



# A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING A CURRICULUM

## PRESENTER NOTES

This guide walks you through presenting *A Culturally Responsive Approach to Implementing a Curriculum* in-service suite. This in-service suite includes PowerPoint slides and supporting materials. The main PowerPoint presentation and optional slides were developed for teachers and family child care providers. A separate PowerPoint presentation and optional slides were developed for home visitors. If your audience includes teachers, family child care providers, and home visitors, you might combine the presentations, as necessary, to meet the needs of your audience.

### MATERIALS

- Projector and audio equipment
- Flip chart or similar large paper
- Markers

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- This 15-minute in-service suite describes a culturally responsive approach to implementing an early childhood curriculum. The presentation will help participants better understand how culture influences caregiving, teaching, and learning; develop practices for communicating with families; and consider how to implement a curriculum that is responsive to culture. Learning activities offer participants opportunities to explore culture's role in their lives and reflect on their curriculum's supports for cultural responsiveness.
- There is version of this suite for home visitors. The topics for the two versions of the suite are the same, but the home visiting version focuses on the implementation of a home-based curriculum designed for home visitors. It includes photographs, video, and examples from home visiting and group socializations. It has a PowerPoint presentation with presenter notes, learning activities, and handouts. If the participants of the training include both education staff and home visitors, you may choose to include materials from both versions of the suite. The presentation outline below includes both sets of materials. You should also examine the presenter notes for the home visitor version of the suite for additional information.
- You may wish to review Head Start's Multicultural Principles before leading this presentation. It is available online at [https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/principles-01-10-revisiting-multicultural-principles-hs-english\\_0.pdf](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/principles-01-10-revisiting-multicultural-principles-hs-english_0.pdf).
- Adaptation boxes are labeled throughout the presentation to individualize this training for your specific training group.

### LIST OF AVAILABLE CONTENT

#### HANDOUTS FOR EDUCATION STAFF

- Cultural Responsiveness and the ELOF
- Learning Activity for Education Staff: The Role of Culture in Our Lives
- Learning Activity for Education Staff: Reflecting on Your Curriculum
- Exploring Stereotypes and Tokenism
- Tips for Education Staff: Learning from Families
- Tips for Education Staff: Interactions with Children
- Tips for Education Staff: Providing Learning Experiences

- Tips for Education Staff: Learning Environments and Materials
- Helpful Resources for Education Staff
- Tools for Supervisors of Education Staff: Reflection and Feedback

#### OPTIONAL HANDOUTS

- Head Start Program Performance Standards Support Cultural Responsiveness
- Exploring Your Curriculum: A Quick Guide for Teachers and Family Child Care Providers
- Tips for Families: Inviting Families to Share Their Cultures
- Activity for Families: Family Artifact Bag

#### OPTIONAL SLIDES

- Optional Slide 1: HSPPS Support Cultural Responsiveness
- Optional Slide 2: What is Culture?
- Optional Slide 3: Exploring Your Curriculum Supports Cultural Responsiveness
- Optional Slide 4: Inviting Families to Share Their Cultures

#### PRESENTATION OUTLINE

SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
1. Introduction			
2. House Framework for Effective Teaching Practices			
3. House Framework for Effective Teaching Practices: Curriculum		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insert Optional Slide 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HSPPS Support Cultural Responsiveness</li> </ul>
4. Objectives			
5. What is Culture?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Replace current slide with Optional Slide 2</li> </ul>	
6. The Role of Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning Activity for ES: The Role of Culture in Our Lives</li> </ul>		
7. Cultural Responsiveness Threads Through the ELOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural Responsiveness and the ELOF</li> </ul>		
8. Culture Influences Learning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning Activity for ES: The Role of Culture in Our Lives</li> </ul>		
9. Culture Influences Caregiving and Teaching			
10. How Does Your Curriculum Support a Culturally Responsive Approach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning Activity for ES: Reflecting on Your Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ -Replace current slide with Optional Slide 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring Your Curriculum</li> </ul>

SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
11. Developmentally Appropriate Practice			
12. Avoiding Stereotypes and Tokenism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring Stereotypes and Tokenism</li> </ul>		
13. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Curriculum			
14. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Learning from Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tips for ES: Learning from Families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optional Slide 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity for Families: Family Artifact Bag (F)</li> <li>Tips for Families: Inviting Families to Share Their Cultures</li> </ul>
15. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Interacting with Families			
16. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Interacting with Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tips for ES: Interactions with Children</li> </ul>		
17. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Providing Learning Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tips for ES: Providing Learning Experiences</li> </ul>		
18. A Culturally Responsive Approach to Learning Environments and Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tips for ES: Providing Learning Environments and Materials</li> </ul>		
19. Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helpful Resources</li> <li>Tools for Supervisors of ES</li> </ul>		

ES indicates tips/activity sheet for education staff, and F indicates tips/activity sheet for families.



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## SLIDE 1:

### INTRODUCTIONS

Begin the training by giving participants background information about yourself. For example, you may choose to share your heritage, your cultural identity, languages that you speak, or places you have lived.

Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves. You may invite participants to share their own backgrounds and identities, as well.

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### INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

A curriculum provides guidance and materials for you to use to support young children's development and learning. It typically focuses on a particular age group, such as infants and toddlers or preschoolers. It offers guidance about learning environments, learning experiences, and adult-child interactions.

Education staff individualize the guidance in a curriculum to respond to children's cultures, development, strengths and needs, temperaments, and interests. This 15-minute in-service suite focuses on how you implement your program's curriculum in ways that are responsive to children's cultures. Use the curriculum to build on the knowledge, skills, and experiences that children have developed in their family, culture, and community supports. This engagement promotes the learning and development of children's skills, behaviors, and concepts described in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF).

For additional guidance on how to implement a curriculum responsively, visit the following resources available on the ECLKC:

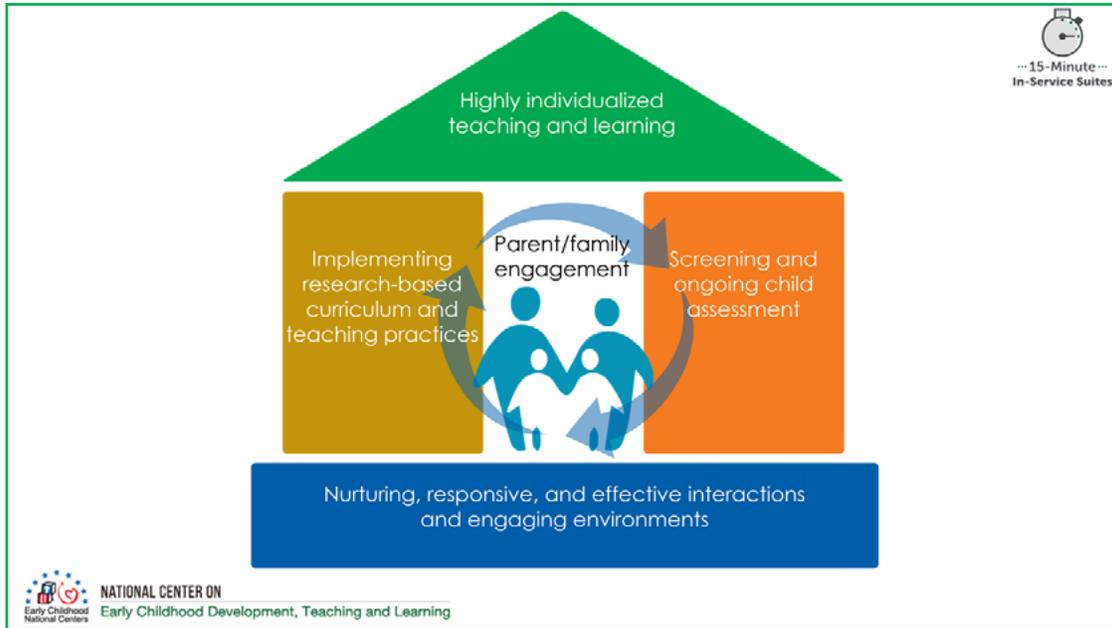
- 15-Minute In-Service Suite on Implementing a Curriculum Responsively: Supporting Individual Children's Development and Learning
- 15-Minute In-Service Suite on Implementing a Curriculum Responsive to Children's Interests

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### DISCUSSION:

Have participants share a way their program's curriculum supports them in being responsive to families' cultures and backgrounds.

This will help you understand how your participants think about cultural responsiveness and help you learn about their curriculum. Listen for misconceptions that need to be addressed in later slides or examples that you might incorporate in later discussions.



## SLIDE 2:

The Framework for Effective Teaching Practices is known as the House. The House represents five integral components of quality teaching and learning:

- **The foundation:** Nurturing, responsive, and effective interactions and engaging environments.
- **The first pillar:** Implementing research-based curricula and teaching practices.
- **The second pillar:** Screening and ongoing child assessment.
- **The roof:** Highly individualized teaching and learning.
- **The center:** Parent and family engagement.

When connected with one another, they form a single structure—the House Framework—that surrounds the family in the center. As we implement each component of the house—in partnership with parents and families—we foster children’s learning and development.



### SLIDE 3:

A culturally responsive approach is an essential part of each component. In this session, we focus on a culturally responsive approach to implementing a curriculum.

#### OPTIONAL FOR HS/EHS:

- Insert: Optional Slide 1
- Handout: HSPPS Supports Cultural Responsiveness

## Objectives



- **Identify** how culture influences and informs caregiving, teaching, and learning
- **Provide** practices for learning about children’s and families’ cultures, with respect and appreciation for cultural values, practices and traditions
- **Describe** a culturally responsive approach to implementing a curriculum that builds on children’s and families’ cultures

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### SLIDE 4:

Review the objectives for the session. These include:

- **Identify** ways culture influences and informs caregiving, teaching, and learning
- **Provide** practices for learning about children’s and families’ cultures, with respect and appreciation for cultural values, practices, and traditions
- **Describe** a culturally responsive approach to implementing a curriculum that builds on the children’s and families’ cultures

**Please note** that this suite’s approach to implementing a curriculum with cultural responsiveness includes children’s and families’ home languages as aspects of their cultures. However, the suite does not specifically focus on implementing a curriculum with the families of children who are dual language learners. See the Early Childhood DLL Toolkit and related resources for more information about implementing a curriculum to support children who are dual language learners.

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### REFERENCE

*Dual Language Learners’ Toolkit*. 2019. Retrieved from:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/dual-language-learners-toolkit>



SLIDE 5:

“What is culture?” This may seem like a simple question, but it is not. There are many definitions of culture. Culture can be described as a set of values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people. It often includes specific artifacts, food, customs, music, and traditions.

Culture can be examined at different levels—individual, family, group, and universal. People tend to notice the universal and group levels of culture first. For example, when we think of all humans, we know that as a culture we express emotions and use language to communicate. At the group level, cultural groups may share traditions, beliefs, and values, such as their beliefs about what young children should and should not do. However, we know that each family makes decisions about the beliefs and values they hold and the traditions in which they participate; for example, an individual family’s expectations for their children may not be the same as the larger cultural group’s expectations. And at the individual level, each of us has choices about the extent to which we participate and pass on the traditions, values, and beliefs of our groups and family.

Some parts of culture are easy to see, like our clothes, food, and language. Others are less visible and less straightforward to describe, such as our expectations for children or how we build relationships and make friends. People differ from each other within cultures, too. Sometimes people decide not to embrace some of the beliefs or practices adopted by most members of their culture. People within the same family may have different values or beliefs.

Another way to think about culture is that it includes

- artifacts or items,
- customs, and
- values.

This image includes many words that are associated with the term “culture.” For example, items such as clothing, food, and games may be shared by members of a culture. Also, customs or routines such as celebrations, communication styles, and family roles are also related to culture. Finally, goals and values about education, health, and childrearing practices also influence how people live their daily lives (York, 2016). One definition is that culture is “a powerful force that shapes our lives...It is a set of values, beliefs and behaviors shared by a group of people” (York 2016, p. 79).

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## DISCUSSION

Are there any words you would like to add to this image? Are there any you think should be taken away? Why do you think so?

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## REFERENCE

York, S. 2016. *Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture and Preventing Bias in Early Childhood Programs*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

## OPTIONAL MATERIALS:

- Replace with Optional Slide 2 for a learning activity about the meaning of culture

**Learning Activity: The Role of Culture**

... 15-Minute In-Service Suites ...

What were some of your favorite foods growing up?

How have you been influenced by **where** you grew up?

What was something special your family liked to do together?

When was the first time you realized that the way your family did something was different than how others did it?

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## SLIDE 6:

### NOTES FOR PRESENTER

Let's now think about the role of culture in our own lives, starting with our childhoods. Share the handout with participants.

Ask participants to think about and answer the first set of questions on the handout.

- What were some of your favorite foods growing up?
- What was something special that your family liked to do together?
- What are some ways that experiences within your community and culture shaped who you are?
- Describe the first time you realized that the way your family did something different than how others did it.

### DISCUSSION

Lead the participants in a discussion of the prompts on the handout:

- What did you notice?
- In what ways might your cultural values, beliefs, and practices impact your work with children and families?

Janet Gonzalez-Mena, a former Head Start teacher and trainer, has explained: "Every day you bring your personal values and beliefs to your work with children and families, and it is likely that the way you were raised shaped those beliefs and values." (Gonzalez, J. M. in Virmani, E. & Mangione, P. 2013, p. 56).

As adults, we can bring an understanding of the role of culture in our lives to our work with children and families. Let's consider how culture contributes to learning and development.

Tell participants we will return to the "Reflection" section of the handout later in the presentation.

### REFERENCES

Gonzalez, J. M. "Cultural Sensitivity in Caregiving Routines: The Essential Activities of Daily Living" in Virmani, E. A., & Mangione, P. L., (Eds.). 2013. *Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Culturally Sensitive Care* (2nd ed.). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education pp. 56-66.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Learning Activity: The Role of Culture in Our Lives

... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites

## Cultural Responsiveness and the ELOF

	CENTRAL DOMAINS				
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication Literacy	Mathematics Development Scientific Reasoning	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

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### SLIDE 7:

Teachers, family child care providers, and home visitors use the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) to understand child development and what children should know and be able to do to succeed in school. The ELOF supports effective program and teaching practices that promote strong outcomes for all children birth to age five, including children with disabilities or suspected delays and children who are dual language learners or children who are learning tribal languages.

A culturally responsive approach to implementing a curriculum is essential to supporting children's development in the ELOF domains. One of the ELOF's guiding principles states, "Every child has diverse strengths rooted in their family's culture, background, language, and beliefs. Responsive and respectful learning environments welcome children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Effective teaching practices and learning experiences build on the unique backgrounds and prior experiences of each child" (ELOF, p 3). Cultural responsiveness supports the learning and development of children from all cultures and backgrounds.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Cultural Responsiveness and the ELOF

## Culture contributes to learning and development



- Express and manage emotions
- Attend to others
- Show respect
- Seek comfort
- Engage with stories or songs

### SLIDE 8:

Culture is one of many influences on children's development. Caregivers use practices that are based on families' cultural values and expectations.

The ELOF includes specific examples of the ways that culture contributes to children's progress in each learning goal. For example, the first learning goal in the Approaches to Learning domain for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers refers to how children manage their emotions. As the ELOF explains, "The strategies children use to manage strong emotions may vary based on cultural background. For example, some children may be much more likely to use self-soothing strategies while others may seek out comfort from adults" (ELOF, p. 12).

### DISCUSSION

Lead the participants in a brief discussion of different ways children may demonstrate 1-2 of the skills on the slide. While the differences may be related to culture, personality, or circumstance, it is less important to identify the reason for these differences than it is to think about varied ways that children may demonstrate these skills.

For example:

- What are different ways children may show respect to adults? *Some children will look at adults, while, in some circumstances, others will look away. Some may ask adults lots of questions, while others will not.*
- What are different ways children engage with stories? *Some children may actively participate in stories that are read to them, while others may tell stories orally or listen attentively to stories that are read or told to them.*

To close this section of the training, ask participants to complete the "Reflection" section of the Learning Activity: The Role of Culture in Our Lives handout.

### REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2015. *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*. Washington, DC: Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Learning Activity: The Role of Culture in Our Lives

## Culture contributes to caregiving and teaching



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### SLIDE 9:

Culture shapes our expectations of children and how we interact with them. For example, people from some cultures highly value independence, even in very young children. Those who hold this value may encourage children to develop self-care skills from a young age, including feeding themselves, managing their own conflicts, and cleaning up after themselves. They may provide appropriate utensils and cups to support children's independence in feeding themselves. Other adults use practices that nurture interdependence, including feeding young children long after other cultures expect them to feed themselves.

### OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

Lead the participants in a brief discussion of the following prompts. Discuss the ways participants agree and disagree, and why. If all participants answered the same way, ask if they have ever interacted with those who would answer differently. Note that culture is one influence on how we answer these questions, but not the only one.

Suggested prompts include:

- How should caregivers soothe babies (e.g., holding, providing an object, pacifier)?
- When should children learn to start using the toilet?
- When should children feed themselves?
- When should children learn letters and sounds?

### DISCUSSION

Lead the participants in a brief discussion using one or more of these prompts:

- Think about a time you realized that you hold different views about caregiving and teaching from another adult. How did you feel? Were these cultural differences? What did you do?
- Think about a time that staff within your program disagreed about the practices they should use with children. What was the disagreement? Was it related to culture? How was it resolved?
- Think about a time that staff disagreed with a family about the practices they should use with children. What was the disagreement? Was it related to culture? How was it resolved?



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You might use this follow-up question with any one of the above prompts.

- In what way, if any, has your professional training or work environment impacted your approach?

Families, communities, and early learning programs may have different expectations for children's growth and development. The expectations programs have for children were developed within the culture of the early care and education system in the United States. The expectations families have for their children are developed within the culture of the family and the context of their community. Therefore, there may be times when families have different expectations than programs staff. For example, a program staff member has noticed that a child has not yet developed self-care skills that the program expects for learning and development. The family may share that they do not expect the child to have those skills yet, and the child has not been given opportunities at home to develop those skills. Knowing more about the families' expectations, goals, and values can guide the program staff's assessment of the child and provide an opportunity for the program staff and families to share more about their practices and expectations.

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#### REFERENCES

Derman-Sparks, L. "Developing Culturally Competent Caregiving Practices: Ask, Acknowledge, Adapt" in Virmani, E. A., & Mangione, P. L., (Eds.). 2013. *Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Culturally Sensitive Care* (2nd ed.). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education, 67-94.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2010. *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start, 38.

## How does your curriculum support a culturally responsive approach?



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A curriculum should include guidance for culturally responsive:

- Interactions
- Learning Experiences
- Learning Environments

### SLIDE 10:

A curriculum should support a culturally responsive approach. The materials or training should share the ways that culture influences children and adults. The curriculum should also provide guidance for culturally responsive:

- **Interactions.** It should share ways to engage with children and families of varied cultures and backgrounds.
- **Learning experiences.** It needs to share routines that build on children's cultures and experiences within their family and community.
- **Learning environments and materials.** It must represent children's and families' cultures and languages.

A culturally responsive approach to implementing the curriculum should include suggestions for studies, themes, or investigations that respond to children's cultures, backgrounds, interests, and prior knowledge. For example, a curriculum may include learning experiences about gardening. The curriculum may suggest asking families and children which plants to grow and sharing experiences or knowledge about plants or gardening. Families may share gardening tools, plants that are unique to the family's culture or country of origin, and stories or songs about plants and gardening. The curriculum may also offer ways to involve children and families who have little experience with gardening.

### DISCUSSION

Ask participants to complete the handout in small groups. Then share their responses with the larger group.

Lead a discussion about how their curriculum supports cultural responsiveness.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Learning Activity for Education Staff: Reflecting on Your Curriculum

### OPTIONAL MATERIALS:

- Replace with Optional Slide 3 for an extended version of the learning activity
- Handout: Exploring Your Curriculum: A Quick Guide for Teachers and Family Child Care Providers

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites

## Developmentally Appropriate Practice

“Addressing cultural  
relevance in making  
curriculum choices and  
adaptations is a necessary,  
developmentally  
appropriate practice.”

Multicultural Principle 4, *Head Start  
Multicultural Principles*

### SLIDE 11:

Multicultural Principle 4 states, “Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices and adaptations is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice.”

### DISCUSSION

**Ask participants:** What does this principle mean to you? Have you ever made a curriculum choice or adaptation to support cultural relevance and responsiveness?

We should always strive to implement the curriculum with fidelity, following the curriculum’s guidance and recommendations. Sometimes we may need to modify how we implement a curriculum to be more culturally responsive, which is developmentally appropriate for the children in our group. For example, a curriculum may suggest children’s books or materials that do not authentically represent the cultures or children in the group. In this case, education staff, along with families and community members, would choose learning materials that meet the goals of the curriculum and are culturally responsive and meaningful to children.

As one educator says, “Culturally responsive care and education keep children not only emotionally safe but intellectually safe. In a culturally responsive classroom, children are free to focus on learning” (York 2016).

(Note: See *Implementing a Curriculum with Fidelity: Questions and Answers* for information about when Early Head Start/Head Start programs must consult with outside experts to make major adaptations to curricula. And see *Selecting and Using Culturally Appropriate Children’s Books* for information about this topic.)

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## REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Selecting and Using Culturally Appropriate Children's Books*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2018. *Implementing a Curriculum with Fidelity: Questions and Answers*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Planned Language Approach*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2010. *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

York, S. 2016. *Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture and Preventing Bias in Early Childhood Programs*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.



## Avoiding stereotypes and tokenism



- AVOID making assumptions about people based on their culture
- AVOID using only one picture or activity to represent a whole culture
- AVOID reducing culture to celebrations, food, clothes and art
- LEARN from people about their cultures
- EMPHASIZE diversity **within** as well as **across** cultures
- INFUSE culture in meaningful ways throughout your curriculum

### SLIDE 12:

To be culturally responsive, we must avoid stereotypes and tokenism. While culture is related to values, beliefs, practices, and traditions, people within a culture do not all believe or act the same way. Each culture includes a huge diversity of values, beliefs, practices, and traditions. It is very important not to make assumptions about what people are like based on their perceived culture, language, race, or ethnicity. Instead, we should learn from families about their cultures to help us understand what is unique about this family and help us build strong relationships. Also, as we learn from families, we gain insight into the vast diversity within and across cultures.

Even stereotypes that seem positive are harmful. For example, assuming that people from a culture will be really smart or really friendly is stereotypical. Instead, we recognize that every person is unique. Every day is a learning opportunity when we are open to understanding the cultures of individual families.

Cultural responsiveness also means representing cultures as fully as possible, rather than reducing them to only a few items, like food traditions. Including culture in only a minimal or “token” way is called tokenism. For example, we may learn about and respect a family’s cultural traditions like holidays and foods. Tokenism is when we do not learn about and respect other less visible cultural practices, like the role of elders or household customs upon entering a house. If we only expect cultures to differ in their holidays and foods, we miss most of what culture is and miss important opportunities to be more culturally responsive!

Now we will explore stereotypes and tokenism.

Distribute the handout to participants. Encourage half of the participants to read the “Stereotypes” side of the handout and the other half to read the “Tokenism” side of the handout.

### DISCUSSION:

Lead a brief discussion of 1-2 of the prompts at the bottom of the handout in the “Consider why” (page 1) or “Consider what is missing” (page 2) section.

### CONSIDER WHY:

- When asked to look for “behavior that may become a potential challenge” in a video, early educators looked more often at the Black boy than the White boy or the girls (Gilliam, et al, 2016)

*Discuss the role of bias, including implicit bias, in how we interpret children’s behavior. Emphasize that we are not aware of our implicit bias but that it still influences our thinking and actions.*

- “Positive stereotypes, that imply children from some cultural groups are academically strong, are harmful.

*Discuss what it feels like when someone makes assumptions about you based on your group membership. Emphasize that positive stereotypes reinforce other assumptions.*

CONSIDER WHAT IS MISSING WHEN:

- A curriculum includes one unit about culture and rarely addresses culture in other units. Each lesson in the unit describes the food, clothing, and traditions of a different culture (five lessons in total).

*Emphasize the importance of diving deeper than food, clothing, and traditions. What else could you discover about a person’s culture?*

- A lesson about clothing explains that in Japan women wear kimonos and in India women wear saris and only picture women in this traditional clothing.

*Discuss the diversity of clothing in Japan and India, including traditional wear and everyday clothing.*

- One family, who has roots in Mexico, shares aspects of their culture with the educator. The teacher assumes that other children, from different regions in Mexico and Central America and South America, share the same culture and language.

*Discuss how teachers miss opportunities when they assume that other children and families from different regions in Mexico, Central America, and South America share the same culture and language.*

OPTIONAL EXTENSION/ALTERNATIVE APPROACH:

Form groups of 2-3. Half of the groups will explore the “Stereotypes” side of the sheet, and the other half will explore the “Tokenism” side of the sheet. Ask each participant to read the appropriate side of the handout (i.e., “Stereotypes” or “Tokenism”). Ask small groups to discuss the reflection question. Then ask the groups to discuss 1-2 of the prompts at the bottom of the handout. After several minutes, ask the groups that explored “Stereotypes” to share, and then ask the groups that explored “Tokenism” to share.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON IMPLICIT BIAS, LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCE:

Front Porch Series: Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions, and Why We Should Care. January 2020. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/preschool-expulsions-suspensions-why-we-should-care>.

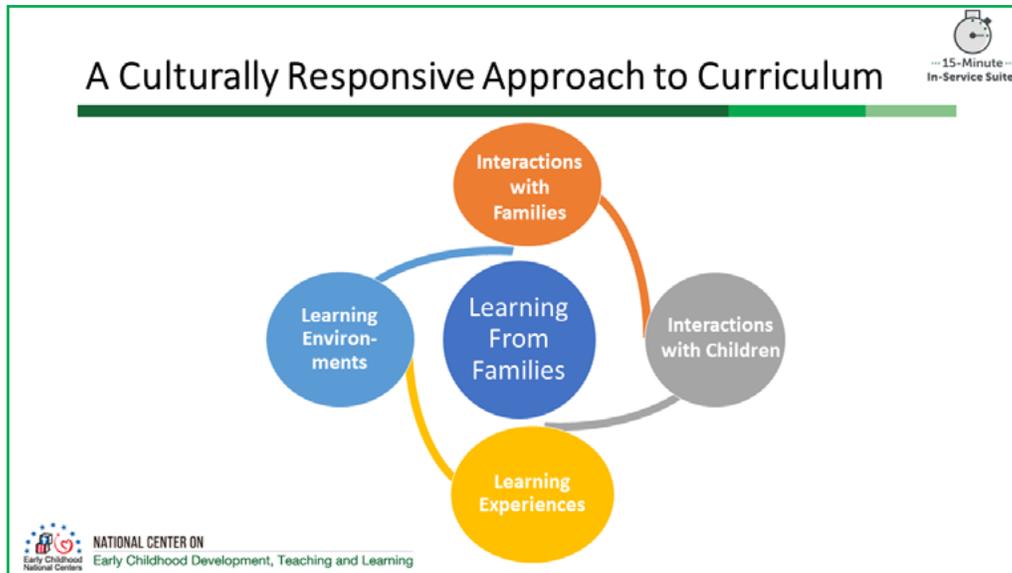
REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2010. *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Supporting the School Readiness and Success of Young African American Boys Project*. Washington, CD: Office of Head Start.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Handout: Exploring Stereotypes and Tokenism



### SLIDE 13:

Now we will describe a culturally responsive approach to implementing a curriculum.

A culturally responsive and meaningful approach to teaching and learning affects the ways we:

- Learn from families
- Interact with families and children
- Implement learning experiences
- Provide learning environments and materials

We will now explore each aspect of implementing a curriculum in culturally responsive ways.

## A Culturally Responsive Approach: Learning from Families

... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites

- How families prefer to communicate
- How their children are cared for within their families and community
- Their goals and hopes for their children



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### SLIDE 14:

We begin with learning from families. Families are vital partners in implementing a curriculum with cultural responsiveness. They are our best source of information about their culture. Families can show us how to interact with them and with their child. Many families' backgrounds and languages are different from your own. While you may share some important goals and practices with families, they also have ideas, goals, and practices that are new to you. Be respectful, appreciative, and responsive to the interests, strengths, and needs of each family.

An important piece of this relationship is learning how families prefer to communicate. For example, what language do they prefer? When is the best time to communicate? Do they prefer informal or formal meetings? Who do they want to include? Together, work to be responsive to these preferences.

#### OPTIONAL BRIEF DISCUSSION

How do the families you work with prefer to communicate? How could you be responsive to these preferences?

We also must learn how families and communities care for their children. Learn how children are fed and soothed. Gather families' perspectives on language, independence, toilet training, and discipline. Learn key words or phrases, songs, stories, objects, and routines that are important to the family. Ask about objects and routines—such as sleeping, eating, and playing—that are important to the child and family.

#### OPTIONAL BRIEF DISCUSSION

What information did you already learn from families? What could you ask families?

We also ask families to share their goals and hopes for their child. This helps us know what families expect as they raise their children. For example, what do families consider important milestones? They may be different than what most early childhood educators believe are "typical." Do families expect children to walk, talk, feed and dress themselves, use the toilet, write their name, or count at the same time as you? Do their goals align with the learning and development goals in the ELOF? Also, how do families expect children to learn best? By exploring and playing? Being taught within the family? Being taught by teachers? Rote? Practicing over and over until they write their name or numbers correctly? Cultural beliefs and experiences can influence these aspects of learning and development.

Share the handout.

Ask participants to circle any topics they would like to ask families about.

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## DISCUSSION

Lead a discussion about learning from families. Ask some of the following prompts:

- What would you like to learn from families? Are there any topics that are not on the handout that you would like to learn about?
- When and how do you learn from families? When could you learn from families after children are enrolled in your program?
- Please share what you have learned from families that informed your caregiving and teaching. What impact did this information have on your practice?

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff: Learning from Families

### OPTIONAL MATERIALS:

- Insert Optional Slide 4 to explore resources that encourage families to share their culture with the early learning setting
- Handout: Tips for Families: Inviting Families to Share Their Culture
- Handout: Activity for Families: Family Artifact Bag

## A Culturally Responsive Approach: Interactions with Families

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites



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### SLIDE 15:

Our interactions with families are ongoing. We use information from families to guide our interactions. We also use this information to build positive relationships with families and plan our curricula. This helps us support positive outcomes for children and families. Here we will hear Maria, a family child care provider, share how she involves the diverse families in her group. We will discuss her goals and strategies, as well as families' responses, after the video.

**Share the education staff video** (the video will be translated; see the translation file for the English language translation).

### DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share what they noticed. Use the following prompts:

- How does Maria describe the families she works with?
- What are her goals?
- What practices does Maria use to involve families?
- How do the families respond?
- What are other practices Maria could try?

## A Culturally Responsive Approach: Interactions with Children

... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites

Engage in interactions that are familiar to children, nurturing, and supportive.



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### SLIDE 16:

It is important to learn how families interact with their children and what their children find nurturing, supportive, and meaningful. Some interactions and parenting practices may be related to culture; others may be individual preferences or related to other factors.

Develop a warm, nurturing, and supportive relationship with each child. Be attentive to the child's cues and responsive to individual interests, strengths, and needs. Respect and include children's home or tribal languages.

For example, based on culture or individual preference, some children may seek comfort from adults through hugs, while others may prefer a caring adult engage with them in another way—maybe sitting close by as the child plays. While we may have our own preferences, using a culturally responsive approach means that we will provide comfort in ways that are familiar and meaningful to each child.

### DISCUSSION

What are some other ways that children may seek comfort from adults?

Some examples may include sharing a smile, using words or phrases in a home or tribal language, sharing familiar songs, or allowing children space and time to comfort themselves.

### SHARE THE HANDOUT

After giving participants time to read and engage with the material, ask them to share their responses to one or more of the scenarios. Note that in many cases, it is not clear if the practices, goals, and values families share are cultural. We aim to be responsive whether they are cultural in origin or not. Questions to ask about each scenario include:

- What is the educator's challenge?
- What does the educator learn from the family?
- How does this information help her be responsive to the child?
- Do you have any additional responses to this scenario?

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff: Interactions with Children

## A Culturally Responsive Approach: Learning Experiences



- **Build** on children’s cultures and languages
- **Engage** families and communities in making connections between learning experiences and their cultures
- **Respect** children’s expressions of culture



### SLIDE 17:

Most curricula suggest learning experiences to support children’s learning and development. When you use a culturally responsive approach, you may modify those learning experiences to directly connect to children’s knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Avoid learning experiences that include stereotypes, involve tokenism, or take a “tourist” approach to culture.

When using a culturally responsive approach, educators provide learning experiences that:

- **Build** on children’s diverse experiences within their families, cultures, and home and tribal languages.
- **Engage** families and community members in learning experiences that include and build on children’s cultures.
- **Respect** and include children’s cultures and languages in the early learning settings.

### OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

Lead a discussion about the photograph. Ask participants to turn to a partner and describe the photograph. What do they see?

Here is one way to interpret the photograph:

Rather than highlighting foods commonly associated with different cultures, this educator worked with families to identify customs for cooking, serving, and eating food. Each family contributed special recipes, food-related practices, and items. Families were invited to prepare and share dishes with the group. Each child had an opportunity to share something that had both cultural and personal meaning.

### DISCUSSION

Share the handout. After giving participants time to read the sheet and engage with the material, ask them to share their responses to one or more of the scenarios. Questions to ask about each scenario include:

- What is the learning experience suggested by the curriculum?
- How does the educator learn about the knowledge and skills children and families bring to that learning experience?

- How does the educator enhance or adapt the learning experience to build on children’s knowledge and skills?
- What other responses do you have to this scenario?

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REFERENCE

National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. 2017. *Making It Work: Implementing Cultural Learning Experiences in American Indian and Alaska Native Early Learning Settings*. Washington, DC: Office of Head Start.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff: Providing Learning Experiences

## A Culturally Responsive Approach: Learning Environments

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites

- Provide environments and materials that reflect children's cultures and languages.
- Invite families and community members to suggest or provide culturally relevant materials
- Integrate home and tribal languages into the learning environment in meaningful ways.



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### SLIDE 18:

Most curricula help you set up the learning environment and introduce materials. When you use a culturally responsive approach, you intentionally create learning experiences and provide learning materials that reflect children's cultures and languages. While the curriculum's suggestions are important, choosing learning materials involves input from families, staff, and community members who represent the diversity of the group.

#### BRIEF DISCUSSION

What do you notice about this picture? What learning materials is this child using? How? Why is this important?

When designing the learning environment, begin with the curriculum's recommendations and materials. Evaluate these resources for stereotypes and tokenism. Invite families and community members to suggest, provide, or review culturally relevant materials for interest areas, learning centers, and learning experiences. The learning environment should include materials and resources that represent a variety of cultural backgrounds. Most importantly, all the children's cultures should be fully represented. The language used in literacy materials or signs should be respectful and inclusive. Home and tribal languages should be integrated into the learning environment in meaningful ways.

#### OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

What are some ways you include learning materials and create learning environments that are culturally responsive to children and families? What are some other ways you could provide more culturally responsive learning materials?

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## DISCUSSION

Share the handout.

After giving participants time to read the sheet and engage with the material, ask them to share their responses to one or more of the scenarios.

Questions to ask about each scenario include:

- What does the curriculum suggest when setting up the learning environment (including providing learning materials)?
- What practices does the educator use to find out which knowledge and skills children and families bring to that learning experience?
- How does the educator enhance or adapt the learning environment (including learning materials) to authentically reflect all the children's cultures and languages?
- What other responses do you have to this scenario?

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff: Providing Learning Environments and Materials

## Review

—15-Minute—  
In-Service Suites



What do I know about children's culture?



What does my program's curriculum offer?



How do I implement the curriculum responsive to children's culture?

### SLIDE 19:

Cultural responsiveness is an essential aspect of implementing a curriculum. This process is ongoing and grows and deepens over time. It begins with becoming aware of our own cultural lenses and starting to learn more about the cultures of the children and families. We use this knowledge to build strong relationships, strategize our teaching and learning, and implement our curriculum in ways that build on children's and families' cultures and languages. With each new group, we have more to learn and discover ways to make the curriculum culturally responsive and meaningful. Our efforts support positive outcomes for all children and their families.

Use the lessons you have learned to implement your curriculum in a culturally responsive way.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Helpful Resources for Education Staff
- Tools for Supervisors of Education Staff: Reflection and Feedback