



# Cultural Awareness

## Facilitator Guide

Tennessee Department of Children's Services | CHP2056 | Ver 21.2.3





## Curriculum Information

This **2.0 Hour Training** focuses on the importance of self-awareness of cultural beliefs, values, and perceptions for the purpose of providing culturally aware parenting skills to foster children in foster care.

This curriculum was developed by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services with federal funds. It is available to use in part or in whole free of charge. Suggested citation:

Office of Training and Professional Development (2020). *Cultural Awareness*. Tennessee Department of Children's Services

## Competencies

- Recognize the complexities associated with the term “culture” and begin to assess how it affects how foster parents will parent foster children.
- Explore terminology like “stereotyping” and the implications it has on parenting outcomes.
- Emphasize the characteristics of those who strive to be culturally competent.
- Recognize how bias can derail relationships with foster children.
- Explain the importance of cultural self-assessment to the journey toward cultural awareness.
- Practice cultural awareness using case studies.

# Materials Checklist

## Materials needed for this curriculum:

- Sign-In Sheets
- Circle Activity Icebreaker
- YouTube: Doll Test Video
- Handout cards: Expert Responses
- My Culture Tree Activity
- Who Am I? Worksheet
- Visual Aid: The Five Steps to Becoming Culturally Aware
- Traits Needed to Become Culturally Competent
- 4 Cultural Practice Scenarios
- Electronic Evaluations

## Standard Training Tote:

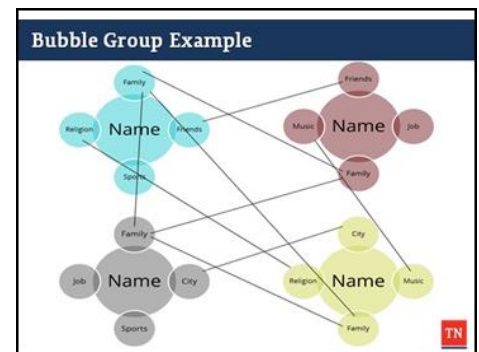
- Flip charts & Stands
- Markers
- White Board Markers
- Laptop & Projector
- Extension Cords
- Masking Tape
- Pencils
- Pens

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Unit 1: Welcome and Defining Culture	15 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the learning objective for this training.</li> <li>Begin to assess the amount of cultural diversity in this group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign-In Sheets</li> <li>Circle Activity Icebreaker</li> <li>Cultural Terms</li> </ul>
Unit 2: Similar But Different	15 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge that other cultures have differences from and similarities to American culture</li> <li>Acknowledge that other cultures have strengths</li> <li>Recognize how our upbringing helped to form our attitudes about race and other cultures.</li> </ul>	
Unit 3: Implicit Bias	20 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define Implicit Bias and identify key characteristics</li> <li>Become aware of bias as it relates to cultural needs, characteristics, and different cultural groups.</li> <li>Realize that different cultures have distinct characteristics.</li> </ul>	
Unit 4: Biases Are Learned	15 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become aware of their own personal biases and stereotypes and toward what/whom these biases and stereotypes are directed.</li> <li>Explore how to integrate a child from a different culture into our family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YouTube: Doll Test Video</li> <li>Handout cards: Expert Responses</li> </ul>
Unit 5: Cultural Awareness Self-Assessment	15 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore our personal cultural beliefs</li> <li>Identify areas that might be challenging to parenting a culturally different child.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My Culture Tree Activity</li> <li>Who Am I? Worksheet</li> </ul>
Unit 6: Becoming Culturally Aware	10 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Five Steps of Cultural Awareness.</li> <li>Identify traits/characteristics needed to become culturally competent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual Aid: The Five Steps to Becoming Culturally Aware</li> <li>Traits Needed to Become Culturally Competent</li> </ul>
Unit 7: Cultural Practice	20 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore Cultural Case Studies</li> <li>Practice Cultural Competence</li> </ul>	4 Cultural Practice Scenarios
Unit 8: Close	10 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer of Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic Evaluations</li> </ul>



become familiar with the others in the class as well as begin to look at the cultural details of our lives and how they are similar.

- **SHOW** example slide and explain directions. Participants are going to form groups of 3 to 4 people. (If possible, they should not know each other). Ask the group to design a poster/flip chart, first by writing their names into the circles that are already drawn. Then they should get to know each other and discuss the question **“With which**



**groups would I align myself?"/"Which groups do I feel like I belong to?"** The results can vary from family to sports groups, fans of activities, university, the town they live in, the country etc. These should be written down and circled, so that each of the circles appear on the paper and is linked to the name it belongs to. If the people in the group have something in common, they can draw a line to the different names. Give the participants ten minutes to do this. Make sure each person has a different color marker and an additional color marker to draw the connecting lines between participants' common answers.

**TRAINER NOTE:** *Be prepared to give a personal example that can help participants with their discussions. Give the full directions of the icebreaker before moving them into their groups. Prepare flipcharts ahead of time. Keep this brief.*

- **DEBRIEF:** Ask the large group: “Was it hard to find something you have in common?”, “How can this activity help you to make first encounters with your foster children from other cultures work?”
- **REVIEW** the learning objectives, ground rules and expectations for the training.
- **SHARE** that today’s training will look at definitions related to culture, focus on helping us take a closer look at our own cultural identity and how

Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss cultural terms.</li> <li>• Acknowledge that other cultures have differences and similarities to the American culture and that other cultures have strengths.</li> <li>• Recognize how our upbringings help to form attitudes about race and other cultures</li> <li>• Identify origins of stereotypes and become aware of stereotypes, cultural needs, characteristics, and biases about different cultural groups.</li> <li>• Become aware that our cultural backgrounds affect our behavior.</li> <li>• Know the steps to becoming culturally aware.</li> <li>• Practice Cultural Competence.</li> </ul>

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we can become more culturally competent in the work that we do with foster children. This course serves as a self-assessment process that is an important part of helping us to become more culturally aware. By identifying our own culture, we will better understand how to work through the differences we have with the foster children we parent.

- **STATE** that in order for us to understand the topic and continue with the discussion on culture, we will review terms that relate to culture.
- **REVIEW** the “What is Culture?” slide, and then ask for volunteers to read the remaining definitions from the Glossary of Terms located in their participant guides. **Trainer Note:** *You may have the audience pick a few to read; not all.*
  - **Culture:** Shared, learned values and behaviors that hold groups together. These groups can be social organizations, racial or ethnic groups, language-based, regional, occupational, or corporations. All groups have their own cultures. The culture provides meaning and direction. It mobilizes the social energy that moves the group into action. The core values of a culture are very important. The core values are what produce different beliefs and practices such as childbearing and the view of how a family should function; i.e., patriarchal, matriarchal, and/or extended family units.
  - **Cultural Awareness:** Knowledge of the main characteristics and history of, and differences between various cultural groups.
  - **Cultural Competence:** A set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency, or among professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
  - **Cultural Responsiveness:** Respecting the unique culture of a family, not only in terms of cultural or ethnic heritage, but also their

### What is Culture?




Culture is **learned and shared** values and behaviors that hold groups together. These groups can be social organizations, racial or ethnic groups language-based, regional, occupational, or corporations.



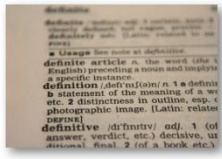
### What is Culture?


- ✓ All groups have their own cultures. The culture provides meaning and direction. It mobilizes the social energy that moves the group into action.
- ✓ The core values of a culture are very important.
- ✓ These core values are what produce different beliefs and practices such as childbearing and view of how a family should function; i.e./patriarchal, matriarchal and/or extended family units.



### Cultural Terms

- Culture
- Cultural Awareness
- Cultural Competence
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Discrimination
- Diversity
- Ethnocentrism
- Generalization
- Prejudice
- Race
- Stereotyping





- unique values, attitudes, beliefs, habits, priorities, customs, ways of making decisions, and interpersonal relations.
- **Discrimination:** Partiality or prejudicial treatment based on perceived identity, usually in actions or policies against a certain group.
  - **Diversity:** The condition of possessing distinct or unlike elements or qualities; a synonym for variety and difference.
  - **Generalization:** A general idea or statement, which, if made about one person of a certain race, would then be inferred about all members of that race.
  - **Prejudice:** A preconceived judgment or opinion; suspicion, intolerance, or irrational belief of races, religions, occupations, etc.
  - **Race:** Commonly understood as a subgroup of people possessing a definite combination of physical characteristics of genetic origin.
  - **Stereotyping:** Preconceptions held about people who are members of a different culture.
- **EXPLAIN** that if we look closely at the definition of culture, we can see that culture is learned. From birth, we begin learning about language in the way we communicate, such as family sayings, curse words, slang, etc. Values and traditions were passed down from generation to generation, forming our cultural heritage. When we become independent from our families and begin our own, we often make some adjustments in some of the beliefs of our families, adopting our own ideas and traditions. There may be areas that you said you would never be like your parents and then hear them in the words you say to your own children, and then find that you are using the same words they did. In America, parenting styles vary somewhat from region to region but are familiar to most of us. However, in other countries, different cultural parenting styles can differ greatly from Americans.
  - **STATE** next we will begin the self-assessment process by looking at some similarities and differences that can be seen in other cultures.

## Unit 2: Cultural Similarities and Differences

**Unit Time: 15 minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

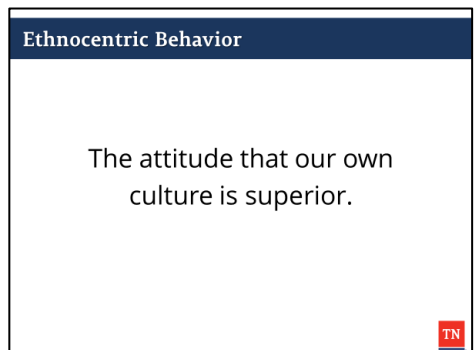
- Acknowledge that other cultures have differences from and similarities to American culture
- Acknowledge that other cultures have strengths
- Recognize how their upbringings helped to form their attitudes about race and other cultures.

### Supporting Materials:

- Who Am I? Handout
- Babies Video (Amazon Prime Video) By Thomas Balmes

### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **STATE** that in this unit that you will be discussing similarities and differences between cultures, and how our own personal beliefs impact how we view other cultural beliefs.
- **STATE** sometimes we compare our way of life with others and feel that it is the best or only way to live. This would be considered **Ethnocentric Behavior (The attitude that our own culture is superior)**, which is a barrier to understanding that just because someone has a different cultural background does not make it wrong. We are different, but the same.
- **STATE:** One of the key components to effectively fostering children with different cultural backgrounds is becoming aware of our own cultural characteristics, beliefs and biases. We will now take a closer look through self-assessment.



- **ACTIVITY:** (Link to purchase “Babies” video: <https://www.amazon.com/Babies-Bayar/dp/B003WKLOTQ>) Show clips from Babies video to demonstrate differences between child raising between four different cultures. Divide participants into small groups to facilitate discussion. Ask participants to identify initial reactions to what they saw in the video within the small group. Next, have participants respond to the following questions:
  - What similarities exist between the four cultures?
  - What differences exist between the four cultures?
  - What biases did you note within yourself when watching the video clips?
  - Identify at least one parenting strength from each of the cultures you observed.
- Process the activity by asking the large group if they had any takeaways from the activity. Ask participants to volunteer and share the strengths they identified. Ensure every culture has at least one strength identified.



**Video Clips: “Babies” Movie**

1. What similarities exist between the four cultures?
2. What differences exist between the four cultures?
3. What biases did you note within yourself when watching the video clips?
4. Identify at least one parenting strength from each of the cultures you observed.

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## Unit 3: Implicit Bias

**Unit Time: 25 Minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Define Implicit Bias and identify key characteristics
- Become aware of bias as it relates to cultural needs, characteristics, and different cultural groups.
- Realize that different cultures have distinct characteristics.

### Supporting Materials:

- Video-I AM Not Black, You are Not White  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0qD2K2RWkc&feature=youtu.be&list=PLwAlHYrmPXwjsapkRIJ7aZ0x4y-gD8wIm%0C>
- Activity Sheet -My Identity and Email to a Foster child

### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **SHARE** the definition of Implicit Bias: the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily with or without an individual's awareness or intentional control.

- **REVIEW** the information below:

#### *A Few Key Characteristics of Implicit Biases*

- Implicit biases are universal. Everyone possess them, they are hardwired into our brain as part of our survival mechanism.

#### Implicit Bias

The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily with or without an individual's awareness or intentional control.



#### Key Characteristics of Implicit Bias


- Implicit biases are universal. Everyone possess them, they are hardwired into our brain as part of our survival mechanism.
- Implicit and explicit biases are **related but distinct** ideas and beliefs.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that **favor our own ingroup**, though research has show that we can still hold implicit biases against our ingroup.



- Implicit and explicit biases are **related but distinct** ideas and beliefs.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that **favor our own ingroup**, though research has shown that we can still hold implicit biases against our ingroup.
- Implicit biases are flexible. Our brains are incredibly complex and resilient, and the implicit associations that we have formed can be gradually unlearned. By becoming aware of and identifying our biases, we can begin to challenge our thinking and the basis for these biases. We can monitor our reactions and begin to reframe our thoughts to be more in line with our values and beliefs.

### Key Characteristics of Implicit Bias

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- **EXPLAIN** that in America, we have many different ethnicities represented. America is predominately White, but Hispanic/Latino and African American/Black ethnicities numbers are rising. When you first see these numbers, what comes to mind? Ask participants to think about this to themselves. What biases do we hold as it relates to each of these groups?

### Ethnicity in America

- Asian- 5.7%
- American Indian/Alaska Native- 1.3%
- African American/Black- 13.3%
- Hispanic or Latino- 17.8%
- Native American/Other Pacific Islander- 0.2%
- Two or More Races- 2.6%
- White- 76.9%

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- **SHARE** that in Tennessee, the numbers from the 2017-2018 DCS Annual Report show kids from several different races/cultures. White and African American/Black make up the majority of the children in care. How do our biases impact our ability to work with children of different cultures?

Children in Custody SFY 2017-2018 by Race

Region	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Multi Racial	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Inable to Determine	White	(Blank)	Grand Total
Davidson	1	6	629	87	5	10	277	35	1,060
East	6	0	21	82	0	2	972	2	1,085
Wixom	0	2	212	186	1	3	846	2	1,252
Mid-Cumberland	1	5	381	171	3	12	1,124	34	1,731
Northwest	1	1	49	77	0	5	1,126	5	1,264
Northwest	0	0	120	80	0	3	705	5	913
Shelby	1	1	1,493	32	0	4	235	9	1,775
Smoky Mountains	11	0	47	125	4	6	1,282	1	1,476
South Central	0	2	118	165	1	1	1,115	0	1,402
Southwest	1	1	205	68	1	0	410	4	690
Tennessee Valley	2	3	275	102	1	6	949	27	1,365
Upper Cumberland	0	2	46	81	0	3	1,263	6	1,401
Grand Total	24	23	3,596	1,256	16	55	10,304	130	15,404

What do we know about their cultures? Each child has a way of life that they are used to, yet when they are placed with different families; the child's way of life is changed to fit the new home's way of life, instead of learning about and adapting to the child's unique culture. Ask group to identify ways we can learn more about the culture of the children placed in our homes. Flip chart

or white board responses. **Ask participants** what reactions might they experience if the child's culture is different from their own?

- **SHOW** the definition of "Stereotyping" and share that regardless of our upbringing, most of us are, to some degree, culturally conditioned to be prejudiced. Ask participants how they think cultural stereotypes are learned; i.e., family, media, educational systems, government. Allow a brief discussion.
- **EXPLAIN** that most people do not want to think of themselves as biased. However, our core values have been formed over our lifetimes in such subtle ways that we may not be able to recognize or be aware of our implicit bias or prejudices.
- **SHOW** the following YouTube video: I am Not Black, You are not White  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0qD2K2RWkc&list=PLwAlHYrmPXwjsapkRIJ7aZ0x4y-gD8wlm&index=2>
- **DEBRIEF** the video by asking:
  1. What barriers prevent us from removing labels when thinking of different cultures?
  2. What resistance did we feel when thinking of different cultures?
  3. What resistance did we feel when watching this video?
  4. What would the world look like if we were able to strip ourselves of label?
  5. What would be the importance of doing this?
- **EXPLORE** each question fully and to encourage responses. Be intent on creating a space where

### Impact of Biases

- What are ways we can learn more about the culture of children placed in our homes?
- What reactions might we experience if the child's culture is different from our own?



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### Stereotyping

"Preconceptions held about people who are members of a different culture."



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### Stereotyping Video

Video: I Am NOT Black, You are NOT White



<https://youtu.be/q0qD2K2RWkc?list=PLwAlHYrmPXwjsapkRIJ7aZ0x4y-gD8wlm>

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### Debrief

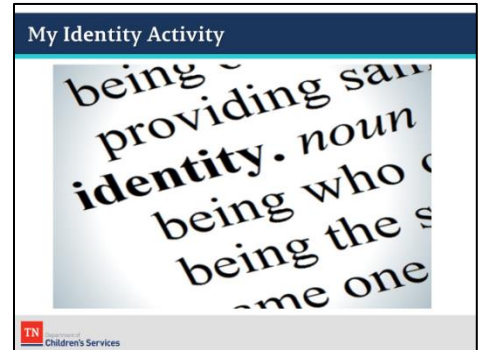
- What barriers prevent us from removing labels when thinking of different cultures?
- What resistance did we feel when thinking of different cultures?
- What resistance did we feel when watching this video?
- What would the world look like if we were able to strip ourselves of labels?
- What would be the importance of doing this?

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everyone can freely express their opinions without judgement and to allow for different opinions and interpretations.

- **INVITE** participants to be open and vulnerable.
- **REFER** participants to My Identity Worksheet. They will do this activity on their own and will not be required to share their answers with the group unless they choose to do so. Allow them time to focus on the questions and allow responses and encourage them to answer as truthfully as possible. Have them write out the answers to make this exercise more meaningful.



## Part 1

### Activity Statements:

1. The part of my identity that I am most aware of on a daily basis is
2. The part of my identity that I am the least aware of on a daily basis is
3. The part of my identity that I wish I knew more about is
4. The part of my identity that I believe is the most misunderstood by others is
5. The part of my identity that I feel is difficult to discuss with others who identify differently is
6. The part of my identity that makes me feel discriminated against is

### Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to respond to these statements?
- What did you find surprising?
- What do you want to explore further?

## Part 2

### Activity: Email to a Foster Child Coming to Your Home



1. Envision the child is from another culture than your own.
  2. Write an email or letter to this child considering the below prompts:
    - a. What do you want to help them understand about your family and your culture?
    - b. What questions do you want to ask them to help you understand them better and to understand their culture?
    - c. What challenges do you think this child will face living in your home?
    - d. What strengths or benefits do you think this child will bring to your home?
    - e. What will you do to help them feel more comfortable in your home and to feel like they belong?
    - f. What do you think you can learn from this child?
- **STATE:** When we can understand that some of our views about groups of people, including foster children, are biases and stereotypes that can be harmful, we can begin to look beyond the labels to see a person as an individual with the same needs we all have in common.
  - **STATE:** That the next unit of training will focus on becoming aware that the term “family” varies from culture to culture and help us to look inward and become aware of our own personal biases and stereotypes and toward whom these biases and stereotypes are directed.



## Unit 4: Cultural Biases Are Learned

**Unit Time: 15 minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Become aware of their own personal biases and stereotypes and toward what/whom these biases and stereotypes are directed.
- Explore how to integrate a child from a different culture into our family.

### Supporting Materials:

- YouTube Video: "Doll Test – The effects of racism on children" (2:44)
- Handout cards: Expert Responses

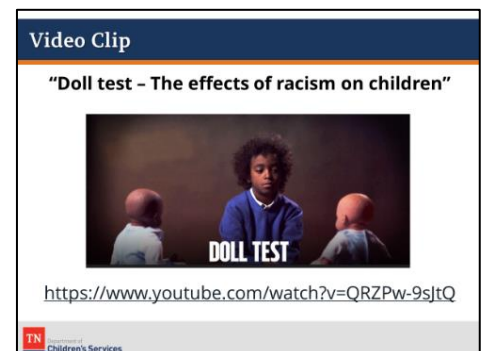
### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **BEGIN** this unit by showing the video "Doll test – The effects of racism on children (ENG)" Video length (2:44).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRZPw-9sJtQ>

**TRAINER NOTE:** *This video is intended to show that the responses from Italian children are similar to American children, and that other cultures struggle with the same biases as us.*

- **DEBRIEF** the video by asking for observations and feelings after viewing the content. Ask the group about how the children felt at the end of the video when they chose the doll that looked most like them after selecting that doll as being "bad" and "ugly."
- **SHARE** that the primary influences on our attitudes are family and culture. We adopt our family's values, attitudes, and behaviors at a very young age. This is done not out of preference, but because that is all we know. Therefore, we adopt our family lifestyle. As we become older and more exposed to the wider world and what it has to offer, we begin to question,



consider, or perhaps challenge our family values. We form our own beliefs and value systems, some of which may, or may not, agree with those of our family.


- **ASK:** How do we explain discrimination/prejudice?

The Anti-Defamation League provides a great, simple explanation for parents and children. They describe prejudice as “attitudes or opinions about a person or group simply because the person belongs to a specific religion, race, nationality, or other group. Prejudices involve strong feelings that are difficult to change. Prejudice is pre-judging. A person who thinks, ‘I don’t want (so-and-so) living in my neighborhood,’ is expressing a prejudice.”

### Discrimination/Prejudice

The Anti-Defamation League's definition:


“attitudes or opinions about a person or group simply because the person belongs to a specific religion, race, nationality, or other group. Prejudices involve strong feelings that are difficult to change. Prejudice is pre-judging. A person who thinks, ‘I don’t want (so-and-so) living in my neighborhood,’ is expressing a prejudice.”



- **SHARE** that the fact of the matter is that children will most likely see prejudice, even in its earliest forms, at a young age. So, our responsibility will be more about teaching our child how to react to that bias rather than simply explaining it. Much of what our child learns will be based on what we model for them, so take a moment to consider our own experiences, fears and assumptions. Think about what words we use to describe our own culture as well as others. Consider the group of adults we interact with on a regular basis. How are we modeling cultural sensitivity and appreciation for our child?

### How to Explain Discrimination/Prejudice


- Much of what a child learns will be based on what you model for them, so take a moment to consider your own experiences, fears and assumptions.
- Think about what words you use describe your own culture as well as others.
- Consider the group of adults you interact with on a regular basis.
- Are you modeling cultural sensitivity and appreciation for your foster child?



- **STATE** that age matters. A child is never too young, or too old, to begin a discussion with them about cultural diversity. The challenge comes in finding the right way to talk about it depending on the child’s age. Here are ways to talk with your foster children based on their age:

### Talking To Children About Prejudice

- **Preschool Ages: 2 to 5**
- **School Children Ages: 6 to 8**
- **Tweens Ages: 9 to 12**



- **Preschool:** Between the ages of 2 and 5, children begin to become aware of physical differences among people, as

well as become curious about these differences, such as gender, hair color and other physical attributes. It is also in these years that children pay more attention to these differences and begin asking questions about them, such as “Where did I get my brown eyes?” By the time children are 4 years old, they are often aware of biases directed against aspects of their identity. Be sensitive to children’s feelings about themselves and immediately respond when they indicate any signs of being affected by biases.

By 5, a child can begin to understand the use of categories and want to know where they themselves fit. This can be a critical time to introduce different cultures to children, when they are learning what differences exist and how to react to them.

- **School children:** Between 6 and 8, children begin to understand that their ethnicity is not changeable. They are just beginning to realize that groups of people take actions for and against different racial and cultural communities. This is when role modeling can have an even greater impact, as they are more influenced by significant adults and peers in their life. This is also an excellent time to focus on your child’s own self-esteem and self-worth. A child who feels good about himself is less likely to feel the need to show disrespect or hate towards others.
- **Tweens:** Around 9 years old, children begin to develop a more sophisticated understanding of culture, including how history, geography and politics can affect a society. From this age on, children are often more capable of talking about culture, race and bias. At this point, having a child speak from a dominant and non-dominant perspective, in a sort of role play, can be effective in discussions about bias.
- **REFER** participants to their participant packet to find the participant notes: Taking a Closer Look. Break group into 3 small groups and assign one of the scenarios to each group: Being on Time, Cleaning Your Plate, or Giving Change. Have each group discuss the situation and decide if it is a



cultural issue or not. While they are in their groups, place the envelope with the corresponding “Expert Response” on their table to be read after they finish sharing their result with the class. Allow 10 minutes for the groups to discuss and answer their questions. Have each group chose a spokesperson to read the scenario to the large group and discuss their answers. Once they have finished, have them open the envelope and read the “Expert Response.” Do this for the other two groups as well.

- **DEBRIEF** the activity by discussing how learned prejudices can impact many areas of our lives and the people that we come into contact with each day.
- **STATE:** In the next segment of training, we will work on identifying biases and cultural differences and explore how to incorporate a child who comes from a different culture into our family. We will also begin practicing the five steps to becoming culturally aware and will participate in role-play activities designed to help you use what you have learned today.

## Being on Time

Professor Enell enjoys teaching and invites his students to his home to celebrate the end of the semester with him and his wife. He asks them to come for dessert and coffee at 3:00 p.m.

At 2:30, the doorbell rings, and Mrs. Enell, not yet ready to receive her guests, opens the door to find her husband's Korean students standing there. Flustered, Mrs. Enell ushers them in.

1. Is Mrs. Enell justified in being flustered? Explain your response.
2. Do you think this is a cultural issue? Explain your response.
3. How do you interpret the Korean students' actions?
4. What would you do in this situation?

## Cleaning Your Plate

Scott, born and raised in Los Angeles, and Marina, who spent her childhood in Cambodia, plan to marry. One evening, Scott joined Marina and her family for dinner, which they enjoyed while sitting in a circle on the floor, Cambodian style.

Each place setting has a small bowl of liquid. Scott observes the elderly

Cambodian guest sitting next to him pick up the bowl and drink from it. Scott does the same, emptying the bowl completely. As soon as he does this, Marina's mother asks, "Good?"

"Good," says Scott, and Marina's mother refills it. Once more, Scott drinks the entire contents and again Marina's mother refills it. This happens one more time, but now Scott's face has turned red and he has a dripping nose. He keeps leaving the table to get a cold drink. The more he drinks from the small bowl, the more Marina's mother gives him. He doesn't know what to do. Marina is busy in the kitchen and is unaware of her boyfriend's plight.

1. What should Scott do?
2. What are the cultural issues here? Explain.
3. How do you interpret Marina's mother's actions?
4. What would you do in this situation?



## Giving Change

Sheldon Tramell, an African American, is shopping in a convenience store that has just been bought by the Chos, who have just arrived from Korea. He hands the shopkeeper a \$20 bill for his purchase and waits for the change. Sheldon becomes angered when, instead of placing the change in his hand, Mrs. Cho puts the money on the counter.

1. Is Sheldon justified in being angry? Explain your response.
2. Do you think this is a racial issue? Explain your response.
3. How do you interpret Mrs. Cho's actions?
4. What would you do in this situation?

## **Being on Time** (Expert Response)

Not everyone interprets time in the same way. Most Americans expect that their guests will arrive at the appointed time or perhaps a few minutes later. They are generally not prepared for guests who arrive ahead of time, especially 30 minutes early. However, both Japanese and Korean guests tend to arrive early. This is their interpretation of being “on time.”

Cultural background affects ideas of what is *on time*, what is *early*, and what is considered *late*. To avoid unpleasant surprises, explain your expectations about time and ask those from different regions and cultures about theirs.

## **Cleaning Your Plate** (Expert Response)

When Cambodians empty the bowl or glass or clean their plate, it means they want more. If Scott had wanted to discourage the constant refills, he should have left less than half in the bowl.

- The act of cleaning one's plate and emptying the glass has different meanings, depending on the culture.
- Jordanians leave a small amount as a sign of politeness.
- Filipinos keep a little on the plate to show that the hosts have provided well.
- Koreans will not refill a glass if there is still some liquid in it.
- Egyptians leave some food on the plate as a symbol of abundance and a compliment to the host.
- For Indonesians, leaving food on the plate is impolite.
- For Japanese, cleaning one's plate means the guest appreciates the food.
- Americans frequently caution their children to not waste food and clean their plate, often citing some place in the world where people are starving.

The best solution when you are not sure whether to clean your plate or empty your glass is to observe how often other guests ask for more food and how they signal when they have had enough.

## **Giving Change** (Expert Response)

Because body contact with strangers is not allowed and is particularly taboo between members of the opposite sex in her culture, Mrs. Cho was unable to touch Mr. Tramell's hand. She did what was appropriate and polite and according to her traditions. She placed the money on the counter.

Mr. Tramell's angry reaction and interpretation of this behavior as a personal rebuff is not uncommon. Taking offense to this cultural difference has frequently occurred in places where Korean shopkeepers interact with African American customers. Long-time victims of racism, African Americans might see this as a further example of bias due to not being aware or familiar with the Korean culture. This could cause African Americans to feel racially discriminated against because the money was placed on the counter instead of in their hand.



## Unit 5: Culture Awareness Self-Assessment

**Unit Time: 15 minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will...

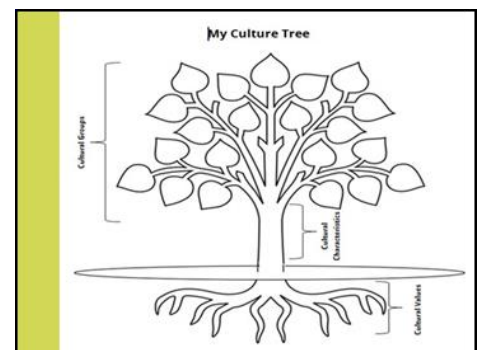
- Recognize how their upbringings helped to form their attitudes towards other cultures.
- Become aware that their cultural backgrounds affect their behavior.
- Know the steps to becoming culturally aware.

### Supporting Materials:

- Participant Note: Cultural Tree
- Visual Aid: Steps to Becoming Culturally Aware
- Participant Note: Who Am I?

### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **STATE:** In order to understand how to acknowledge and support cultural diversity and freedom, participants need to first examine their own cultural identity, biases and behaviors. You will begin by identifying the cultural group(s) that you belong to and the ways in which these cultural groups shape your thinking and beliefs.
- **REFER** participants to their My Culture Tree handout located in their participant guide.
- **EXPLAIN** that the **roots** of the tree represent a person's values and belief system (e.g., being independent, taking care of one's family, getting a good education). The **trunk** of the tree represents those cultural characteristics that are visible (e.g., customs, food, language), and that the **leaves** on

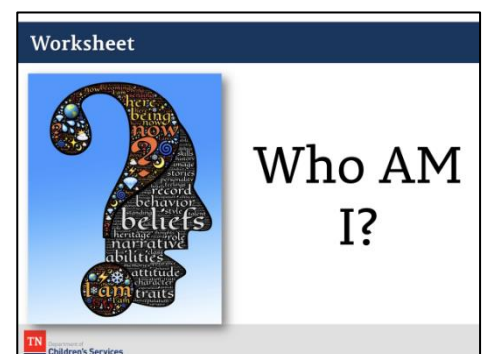


the tree represent a person's cultural groups (e.g., race, religion, and ethnicity).

**Trainer's Note:** *Trainer should be prepared to share examples of each part of the tree to participants using a flipchart or separate power point slide. Please let the group know that their answers will not be shared with the large group and this is meant as a self-assessment tool.*

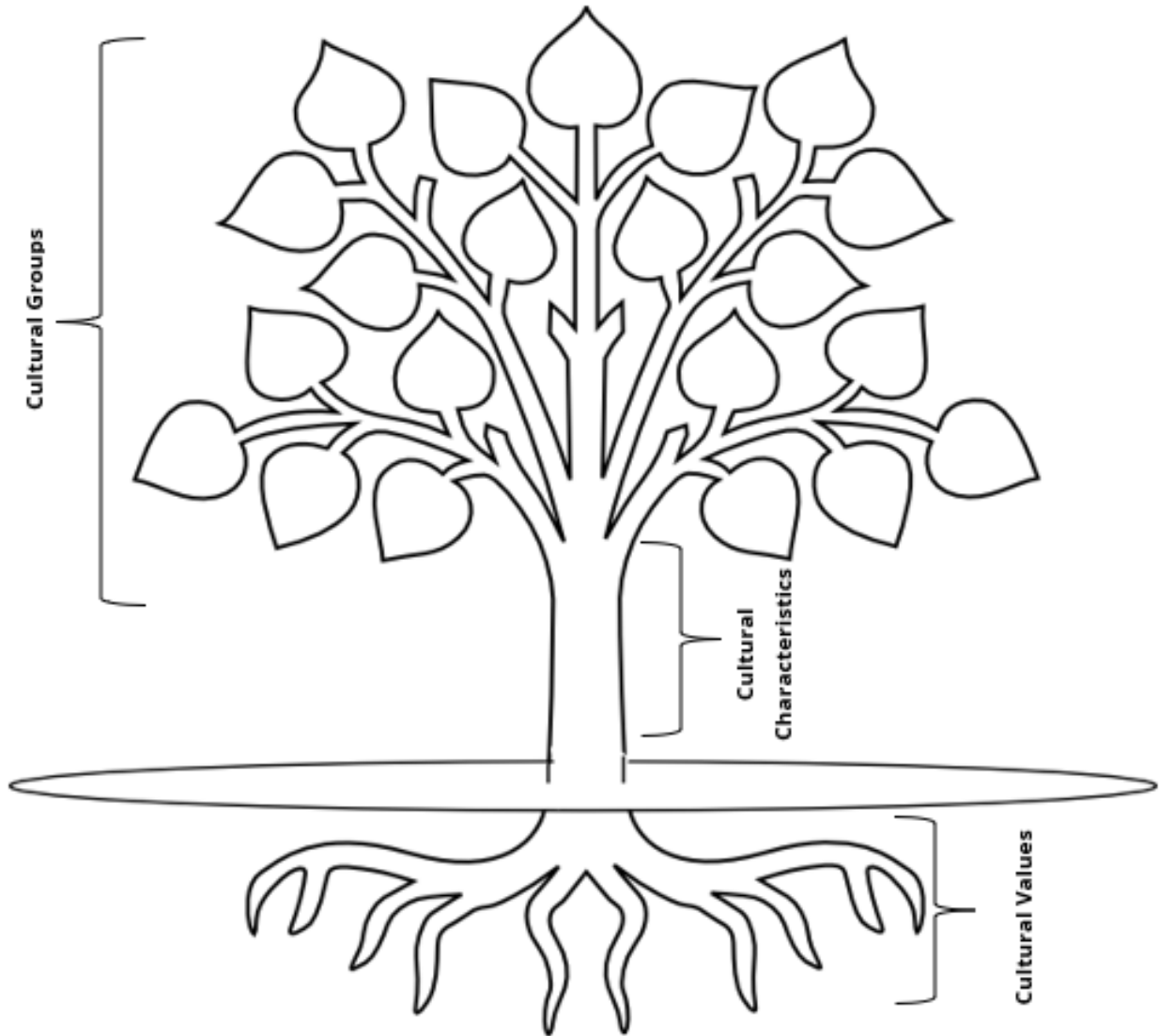


- **ASK** participants to work independently for 10-15 minutes to complete their tree showing their cultural groups, characteristics and values/beliefs. After participants have completed their culture tree, lead participants in a large group discussion using the following question:
  - How have you learned about the culture(s) that you are a part of?
  - How does your culture influence what you believe or value?
  - Have you encountered differences in values and/or behaviors from the children or birth parents you have worked with so far? How did you deal with those differences?
  - What can you do if you are unable to work through your feelings or cannot keep your feelings from influencing your fostering abilities?
- **STATE:** As you can see, self-assessment is only one step to becoming culturally aware but moves us one step closer to being culturally competent. Direct participants to the worksheet titled **"Who AM I?"** Explain that this is an additional tool that they can use to continue the self-assessment process if they would like to do so. (Read a few of the questions from this worksheet)
- **EXPLAIN** that it's important for participants to understand that becoming culturally aware is a long process. The next unit will discuss steps to becoming culturally competent, to help us improve our relationships with the children in our care.



# Insert "My Culture Tree" Handout

## My Culture Tree



**Possible Values:**

Love	Morals	Power	Adventure	Freedom	Nature	Honesty
Wealth	Success	Friends	Variety	Fun	Popularity	Humor
Family	Knowledge	Free Time	Calmness	Recognition	Responsibility	Loyalty
Reason	Independence	Achievement	Beauty	Spirituality	Respect	Peace
Stability	Wisdom	Fairness	Creativity	Relaxation	Safety	Health



## **WHO AM I? A LOOK AT OUR OWN CULTURE**

1. Who took care of you when your mother had to go out? At what age were you left alone? At what age were children in your family given responsibility to care for the other kids in the family? At what age were you allowed to baby-sit when your parents were not at home?
2. What form of discipline or punishment did your family use most often? Did this form of discipline affect how you felt about your parents? How so? Were there any kinds of discipline or punishment that your parents would not use because they felt it was harmful to you?
3. What were the family rules about meals? Did everyone sit down at the table together? Did children cook? Did the kids feed other kids? Could you eat whatever you wanted, when you chose? What kinds of food did you eat a lot of?
4. Did your family have different expectations for children in the family? Older or younger children? Boys or girls?
5. Did your family attend a religious institution? Did your parents encourage you to attend? What were the family rules about attendance? How did you feel about attending or not attending a religious institution?
6. Identify specific ways in which strict adherence to your own values can create biases that may potentially interfere with your ability to understand or relate to persons from different cultural backgrounds.



## Unit 6: Becoming Culturally Competent

**Unit Time: 10 minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will...

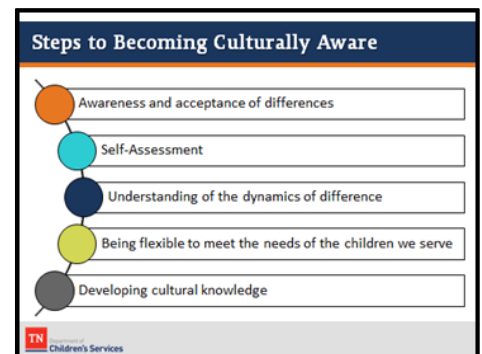
- Review the Five Steps of Cultural Awareness.
- Identify traits/characteristics needed to become culturally competent.

### Supporting Materials:

- Visual Aid: The Five Steps to Becoming Culturally Aware
- Participant Note: Traits Needed to Become Culturally Competent

### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **STATE:** Becoming culturally aware is the beginning of the journey to becoming culturally competent.
- **DISCUSS** the Steps to Becoming Culturally Aware.
  - Awareness and acceptance of differences
  - Self-assessment
  - Understanding of the dynamics of differences
  - Being flexible to meet the needs of the children we serve
  - Developing cultural knowledge
- **DISPLAY** slide titled “Characteristics of Cultural Competence” and state: Individuals who achieve cultural competency usually have a similar set of traits or attitudes, such as:



- **Adaptability to different cultures** – The willingness to try new things and change set patterns in their lives, adopting cultural practices of foster children when possible.
- **Tolerance and patience** – Tolerance, not just for cultural differences, but for the confusion and mixed signals that accompany learning a new culture. It takes patience to know that the process of learning about a new culture and true understanding of it is gradual, not an overnight experience.
- **A sense of humor** – A sense of humor is needed so you do not take yourself so seriously. You will make mistakes, as will members of the other culture. Individuals who can respectfully convey humor to others lets them know that they, too, can make mistakes and not be thought of as stupid.
- **Self-confidence and control** – The person who is trying to learn a new culture will make mistakes and become frustrated. Confidence helps the individual during the first part of this process when it may be stressful. Members of other cultures will make mistakes. We need to be able to control our frustration and stress with others.
- **The ability to communicate** – Remember that communication is more than words. The use of key interpersonal skills such as respect and empathy relays to the other person that you are sincere and want to learn even though you may not understand their culture. Learning the subtle nonverbal communication styles of a culture such as personal space, touch, and eye contact is also a way of showing respect.
- **INFORM** participants that, regardless of their backgrounds and experiences, they may still be able and willing to parent children from different backgrounds.
- **INFORM** participants of what they can do when something happens. Discussions about discrimination and prejudice often come up for families when a particular hate crime or event occurs in their community. As adults,



we can be deeply disturbed by these events and often struggle personally with how to react. At the same time, our children are often looking to us for reassurance and even explanation. These steps can help:

1. **First, review what actually**

**happened.** Children over age 9 are usually aware of headline news. Be sure you all understand the facts of the incident. For younger children, do not give specific details. Be careful not to frighten them.

2. **Next, share your own perceptions and emotions in response to the**

**event.** Without lessening the significance of an event, remain calm and try to convey your perspective of the situation and associated feelings to your children. When it comes to younger children, the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) suggests asking children if they have any questions first to judge what they need from you.

3. **Tell your children that they are not alone.** Many others, adults and children alike, have the same concerns and are having the same discussions.

4. **Finally, calm their fears.** Remind them that organizations such as the police and FBI deal with these crimes, and that while events like these do happen and can be hard to understand, we are predominantly safe and live in a free country.

- **SHARE** that here in the United States, we are lucky enough to live in a country rich with many cultural heritages; take advantage of that luxury!

There are many ways to teach our children, mostly by example, to appreciate differences among cultures such as:

- **Read books** showing children of various ethnic backgrounds, using words in different languages, and telling different cultural stories

**Teachable Moments**

**When an issue/tragedy occurs:**

1. Review what actually happened.
2. Share your own perceptions and emotions in response.
3. Tell children they are not alone.
4. Calm their fears.

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**Share Activities Such As:**

- Reading Books
- Tell Stories
- Join Playgroup or Parent Group
- Visit Cultural Festivals

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- to read with your child. Read books that depict the cultures of foster children.
- **Tell stories** about people from our ethnic group of whom we are especially proud. Include people who have stood up against bias and injustice. Storytelling and folk music are particularly effective ways to inspire exploration and understanding in children. Have foster children tell stories about their traditions and customs.
  - **Join a play group or other parenting group** that provides our foster children with opportunities to meet families of backgrounds similar to the child. Consider our own interactions as well: show that you value diversity in the friends you choose and in the people and establishments you choose for various services, such as doctors, merchants and other service providers.
  - **Visit cultural festivals**, museums and other places or celebrations where ethnicities are celebrated, including your own. This is an opportunity for us to better understand and embrace the culture most similar to our foster children.



## Unit 7: Practicing Cultural Competence

**Unit Time: 20 Minutes**

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will...

- Practice identifying biases, culture differences, and needs.
- Explore how to incorporate a child of a different culture into their family.
- Practice the five steps to becoming culturally aware.

### Supporting Materials:

#### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **ADVISE** participants that they are now going to practice the steps to becoming culturally aware by reviewing actual case studies and determining the best way to assist the foster children to become adjusted to their foster homes.
- **ASK** the participants to locate the four “Cultural Practice” Scenarios in their participant guide, and then explain that they will divide into four groups with each one working on their assigned scenario. Give the groups about 5 minutes to discuss their scenario and answer the questions on each handout. After 5 minutes, have the groups select a spokesperson to read the scenarios and answer the questions they discussed. Ask the large group if they would have done anything differently in each situation.
- **DEBRIEF** the activity by stating:
  - Biases can impact the child’s emotional wellbeing when placed in your home.
  - Be prepared to openly discuss the child’s feelings when he or she is in need of reassurance.





- You should be prepared for cultural bias to exist within your extended family, the community, the school system, etc.
- The child will need your support to navigate him/her through this emotional time.
- **STATE** that as children from various cultural backgrounds enter custody it will be important for foster parents to be aware of how differing cultures and values will affect their own beliefs and the beliefs of their extended family who provide support to the family.
- **EMPHASIZE** that individuals typically belong to more than one culture, as seen in our first activity. It is common for an individual to belong to several different cultures and subcultures, making everyone's situation wonderfully unique.
- **STATE:** The next unit will be a closing activity.
- **Trainer Note:** *Cultural Practice 2: Ensure participants understand that the foster child is missing family traditions and customs. For example, her mother's cooking or favorite meal. We want to caution parents from assuming the child has been abused.*

## **Cultural Practice #1**

Bonnie (Age 9), Alicia (Age 11), and Susan (Age 12) were placed in foster care 5 months ago, and they are still adjusting to their new environment. Their foster home is in a neighboring city with a large population, the girls are from a small rural town with limited resources. School has just ended for the summer break and the foster family enrolled them in dance classes and the community theatre program; Bonnie is the only one happy with the decision. The older girls have not been involved in any activities because they were too far away from their home and they had no transportation. The only activity they took part in was basketball in the neighborhood. One day after dance, the foster parents pick them up and want to celebrate their good work in dance class by getting ice cream at a fancy shop in town. The girls say they would rather have “roller food” from the gas station. The foster parents had no idea what that was, so the girls explained that it’s the food, like hot dogs, that they serve in the rolling warmer boxes.

- 1. What are the cultural differences between the girls and their foster parents?**
- 2. What might be the foster parent’s first reactions to these behaviors?**
- 3. What can the foster parents do in this situation while being culturally sensitive?**

## **Cultural Practice #2**

Serena has been living with the same foster parents since she came into care 2 months ago. Most of the time, Serena seems happy, gets along well with the other kids and enjoys family activities. However, after visits with her mom, she is angry and aggressive. She often refuses to eat dinner, saying she isn't hungry, and has trouble settling down for bed. The foster parent tries to talk to her about the visits with her mom, but she cries, and won't say anything. Aside from her responses to visits, she has no difficult behaviors. The foster parent finds it odd that when bathing, Serena washes her underwear in the tub and hangs it over the edge to dry for the next day. The foster parent also recently found a stash of food hidden in her closet. Serena is currently in 3rd grade, but has been struggling in school since entering foster care. The teacher has reported to the foster parent that she has difficulty focusing, and lashes out at her teacher or other students. Some days she seems agitated and anxious, and it is very hard for her to complete in-class assignments on these days. She is falling behind in her school work.

- 1. What are the cultural differences between Serena and her foster parents?**
- 2. What might be the foster parent's first reactions to these behaviors?**
- 3. What can the foster parents do to help Serena adjust to their home while being culturally sensitive?**

## Cultural Practice #3

Two months ago, Jorge (Age 9), who has Hispanic heritage, was placed in a non-Hispanic home with a family who has a 10-year old birth son named David. Right after Jorge was placed with them; schools started, and at first things were going well. However, Jorge and David came home very upset today. They said that their new friend, Jason, could not play with them or be friends with them anymore. When Jorge asked why, Jason said it's because Jorge is "just a dirty Mexican who is only good enough to work in the fields."

There are migrant workers in your area and the children have seen them when they have gone to the grocery store with you. At times, the children have questioned you about the workers speaking Spanish to one another. You have answered their questions honestly and have told them that Jorge is of the same heritage as the migrant workers, and have talked positively about their heritage.

Now Jorge questions you, "Are the people we see in the store dirty Mexicans? Will I have to work in the fields when I grow up?"

- 1. What are the cultural differences between Jorge and his foster family?**
- 2. What might be the foster parent's first reactions to this situation?**
- 3. What can the foster parents do to help Jorge adjust to his new school, while being culturally sensitive?**

## **Cultural Practice #4**

Marcus (Age 6 and an only child) came into foster care due to his birth mom's failure to provide medical care which ultimately placed his life in danger. It was explained that his family has strong religious beliefs about receiving medical care and do not celebrate holidays. When the family arrived at the agency to pick up Marcus, the first thing they noticed was his long hair coming below his shoulders and he was wearing dirty clothing with rips and stains. After completing the paperwork, they placed Marcus in their car with their four birth children. Marcus began to cry and did not want to get buckled into the seat. He appeared afraid and uneasy. Before they went home, the family stopped at a barber shop and cut Marcus' hair into a crew cut and bought him all new clothes, making him change in the store before getting back into the car. They made a point of telling him how filthy his clothes were before tossing them into a garbage can. Marcus remained quiet the rest of the way home. A week later, at the child and family team meeting, Marcus was able to see his mom for the first time, and she became inconsolable when she saw that his hair had been cut, as it was a family tradition to grow their hair until the age of twelve.

- 1. What are the cultural differences between Marcus and his foster family?**
- 2. What was inappropriate about the foster parent's reaction to Marcus' hair and clothes?**
- 3. What can the foster parents do from this point on to help Marcus adjust to his new family, while being culturally sensitive?**

## Unit 8 Closure

### Unit Time: 10 Minutes

### Learning Objectives:

Participants will...

- Identify future training needs regarding cultural competency.

### Supporting Materials:

- Evaluations

### Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **STATE** that as parents, we *can* raise our children to value one another and benefit from this increasingly diverse society. It's not always easy, but by teaching them to value diversity and be proud of themselves; we open a discussion that is rewarding for all involved. By modeling in our own lives, we can teach children to respect and value people regardless of the color of their skin, physical abilities, or the language they speak.
- **EXPLAIN** that it is important for participants to understand that becoming culturally competent is a long process. It will not occur with just this training. This is the beginning of learning about and appreciating the cultures that are different from mainstream American culture. Participants need to be aware that at least one hour of Cultural Awareness training is required each year per DCS policy. There will be future training sessions tailored towards specific culture groups.
- **THANK** participants for participating in the training session and distribute Evaluations and Certificates.



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