw a line and note the six stages along the continuum on the flip chart. Use this to direct participants to the location of each of the concepts as this section is reviewed (#2, p. 24).*
- *Ensure the “Knowing Who You Are” video (Casey Family Programs) is available and cued for viewing.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING

Time: 15 min.

Description of Activity: Participants will be oriented to the trainers and the competencies and objectives of the training. Participants will have an opportunity to introduce themselves and describe their expectations for the day.

1.  Display **PowerPoint: Welcome: Colorado Court Improvement Project: Community and Culture** and welcome the participants to the training.
2. *Introduce yourself as the trainer(s) and describe your background(s). Explain to participants that this training has been developed for child welfare stakeholders to increase their awareness of issues related to culture and bias, and to understand how these issues influence interactions, services, treatment and decisions in child welfare.*
3. *State the following to give a brief overview of why this training is important:*

Culture is the embodiment of an individual’s identity, lifestyle, shared history, experiences and world view. Attention to these characteristics of culture will help those involved in child welfare better understand their own biases and the needs of families they work with, while promoting responses by stakeholders that are reflective of the cultural needs and values of the family (Nobles, 2006).
4. *Refer participants to **Handout 1: Community and Culture Agenda** and **Handout 2: Competencies and Objectives**. Review the agenda with participants and explain that there will be two 20-minute breaks and one hour, 20 minutes for lunch. Review a few of the competencies and objectives with participants to highlight the content of the training.*
5. *Introduce participants to the concept of the **Parking Lot** and refer them to the flip chart page taped on the wall that is marked as such. The Parking Lot is a way for the trainer to set the stage for dealing with difficult issues or to fend off potentially derailing topics or conversations. It helps the trainer avoid looking like the “bad guy” when trying to keep the discussion on track. Ensure that the trainer addresses all Parking Lot issues before the end of the training day.*
6. *Pass out index cards to participants. Ask them to write their name and profession on the card for the activity Recording a New Tape later in the afternoon. Collect index cards.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

7. *Ask participants to introduce themselves by identifying their name, their child welfare practice environment (e.g., caseworker, supervisor, attorney, child advocate, foster parent) and to identify one hope or expectation for the day. Trainer should note participant’s responses on flip chart paper titled “Expectations.” If there are any hopes or expectations identified that will not be addressed in this training, the trainer should clarify this with the participant. The trainer may suggest checking in at a break for some possible resource recommendations related to any such participants’ questions or concerns. Post “Expectations” flip chart in the room for the trainer and participants to continue to refer back to during the training day.*
8. *Take care of housekeeping issues, including:*
 - *Information about the facility (restrooms, parking, breakout rooms)*
 - *Participant materials*
 - *Expense reimbursement forms and rules*
 - *Continuing Legal Education (CLE) forms*


CARD GAME WARM-UP

TIME: 40 min.

Description of Activity: The purpose of this activity is to provide a highly interactive opportunity for participants to develop insight into how people respond to changes in their environment when they don’t have the benefit of being able to do things the way they normally would. This exercise can transcend into discussions about power, culture shock, learning new cultural rules and inclusion/exclusion.

1. *Trainer (s) should review the following Card Game Trainer Instructions prior to the beginning of the training, as noted in the Training Preparation – Pre-Training Session. These instructions are for the trainer ONLY.*
 - a. *The trainer should not indicate that this game is related to the other material in this module, because it will dilute the impact of the game. The trainer should present this as a warm-up exercise or a little competitive game to get people moving.*
 - b. *This is a nonverbal game in which participants are divided into groups to learn a card game based on a number of simple rules. What the participants do not know is that each group’s set of rules is slightly different, so when they begin to play the game*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

- with others, conflict develops. As players are not allowed to talk, they must rely on other means of communication.*
- c. The secret to success of this game is careful preparation. The trainer should put the groups of rules into one stack to pass them out, because participants should not sense that they are getting different sheets of rules. This means that the trainer needs to have set up the room using four tables with five people at each table. As the trainer goes around to each table, count off five sheets from the stack. Even if there are fewer people at the table, still give them five sheets so that everyone at the same table receives the same rules.*
 - d. The trainer may want to distribute the rules clockwise according to the gradual degrees of changes in the rules. (For example, one set of rules indicates that the high card wins the trick, and diamonds are trump. The next set of rules indicates that the high card wins the trick, but there is no trump.)*
 - e. If you want more people to move throughout the game, after a couple of rounds, you can start having the winners and the losers at each table rotate in the opposite directions.*
 - f. It should take about five minutes to explain the game and pass out the materials. Allow about 15 minutes to play the game for two to three rounds, and then about 20 minutes to discuss the game afterwards.*
 - g. Trainers should be very observant of participants' behaviors, particularly in the second and third rounds. Sometimes people aren't aware of their own behaviors.*
2.  Display **PowerPoint 2: A Little Friendly Competition**. State the following and review the instructions for the game with the participants:


We're going to play a game as our opener to spark a little friendly competition. ***Set up the game using the following instructions and the Trainer Material below:***

- 1) I'm going to divide you into four groups of five each. *(Do so now and divide in a way that they are no longer at the same table with people they are familiar with. Get them settled and then continue with the set up.)*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

- 2) You will be playing a card game based on suits and tricks, and you'll have about five minutes to read the instructions before you begin.
- 3) *Give out the instructions now, saying:* Once the instructions are passed out, there is no more talking. In addition, do not use writing, even writing in the air, no formal sign language and no lip reading. You can only use gestures, facial expressions and body language.
- 4) Read the rules now and I will begin passing out a deck of cards to each table. *(Do so now. Each group will get one deck. The four decks have been constituted from a total of seven decks of cards, weeded out, so only 28 cards are used from each deck: Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in each suit. One deck is given to each group along with copies of instructions for group members; each group will have a different set of instructions.)*
- 5) *After five minutes are up, say:* The thinking part of the game is to remember your rules. The most important things for you to remember are: 1) No talking; and 2) Carefully read the instructions, because they will then be collected. *Collect the rules now.*
- 6) Play the first round now. When a winner is determined, that person should stand up in place to indicate that the round is over. All the groups will need to stop at the same time, so you may stop other groups in the middle of play and determine a winner (maybe by rock, paper, scissors, if necessary).
- 7) *When the winners at each table are all standing, direct them to leave their cards at the table, and then move clockwise to the next table, sit down at the empty space and continue playing. Everyone else should keep the cards they had, and the new person at the table should just pick up the cards the last person left in their space. The decks will be reshuffled only if the round has been completely finished before stopping.*
- 8) *After completing the last round, debrief the activity using the following material.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

3.  Display **PowerPoint 3: Movers and Stayers** and, using the question noted in the boxes below, debrief the exercise according to the “Mover, Stayer, Mover who becomes a Stayer, and Mover who returned home” perspectives.

<u>Mover Perspective</u>	<u>Stayer Perspective</u>
<p>Question: When you moved to a new group, what did you feel/think?</p> <p>This quadrant represented how the mover felt, responded and resolved conflicts over rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scared • Strange • Worried • I wanted to go back to my group • Angry, mad, frustrated • These people are different, funny, weird • Interesting, amusing • I wanted to use the right rules • These people are wrong, didn't understand them • I knew the rules were different, but I didn't know how they were different or what the right rules were • I didn't know what to do • I wanted someone to help me • I wanted someone to teach me the right rules 	<p>Question: When new people came to your group, what did you feel/think?</p> <p>This quadrant represented how the stayer felt, responded and resolved conflicts over rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New person is stupid • I wanted them to use the right rules • Strange person • I wanted to protect my group's rules • New person is interesting, cute, innocent, naïve • The new person doesn't know the rules or how to play, the new person is wrong • Must protect our rules • Didn't want rules to change • Thought the new person's way was interesting and worth a try • Didn't understand the new person at all

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

<u>Mover Who Became a Stayer Perspective</u>	<u>Mover Who Returned Home Perspective</u>
<p>Question: After staying in a new group for a long time, what did you feel/think?</p> <p>This quadrant represented how a person acclimated to new rules and their degree of satisfaction with their decisions about the rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I came to understand their rules • I came to understand their rules but I still wanted to be somewhere else • When another new person came, once again I didn't understand the rules • I no longer wanted to return to my original group; I become comfortable • Their rules became my rules • I became frustrated with other newcomers who didn't learn the rules 	<p>Question: If you returned to your original group, what did you feel/think?</p> <p>This quadrant represented how a returnee may, or may not, have to deal with unforeseen conflicts over rules that are the same, or that have changed, within their original group. Also, it represented how the returnee felt, responded, and resolved these conflicts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scared • It was my own group, but I had adopted the rules of the other group • I forgot my group's rules • The rules had changed and I didn't understand; I wanted them to be the same as before • I expected to understand my own group, but I couldn't • I wanted them to understand me and my changes • I wanted them to change a little

4.  Display **PowerPoint 4: Card Game Takeaways** and explain the primary “takeaways” from this experience as identified in the bullets that follow.

- The game was a reminder that we have power. Power isn't bad; it's neutral until you see how it's used. Each of us has to recognize our power over families and think about how to use power in a leadership role in order to increase partnering opportunities that foster safety for children in families and respect their cultural beliefs and values. As Spiderman's uncle tells him, “With great power comes great responsibility.”
- We need to challenge our own perceptions about the root causes of our own power needs and those of others.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – SESSION 1**

- In using power, not all assumptions are necessarily disclosed, and this adds to the confusion and mixed messages in the child welfare system. When hidden assumptions come to light, suddenly people misinterpret them. This, in turn, impacts interactions with family members.
 - Power that diminishes others comes from fear, resistance and family traditions.
 - Child welfare needs to help families exercise power constructively.
 - People in the child welfare system want to feel culturally competent and it is painful when we realize we aren't always acting this way.
 - It is a struggle for many people to communicate in ways that work in relation to race and other cultural differences. Sometimes we fear having the conversations because of concerns about how to handle the feelings around it, but we have to start.
5. *Ask participants to reflect back on these points as they move through the rest of the training. Explain that remembering why they do what they do and how they can do it even better is the goal of providing this training today.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

DEFINING CULTURE

Time: 15 min.


Description of Activity: This activity will blend presentation and discussion to build knowledge of culture by defining culture; identifying cultural groups disparately involved in child welfare to set the tone for why culture matters; and reviewing the cultural competence continuum and principles of cultural humility.

1. *Explain to participants that the next activity is centered on exploring the dynamics of culture.*

2.  *Display **PowerPoint 5: Defining Culture** and provide the following definition of culture:*

Dr. Wade Nobles, an experimental social psychologist provides us with this definition of culture: “The vast structure of behaviors, ideas, attitudes, values, habits, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices peculiar to a particular group of people, which provides them with a general design for living and patterns for interpreting reality.”

3. *Turn to the prepared flip chart, “The Circle of Culture,” and ask participants to brainstorm elements of a person’s life that influence cultural development.*

4.  *Display **PowerPoint 6: The Circle of Culture** and review the various elements and examples. Include the elements identified in the brainstorm that relate to the elements noted below. Tell participants that the Circle of Culture also appears on **Handout 3: The Circle of Culture**.*

- Values (e.g., family, religion)
- Sources of stress (e.g., discrimination, oppression)
- Cultural factors that hinder growth and development (e.g., poverty)
- Behaviors associated with being male in this culture (e.g., gender roles and stereotypes of being the provider and strong)
- Positive attributes (e.g., skin color, hair color as perceived by others)
- Survival skills
- Major problems and concerns (e.g., lack of employment)
- Cultural factors that support growth and development (e.g., privilege, affluence)

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

- Behaviors associated with being female in this culture (e.g., gender roles and stereotypes of being weak and emotional)
- Negative attributes (e.g., skin color, hair color as perceived by others) (Substance Abuse Services and Health Administration, 1994a)

5. *Using the material that follows, explain to participants that the Circle of Culture helps explain the various elements that help form a cultural identity.*

All of these elements help people form a cultural identity. It is this identity that influences perceptions of reality and the development of a world view. This is significant because the world view individuals hold can either produce a shared understanding relative to experiences and interactions with others or create gaps in understanding and awareness of a particular group. Increasing knowledge and awareness of other cultures helps bridge these gaps.

In order to uphold the values of culturally competent practice, which includes the values of self determination, dignity, worth, inclusion, tolerance and respect (National Association of Social Workers, 2007), child welfare professionals must expand their lens to incorporate an understanding of the challenges many groups face in society, such as racism, classism, sexism, poverty, oppression, hostility, persecution and discrimination. To be responsive, child welfare stakeholders must acknowledge the relevance of a cultural group's history and how this history influences individual interpretations of problems, alternatives and solutions.

CULTURE AND DISPROPORTIONALITY IN CHILD WELFARE

TIME: 45 min.

Description of Activity: This activity will provide participants with some general knowledge of disproportionality and disparity in child welfare, as well as theories as to why disproportionality exists. It will also highlight how this issue directly relates to culture.

1. *Introduce the “Knowing Who You Are” video to participants using the following information (Merz & Hightower, 2005).*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

We are going to watch a video developed by Casey Family Programs to help us understand the importance of valuing culture and cultural identity development for children involved in child welfare. You will hear candid words of foster youth, foster parents, social workers and administrators who have been involved with the child welfare system as they speak about their perspectives on race and ethnic identity.


According to the Casey Family Programs *Trainer's Guide*, this video can serve as a catalyst to:

1. Open a healthy dialogue about racial and ethnic identity formation and culture.
 2. Promote conversations related to topics of disproportionality and disparity that may have previously been ignored or considered uncomfortable.
 3. Illuminate some of the particular challenges faced by youth in care.
 4. Initiate a discussion about the roles of all child welfare personnel (including administrators, managers, supervisors and workers) in helping youth develop their racial and ethnic identities.
2. *Show Video (23 minutes).*
3. *Conduct a large group debrief of the video using the following talking points:*
- 1) As a child welfare professional, what can you take from these individuals' perspectives on racial and ethnic identity, and how can you translate them into action?
 - 2) What strategies can you employ to continue conversations about race and ethnicity in child welfare (identity and overrepresentation) in your agency and community?
 - 3) What are the top two or three points highlighted by the film that you would want to address within your organization?


Trainer Note – Potential Responses:

- *Ongoing assessment of self and staff regarding level of comfort in talking about race and ethnicity.*
- *Promoting ongoing examination of unconscious practices that may be insensitive to a person of color.*
- *Both respect and encourage all voices.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

- *Adopt a “not knowing” stance and an attitude that conveys that race and ethnicity do matter.*
 - *Ensuring that the professionals’ own discomfort does not get in the way of encouraging conversations that benefit children, youth and families.*
 - *Create safety for all involved to have the conversation by being open, honest and non-judgmental.*
 - *Acknowledge the experience and competence of the child, youth or family member of color.*
 - *Remain open to another’s world view.*
4. *Explain to participants that this video provides a good lead-in to discuss a key issue in child welfare: disproportionality. The children in the video help put a face on the numbers that reflect disproportionate representation of youth of color in child welfare.*
5.  *Display **PowerPoint 7: Disproportionality and Disparity** and discuss with participants why attention to culture is a significant issue in child welfare using the following as a guide:*

Disproportionality and disparity are significant concerns in the field of child welfare. Disproportionality means the over- or underrepresentation of minority children under the age of 18 in foster care compared to their representation in the general population. Disparity means the inequitable treatment, services and outcomes for minority children as compared to those provided and experienced by similarly situated Caucasian children (Hill, 2006). Disparity essentially is the racial inequity present in the child welfare system’s treatment of, services provided to (types, quality and quantity) and outcomes for children of color relative to what Caucasian children in similar situations receive.

6.  *Display **PowerPoint 8: Data on Disproportionality in Child Welfare** and discuss with participants why attention to culture is a significant issue in child welfare using the following as a guide:*

The data on the slide tells us that there are more children of color removed from their homes and placed into foster care.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

RACE/Ethnicity	2000 Census % in Total Population	2000 AFCARS % in Foster Care	Disproportionality Rates
Non-Hispanic Whites	60.9	46.0	.76
Non-Hispanic Blacks	15.1	36.6	2.43
Non-Hispanic Indians	1.2	2.6	2.16
Non-Hispanic Asians/Pacific Islanders	3.6	1.4	.39
Hispanics	17.0	13.5	.79

U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families. (2005). *The AFCARS report FY 2005, 10/1/04 through 9/30/05*.

In looking at this chart we see that White children are nearly 61 percent of all children in America, but represent only 46 percent of the children in foster care. This means they are underrepresented at a rate of 0.76, signifying that 76 percent of white children are underrepresented compared to their total population. This analysis of the national data indicates that African Americans and American Indians are the most overrepresented groups, as their children are represented in the foster care population at over twice their proportions in the census populations (15.1 to 36.6 and 1.2 to 2.6). Breaking it down, this means that 2.43 percent of African American children are overrepresented compared to their total population and 2.6 percent of Native American children are overrepresented compared to their total population. Nationally, Hispanics and Asian Pacific Islanders (like Whites) are underrepresented. However, there are local and state-level studies showing that there are subsets of these population groups that are overrepresented — for example, Hispanics in urban settings.

Not only do African American children represent the largest number of children of color in the child welfare system, but they also have the greatest rate of disproportionality when compared to their total population. According to a new report by the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) and the national, nonpartisan Kids Are Waiting campaign, a project of The Pew Charitable Trusts, American Indian and Alaskan Native children are overrepresented in the nation's foster care system at more than 1.6 times the expected level. Both this report and the AFCARS data identify that American Indian and Alaskan Native children are highly overrepresented. While the numbers of American Indian and Alaskan Native children may be small in terms of numbers, their group has the highest rate of disproportionality.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

(Trainer Note: The disproportionality rates are arrived at by dividing each group's total population in the United States by the percentage of the group in foster care.)

Source: National Child Welfare Leadership Institute

1.  Display **PowerPoint 9: Breaking it Down** and review the following:

Breaking it down in terms of the number of states in which children of color are overrepresented reveals that African American children are overrepresented in all states; Native American children are overrepresented in 24 states; and Latinos are overrepresented in 10 states.

2.  Display **PowerPoint 10: Causation Theories**, refer participants to **Handout 4: Disproportionality Causation Theories** and review the following material:

Multiple studies have been conducted to determine why disproportionality exists, and several theories addressing the root cause have been put forth. The primary factors that have been identified as contributing to disproportionality include: 1) Individual and family-level risk factors; 2) Poverty and community risk factors; 3) Community-level support resources; and 4) Organizational and systemic factors.

Individual and family-related behaviors. Overrepresentation is related to minorities' disproportionate needs. For example, risk factors such as employment, teen parenthood, poverty, substance abuse, incarceration, domestic violence and mental illness — which correspond to higher levels of maltreatment — are more likely found in families of color, thus creating a disproportionate need (Hill, 2006; Waheed, 2009).

Poverty and community risk factors. Overrepresentation is less associated with race, ethnicity and class, and more closely tied to residing in neighborhoods or communities that have many risk factors, including high levels of poverty, welfare assistance, unemployment, homelessness, single-parent families, and crime and street violence. All of these phenomena increase surveillance from various public authorities (Hill, 2006; Waheed, 2009).

Community-level support resources. Overrepresentation results from fewer and lower-quality services and less access to mental health and drug and alcohol treatment services.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

Organizational and systemic factors. Overrepresentation results from decision-making processes of child protection agencies, the cultural insensitivity and biases of workers, governmental policies, institutional or structural racism and difficulties in finding permanent homes for children (Hill, 2006; Waheed, 2009).

Though each of these risk factors may contribute in some distinct way to disproportionality, any theory that indicates that race is not a key contributing issue in each of these factors would be inaccurate. According to Khatib Waheed, senior fellow with the Center for the Study of Social Policy, when race is not included in the overall analysis of the factors cited to contributing to disproportionality and disparities, then the proportion of emphasis placed upon the factors impacting disparities are more independent of each other — as demonstrated on the slide (Waheed, 2009).

Source: National Child Welfare Leadership Institute (2008).

3.  Display **PowerPoint 11: Race and Disproportionality (slide 1)**.
4.  Display **PowerPoint 12: Race and Disproportionality (slide 2)** and review the following material:

However, when race is placed back into the analysis, then the proportion of emphasis placed upon the factors impacting disparities shows an increased relationship between these factors and race, as shown in the diagram on the slide.

5.  Display **PowerPoint 13: Native Americans and Child Welfare** and review the following material:

Much of the research relating to disproportionality and disparities has focused on African American families. However, as previously noted, Native American children are also disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. Native Americans have suffered a long history of federal and state policies that resulted in forced removal and termination of parental rights, resulting in devastation to tribal families. According to an article written by Nina William-Mbengue and Steve Christian entitled *The Color of Care*, between the 1969 and 1974, a number of national studies have shown that between 25 percent and 35 percent of Native American children were residing in non-Native foster homes or institutions. These findings and others were the impetus for the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978, which granted Native American tribal courts jurisdiction over children on Native American reservations. The goal was to promote stability,

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

security, and tribal connections and culture. Since ICWA's enactment, many states have struggled with compliance. The article, citing John McCoy, a Native American, and Eric Pettigrew, a Washington state representative in the legislature, indicates that many of the challenges with compliance could be addressed if professional staff were more culturally sensitive to the needs of Native American families. Some states, such as Colorado, have taken steps to improve compliance by passing laws to strengthen compliance with ICWA, test the delivery of services provided by the tribe and prioritize placement options for Native American children. In addition to these efforts, Colorado is working to increase understanding of the needs of Native American families and other diverse or marginalized communities (Williams-Mbengue & Christian, 2007).

6. *Explain to participants that although this training is not specifically about disproportionality and disparities in child welfare, and that a number of cultural groups will be explored during this training, special attention has been placed on certain racial and ethnic groups because of the lack of knowledge and understanding of marginalized groups' cultural values, behaviors and needs, which contributes to disproportionality and disparity via organizational and systemic factors. Explain to participants that it is for this reason that cultural competence and responsive practice are significant issues for child welfare stakeholders.*

20-Min. Break

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

THE CULTURE CONTINUUM

TIME: 20 min.

Description of Activity: This activity will increase participants’ understanding of cultural competence and the various stages individuals and organizations move through to reach a level of proficiency.

1.  Display **PowerPoint 14: Cultural Competence** and open this section of the training using the following as a guide:


Becoming culturally competent does not end with the simple acquisition of knowledge of another’s culture. Society is a compilation of many different individuals and cultures, making it virtually impossible to fully understand and integrate — and thus requiring us to go beyond just obtaining basic knowledge through training and reading. Taking the next step requires the evaluation of self and the organization you work in to identify the level of cultural competence you and your organization have and the application of that knowledge. The key word here is “application.” Cultural competence is defined by the National Center for Cultural Competence as:


Having a defined set of values and principles; demonstrated behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that promote effective work cross-culturally. It requires that organizations have the capacity to value diversity, conduct a self assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire institutional cultural knowledge and adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of the community served, all of which must be infused in policy-making, administration, practice and service delivery (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989).

The complexities of cultural competence are such that it does not allow for an easy solution. Cultural competence is a development process in which individuals and organizations must seek continued growth. The cultural competence continuum, initially developed by Terry Cross et al. (1989), was developed to help organizations determine

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

their current stage of development and what steps to take in working toward a more culturally competent system.

2.  Display ***PowerPoint 15: Cultural Competence Continuum*** and post the prepared flip chart of the continuum. Review the core concepts of the continuum and tell participants that each of these concepts will be reviewed in more detail. Use the prepared flip chart to point out where each stage exists on the continuum.

3.  Display ***PowerPoint 16: Cultural Competence Continuum (slide 1)***, refer participants to ***Handout 5: Cultural Competence Continuum*** and review the following concepts:
 - **Cultural destructiveness** relates to the attitudes, policies, structures and practices within a system or organization that are destructive to a cultural group. It represents the most negative development status on the cultural competency continuum. A few historical examples of cultural destructiveness include the cultural genocide of Native Americans or the prohibition of cultural practices of Africans as they were enslaved in the United States. A system that adheres to cultural destructiveness assumes that one race is superior, giving way to power differentials, disenfranchisement, control and exploitation. A few system examples include:
 - Refusing to select and recruit bilingual staff
 - Refusing to be sensitive to different cultures
 - Not recognizing the importance of family participation
 - Promoting an environment that perpetuates stereotypes

 - **Cultural incapacity** refers to the lack of capacity of systems and organizations to respond effectively to the needs, interests and preferences of culturally and linguistically diverse groups. At this stage, systems do not intentionally seek to destroy a culture, but remain extremely biased in practice and believe their race or culture is superior to others. Agencies at this stage may disproportionately apply resources to the dominant culture. These systems may also act indirectly as agents of policies that are racist in nature or promote stereotypes with people of color. A few current system examples include:
 - Rejection of multiple perspectives; only one right way
 - Puts down the values of a culturally different family

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

- Uses primarily Anglo methods of treatment and is too rigid to accept other methods
- Downplays need to create a culturally sensitive environment

4.  Display **PowerPoint 16: Cultural Competence Continuum (slide 2)** and review the following concepts:

- **Cultural blindness** refers to a philosophy of viewing and treating all people as the same. This is the midpoint on the developmental continuum. Systems that are at this stage provide services that are unbiased in nature; however, they function from the perspective that color or culture makes little difference to the services offered because all people are the same. Examples of this practice include:
 - Disregards diverse cultural practices when scheduling appointments/visitation
 - Ignores the cultural strengths of the family unit
 - Promotes policies and practices that encourage assimilation
 - System practice of blaming families for their circumstances
- **Cultural pre-competence** refers to a level of awareness within systems of their strengths and areas for growth to respond effectively to culturally diverse populations. Agencies at this stage are at the positive end of the scale and are continuing to move forward in a positive direction by improving services provided to people of color. These agencies desire to deliver quality services, are committed to civil rights and are consistently asking, “What can we do?” Examples of agencies’ practices at this stage include:
 - Recognizes that staff have cultural limitations and need training
 - Expressly valuing high-quality services that support culturally diverse populations
 - Hiring practices that support a diverse workforce
 - Recognizes lack of connections with culturally diverse communities

5.  Display **PowerPoint 17: Cultural Competence Continuum (slide 3)** and review the following concepts:

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

- **Cultural competence** refers to a commitment to incorporating new knowledge and experiences into a wider range of practice by actively seeking advice and consultation. Agencies at this stage are beyond being “blind” to culture and past the stage of “tolerance.” This stage is characterized by acceptance and respect for differences. Self assessments are conducted on an ongoing basis to adapt and change models of behavior to eliminate structures or policies that do not effectively meet the needs of minority populations. Some examples of agency practices include:
 - Provides regular staff training on cultural competence
 - Implements culturally competent plans and continually evaluates effectiveness
 - Develops structures and strategies that ensure participation of diverse clients and communities
 - Provides fiscal support, professional development and incentives for improving cultural competence at all levels of the organization

- **Cultural proficiency** refers to holding cultural differences in the highest esteem and being supportive of activities that promote improved cultural relations among diverse groups. This represents the most positive end of the continuum. Agencies at this stage are advocates for cultural competence within systems and throughout society. These agencies conduct research, conduct demonstration projects and publish and disseminate the results of these activities. A few additional examples of agency practices include:
 - Provides services that meet the language needs of the population served
 - Provides modeling and training to other organizations
 - Advocates with and on behalf of populations traditionally unserved and underserved
 - Values families and cultures and commits to educating families on issues critical to safety

(Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989)

6. *Explain to participants that the final step in broadening their capacity to engage diverse families is to understand the concept of cultural humility.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

The concept of cultural humility originated in the health care industry out of a call for innovative approaches to multicultural training for health professionals. Traditionally, cultural competence training was often viewed as a limited body of information that could ultimately be mastered by professionals and put into practice. However, as noted in the previous section, there isn't an endpoint to cultural competence. Cultural competence is an ongoing process that needs to be purposefully attended to. Cultural humility refers to a lifelong process of self reflection and self critique that positions the provider to develop a respectful partnership with the client. This is done through a flexible and humble assessment of what is known and what is not known about a client's experiences and culture; the ability to acknowledge one's own ignorance; seeking to negate stereotypical perceptions; and actively seeking new information to facilitate a positive attitude and respectful interchange between practitioners and clients. Cultural humility requires a commitment to communication and conversation in an effort to learn from those being served. To further illustrate this, let's look at an example of what cultural competence and cultural humility is and is not (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

Example: Nancy, a Caucasian child welfare practitioner, recently attended a cultural competency training where she learned that African Americans are not likely to attend and follow through with mental health services. Based on this, the practitioner has not referred the mother for mental health services, even though she appears to be exhibiting clinical signs of depression. The practitioner believes it would be best to respect the position of the mother and not waste resources that could be used by someone else.

In this example, Nancy demonstrated that she had cultural knowledge about African Americans and their feelings toward accessing mental health services. This could be considered reacting in a culturally competent manner. However, cultural humility would require that Nancy communicate with the mother to develop an understanding of her needs and how she might be able or willing to go about getting her needs met in a manner that is comfortable for her.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF
CULTURE IN CHILD WELFARE – SESSION 2**

ASSESSING YOUR PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT

TIME: 25 min.

Description of Activity: This activity will give participants an opportunity to determine their position on the continuum and identify what needs to change to move forward on the continuum.

1. *Tell participants that by using the information on the continuum they will assess their current practice environment.*
 - 1) *Ask participants to take out **Handout 6: Assessing Your Practice Environment**.*
 - 2) *Divide participants into groups based on their practice environment. If there are too few or too many participants in one group, try to keep the divided groups as closely linked to work tasks as possible (e.g., judges and attorneys, social workers, service providers).*
 - 3) *Review the directions on the handout with participants.*
 - *Based on the concepts in the continuum, discuss in your group where you believe your practice environment is positioned on the continuum.*
 - *Identify the reasons you selected this position on the continuum.*
 - *Determine what needs to change to move forward on the continuum.*
 - 2) *Debrief in large group. Ask participants to share what they learned.*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CULTURALLY
COMPETENT PRACTICE – SESSION 3**

CULTURAL AWARENESS HIERARCHY

Time: 50 min.

Description of activity: The purpose of this section is to promote self-discovery and awareness related to one's own values, world view and biases associated with one's own cultural development.

1. *Introduce this section using the following:*

Understanding how to build cultural awareness in the human service profession was based on the work of Peter Muniz and Robert Chasnoff. Muniz and Chasnoff wrote an article titled *The Cultural Awareness Hierarchy: A Model for Promoting Understanding* (1983), which identified six levels of awareness individuals must go through to ultimately reach an increased cultural understanding of self and others. *Explain that this model will be used to discuss how participants can build knowledge and awareness to facilitate communication and understanding of culturally diverse families.*

2. *Explain to participants that they will now participate in an activity as a precursor to identifying the six levels of cultural awareness. The purpose of this activity is to encourage critical thinking about how we view differences. Provide the following directions to the participants:*

- 1) Ask participants to take out **Handout 7: What Do You Think?**
- 2) There are nine statements on the handout. Read each statement quickly and decide whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree (*allow 5 min.*). Individually respond to the reflection questions at the end of the exercise.
- 3) *After five minutes, divide participants into groups.*
- 4) In your groups, discuss the following (*trainer should ensure that participants understand that they need only share what they feel comfortable sharing, but to try to have a courageous conversation about race and culture that will inspire growth for themselves and others in their group*):

- Were there some statements that were difficult to answer? If so, why?

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CULTURALLY
COMPETENT PRACTICE – SESSION 3**

- What does this activity tell you about your current position on the cultural competency continuum? Does this make you comfortable or uncomfortable?
- What ideas do you have about addressing the challenges presented by diversity in culture in the child welfare profession?

5) Debrief the activity by soliciting the audience for personal reflections, thoughts and comments from group discussion using the same talking points noted previously.

3. *State the following to participants:*

Although the journey in confronting conscious or subconscious biases may be difficult, it will invite an opportunity for discovery of what challenges you in working with culturally different families. This discovery should lead you to ask yourself what shifts you are going to make so that your imprint on each family's life will be one that is positive, helpful and respectful of their culture.

4.  Display ***PowerPoint 18: Cultural Awareness Hierarchy***, refer participants to ***Handout 8: Cultural Awareness Hierarchy*** and discuss the six levels of the cultural hierarchy.

Let's now examine the Cultural Awareness Hierarchy a bit closer. As we move through the components of the hierarchy, reflect on the “**What Do You Think?**” activity that was just completed.

Level 1-The Self. The first step toward cultural awareness is to understand oneself. How your experiences, values and beliefs influence your interactions with others is important because this knowledge helps prepare you for interactions with families that are culturally different. Understanding your cultural identity will help you relate to others, and others relate to you.

Level 2-Prevention Skills. The focus of this level is on the need to differentiate cultural knowledge or competence from behavior that is culturally aware and responsive to the needs of the individual or family. Professionals may have the skill necessary to recite a vast amount of knowledge about a group as a representation of “cultural understanding”;

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CULTURALLY
COMPETENT PRACTICE – SESSION 3**

however, skills are also needed to build a relationship and demonstrate a desire to prevent hurt feelings or disrespect.

Level 3-Factors Beyond Culture That May Influence Behavior. There are times when problems arise between diverse groups and culture is not the root cause. At these times there is a tendency to blame problems that exist on a lack of cultural understanding to avoid the issue or to avoid the discussion. This allows parties to go to their respective corners and bury the issue beneath the cloak of “lack of cultural awareness” and encourage parties to attend training. Sometimes what really may be going on relates to issues such as hunger, homelessness, health, and safety — each of which may be inhibiting positive engagement with someone from another culture.

For example, you may have determined that a Native American mom has not called you back because she doesn’t trust the system, when it is really because she is embarrassed and ashamed because she doesn’t have a home, a job or her children with her.

Level 4-One's Own Culture. The United States shares a complicated history with several cultural groups. This history is fraught with emotions, including shame and anger. A lack of personal awareness of how this history affects your attitudes, thoughts, behaviors, motivations and interactions with others impacts your ability to learn about families with different cultural backgrounds. Exploring your own cultural heritage will allow long-buried thoughts or emotions to surface and be dealt with so that you can be more open to the perspectives of others.

Level 5-Factors Specific to One's Own Community (or Country). After getting in touch with your own culture, the next step is to examine the community heritage. Understanding how communities have developed and adopted certain values and beliefs will help expand the lens through which you view groups of individuals. Most everyone belongs to a community of some sort, whether it be religious, geographical or political in nature. The shared history, both positive and negative, and how members have been affected or been resilient, provides valuable information that increases knowledge and awareness about that group. Though not all members of a community are homogeneous, the influence members of a community have on individuals informs how they have developed the values and beliefs they now hold.

Level 6-The Other Culture. Conducting an examination of self to get to a greater awareness of how the self interacts with other diverse groups helps us move forward in developing a new culture that requires stepping outside of the biases carried forward by our perceptions of others. This can only be accomplished through critical and discerning

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CULTURALLY
COMPETENT PRACTICE – SESSION 3**

thinking. Our perceptions are our reality; however, to create this new culture of thinking and behaving, we must be open to challenging our thinking, learning new ways of communicating and behaving, and seeing things from the perspective of others. To do this means to accept that there will be awkwardness and discomfort, but we must endure

these uncomfortable feelings in order to get to the other side of a new way of living that is compatible with what we want the future to look like.

Sources: Muniz & Chasnoff, 1983; Substance Abuse Services and Health Administration, 1994b

5. *Ask participants to reflect for a moment on the information presented and to make a note on their handout, “What Do You Think?”, of the areas of growth they believe they need to work on based on the levels in the Cultural Awareness Hierarchy.*

1 Hour, 20 Min.: Lunch Break


RECORDING A NEW TAPE

Time: 55 min.

Description of activity: The purpose of this activity is to promote sensitivity to issues relevant to some cultural groups. This activity will generate dialogue between participants and help them acknowledge the often-difficult topics related to race, ethnicity, gender and other cultural groups. Participants will be able to use learning from this activity to engage in discussions about culture in the practice environment.

1. *Open this section by stating the following:*

Managing the dynamics of difference to achieve Level 6 on the continuum can be a challenge. There are a multitude of people with diverse histories, beliefs, values and world views. You may say to yourself there is absolutely no way one can manage all the diversity that exists in society today. There are too many missteps you could take just in having the discussion, so maybe you'd rather take a safe approach and not address them, than take an approach that could potentially offend someone or get you in trouble.

2. *Ask for a show of hands to see how many people believe this to be a true depiction of how they feel. Normalize these feelings for participants and acknowledge that many people feel the same way, which has a tendency to prevent communication that could help bridge the gaps that divide us.*
3. *Explain that as a way of helping participants overcome this fear, they will have the opportunity to practice getting out of their comfort zone in a safe, protected environment. This activity will set the stage for genuine dialogue that supports actively engaging in the discourse of diversity. Explain to participants that this is a protected space where learning can only be achieved through taking a risk, and that shame and blame do not exist in this room.*
4.  *Display **PowerPoint 19: Recording a New Tape** and introduce and explain the following activity, Recording a New Tape:*

Post flipchart with the names of population groups noted below. Ask participants to sign up for a group to which they belong. There can be no more than four people to a group.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

Once groups are determined, ask participants to go to the location assigned to the group (either within the room or in a breakout room). Participants can select only one group.

Examples of groups:

- Women
- Men
- African Americans
- Caucasians or European Americans
- Native Americans
- Latino Americans
- Individuals younger than 30
- Individuals older than 30
- Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual
- Reside in a rural community
- Grew up in poverty
- Grew up upper class
- Other:
- Other:

- 1) *Participants will meet in their small groups, each of which represents a population to which all members of the group belong (five min.).*
- 2) *Select someone as a “recorder” to report for your group and take 10 minutes to make the following three lists on a piece of flip chart paper:*
 - Comments about their group that they never want said again
 - Things they never want done to their group again
 - Ways they want their group to be viewed and treated
- 3) *If the people who signed-up for a group have fewer than three participants, ask if they are willing to join other groups; if they are, ask them to do so and eliminate the groups of three or fewer from the list. Send each group to a different location.*
- 4) *Encourage the participants to brainstorm items, so that they develop as many items as possible for the three lists.*
- 5) *After 10 minutes, reconvene and redistribute groups according to their professional culture (e.g., judiciary, social work, service provider). (Trainer*

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

Note: The distribution of these groups was conducted during the morning break with the index cards.)

- 6) *Assign a new recorder and reporter and for 10 minutes create a list on a piece of flip chart paper of the following:*
 - Cultural features or attributes of your profession
 - Ways in which your professional culture influences (positively and negatively) decisions made in your profession.
 - Ways in which your group wants to be viewed by other key stakeholders
- 7) *Reconvene to the large group to process the activity (25 min.).*
- 8) *Ask the reporters from the first small workgroups to read their lists. As the lists are read, reporters should build on information that has not already been identified in a previous group. For example, if Group 1 states “respected,” then this should not be reported during additional reports; only new information should be added.*
- 9) *After all of the groups have shared their lists, lead a discussion about what people were feeling while the lists were being read and what they learned from the lists.*
- 10) *Ask the reporters for the second small workgroups to read their lists following step 9.*
- 11) *Debrief by discussing the feelings and learnings from this activity.*
- 12) *As time allows, hold a general discussion of perceptions and characteristics of those groups that were not covered (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning (GLBTQ); socioeconomic status; rural community members).*

CULTURAL STUMBLING BLOCKS

Time: 15 min.

Description of activity: The purpose of this activity is to provide some understanding of the differences in rules, norms, values, beliefs and behaviors of particular cultural groups, including but not limited to, those defined by race/ethnicity, GLBTQ, rural versus urban, gender, immigration and socioeconomic status. Participants will utilize the information gained and begin to demonstrate, through interactive small group practice exercises, how they might transfer the knowledge gained in their interactions with and decisions made about culturally different families.

1. Display ***PowerPoint 20: Cultural Stumbling Blocks*** and refer participants to ***Handout 9: Cultural Stumbling Blocks***. Use the preceding activity as a lead-in to the next activity of reviewing specific culture-related communication stumbling blocks. The trainer will lead an interactive discussion of the concerns identified in the *Recording a New Tape* activity and any that were not identified as the following information is reviewed.

Most stumbling blocks occur in a few key subject areas. These include:

- 1) Language. People may use different languages or different dialects of the same language. Certain words, phrases or concepts may be difficult or impossible to translate.
- 2) Class-related values. Differences based on socioeconomic class may create differences in values and customs. Privileges may be taken for granted by people in higher socioeconomic groups.
- 3) Culture-related values. Different meanings and values are attached to behavior, objects, events and situations by different cultures.
- 4) Nonverbal communications. Gestures, physical distance, facial expressions and eye contact may have different or even opposite meanings among different cultures.
- 5) Stereotyping. The assignment of characteristics or beliefs about another culture based on prejudice or limited exposure.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

- 6) Racism. The belief that one race is superior in some way to others and members of that race are able to exercise power over other races to which they feel superior.
- 7) Ethnocentricity. The belief that one's ethnicity provides the true or correct view of the world and that any other interpretation is false.

(Substance Abuse Services and Health Administration, 1994a)

5. *Inform participants that **Handout 10: Culture and Communication** provides some information on common stumbling blocks that may be encountered in intercultural interactions. Be sure to review only those stumbling blocks that have not be reviewed in the previous exercise.*
6. *Lead participants into the next activity by informing them that the information from the previous sections will be used to set the stage for managing the dynamics of difference. Review the following with participants:*

“Managing the dynamics of difference” is a phrase used to suggest strategies or methods to address the conflicts that arise between cultural groups. These conflicts stem from the actual or perceived attributes that are assigned to people from different cultures. In our daily lives we may be open to having adamant debates about who is better, the Broncos or the Chiefs; Coke or Pepsi. These are relatively innocuous issues that we usually do not personalize. However, when the discussion of culture is debated, people are generally averse to honestly communicating their thoughts, concerns, values and beliefs for fear of offending or alienating themselves or others. Our practice has been to fall back on politically correct behavior that is insincere and does not reflect a desire to understand or know each other. These fears stop communication in its tracks, when, ironically, communication is the driving force for managing the dynamics of difference. Professionals must promote inquiry and dialogue to gather multiple perspectives and increase their capacity to work with others in an open, transparent manner. Managing the dynamics of difference means:


- Actively and genuinely fostering discussions about race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomics and faith as related to the needs of the family.
- Ensuring that decision-making processes are transparent and subject to change based on the family’s needs (Lindsey, Lindsey, Jungwirth, & Pahl, 2009).

20-Min. Break

MANAGING DIFFERENCES PRACTICE STRATEGIES

Time: 15 min.

Description of activity: The purpose of this activity is to introduce practice strategies which can be used in cross cultural interactions to help manage the dynamics of difference.

7.  Display [PowerPoint 21: Managing Differences: Practice Strategies](#), refer participants to [Handout 11: Managing Differences: Practice Strategies](#) and discuss the following strategies for managing difference:

- **The service professional would benefit from understanding the values, attitudes, traditions and beliefs of the cultural groups being served.**

Such an understanding can prevent the service professional from inadvertently insulting or criticizing a family member, or misinterpreting the meaning of family members' communications and behaviors. However, the service professional must remember that all generalizations about a cultural group must be “checked out” to determine their applicability to any individual family, or else there is the risk of stereotyping.

- **The service professional would benefit from becoming familiar with the rules of social behavior for a particular group and abiding by them.**

It is important to tread gently until the culture is better understood. The service professional should ask how each of the family members would like to be addressed, and what they would feel most comfortable calling the service professional. The service professional may request their guidance to help in understanding them and to avoid offending them.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

- **The service professional would benefit from openly acknowledging cultural differences during the early stages of the relationship, and acknowledging that there may be misunderstandings as a result.**

The service professional might suggest that many people find it harder to trust someone who is very different from them, and should encourage the family to point out when they identify differences, so they can better understand each other and avoid misunderstandings. If lack of cultural knowledge leads to a blunder, the service professional should apologize and assure the family that no insult was intended. The service professional should, similarly, not automatically assume that what is perceived as an insult or an affront was so intended by the family.

- **The service professional would benefit from knowledge of the cultural norms of the family's primary reference group regarding the involvement of outside persons or agencies in family problems.**

These norms will affect the family's view of the service professional and the agency. What appears to be resistance may instead reflect feelings of shame or embarrassment because family problems have become public, or a pervasive distrust of institutional authority. Such feelings are typical when a family values privacy, self-sufficiency and independence. In some cultures, it is permissible to discuss problems within one's own family and community, but never with representatives of formal institutions. A service professional who understands these issues can respond accordingly, and can establish a relationship that is comfortable for the family before addressing more sensitive issues. The service professional might also utilize community leaders or extended family members to gain access to otherwise isolated or reluctant families. The service professional's association with a person who is trusted by the family can speed up the establishment of a positive relationship. However, service professionals should not expect to be automatically accepted or trusted by members of the community. These relationships will also have to be developed and nurtured.

- **The service professional would benefit from communicating interest in the family and in understanding things from their perspective.**

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

A willingness to listen to and learn from the family can help the service professional identify areas of commonality, and also communicates respect for the family's strengths and uniqueness. During the early stages of the relationship, service professionals should do a lot of listening. Ask gentle, clarifying questions to help family members explain themselves and their views, and describe their lives. For example: "It may be harder for me to understand what you mean, since I grew up very differently, but tell me about it. I'd like to understand better."

- **The service professional would benefit from using interviewing techniques that can clarify the subtleties of the family's communications.**

The service professional should never assume what the family means, nor assume that the family understands the service professional's intentions. The service professional should clearly explain the meaning of his or her own responses and behaviors, and ask for feedback from family members to assure their understanding.

- **The service professional would benefit from not underestimating the barriers posed by language differences between service professionals and families.**

While basic communication is often possible, it requires considerable proficiency in a language to accurately express the subtleties and nuances associated with feelings, values, and beliefs. And, while it is possible for a service professional to better understand a family's culture simply by asking the proper questions and listening carefully, if family members must explain or represent themselves in a language they neither speak nor understand well, the risk of miscommunication and misinterpretation is high. Families should normally be assigned service professionals who speak their language, and trained interpreters should be used when service professionals are not fluent in the family's language (Rycus & Hughes, 1998; Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 2001).

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

HYPOTHETICAL CASE SCENARIO ACTIVITY

Time: 50 Min.

Description of activity: The purpose of this section is to give participants an opportunity to practice the concepts and strategies discussed in training today and receive feedback to help promote culturally competent practice.

1. Refer participants to *Handout 12: Hypothetical Case Scenario* for the next activity, and explain what participants need to do.
2. Part 1: Set-up

Participants will be divided into five groups.

Group 1a and 1b: Family (Mother, Father, Extended Family)

Group 2: Caseworkers

Group 3: Attorney for Mother

Group 4: Guardian ad litem

Group 5: Judge

3. Assign groups an area of the room and/or use breakout rooms for groups to meet.
4. Part 2: Preparation

Each group will be assigned a task.

Group 1a and 1b: The family will review the case scenario and additional information provided to them for this activity. (Note to trainer: The family will receive a Culture Key representing the cultural attributes of the family they represent in this case scenario. The other participants will not be privy to this information unless it is shared by the family.) Participants will maintain their roles during this activity. Participants should be respectful and considerate in how they portray the family — as if this family were in the room. Family members get to determine which additional family members (e.g., grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, priest, pastor, church member) they would like to invite to the meeting.

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
MANAGING THE DYNAMICS
OF DIFFERENCE– SESSION 4**

Stakeholder groups: Stakeholder groups will review the case scenario and information on the roles they are to assume. Participants are to maintain these roles throughout the exercise. Participants will meet and develop language that is culturally competent and responsive to the family based on the information they have. Additional information may be requested of the family during the meeting with the family if they consent to share.

This is the initial meeting with the family following the referral. Group members are attempting to engage the family while communicating concerns of the case and remaining sensitive and responsive to the needs of the family's culture.

(Allow 15 minutes for Part 2 of this exercise.)

5. Part 3: The Meeting

Family Member Group 1a and 1b: Family members will meet with each group to discuss the concerns of the case while remaining culturally sensitive and responsive to their needs. During the meeting, family members will evaluate how well other group members were able to do this (using information contained on the Culture Key). Group 1a will meet with Groups 2 and 3, and Group 1b will meet with Groups 4 and 5. Family members will not share their evaluation of the other groups until the large group debrief.

(Each meeting should last 10 minutes; allow 20 minutes total for Part 3.)

6. Part 4: Debrief

- *Trainer will facilitate the debrief discussion using the following:*
 - o Family members, what was done well in your meeting with the professionals on your case from a cultural vantage point? What concerns did you have that would suggest a need for improvement? What would those suggestions be?
 - o Stakeholder groups: What were some areas of strength in your communication with the family? What were some particular challenges or concerns that arose during your meeting with the family? Was there anything that you would like to have done differently?
 - o *Ask all participants for any general thoughts or comments about this exercise and how it might help them in practice.*

(Allow 15 minutes to debrief.)

**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
CLOSING AND EVALUATION – SESSION 5**

CLOSING AND EVALUATION

TIME: 15 min.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: To allow participants an opportunity to reflect on the learning from the day and identify one specific next step they will take from the training room to actual practice. Participants will also have an opportunity to ask final questions and complete the training evaluation forms.

1. Display ***PowerPoint 22: The Right Thing to Do*** and ask participants to take out ***Handout 13: My Next Step***. They should note at least one thing they will take from the training and implement into their practice and determine when they will accomplish this.
2. Remind participants that there is a Resource Bibliography included in their training materials that provides information on resources that can be accessed to further their development on issues related to cultural competence.
3. Ask participants to complete a training evaluation before they leave and thank them for their participation, time and attention through the day.



**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
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**COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM:
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