HANDOUT 1
COMMUNITY AND CULTURE AGENDA

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.  Registration and light breakfast
8:30 a.m. – 9:25 a.m.  Welcome and Introductions
  Opening Activity:
  “A Little Friendly Competition”
9:25 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.  Exploring the Dynamics of Culture in the Child Welfare System
10:25 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.  Break and Networking
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  Exploring the Dynamics of Culture in the Child Welfare System (cont.)
11:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.  Building Blocks of Culturally Competent Practice
12:20 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.  Lunch and Networking Break
1:40 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.  Managing the Dynamics of Difference
2:45 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.  Break and Networking
3:05 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.  Managing the Dynamics of Difference — Practice Strategies
4:10 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.  Questions, Wrap-Up and Evaluation
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.

Competency 2

Aware of personal perceptions and behaviors that influence interactions with and assessments 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 the need to be attentive to 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/questioning community; members of an urban or rural community; members of certain racial or ethnic communities; and those with undocumented immigration status.

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.
# CIRCLE OF CULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Behaviors associated with being female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factors that hinder cultural growth</td>
<td>Cultural factors that support growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attributes of culture</td>
<td>Survival skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major problems and concerns</td>
<td>Sources of stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors associated with being male</td>
<td>Negative attributes of culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 tie to higher levels of maltreatment — are more likely found in families of color, thus creating a disproportionate need.

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.

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

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

CULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM ASSESSMENT

CULTURAL DESTRUCTIVENESS

Check the box only if the statement is true of your practice environment or self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PE/Self</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□□</td>
<td>Disregards need to address cultural awareness, behaviors and skills of staff in work with families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□□</td>
<td>Refuses to acknowledge the importance of family culture in engagement and case plan development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□□</td>
<td>Lacks sensitivity to families from diverse cultural backgrounds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□□</td>
<td>Creates policies and supports practices that uniformly negatively impact marginalized groups and/or culturally diverse families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□□</td>
<td>Perpetuates stereotypes as evidenced by language, visual aspects of environment (e.g., pictures, art work) and practice patterns.</td>
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CULTURAL INCAPACITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□□ Biased belief that the dominant culture is superior to other cultural groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□□ Better-quality resources are applied disproportionately to members of the dominant culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□□ Exhibits a pattern of putting down the values belonging to culturally diverse families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□□ Use of treatment methods that are primarily researched by and used with the dominant culture.</td>
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</table>

Downplays need to create a culturally sensitive environment.

## CULTURAL BLINDNESS

- **Cross-cultural relations** does not consider cultural and religious practices of culturally diverse families in terms of scheduling meetings or visitation.
- **Ignores strengths** ignores the strengths of families that are evidenced in their cultural practices.
- **Promotes assimilation** promotes policies and practices that encourage assimilation.
- **Blames families** pattern of blaming families for their current circumstances and gives voice to the idea that “everyone” can do it with enough effort.
- **Melting pot** supports the idea that everyone exists in a “melting pot.”

## CULTURAL PRE-COMPETENCE

- **Visual representation** emerging visual representation of diverse groups in the organization.
- **Engages and values** actively engages and values involvement of members from culturally diverse communities.
- **Cultural awareness** recognizes the need for cultural awareness training for staff that addresses practice strategies to improve staff’s ability to engage culturally diverse families, rather than just building knowledge about diversity.
- **High-quality services** values high-quality services for culturally diverse families.
- **Shift in practice** actively seeks a shift in practice that supports developing partnerships with diverse family groups.
### CULTURAL COMPETENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Implements specific policies and procedures that integrate cultural and linguistic competence into each core function of the organization.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides regular staff training on cultural competence.</td>
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<td>Develops system structures and practice strategies that ensure participation of diverse clients and communities.</td>
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<td>Provides fiscal support, professional development and incentives for improving cultural competence at all levels of the organization.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Screens for and is responsive to materials or practices that are culturally insensitive.</td>
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### CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advocates with and on behalf of populations traditionally underserved and underserved.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides modeling and training to other organizations on cultural awareness practices.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Values families and diverse cultures and commits to educating families on issues critical to safety that are respectful of their cultural practices.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conducts research and engages in demonstration projects to support advancement of culturally competent practice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provides services that meet the language needs of the population served.</td>
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</table>
1. Based on your above responses, indicate where your practice environment would land on the continuum. Indicate placement with a PE for practice environment. Do the same for yourself by placing your initials on the continuum.

2. Identify the reasons why you selected this position on the continuum for your practice environment and for yourself.

3. What needs to change in your practice environment to move forward on the continuum? What do you believe you need to change within yourself?
Indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) or strongly disagree (SD) for each of the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hostile relations between racial and ethnic groups cancel any benefits that may be gained through cultural awareness training.</td>
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<td>2. Many people cannot understand other cultures because they don’t know or understand their own culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Social oppression occurs and is maintained at individual, institutional and societal/structural levels.</td>
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<td>4. Caucasians are consciously and unconsciously taught not to recognize their privileged status in society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The only acceptable home environment for a child is one with a mother and a father, not two fathers or two mothers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Discussions around differences tend to divide us more than unite us so we should just agree to coexist and not constantly hold discussions about race relations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Abuse is abuse. Neglect is neglect. It doesn’t really matter what culture you are from; when a child is unsafe, culture moves to the bottom of the list of issues to address.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. English is this country’s primary language so families that do not speak English must learn to assimilate. Otherwise they are doing themselves and their children a disservice.</td>
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</table>
9. Many of the current struggles that culturally diverse groups such as African Americans, American Indians, Latino Americans, gay and lesbians, etc. face are self-inflicted and could be overcome with hard work.

10. People that reside in rural communities are less likely to believe that issues related to culture and diversity are important.

11. Part of the challenge with addressing culture in child welfare is that the key professional stakeholders do not represent the race or ethnicity of the community served.

12. An orientation to being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning is more of a fad than reality for many youth today.

13. There is a significant disconnect between the culture of the courts and the culture of the child welfare agency. Each operates from a different lens which challenges collaboration.

14. Most individuals in the dominant culture that work in child welfare are culturally aware and bring this awareness to their work with culturally different children and families.

15. There is a tendency for most Americans no matter the race to view African Americans from a deficit base. Even though I try not to, this tends to be the case for myself.
Reflection Questions:

1. How much did your world view, values, beliefs and biases influence your responses?

2. Was there a tendency for you to respond favorably to the statement because to do otherwise would label you negatively?

3. How conscious are you of how your responses influence your decision making and service delivery for children and families? Describe your level of awareness.

4. As a result of this exercise, identify two key things that you will do or will continue to do moving forward to strengthen your ability to work with members of diverse groups in a culturally competent manner.

**Level 1-The Self.** The first step toward cultural awareness is to understand one’s self. 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 with 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”; 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 an Native American mom who has not called you back because she doesn’t trust the system, when it is really because she is embarrassed and ashamed that 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

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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 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 — one that is compatible with what we want the future to look like.
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.

6) **Racism.** The belief that one race is superior in some way to others and is able to exercise power over other races.

7) **Ethnocentricity.** The belief that one's ethnicity provides the true or correct view of the world and that any other interpretation is false.

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Below is the key to accessing information on knowledge of difference in rules, norms, values, beliefs and behaviors of all cultural groups.

**Children and families should self-identify and professionals should ensure that the family is their cultural guide.**

This is the number one rule in culture and communication – be courageous and ask questions. This fosters respect and a desire to know and learn. Independent sources can be used to provide information about cultural groups; however, it will never be known which particular cultural group a person identifies with and the values, beliefs, rules and norms each subscribes to unless the questions are asked and the family provides cultural guidance.

The following provides some possible verbal and nonverbal sources of miscommunication between various ethnic groups and white Americans. This information should be considered generally and should not be automatically ascribed to a particular group without checking it out with the individual or family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African-Americans often . . .</th>
<th>Whites often . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Consider having one’s hair touched by another person to be offensive.</td>
<td>1. Consider the touching of one’s hair by another person to be a sign of affection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prefer indirect eye contact during listening and direct eye contact during speaking as signs of attentiveness and respect.</td>
<td>2. Consider direct eye contact during listening and indirect eye contact during speaking as signs of attention and respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. May be emotionally intense, dynamic and demonstrative in public.</td>
<td>3. Expect public behavior to be modest and restrained; emotional displays are seen as irresponsible or in bad taste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Clearly distinguish between arguing and fighting; verbal abuse is not necessarily a precursor to violence.</td>
<td>4. Do not distinguish arguing from fighting — heated arguments suggest violence is imminent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Consider asking personal questions of a new acquaintance improper and intrusive.</td>
<td>5. Consider asking a new acquaintance about jobs, family, etc. as friendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Usually tolerate interruption during a conversation — competition for the floor is</td>
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</table>
granted to the most assertive person.
7. Regard conversations as private — butting in is seen as eavesdropping and is not tolerated.
8. Consider the expression “you people” pejorative and racist.

6. Usually do not tolerance interruptions during conversation; taking turns is the rule.
7. Consider adding information or insights to a conversation one is not engaged in as helpful.
8. Tolerate the use of the expression “you people.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hispanics often . . .</th>
<th>Whites often . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Consider hissing to gain attention acceptable.</td>
<td>1. Consider hissing to be an impolite gesture that indicates contempt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Touch one another during conversation.</td>
<td>2. Consider touching to be unacceptable; it may carry sexual overtones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consider avoidance of direct eye contact to be a sign of attentiveness and respect; sustained direct eye contact may be interpreted as a challenge to authority.</td>
<td>3. Consider direct eye contact a sign of attentiveness and respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Stand closer to one another in conversation than members of other cultures do.</td>
<td>4. Stand farther apart from one another in conversation than Hispanic speakers do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Precede official or business conversations with lengthy greetings, pleasantries and other talk unrelated to the point of business.</td>
<td>5. Value getting to the point quickly and directly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asians often . . .</th>
<th>Whites often . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Consider touching or hand-holding between males to be acceptable.</td>
<td>1. Consider touching or hand-holding between males to be unacceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Consider hand-holding, hugging and kissing between men and women in public to be unacceptable.</td>
<td>2. Consider hand-holding, hugging and kissing between men and women in public to be acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consider a slap on the back an insult.</td>
<td>3. Consider a slap on the back as a sign of friendliness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do not shake hands with a person of the opposite sex.</td>
<td>4. Customarily shake hands with persons of the opposite sex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AFRICAN AMERICAN

Values, Beliefs and Life Ways:

- Strong kinship bonds
- Strong work orientation
- Strong religious orientation
- Adaptable family roles
- Use informal support network — church or community
- Distrust of government and social services — feel “Big Brother doesn’t care about us”
- Most are assimilated to the Anglo-American culture
- Take care of their own
- Don’t like to admit they need help — strong sense of pride
- Lack of knowledge about available services and how the system works
- Natural remedies used frequently — laying on of hands and prayer are used to heal
- Poverty impacts education, self-esteem, quality of life and lifestyle across the lifespan
- Seniors are highly respected — aging is to be respected and represents authority and wisdom
- Tend to keep things hidden within the family system — fear being disgraced or family being disgraced

Communication Tips:

- Familiar with Anglo-American communication patterns
- Show respect at all times; history of racism and sense of powerlessness impacts interactions
- Prolonged eye contact may be perceived as staring, interpreted as confrontational/aggressive
- Use community and/or religious leaders if assistance is needed
- May have limited education — written and spoken words should be adapted to level of understanding
- Don’t use “street slang”; this may be interpreted as ridicule
- Do not address by first name unless they request that you do so — interpreted as a lack of respect
- Decision-maker is usually the eldest adult child
- Do not like to be asked questions about finances and past relationships, whether married or not
LATINO

Values, Beliefs and Life Ways:
- Group has more importance than self
- Strong family ties
- Strong church and community orientation/interdependence
- Distrust/fear of government; immigration status may impact interactions
- Male (machismo)-dominant — father/husband is head of household and women remain under authority/control of men
- Age-dominant — respect for hierarchy
- Live for the present/today, fatalistic, feel powerless to control the future
- Take care of their own
- Negative view on asking for help; can take time before an agency is trusted
- Modesty is important
- Majority are Roman Catholic; church is seen as main source for services and information
- Very proud of heritage, never forget where they came from

Communication Tips:
- Respect is basic for all communication
- Like to be approached first, do not easily initiate conversation
- Eye contact is perceived more as confrontational body language than a sign of respect
- Being ignored is a sign of disrespect and can be perceived as offensive
- Being personal, warm, trustworthy and respectful is valued
- Avoid too much gesturing
- Encourage the individual to ask questions
- Make sure your questions have been understood
- Maintain an accepting attitude
- Let them know their ideas/thoughts/etc. are valued
- Personal space viewed as being closer than Anglo-Americans view it
- Very expressive in their communication
- Determine level of fluency in English — use interpreter if necessary
- Do not like to be asked about immigration status, religion and financial sources
ARAB/MUSLIM

Values, Beliefs and Life Ways:
- Male-dominant; male is always the head of the family
- Modesty important, especially for females
- Shame to be avoided at all times
- Don’t like to admit they don’t know something
- Honor and respect for families and friends needs to be protected and defended at all costs
- Believe in predestination/fate
- Men stand when a female enters the room
- Men protect women
- Women usually do not eat or socialize in the same room as men
- Patriarchal/hierarchical society — age and wisdom honored
- Family is the key social unit — have large families
- Religion is central to all things
- Time is less rigid, slower and more relaxed than Anglo-American
- Woman does all caretaking and defers to father/husband before answering questions
- Avoid touching females if of the opposite sex, use same-sex mediator
- Do not discuss sexual matters with someone of the opposite sex

Communication Tips:
- Ask many questions to clarify that they understand
- Right hand is always used for clean activities
- A lot of hand gestures are perceived as obscene (e.g., putting thumb and pointer finger together)
- Observe distance between genders when there is no previous relationship
- Expect less eye contact from females if you are a male
- Avoid touching females if you are a male
- Always introduce yourself; do not talk to a woman until you’ve been introduced
- Do not shake a woman’s hand unless she offers her hand first or if you’re a woman yourself
- Do not ask an Arab about his wife or other female relatives
- Do not show soles of feet while sitting; this is considered rude
- Expect tardiness
- Greet in order of seniority
- Do not stare or maintain eye contact with a woman
- It is considered offensive to step or lean away

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 questioned 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 abide 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.

The service professional would benefit from openly acknowledge cultural differences during the early stages of the relationship, and acknowledge 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 knowing 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 because there is 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.**

  A willingness to listen to and to 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, their views and 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 which can clarify the subtleties of the family's communications.**

  The service professional should never assume he or she knows 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.

- **Do not underestimate 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.

Marianne’s three children were removed from her home and placed in care following a report from the school that the oldest child, Sandra, age 6, came to school tired and hungry. The teacher, who has been concerned about Sandra before due to her shy and withdrawn demeanor, decided to try to talk to her about what might be going on in her family. When the teacher attempted to talk to Sandra to get her to open up, Sandra stated, “I’m not supposed to talk about it.” Sandra did explain that she had been up all night, trying to comfort her younger siblings, Leon, age 4, and Brianna, age 13 months. That morning she had left the house while her mother and mother’s new husband, Sam (Brianna’s father), were still asleep. She stopped at a neighbor’s to ask if the neighbor had some food that her brother and sister could have for breakfast.

Upon investigation, DHS workers found the apartment in complete disarray, with chairs turned over, food spilled on the floor and empty beer cans scattered in the kitchen and living room. There was no fresh food in the refrigerator or kitchen cabinets. Sandra’s brother and sister both appeared frightened, dirty and hungry. The children were placed at that time because there were no available family members to care for them.

Marianne (age 25) and Sam (age 23) downplayed any concerns. They said there had been a party and others brought in the beer and then left without cleaning up. They adamantly denied that the children were in any danger. Marianne stated that she was planning to go shopping for food but Sam used the car most of the time, and when he did come home, the stores were closed. Marianne is a high school graduate and attended some college. She is unemployed, but Sam works at a local meat packing plant. Sandra and Leon’s father passed away three-and-a-half years ago.

Evaluation of the children showed no evidence of physical abuse. Sandra is doing well in school and Leon shows no identifiable delays, although he is neither enrolled in Head Start nor pre-K at this time. Brianna may have some developmental delays, as she doesn’t crawl and rarely even babbles.

The file indicates that two years ago Marianne successfully completed an outpatient drug treatment program. There was an allegation in the file indicating that shortly after meeting Sam, Marianne resumed using drugs. Both Marianne and Sam deny any current drug use and deny that there is any violence in their home.

Sam entered Marianne’s life shortly after she graduated from the drug program. Sam is from California and has no local family. He does have a large extended family in California, including his father, grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins. Marianne has an extended family locally, but
she became distanced from them when she began using drugs and stepping outside of the cultural traditions her family had instilled in her. The children still maintain a close relationship with many members of their family. Sam has been arrested for domestic violence with his previous girlfriend, but the case was later dismissed. He was also recently arrested for DUI. Sam reports that the child Sandra “hates me and tells me she doesn’t have to do anything I tell her,” but that Leon calls him “daddy.” He describes Brianna as the “light of my life” and tells the caseworker that he can take care of both Leon and Brianna. He insists that there is nothing wrong with Brianna and that “kids in my family were always a little behind the curve.”

The family has been struggling financially because Sam had his hours reduced three-and-a-half months ago. Marianne went to secretarial school and held a good job before she married her first husband; however, she knows her that her current husband is not in favor of her working outside of the home.

This is a Latino family.
Identify at least one thing that you will take away from this training and implement into practice.

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

My goal for accomplishing this is ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________


ARTICLES


**BOOKS**


WEBSITES

Black Administrators in Child Welfare Inc – A membership and advocacy organization, the mission of the Black Administrators in Child Welfare is to advocate for culturally-appropriate services for African American children and families in the child welfare system and to promote the development and support of African American leaders in the field: [www.blackadministrators.org](http://www.blackadministrators.org)

Diversity Central – Resources for diversity at work: [www.diversitycentral.com](http://www.diversitycentral.com)

Diversity RX – Clearinghouse of information on how to meet the language and cultural needs of minorities, immigrants, refugees and other diverse populations seeking health care: [http://www.diversityrx.org](http://www.diversityrx.org)

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation – Organized to improve the public’s attitudes toward homosexuality and put an end to violence and discrimination against lesbians and gay men: [http://www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)

Gay & Lesbian & Straight Education Network – Network working to end the cycle of bigotry in K-12 schools: [http://www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)
HR Press – Publishes The Workforce Diversity Training Catalog, which provides a large selection of cultural diversity training and awareness material: http://www.hrpress-diversity.com

Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics – Educational, community-based organization organized to develop, strengthen and expand the leadership roles of Asian Pacifics in all sectors of American society: http://www.leap.org

National Association for Multicultural Education – Advances the philosophy of inclusion that embraces the basic tenets of cultural pluralism; promoting cultural and ethnic diversity as a national strength; fostering equity for all regardless of culture, ethnicity, race, religion, language, age, gender, sexual orientation or exceptionality: http://www.nameorg.org


National Council of La Raza – Established to reduce poverty and discrimination and improve life opportunities for Hispanic Americans: http://www.nclr.org

National Organization on Disability – Promotes full and equal participation of America’s disabled men, women and children: http://www.nod.org

National Partnership for Women & Families – Nonprofit and non-partisan organization that uses public education and advocacy to promote fairness and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family: http://www.nationalpartnership.org

National Urban League – A premier social service and civil rights organization in America organized in 1910 to assist African Americans in the achievement of social and economic equality: www.nul.com

Native American Rights Fund – Founded in 1970 to address the need for legal assistance on the major issues facing Indian country: http://www.narf.org

Network of Disability Resources – World’s leading Internet-based disability information and news service: www.disability.co.uk

New York Public Library – Provides information on collections, services and programs for African Americans: http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html

People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond – National and international collective of anti-racist, multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building an effective movement for social transformation: www.pisab.org

University of Maryland Diversity Database – Comprehensive index of multicultural and diversity resources: www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/Topic/Diversity/