

Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Delinquency and Court Services Division Policy & Procedure	Date Issued: 02/07/2014	Reviewed: 01/02/2014 By: MG Last Revision:	Section: ADMINISTRATION	Policy No: 017	Pages: 1 of 3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delinquency and Court Services Division <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children's Court Services Network <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Service Agencies	Effective Date: 03/01/2014	Subject: <p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Competency/Diversity</p>			

I. POLICY

It is the policy of Delinquency Court Services Division (DCSD) to ensure that youths and families can expect that all service providers offer culturally competent services. The integration of cultural, spiritual, health and healing practices, and beliefs which promote the individual client's wellness will be integrated in the assessment, planning, intervention and ongoing review of service.

DCSD is committed to keeping the value of cultural competency at the forefront of our daily interactions with youth, families and each other.

- Providing educational opportunities to the community of service personnel to develop awareness of attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and skills to effectively respond to families.
- Embracing the racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, national, international and political diversity with a view to promoting understanding and respect of the culture, heritage, history, beliefs and values of all clients and staff, regardless of age, gender or sexual orientation.
- Teaching concepts that support the understanding and pride in one's own diversity, as well as including, understanding, respecting, being sensitive to and accepting the diversity of others.
- To become a community resource to address diversity/cultural issues.

II. DEFINITIONS

Competency – Competencies are thought of as a set of skills or attributes that allow a person to respond effectively to the demands of a particular situation or circumstance.

Culture – Culture is a complex collection of values, morals, norms, customs and tradition that provide a general design for living and a pattern for interpreting reality.

Cultural Competency – Cultural Competency involves the following:

- The ability to increase one's awareness about personal biases, assumptions, attitudes and worldviews.
- The specific knowledge of people, culture, history, languages and experiences.
- A repertoire of skills that allows one to effectively intervene in personal and professional domains.

Diversity – Diversity refers to people of difference, including age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability and disability, and other characteristics by which someone may prefer to self-define.

Multiculturalism – Multiculturalism focuses on ethnicity, race and culture. In this context it refers to the following five major cultural groups in the United States: African American / Black, Caucasian / European, Hispanic / Latino, Asian / Pacific Islander, and Native American or indigenous groups who have historically resided in the continental

United States. All persons can point to one or more of these macro-level cultural groups as sources of their cultural heritage.

III. STANDARDS OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE.

A. Awareness / Attitudes / Beliefs.

Culturally skilled service providers believe cultural self-awareness and sensitivity to one's own cultural heritage is essential and shall seek to develop an understanding of their own personal, cultural values, beliefs, healthcare beliefs and practices. This is one way of appreciating the importance of multicultural identities in the lives of people.

Culturally skilled service providers are aware of their negative and positive emotional reactions toward other racial and ethnic groups that may prove detrimental to the relationship between them and the client.

B. Knowledge.

Culturally skilled service providers have specific knowledge about their own racial and cultural heritage and how it personally and professionally affects their definitions of and biases about normality / abnormality and their practices. They have and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about history, traditions, values, family systems, healthcare beliefs and artistic expressions of people that are served.

Culturally skilled service providers seek out educational, consultative and training experiences to improve their understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally diverse populations. Being able to recognize the limits of their competencies, they seek consultation, seek further training or education, refer to more qualified individuals or resources or engage in a combination of these.

C. Skills.

1. Culturally skilled service providers **assess** the meaning of culture and use comprehensive assessments to evaluate cultural norms and behaviors as strengths, and differentiate from problematic or symptomatic behaviors.
2. Culturally skilled service providers **integrate** information gained in the comprehensive assessment into culturally responsive interventions.
3. Culturally skilled service providers **assess** and respect religious and spiritual beliefs and values, healthcare beliefs and practices, including attributions and taboos, because these effect worldview, psychosocial functioning and expressions of distress.
4. Culturally skilled service providers **integrate** helping practices native to the families' culture in the planning process.
5. Culturally skilled service providers **use** the individual's natural/informal support system in resolving problems (i.e., folk healers, storefront religious and spiritual leaders, families of creation and other community resources).
6. Culturally skilled service providers **take responsibility** for interacting in the language requested by the youth and family.
7. Culturally skilled service providers **seek** translators with cultural knowledge and appropriate professional backgrounds or make referrals to competent bilingual service providers.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Through recruiting, hiring, training, and staff retention guidelines and practices, efforts are made and reinforced to assure that culturally competent, diverse staff and community providers are available to serve clients.

B. Through the use of surveys, questionnaires, Case Plan reviews, etc., DCSD will monitor that the cultural needs of the youth/families we serve are being addressed and met.

C. Continue to partner with youth, families, providers and community partners to promote cultural awareness and to embrace and respect difference.

Reviewed & Approved By: *B. Thomas Wanta*
B. Thomas Wanta, Division Administrator