

<p>Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Division of Youth & Family Services</p> <p>POLICY & PROCEDURE</p>	<p>Original Date Issued: 02/07/2014</p> <hr/> <p>Last Revision Date: 03/01/2014</p>	<p>Date Last Reviewed: 11/03/2017</p> <p>Last Reviewed By: DP</p>	<p>Section: ADMINISTRATION</p>	<p>Policy No: 017</p>	<p>Pages: Page 1 of 3</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Division of Youth & Family Services (DYFS)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detention Center</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DYFS Services Network</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchase of Service Agencies</p>	<p>Last Effective Date: 01/01/2018</p>	<p>Subject:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Competency and Diversity Policy</p>			

I. Policy

It is the policy of Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) to provide a safe and discrimination-free environment for youth in all of its locations. All DYFS providers, employees, interns, and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any form of discrimination against or harassment of individuals on the basis of actual or perceived membership or association with a member of a protected category. In addition, any act of discrimination against or harassment of individuals by another individual will not be tolerated. Protected categories include race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex, military status, and criminal record. DYFS is committed to providing a healthy and accepting setting for all individuals by providing training for its employees and educating individuals to respect each individual.

DYFS is a division of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), who values of Partnership, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence (PRIDE) are a required standard of practice. DYFS is committed to keeping the value of cultural competency at the forefront of our daily interactions with youth, families and each other by:

- 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, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.
- 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.
- Becoming a community resource to address diversity/cultural issues.

II. Definitions

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. Cross-Cultural Knowledge

DYFS shall possess and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding that is inclusive of, but not limited to, the history, traditions, values, family systems, and artistic expressions such as race and ethnicity, immigration, and refugee status; tribal groups; religion and spirituality; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; social class and mental or physical abilities of various cultural groups.

D. Diversity

Diversity refers to people of difference, including age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, physical ability and disability, and other characteristics by which someone may prefer to self-define. DYFS values the dignity and worth of each individual and views differences of all people, values and ideas as strengths.

E. 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 and Diversity

A. Awareness, Attitudes and 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 individuals differing from themselves, including difference in race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex condition, military status, and criminal record, 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, cultural heritage along with their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression 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

DYFS is committed to and shall provide training regarding cross-cultural knowledge and the types of behaviors that constitute discrimination or harassment for employees and/or youth and families alike. These trainings will include how to communicate effectively and professionally with all youth including LGBTQI and GNC youth. Because DYFS will not tolerate insensitive behavior, DYFS will provide training on professional, appropriate and effective practices that will create a culture of understanding.

Culturally skilled service providers assess, integrate and take responsibility for understanding the meaning of culture and use comprehensive assessment processes to evaluate cultural norms and behaviors as strengths and differentiate them from problematic or symptomatic behaviors.

Culturally skilled service providers seek translators with cultural knowledge and appropriate professional backgrounds or make referrals to competent bilingual service providers. *(Please refer to the DYFS Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Policy 037 for more details on the process).*

IV. Procedure

A. Staff

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 youth and families.

B. Monitoring

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

C. Partnership

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

D. Enforcement

In accordance with DYFS policy and procedures and consistent with current collective bargaining agreements, supervisors and managers shall promptly address and investigate any reported incident of alleged discrimination and/or harassment against an individual by an employee or other individual contracted with DYFS or youth by another youth and, if determined to have occurred, will result in progressive corrective/disciplinary action. Failure to report an allegation of harassment or discrimination against an individual by an employee or other individual contracted with DYFS or youth by another youth will result in discipline up to and including termination.

Reviewed & Approved By: _____


Mark Mertens, Division Administrator