



Engaging and Supporting Culturally Diverse Families with Young Children

This activity is made possible with funding from a grant from the Minnesota Department of Education. The source of the funds is federal award, State Personnel Development Grant.

PACER Center, Inc.

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TaALLIANCE.org

Phone (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST, Monday – Friday)

Minnesota: 1.800.537.2237 or 952.838.9000

TTY: 952.838.0190

USA: 888.248.0822

Fax: 952.838.0199

Today's Webinar

- ▶ Scheduled from 1:00 – 3:00 (Optional Question and Answer Session from 2:35 – 3:00)
- ▶ NOTE: If you are unable to listen to the Webinar through your computer speakers you may dial into the Webinar using the following toll free number:
 - Phone Number: 1-866-951-1151
 - Conference Room number: 3252262
- ▶ Participant phone lines are muted.
- ▶ If you are having technical difficulties, please call 952-838-9000 or 1-800-547-2237.

Today's Webinar

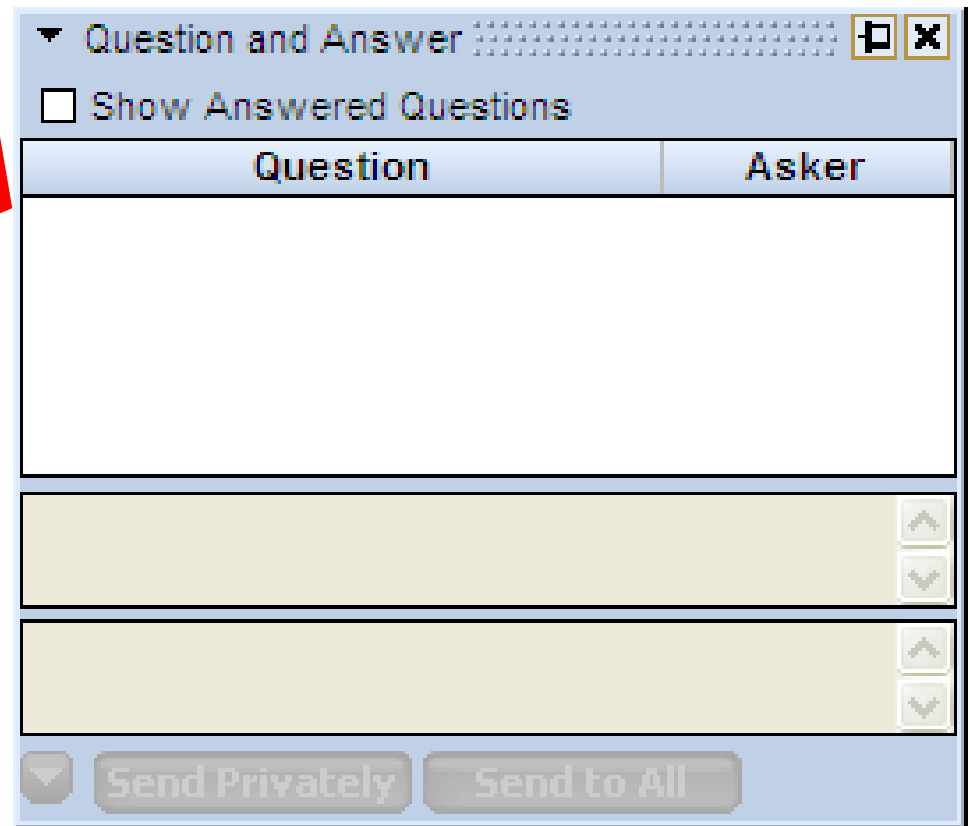
- ▶ A link to the on-line evaluation survey will be emailed after the presentation today
- ▶ Please complete evaluation surveys by August 28. Certificates of Attendance will be emailed in return the week of August 31
- ▶ If participating as a group, select one person to email bziemke@pacer.org a list of group participants after the presentation concludes today
- ▶ The Webinar will be archived in 8 to 10 weeks

Agenda

- ▶ **1:00 pm, Part I: *Serving Diverse Families in Minnesota***
 - Presenter: Dixie Jordan
- ▶ **2:10 pm, Part II: *Practical Tips for Successful Interactions***
 - Presenters: PACER's Multicultural Advocates, Hassan Samantar, Bonnie Jean Smith, Jesús Villaseñor, Dao Xiong and Dixie Jordan
- ▶ **2:35 pm, Part III: *Q & A's***

Optional: Question and Answer

1. Type your question in the white box
2. When text is entered, a “send” option will activate
3. Click send
4. Senders of questions are anonymous and will not be identified



Question and Answer

Show Answered Questions

Question	Asker

Send Privately Send to All

Barb Ziemke, moderator

- Parent Advocate and Trainer for 7 years
- Coordinator of PACER's SPDG Parent Outreach Project
- Parent of a son with a developmental disability
- Experience as a preschool teacher; facilitator for local Early Intervention Coordinating Committees; parent involvement coordinator for University of Washington's Center on Human Development and Disability Child Development Clinic.
- Parent and advocacy representative on Minnesota's State Special Education Advisory Panel



Hassan Samantar

- Parent Advocate and Trainer
- Parent of a child with a health impairment
- Advisor to Somali parents
- Translates materials into Somali
- Conducts workshops for professionals on culturally sensitive issues
- Serves on the Interagency Early Intervention Outreach Committee



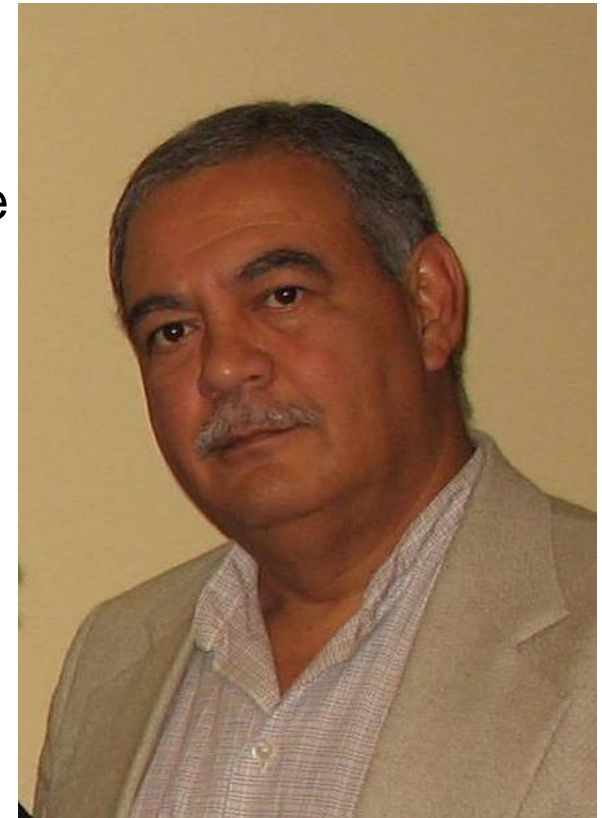
Bonnie Jean Smith

- PACER Parent advocate, trainer and Multicultural specialist for 9 years
- Former member of MN Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Member of the Monitoring and TA Review System team for the Federal Adm. on Developmental Disabilities
- Evaluator for MN Council for Quality
- Experience as educator and director at at Phillips Community Initiatives for Children, Early Learning Center
- Author of "How Big is the Fly; Asking the Right Question."
 - Parent of two children with developmental disabilities



Jesús Villaseñor

- Multicultural Specialist, Parent Advocate and Trainer at PACER for thirteen years
- Member of the Diversity Advisory Committee of the Minnesota Department of Education
- Formerly on the Minnesota Special Education Advisory Panel; LEP/IEP Cultural Advisory for the National Center on Educational Outcomes; Board of Directors, Hispanic/Latino Leadership ; the “Success By Six” Cultural Dynamics Committee of The United Way and as a National Field Reviewer for Cultural and Linguistic Appropriate Services Institute (CLAS)



Parent of adult child with a learning disability

Dao Xiong

- Parent advocate and trainer at PACER Center for 16 years
- Provides information and resources for Southeast Asian American families of children through workshops, personal assistance and written materials.
- Participates with many organizations in an advisory role.
- Came to the United States as a refugee 30 years ago
- Parent of 7 children, including an adult daughter with a mild cognitive disability
- Has extensive involvement in school settings



Part I: Serving Diverse Families

Presenter: Dixie Jordan

Keynote presenter Dixie Jordan is a nationally certified cultural competence trainer and a board member of the National Federation of Families. She has conducted more than 600 trainings, presentations, and keynotes nationally.





Engaging and Supporting Culturally Diverse Families with Young Children

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Welcome

Today's Webinar is for early childhood professionals who strive to produce positive outcomes for infants and young children and their families.



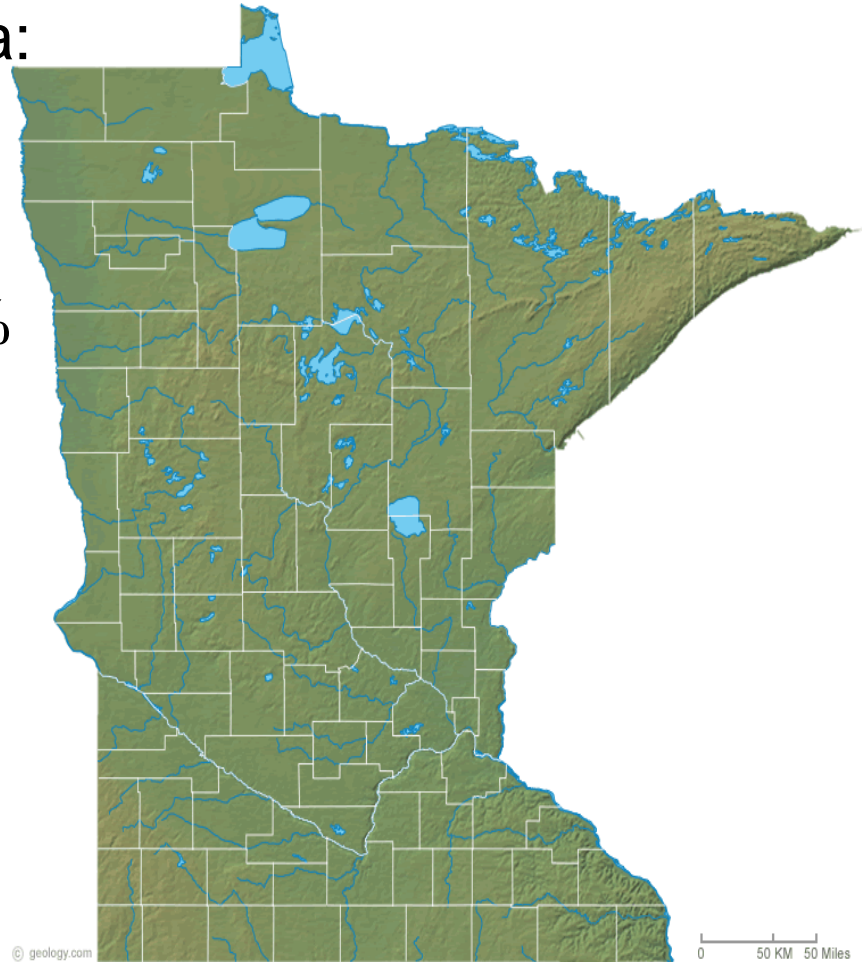
Why do we need to pay attention?

Between 2005-2015 in Minnesota:

1. Nonwhites will grow 35%
2. Whites will grow 7%
3. “Hispanic Origin” will grow 47%

In 2015:

- 19% of children under age 15 will be nonwhite
- 5% of people over age 65 will be nonwhite



Culture: More than meets the eye

Visible Culture:

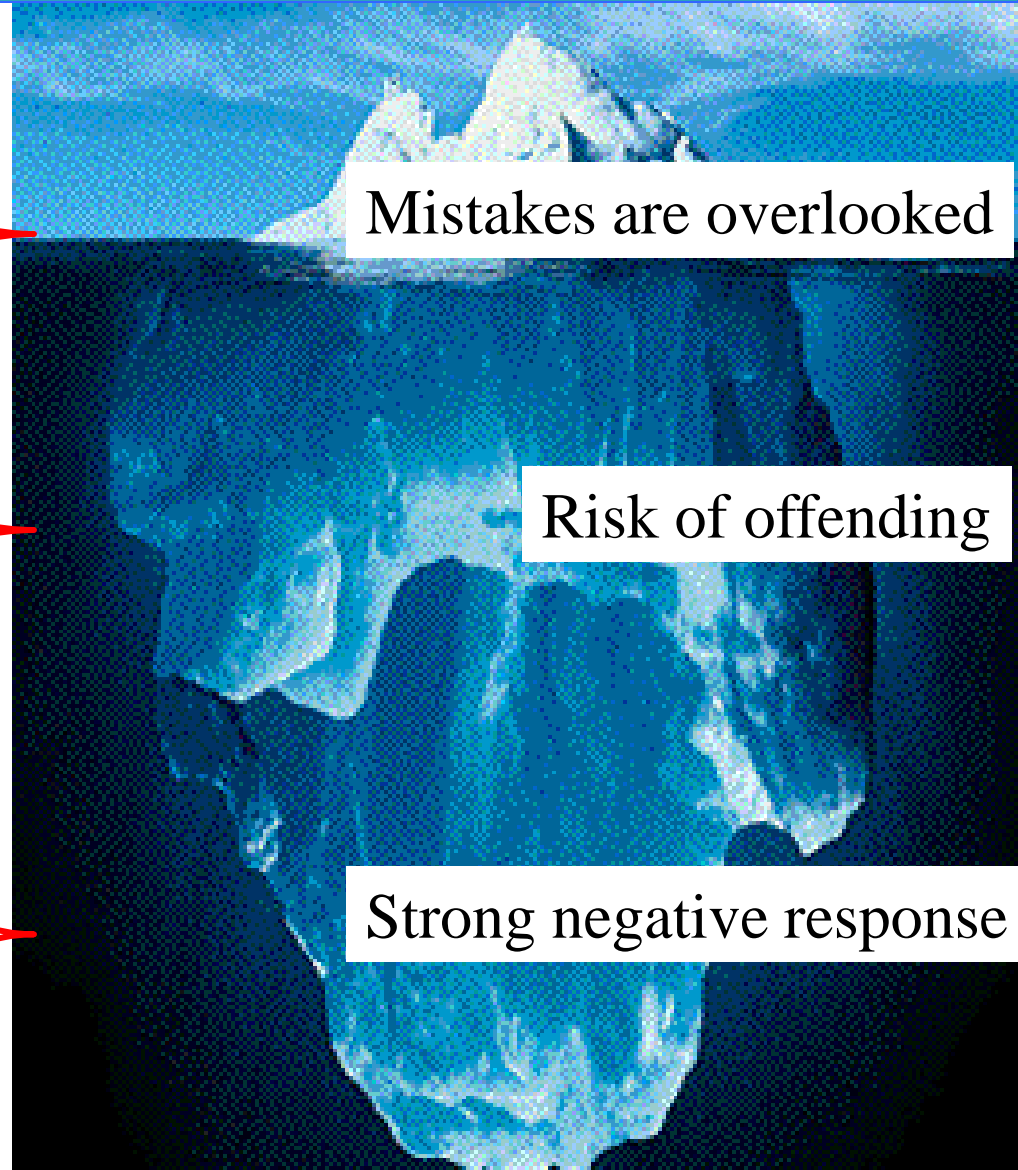
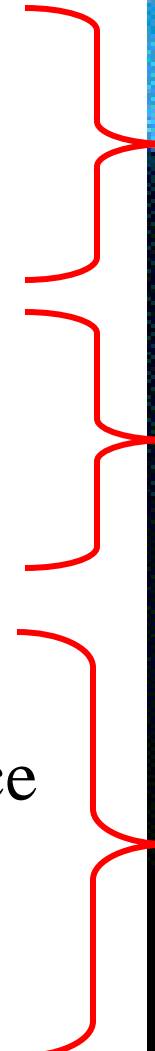
Foods, language, music, celebrations, dress, etc.

Understood rules:

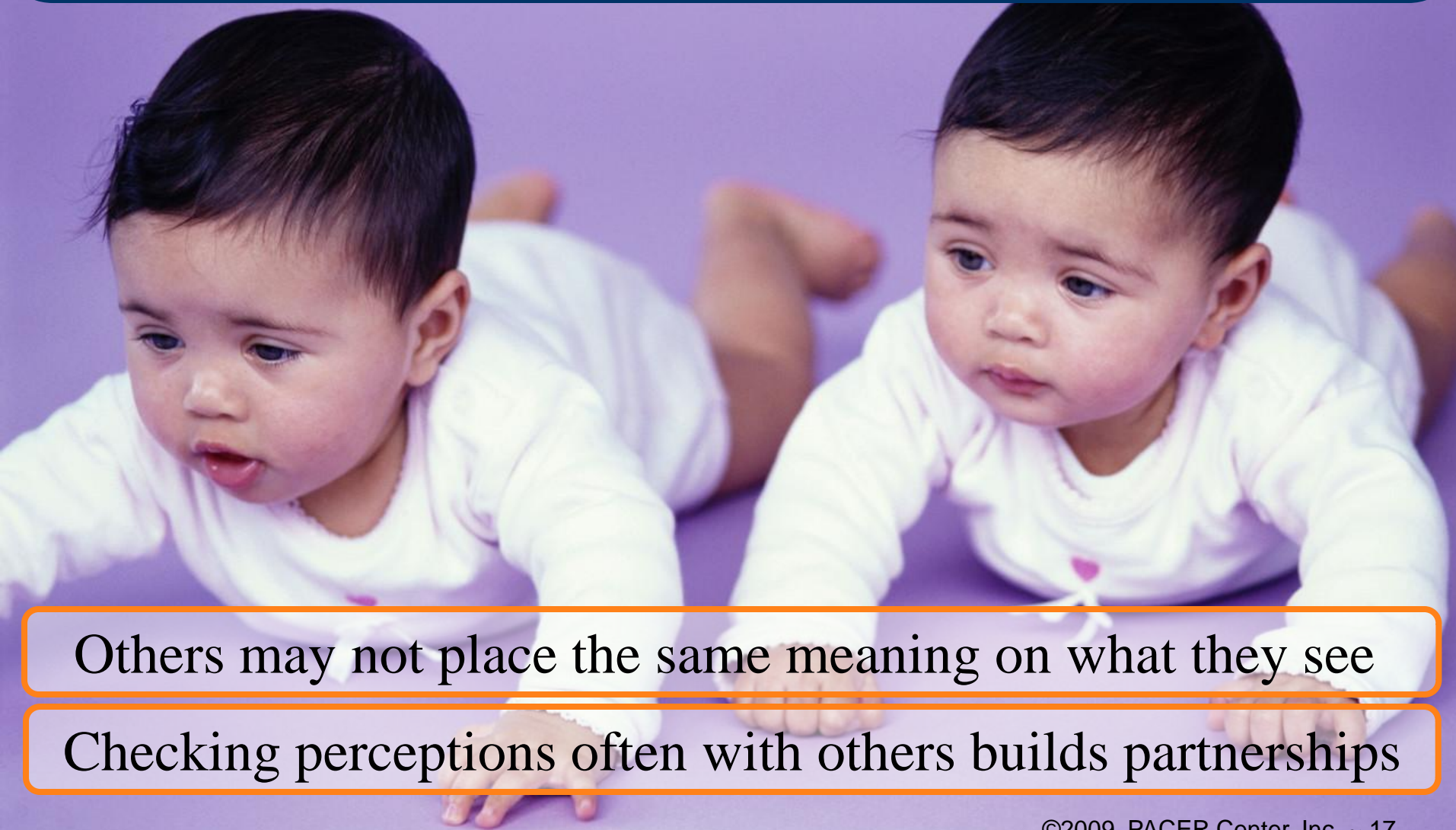
Courtesy, time, conduct across situations

Unconscious rules:

Communication (human interaction). Includes voice tone, verbal/non-verbal, touch, eye contact, etc.



Perception – the meaning we place on what we observe—such as the behaviors of others. What we see is not simply what we look at but how we interpret what we see



Others may not place the same meaning on what they see

Checking perceptions often with others builds partnerships

Communication

A continuum of preferences

Direct

Indirect

- Direct or indirect communication preferences
 - Tip: Listen and adapt inquiries to fit their preferences**
- Formal or informal communication preferences
 - Tip: ask how you should address the family**
- Decision-making preferences
 - Tip: ask who makes educational, medical, or other decisions about a child**

Communication: A continuum of preferences

Physical proximity:

- Everyone has a concept of their own personal space and is uncomfortable when it has been violated. Look for cues to help you to understand if you are standing or sitting too close
- Some parents do not like others to touch their child without reason
- Touch is often necessary with young children. Explain when this might be needed and ask parents' permission

Communication: A continuum of preferences



Eye contact

- You may note that some parents do not make eye contact in a way that is familiar to you
 - It's important not to interpret a lack of eye contact as disinterest or disrespect
- In some cultures, it is considered disrespectful to make sustained eye contact

Communication: A continuum of preferences

Deference (getting along):

- “Sitting quietly” may mean that a parent is being polite, but it does not necessarily mean that he or she agrees
- Some parents will nod as you speak to let you know that they are listening. It does not necessarily mean that they understand what you are saying



How will you know if parents understand what is being communicated?

Communicating Concerns

As an early childhood professional, you may be the first person to:

- notice that a child has developmental delays or special needs
- be contacted by parents when they are concerned about their child's development

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

Challenging Factors

- Personal and private nature of the topic
- Parents' lack of knowledge about disabilities, related services and supports
- The stigma of disability
- Parents' concerns about labeling a child

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

Helpful Approaches

1. Set the stage for a successful conversation
2. Start with the parents' observations, questions, or concerns about their child. Try to understand any cultural explanation for a child's development

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

3. Put yourself in the parents' shoes. Be supportive, but be very careful not to use judgmental words
4. Focus on milestones, absolute indicators, and the need to rule out anything serious

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

5. Refer parents to other resources for information. Some parents need to realize on their own that their child may have special needs
6. Emphasize the importance of early identification and intervention

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

7. Know that sharing your concerns is always the right thing to do—even if it is difficult
8. Understand that by sharing your concerns, you may validate parents' unexpressed thoughts and fears

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

9. Always listen to the parents and observe the child before you do – or say – anything.
10. Always remember that each child is a unique individual. It is better not to compare one child with another.

Sharing Concerns about a Child's Development with Parents

11. Try not to use labels, technical jargon, or unfamiliar terminology
12. Keep your conversation positive

Optional: Question and Answer

1. Type your question in the white box
2. When text is entered, a “send” option will activate
3. Click send
4. Senders of questions are anonymous and will not be identified

Question and Answer [minimize] [close]

Show Answered Questions

Question	Asker

Send SEND All

Focus on the family

➤ What if you went to dinner in a stranger's home – someone you had never met? Would you:

- Know if they like wine with dinner?
- Know if they dress informally or formally for meals?
- Know if they pray before eating?



➤ How would knowing these things help you?

The more we know about all families, the more likely we will be able to avoid breaching important boundaries

Meeting with parents

- ❖ Call parents before any meeting or visit to answer any questions they may have about services. No phone? Mail info and include your phone number
- ❖ Explain the purpose of any meeting and its expected outcome
- ❖ Explain who, if anyone, will participate and their roles



Meeting with parents

- ❖ Find the best days and times of day to ensure that parents are able to attend
- ❖ Be sure not to schedule any parent meetings or events on cultural or religious holidays (in some Muslim homes, parents may need a break during a meeting for scheduled prayer time)



Meeting with parents

- ❖ Recognize the importance of community elders, spiritual leaders or healers that families use for guidance and direction
- ❖ Some of these people will participate in family goals
- ❖ If you are scheduling a meeting with parents, remind them that they may bring others



Meeting with parents

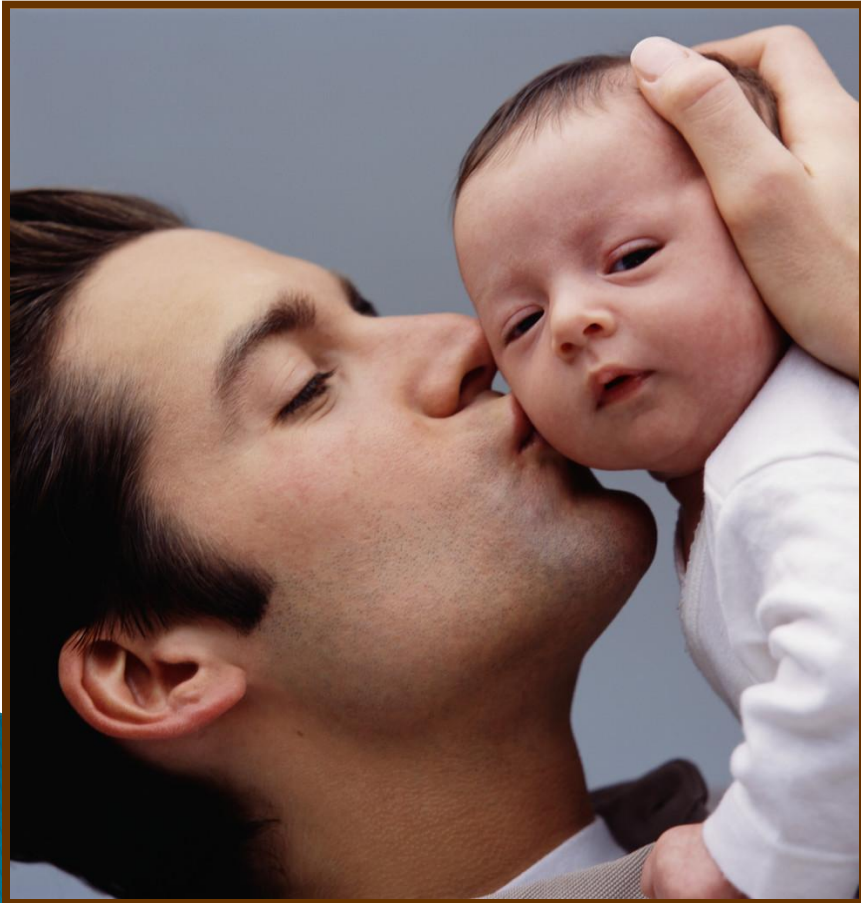
Greet each family personally



- ❖ Share a bit of personal information about yourself
- ❖ Talk to both parents (unless the family has expressed another preference)
- ❖ Invite and expect that extended family may be present at meetings, either relatives or non-relatives

Meeting with parents

Explain your services carefully



- ❖ You will likely need to explain what services your agency offers
- ❖ New immigrant parents in particular cannot be expected to know systems or terminology
- ❖ Invite questions. Repeat more than once

Meeting with parents

- ❖ Help the family to understand their role in your services



- ❖ “Parents as experts” may be a concept that takes time for families to fully understand
- ❖ “Getting along” may take priority for some parents over expressing their opinion, when their opinion is different from the provider or the team

Meeting with parents

Be sensitive to emotional states



- ❖ Be sensitive to the family's emotional state as you decide the issues that brought a child to your services
- ❖ Expect some families to say that everything is fine; acknowledge this and build the relationship so that the parent is able to later hear what you have to say

Meeting with parents

- ❖ Many diverse families show respect through offering food or refreshments to guests
- ❖ If you meet in a family's home and are unable to accept, share this information before the visit in an informal way
- ❖ You may also bring something, like bottled water, so that the family sees that you have what you need



Meeting with parents

- ❖ Be sure to ask if the family wants an interpreter (wants, not needs)
- ❖ Ask whether a family prefers written information in English or their primary language
- ❖ Have information available in a variety of languages
- ❖ Do not ask family members to translate for the family – if at all possible!



Ending a meeting

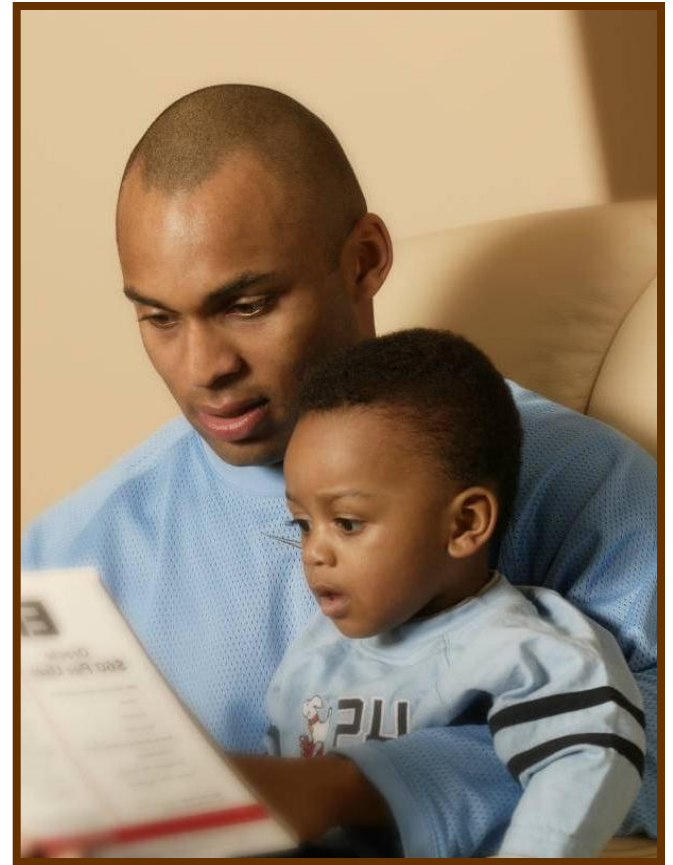
- ❖ **Explain** what will happen next for the young child and the family
- ❖ **Encourage** parents to call with questions or concerns – and give them contact information
- ❖ **End** on a positive note!
 - Praise child or family strength
 - Thank parents for their participation



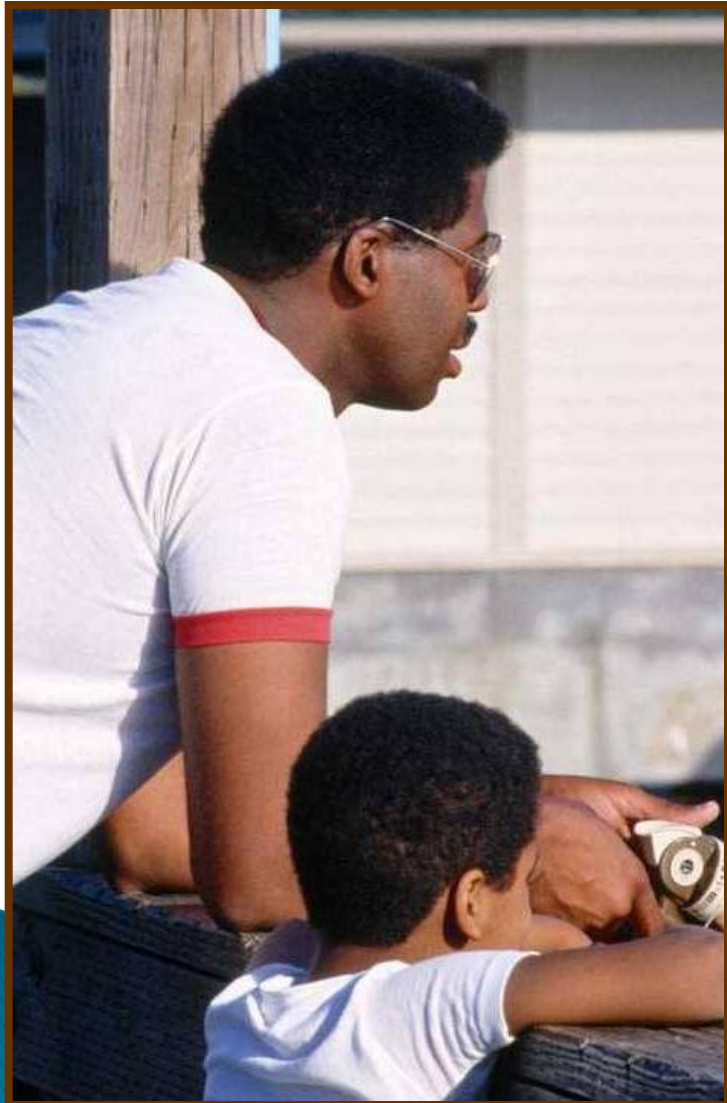
Strategies for working with families

Reinforce the value of parent participation

- ❖ Help parents to understand how highly their role is valued
- ❖ Talk about a structure for reaching agreement if parents are not happy with services
- ❖ Honor the knowledge of families – and use it whenever possible



Strategies for working with families



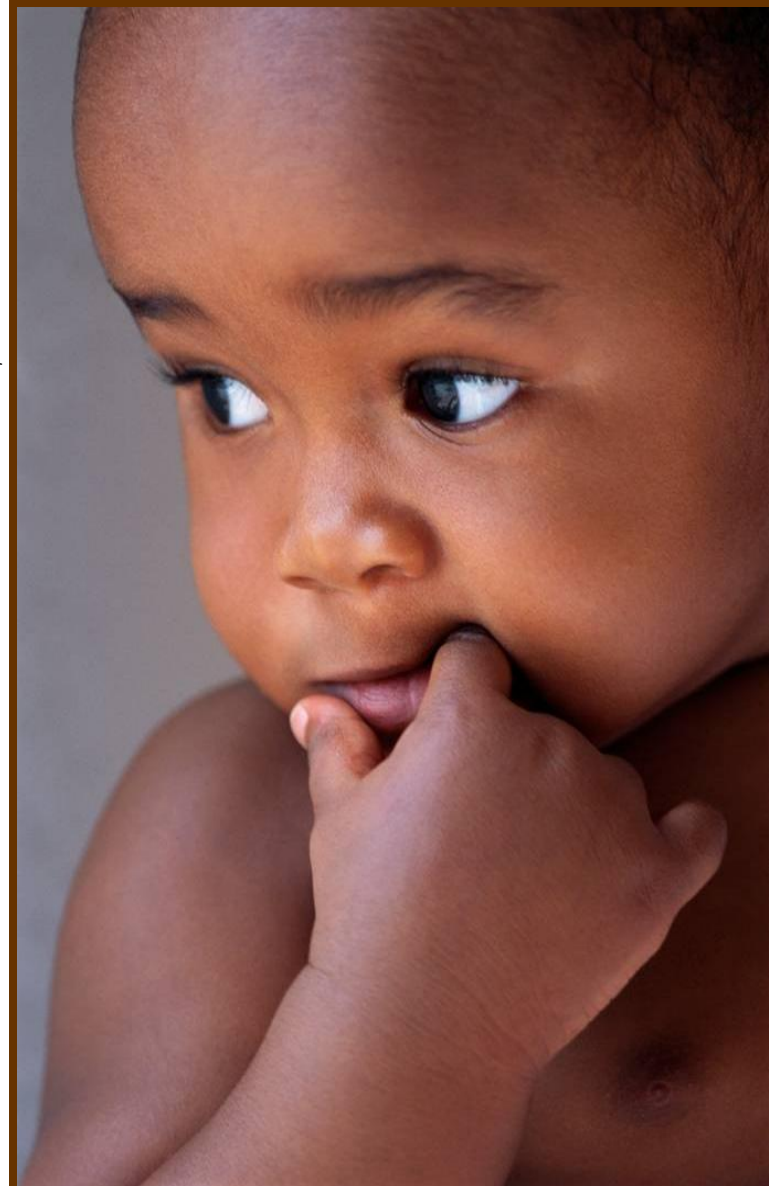
- ❖ Some parents may be reluctant to have their child in services, and may be fearful of what will happen to their child

- ❖ Take the time needed to work on the relationship so that parents are comfortable with you and services

- ❖ Allow enough time in the process for families to make decisions in a way that makes sense to them

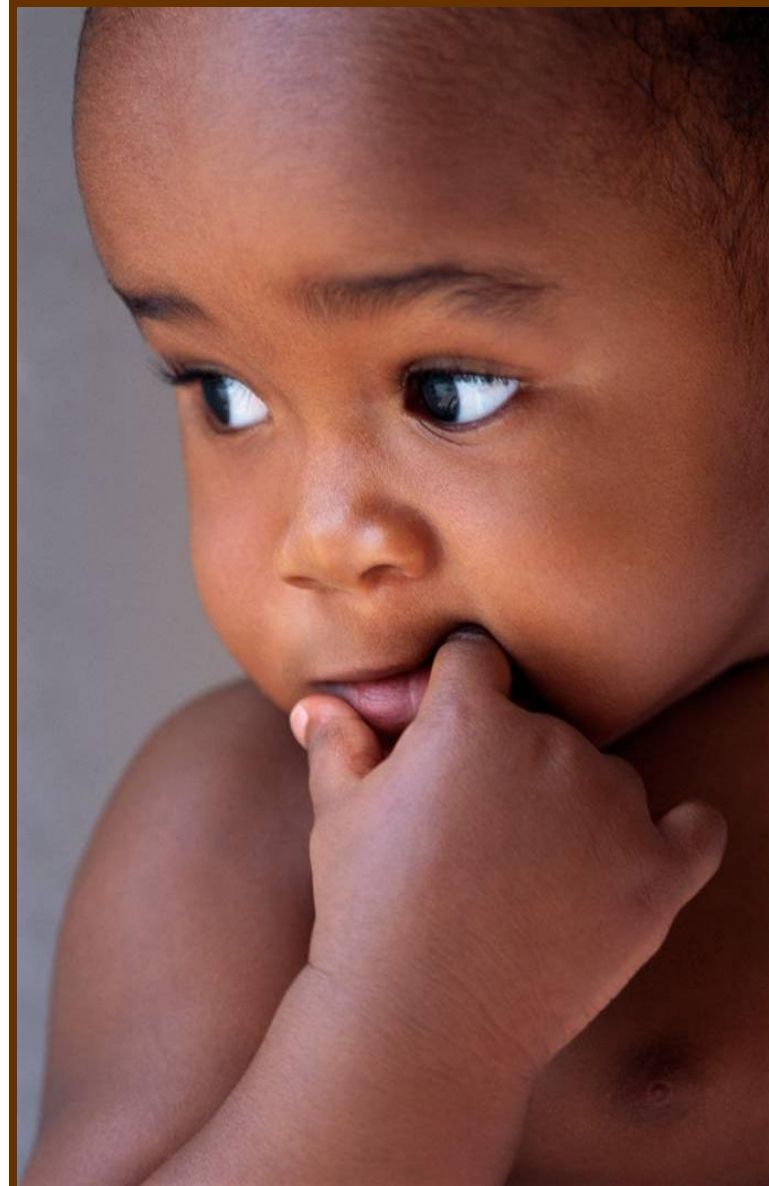
Strategies for working with families

- ❖ Many families fear being judged for their home, dress, or parenting skills
- ❖ If you provide home visits, meet in a setting determined by parents the first time
- ❖ Many families are wary of strangers in their home, and some may even be wary of meeting in an office. Build the relationship!



Strategies for working with families

- ❖ In many families, it is better not to initiate a handshake unless the parent extends their hand first (belief system may affect physical contact)
- ❖ Try to start and end any meeting as scheduled (parents may not want to interrupt, even if they have something else to do)



Strategies for working with families

- ❖ In some Asian families, both Western and Eastern medicine will be used
- ❖ In Native American families, traditional healing practices are often combined with Western medicine
- ❖ When parents use massage, smudging, cupping or other healing practices that are common in their culture, consider these interventions in your service plan, if you have one.



Or, acknowledge differences in a positive way

Strategies for working with families

Understand child rearing practices across cultures

- ❖ Play: sand, mud, water (valuable sensory experience or a messy consequence?)
- ❖ When do children begin independent toileting?
- ❖ Expected age for first steps?
- ❖ Do children wear shoes when learning to walk?



Strategies for working with families

Understand child rearing practices across cultures

- ❖ When does a child first use words?
- ❖ Is early language encouraged?
- ❖ Sleep: how long, where?
- ❖ When do children stop nursing or using a bottle?
- ❖ When do children eat solid foods?
- ❖ When do children feed themselves?
- ❖ How independent are other children in the family?



Interdependence is not a problem behavior!

Strategies for working with families

Ask about how parents perceive their child and the child's future

Parents may have:

- ❖ Different images of their child than you carry
- ❖ Different beliefs about their child's success as an adult
- ❖ Different thoughts about services would be useful
- ❖ Different expectations for the child receiving services
--or for all their children



Strategies for working with families

Ask about learning differences for the young child who has delays

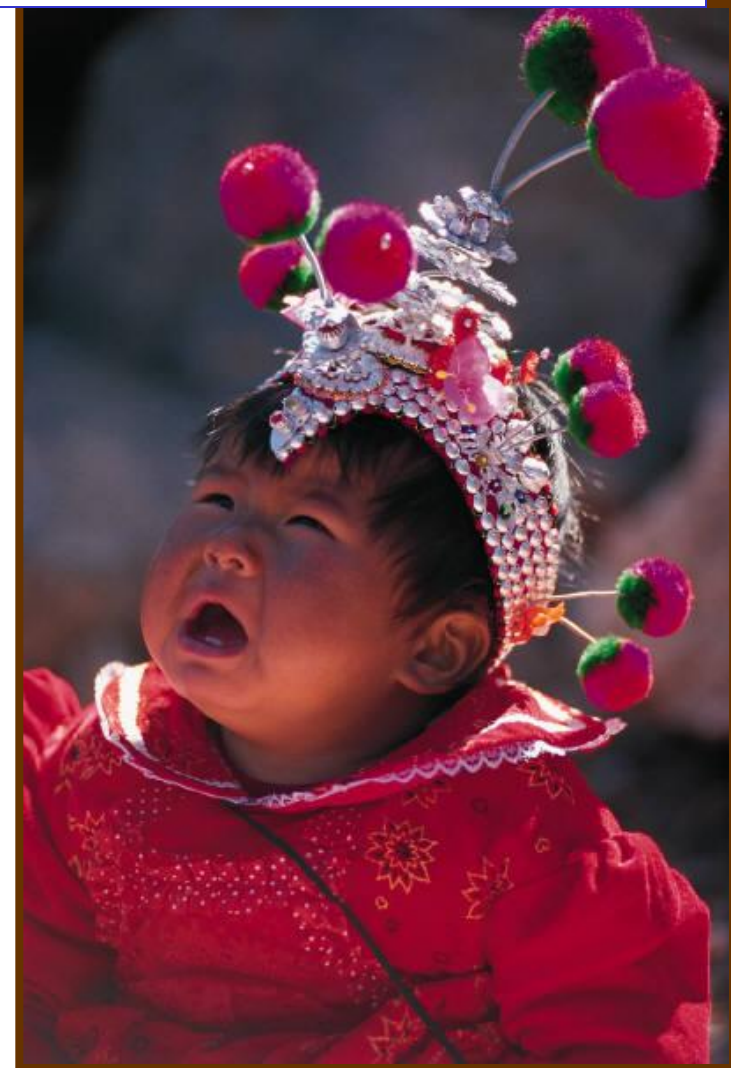
- ❖ What could other children in the family do that this child cannot do at the same age?
- ❖ If parents had a dream that came true for their child, what would the child be doing differently?



Strategies for working with families

Open-ended questions encourage conversation:

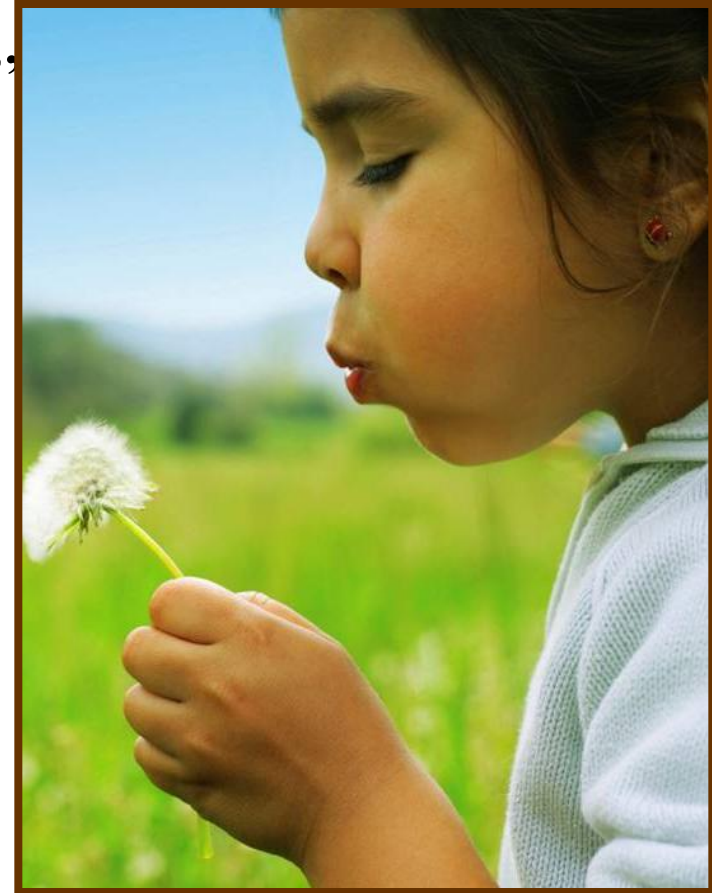
- ❖ “I really want to be helpful. Is there anything I should learn about your community or culture that would help me do a better job with your child?”
- ❖ “Help me understand what resources you have found helpful in your community?”



Strategies for working with families

Check frequently for understanding:

- ❖ Questions like “Do you understand?” may receive a “yes” response, even when parents do not understand
- ❖ Try: “Do you think this sounds right, or.....?”
“Can you tell me what you think of this idea?”
“Do you know what to do next?”



Question and Answer

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Question and Answer

Show Answered Questions

Question	Asker

SEND

Part II: Practical Tips for Successful Interactions

Presenters: PACER's Multicultural Advocates

- ▶ Hassan Samantar
- ▶ Bonnie Jean Smith
- ▶ Jesús Villaseñor
- ▶ Dao Xiong
 - Multicultural advocates provide individual assistance to parents through phone calls and home visits; conduct workshops for parents and professionals; and develop and translate family-friendly materials and resources for families.

Hassan Samantar

- ▶ Take time to get to know each other through informal conversation
- ▶ Be prepared to address language challenges with interpreter and family
- ▶ Recognize differences in expectations for development and age-appropriate skills



Bonnie Jean Smith

- ▶ Each family has a different culture even when they have the same ethnicity.
- ▶ Share about yourself and why you are an Early Childhood educator
- ▶ Provide contact information in multiple ways
 - Refrigerator magnet
 - Post card
- ▶ Refer only to confirmed, available resources



Jesús Villaseñor

- ▶ Hispanic/Latino families have many different levels of acculturation
- ▶ Establish trust through good communication
 - Plan what you are going to say, then cut it in half!
- ▶ Discuss meeting with interpreter ahead of time
- ▶ Be prepared to address confidentiality



Dao Xiong

- ▶ Expect that families will seek help and resources in different ways
- ▶ Focus on strengths and incorporate traditional practices
- ▶ Consider differences in view of disability, emotions and communication styles
- ▶ Respect the home environment





A final note

What EC professionals and a family have in common is the development of a young child

Building partnerships with diverse families can help them acquire skills to help their child and family

Partnerships are not easy, but they yield tremendous rewards. Thank you for what you do.

Thank You for Attending!

- Please complete evaluation surveys by August 28
- In return, Certificates of Attendance will be emailed the week of August 31

Questions? Barb Ziemke 952.838.9000 or
BZiemke@PACER.org

- Optional Q&A session to follow, 2:30 to 3:00 pm
Note: We will attempt to answer as many questions received as possible, but may not be able to answer all questions during the allotted time.

Part III: Q & A's



Dao Xiong



Bonnie Jean Smith



Hassan Samantar



Jesús
Villaseñor



Dixie Jordon

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