



# Facilitator's Guide

## Introduction to Cultural Responsiveness: A Training Tool

### Cultural Responsiveness

In a multicultural society such as ours, the commitment to value, respect, understand, and appropriately respond to cultural differences is imperative to the success of efforts to work with and support children and families. Culture matters. In fact, when unique cultural attributes and elements are ignored, families are at risk of not getting the culturally appropriate support they need, or worse yet, receiving assistance that is more harmful than helpful. The purpose of the CBCAP PowerPoint presentation on cultural responsiveness is to provide a basic framework for stimulating discussion about: (a) what is meant by cultural responsiveness and why it is important, (b) how to evaluate individual and organizational cultural responsiveness, and (c) how to begin to develop cultural responsiveness and create a culturally specific approach to ensure ongoing success.

### Cultural Responsiveness and Prevention

The link between cultural responsiveness and the prevention of child abuse and neglect may not be readily apparent, but is quite strong. The success of prevention and family support efforts is directly dependent upon the ability to listen, build trust and understand parents' strengths, challenges, perspectives, and future aspirations or goals. At the individual level, cultural responsiveness provides us with the ability to think, feel, and act in ways that acknowledge, respect, and build upon ethnic, socio-cultural, and linguistic diversity. At the organization and system level, cultural responsiveness provides the skills and infrastructure necessary to integrate and transform knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes to increase the quality and cultural appropriateness of services, producing better outcomes.

CBCAP-funded programs routinely serve richly diverse populations. Effective CBCAP programs demonstrate cultural responsiveness by, for example:



- ◆ Developing curricula for parenting classes that are grounded in the cultural values and familial expectations of the population(s) served
- ◆ Hiring staff who speak the language(s) spoken by the families who use services and have the willingness to learn about the cultural perspective of individuals and families they serve
- ◆ Promoting non-threatening, non-judgmental opportunities to learn different approaches to child rearing, nurturing, disciplining, and learning.
- ◆ Helping parents express their concerns, ideas or questions and understand what schools, health care providers, and service systems expect of them with respect to child rearing practices, while at the same time working with protective services and agencies to understand and respect diverse cultures.
- ◆ Ensure that services are culturally responsive and appropriate in a way that serves families positively and effectively.

## Training Tool Facilitator

The CBCAP PowerPoint training tool on cultural responsiveness is designed to be used by a facilitator who is familiar with the tool. Facilitators should be knowledgeable and experienced in leading a conversation on this topic and be fully aware of their own culturally, ethnically, and socio-economically based values, biases, misconceptions, and assumptions. It is important that facilitators be open to perspectives and views that may vary significantly from their own. Open conversation can bring out many stereotypes, assumptions, and judgments. Therefore, facilitators should anticipate disagreements and emotional reactions to others' language and opinions. It is important to create "ground rules" for the discussion that ensure a safe and respectful environment for honest discourse.

Facilitators are encouraged to obtain additional background information about cultural responsiveness by talking to people who have successfully developed competencies and successful outcomes in working with a culture different from their own, have adopted culturally responsive policies and practices in their work environments, and/or have studied the subject by, for example, reading the materials listed in the Cultural Responsiveness Resources document that was developed as part of this toolkit. Facilitators need not be experts or previously trained in cultural responsiveness.

## Use of the Introduction to Cultural Competence Toolkit

- ◆ Project the PowerPoint presentation onto a wall or screen so that all participants can see it. If you do not have projection equipment, simply print a copy of the presentation for each participant. It is recommended that you print copies in black and white.
- ◆ Print black and white copies of the presentation using the "notes pages" feature so that workshop participants have space to jot down information for future reference.
- ◆ Print a copy of the Cultural Responsiveness Resources learning tool for each participant.
- ◆ It is always good to print more copies than you think you will need. Unexpected participants might be present and/or participants may want extra copies to provide to friends and colleagues.
- ◆ Use the presentation as a guide for instruction and discussion. Workshops should include considerable give and take between the facilitator and participants. Most likely, you will find that workshop participants have great interest in the subject matter and want to contribute to a lively discussion.



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