

# Family-Centered Care - Cultural and Linguistic Competence

New Mexico

## Definition:

- Cultural competence is defined as a set of **values, behaviors, attitudes, and practices** within a system, organization, program, or among individuals and which enables them to work effectively cross culturally. Further, it refers to the ability to **honor and respect the beliefs, language, interpersonal styles and behaviors** of individuals and families receiving services, as well as staff who are providing such services.
- At a systems, organizational, or program level, cultural competence requires a comprehensive and coordinated plan that includes interventions at all the levels from policy-making to the individual, and is a dynamic, ongoing, process that requires a long-term commitment.
- A component of cultural competence is **linguistic competence**, the capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively, and convey information **in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences** including persons of limited English proficiency, those who are not literate or have low literacy skills, and individuals with disabilities.
- Family-Centered Care assures the health and well-being of children and their families through a **respectful family-professional partnership**. It honors the strengths, cultures, traditions and expertise that everyone brings to the relationship.
- Family-Centered Care is the standard of practice which results in **high quality services**.

## Role of Cultural Competence in Family-Centered Care

- Cultural Competence is intricately linked to the concept and practice of “family-centered care”.
- Family-Centered Care honors the strengths, cultures, traditions and expertise that everyone brings to a respectful family/professional partnership, where families feel they can be decision makers with providers at different levels - in the care of their own children and as advocates for systems and policies supportive of children and youth with special health care needs.
- It requires culturally competent attitudes and practices in order to develop and nurture those partnerships and to have the knowledge and skills that will enable you to be “family-centered” with the many diverse families that exist.
- It also often requires building relationships with community cultural brokers, who can assist you in understanding community norms and link you with other families and organizations, such as churches, beauty shops, social clubs, etc. that can help promote your message or conduct outreach for services.

## Principles of Cultural Competence within Family-Centered Care

An organization should:

- Value diversity in families, staff, providers and communities;
- Have the capacity for cultural self-assessment;
- Be conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, e.g. families and providers;
- Institutionalize cultural knowledge; and
- Develop adaptations to service delivery and partnership building reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity.

An individual should:

- Examine one’s own attitude and values;
- Acquire the values, knowledge, and skills for working in cross cultural situations; and
- Remember that everyone has a culture.

from *Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs*

**Questions? Call the CDD Information Network at**

**1-800-552-8195 or 505-272-8549**

<https://goto.unm.edu/amx6v>

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