Cultural Competency

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman.”

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
SPHARC Grantee Call
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This information contains information from the National Center for Cultural Competency's website: http://nccc.georgetown.edu/index.html a partner and natural “first stop” for information for ASD/DD grantees.
The mission of the **National Center for Cultural Competence** is to increase the capacity of health care and mental health care programs to design, implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems to address growing diversity, persistent disparities, and to promote health and mental health equity.
Cultural Competence:

Definition and Conceptual Framework

Cultural competence requires that organizations:

- have a defined set of **values** and **principles**,

and

- **demonstrate behaviors**, **attitudes**, **policies**

and

- **structures** that enable them to *work effectively cross-culturally*. 
Organizations which are Culturally Competent:

Have the **capacity** to

(1) **value diversity**, 
(2) **conduct self-assessment**, 
(3) **manage the dynamics of difference**, 
(4) **acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge**

and

(5) **adapt to diversity** and the **cultural contexts of the communities they serve.**
There lies the Challenge!
Do you have what you need to meet the needs of the communities you serve?

Cultural Competence is a multi-layered, transcending and transforming concept. It is a journey, not an outcome. The path to cultural competency requires ongoing self-assessment & improvement planning. Be true to yourself and take a look at your organization(s):

**Attitude(s)**

Knowledge base

Skill(s)

Organizational behaviors

Policies

Location

Outreach

Employees

Culture
Culturally Competent Organizations

design and implement services that are tailored or matched to the unique needs of individuals, children, families, organizations and communities served.*
In Culturally Competent Organizations...

Service delivery systems are driven by the service community client’s preferred choices, **not** by culturally blind or culturally free interventions.*
Practice & Service Design

Cultural competence is achieved by identifying and understanding the needs and help-seeking behaviors of individuals and families.*

What are some of the help-seeking behaviors of the families you serve?
Culture shapes status, relationships and social behaviors with regard to every aspect of life

- Justice for individual vs. group harmony
- Willingness to question authority

People from various backgrounds communicate and process information differently

- Rational vs. intuitive
- Linear vs. circular
- Abstract vs. concrete
- Time-bound vs. not
The SPAN Model:

Throughout our organization’s history, our focus has continually been to engage parents/caregivers of children with the greatest need due to disability; poverty; discrimination based on race, sex, language, immigrant, or homeless status; involvement in the foster care, child welfare, or juvenile justice systems; geographic location; or other special circumstances.
The SPAN Motto:

Empowered Parents: Educated, Engaged, Effective!

Focus = enhance the leadership of every parent
  Within their family
  Within their community
  In systems change
State Snapshot:

NJ is the most urbanized and densely populated state in the nation, and it is rich in racial and ethnic diversity compared to the nation as a whole. Our beautiful state ranges from sandy beaches to lush mountain ranges.
The People of New Jersey: DIVERSE!

Our population is estimated to be close to 8.7 million. According to the 2011 US Census data the demographics rounded up are as follows: Hispanics or Latinos comprise 21%, Black Americans 13 %, White (not Hispanic) 58% , Asian 7% and those reporting two or more races, 1%.

There are almost 300,000 thousand CYSHCN in New Jersey
We have a diverse staff...

You must be an *authentic bridge* to the community and be composed of an *authentic voice*.

Our staff is composed of **60% parents of color** including Native American, African-American, Latina, and Asian. From top to bottom, our staff is diverse including our diverse set of management team and project directors and project coordinators. **We have to** be diverse because the families we serve and support represent the full diversity of NJ families, and our outcome data is very positive.
Cultural Competency means extending Partnerships across Cultural and Professional Boundaries for CYSHCN-ASD/DD:
SPAN has a unique and strategic partnership with both of NJ’s statewide organizations focused on autism (Autism NJ and Parents of Autistic Children (POAC) in addition to other programs targeted to **specific cultural communities** such as the Chinese Autism Center, numerous other developmental disability-specific organizations (Cerebral Palsy of NJ, Epilepsy Foundation of NJ, Mom 2 Mom Espanola, Servicios de Burlington County etc.) These organizations are able to “extend our reach” to provide additional Autism specific training programs and literature for parents of CYSHCN-ASD/DD across the state of New Jersey!
Our Partners helped us create a broad-based Community of Care Consortium established with representatives from families of CYSHCN (including ASD/DD), state agencies, health providers and their associations, disability and advocacy groups, and community based organizations including immigrant organizations.

Program Diversity is sustainable...
This Community of Care Consortium membership will assume responsibility, continue coordination and sustain statewide activities implemented in NJ’s State Plan for Autism, developed through a multi-pronged process of needs assessment (Autism NJ Listening Tour; Adults with Autism Task Force (with its targeted focus on transition); and a series of focus groups with diverse parents of CYSHCN-ASD/DD from early intervention through transition.
Diversity is not new for us:

SPAN has had a **Culturally Competent Outreach and Support Project** for over 6 years that works across projects to improve our cultural responsiveness and "cultural reciprocity." We also conduct training, cultural and linguistic competence self assessments, and language access rights and strategies workshops on a national level as well as within our state.
Our Model:

We never develop a new program, implement a new initiative, or evaluate our effectiveness, without engaging representatives of the diverse community we are seeking to support.

Period.
Our Model:

We provide the supports that diverse families need to partner with us.

We believe that all parents can be leaders, regardless of their background.

We partner with community-based and immigrant-serving agencies, asking not what they can do for us, but what we can do together.
Our Model:

Strengths-based
Build leadership, not dependence
Be ready to hear what families say
Be ready to follow where families lead
Engage diverse families at all levels
Provide needed supports
“Nothing about me, without me”
Develop reciprocal relationships of trust
Use cultural brokers/serve as cultural brokers
Cultural reciprocity means:

Do unto others as they would have you do unto them.

Relationships: learning about the other, sharing about oneself.

Listening with the heart, for the heart, and sharing our heart.