

The Cultural and Linguistic Competence Self-Assessment Checklist for Early Head Start and Head Start Program Administrators and Managers is intended to increase awareness and sensitivity of administrators and managers to the importance of cultural diversity and cultural and linguistic competence in support and supervision of Head Start and Early Head Start program staff. Each of the sections provides real examples of the kinds of values and practices that foster culturally and linguistically competent Early Head Start and Head Start environments.

There is no answer key with correct responses, however, if you frequently respond “C,” you may want to take steps to increase your awareness, knowledge and skills in providing culturally and linguistically competent services for the current and future young children and families served by your program. We have provided links to additional resources below.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence Self-Assessment Checklist for Early Head Start and Head Start Program Administrators

DIRECTIONS

Please select A, B, or C for each of the items presented in this checklist.

A = Things I do frequently

B = Things I do occasionally

C = Things I do rarely or never

MY VALUES AND ATTITUDES- SUPPORTING STAFF

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- ____ 1. I encourage all staff and consultants to avoid imposing values that may conflict or be inconsistent with those of cultures or ethnic groups other than their own.
- ____ 2. I encourage staff to screen books, movies, and other media resources for negative cultural, ethnic, racial, or religious stereotypes before sharing them with children and families served.
- ____ 3. I encourage staff to provide activities to help children learn about and accept the differences and similarities in all people.
- ____ 4. I support all staff and consultants to intervene in an appropriate manner when they observe any staff, consultant or parent engaging in behaviors that show cultural insensitivity, bias or prejudice.
- ____ 5. I encourage all staff and consultants to understand and accept that individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds may desire varying degrees of acculturation into the dominant culture.
- ____ 6. I encourage all staff and consultants to understand and accept that family is defined differently by different cultures (e.g., extended family members, fictive kin, and godparents).
- ____ 7. I encourage all staff and consultants to accept and respect that among different cultural groups male-female roles in families may vary significantly (e.g. who makes major decisions for the family, play and social interactions expected of male and female children).
- ____ 8. I support all staff and consultants in developing the understanding that age and life cycle factors must be considered in interactions with families (e.g. high value placed on the decisions or childrearing practices of elders or the role of the eldest female in the family).
- ____ 9. I encourage all staff and consultants to recognize that even though their professional or moral viewpoints may differ, they should accept the family/parents as the ultimate decision makers for services and supports for their children.

MY VALUES AND ATTITUDES-SUPPORTING STAFF

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- ____10. I support all staff and consultants to accept that religion, spirituality, and other beliefs may influence how families respond to illness, disease, and death.
- ____11. I support all staff and consultants in their understanding that beliefs and concepts of mental health or emotional well-being, particularly for infants and young children, vary significantly from culture to culture.
- ____12. I encourage all staff and consultants to recognize and accept that familial folklore, religious, or spiritual beliefs may influence a family's reaction and approach to a child born with a disability or later diagnosed with a disability or special health care need.
- ____13. I assist all staff and consultants in understanding that beliefs about mental illness and emotional disability are culturally-based.
- ____14. I support all staff and consultants in understanding that culture has a great influence on how parents, families and communities respond to these conditions and related treatment/interventions.
- ____15. I assist all staff and consultants to recognize that the health care practices of families served in our Early Head Start or Head Start program may be rooted in cultural traditions.
- ____16. I assist all staff and consultants to recognize that the meaning or value of early learning, early childhood education, early intervention, and/or school readiness may vary greatly among cultures.
- ____17. I assist all staff and consultants to understand that approaches to disciplining children are influenced by culture.
- ____18. I support all staff and consultants in understanding that families from different cultural backgrounds will have different expectations of their children for acquiring toileting, dressing, feeding, and other self-help skills.
- ____19. I assist all staff and consultants in understanding that customs and beliefs about food, its value, preparation, and use are different from culture to culture.

MY VALUES AND ATTITUDES-SUPPORTING STAFF

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- _____20. Before visiting or providing services in the home setting, I encourage all staff and consultants to seek information on acceptable behaviors, courtesies, customs, and expectations that are unique to families of specific cultural groups served in our Early Head Start and Head Start program.
- _____21. I encourage all staff and consultants to review our programs or agency's mission statement, goals, policies, and procedures to ensure that they include principles and practices that promote cultural diversity, cultural competence and linguistic competence.
- _____22. I encourage all staff and consultants to seek information from family members or other key community informants that will assist us in responding effectively to the preferences and needs of children and families from diverse backgrounds served in our program.

COMMUNICATION STYLES- SUPPORTING STAFF

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- _____ 1. I encourage all staff and consultants to attempt to learn and use key words in the languages and dialects of the children and families served so that they are better able to communicate.
- _____ 2. I support all staff to attempt to determine any familial terms used by children and families that will assist and/or enhance the delivery of services and supports.
- _____ 3. I encourage all staff and consultants to use visual aids, gestures, and physical prompts in their interactions with children, parents, and other family and community members with limited English proficiency or who are English language learners.
- _____ 4. I assist all staff and consultants to be aware that when interacting with parents, other family and community members with limited English proficiency or who are English language learners, that:
 - _____ * Limitations in their ability to speak and/or understand English are not a reflection of intellectual functioning.
 - _____ * Limitations in their ability to speak and/or understand the language of the dominant culture is not related to their ability to communicate effectively in their native or primary language.
 - _____ * they may or may not be literate in their native or primary language or English.
- _____ 5. I encourage all staff and consultants to ensure that all bulletins, newsletters, and notices to parents are written in their native or primary language.
- _____ 6. I support all staff and consultants to understand that for some parents and family members it may be necessary to provide information in non-written formats, because word of mouth may be a preferred method of receiving information.

COMMUNICATION STYLES- SUPPORTING STAFF

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- ____ 7. I assist all staff and consultants in their understanding of the definition and related practices of linguistic competency and I:
- ____ *
- ____ *
- ____ 8. I encourage all staff and consultants to use bilingual or multilingual staff and/or trained/certified foreign language interpreters for meetings, conferences, or other events for parents and family members who may require this level of assistance.
- ____ 9. I encourage all staff and consultants to invite parents and family members to volunteer and assist with activities regardless of their ability to speak English.
- ____ 10. I encourage all staff and consultants to use a variety of approaches and formats to communicate with children, parents and other family members with disabilities.
- ____ 11. I encourage all staff to arrange accommodations for parents and family members who may require communication assistance (e.g. hard of hearing, visual disability, physical disability, low or no literacy) to ensure their full participation in all aspects of our Early Head Start or Head Start program.
- ____ 12. I encourage all staff and consultants to use plain language in interactions with parent, family and community members.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS, MATERIALS, AND RESOURCES- SUPPORTING STAFF
In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- _____1. I encourage all staff and consultants to hang pictures, posters and other materials that reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of children and families we serve.
- _____2. I encourage all staff to include materials for the dramatic play/housekeeping area that represent different cultures (including dolls, clothing, cooking utensils, household articles, furniture, and other items).
- _____3. I support all staff in including pictures and storybooks in the book/literacy area, that show the different cultures of children and families served.
- _____4. I assist staff to include toys and other play items that represent the various cultural and ethnic groups in my community and the society in general.
- _____5. I encourage staff to read a variety of books to children to expose them to various life experiences of people from ethnic and cultural groups other than their own.
- _____6. I encourage staff to provide opportunities for children and their families to create their own books and include them among the resources and materials in the classroom.
- _____7. I encourage staff to provide opportunities for children and their families to share experiences through storytelling, puppets, or other props to support the "story telling tradition" common among many cultures.
- _____8. I support teachers to plan trips and community outings to places where children and their families can learn about their own cultural or ethnic history as well as the history of others.
- _____9. I assist staff to select videos, films, or other media resources that reflect diverse cultures to share with children and families served in our program.
- _____10. I encourage staff to play a variety of music and introduce musical instruments from many cultures.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS, MATERIALS, AND RESOURCES

In our Head Start or Early Head Start program:

- _____11. I encourage staff to ensure that meals provided reflect the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of children and families served.
- _____12. I encourage staff to provide opportunities for children to prepare and/or sample foods typically served by different cultural and ethnic groups.
- _____13. I encourage all staff and consultants to create an environment that reflects the cultural diversity within the society at large even if the children and families in our program are of the same cultural or ethnic group.
- _____14. I support staff to ensure that curricula include holidays that are unique to the culturally diverse children and families served in my program.