Culture Connections

Summer 2020 News & Updates

We first want to acknowledge the ongoing concerns regarding COVID-19 and affirm that we are hopeful and solution focused in supporting our community of providers and clients. We have made temporary changes in our services to reflect the needs and the directives from the CDC and state, and we encourage you to stay connected via our webinars, newsletters, web-site and via email/phone for updates and support.

Our mission is to improve mental health services and outcomes in northern NJ by enhancing the cultural competence of mental health professionals...

And we're excited to share with you some news about our program and team, as well as some resources and upcoming services!

Check out the news below and online for more updates. Have a great day, full of healthy connections! #WhereHopeMeetsPossibility

Visit our Website

Call to Action

Advocate for Racial Equality and Justice

NJ Cultural Competence Training Centers' response to George Floyd's murder and the continued advocacy for the dismantling of systemic racism and injustices: Response to Floyd murder and systemic racism

Shape Your Community's Future

Fill out the Census : United States Census 2020
Register to Vote : The New Jersey Division of Elections

Upcoming Training

UPDATE: Annual Cultural Competence Conference Postponed
"Overcoming Incomplete Impressions: Dismantling Conscious and Unconscious Bias in Behavioral Health" *Presented by Family Connections and the Center For Family Services*
Stay tuned here for updates when they become available.

Service Spotlight

How Organizations Commit to Real Change
'Take risks, sit with uncertainty and discomfort, stop looking for easy answers' says the leader of NJ's southern region training center.

We asked Clarissa Wheat, the Diversity Consultant for Center for Family Services, the NJ southern region's training center, about what it takes to change the cultural competence of an organization:

1. ***Cultural Competence work is not just about the short game, but also the long***

game. What does that statement mean for leadership teams?

"Leadership teams: maintain the mindset that it's not something that is achieved once and is then complete. Cultural competence requires an ongoing commitment to openness and learning, taking time and risks, sitting with uncertainty and discomfort, and not having quick solutions or easy answers. Organizational structures and components evolve such as the demographics and individual needs of the community and the people they serve."

2. Why is training something that should happen from top to bottom in an organization?

"Cultural competence training should be viewed as multidimensional and essential to any organization. Bias is part of the human anatomy and should be addressed by all within an organization especially those with power to make change. Organizations committed to the learning process, that require all team members to have continuous education in cultural competence surrounding their job responsibilities and biases, will not have team members working in a culturally competent silo."

3. What would you say is the biggest challenge organizations have in their cultural competence work ?

"The mission impossible: individual team members given the charge of developing the plan to change the organizational cultural competence landscape. While those individuals may be passionate about the task, they have very little power and ability to drive impact and change in their organization. If leadership is not actively involved in the development, there will not be any implementation of systematic changes. Real impact for effective change can and always will need to happen from the top down. That's the biggest challenge and the biggest commitment."
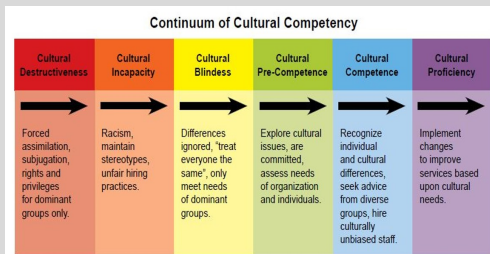
4.Why do you do this work and what do you hope to see in the future for organizations' journeys?

I was always taught if there isn't a space for you, create one. This work allows me to do just that for many marginalized groups by providing education, insight and a skill set for organizations that may need assistance in making those changes to becoming a culturally competent organization. One of the biggest gaps: people who should or could be advocating for others are not doing so, especially in the heat of the moment. Whoever you are, consider being an advocate and ally for others different from yourself.

My hope is for all organizations to establish a framework--seen through the mission statements, strategic plans, and day to day operations-- that develops the capacity to value diversity and inclusion, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and instill cultural knowledge, and adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of the individuals and communities.

Learn more about training information and efforts through the Center for Family Services' central/southern region training center.

Learn more about how cultural competency shapes the Family Connections team and services. ,

Striving for Cultural Proficiency in 2020!

Continuum of Cultural Competency

Cultural Destructiveness	Cultural Incapacity	Cultural Blindness	Cultural Pre-Competence	Cultural Competence	Cultural Proficiency
Forced assimilation, subjugation, rights and privileges for dominant groups only.	Racism, maintain stereotypes, unfair hiring practices.	Differences ignored, "treat everyone the same", only meet needs of dominant groups.	Explore cultural issues, are committed, assess needs of organization and individuals.	Recognize individual and cultural differences, seek advice from diverse groups, hire culturally unbiased staff.	Implement changes to improve services based upon cultural needs.

Awareness

National Minority Health Month

While celebrating these cultures and the diversity within them, here are some resources to increase your cultural competency with colleagues and communities you serve, and to motivate you to continue to be aware of the possible needs of clients who identify as a minority.

Learning Resources:
- **Mental Health America's BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color) and LGBTQ Tool Kit (tons of resources!):** https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2020%20BIPOC%20MHM%20TOOLKIT%20FINAL%206.29.20.pdf
- **Strength Over Silence Docuseries, NAMI:** https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month/Strength-Over-Silence
- **HHS Office of Minority Health's 'Improving Cultural Competency for Behavioral Health Professionals' accredited and FREE (during July) e-learning program**: This program is part of OMH's Think Cultural Health E-learning courses (which support the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (National CLAS Standards).

https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/content.aspx?ID=9447

Mental health and Behavioral health statistics for:

- **African Americans:** https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=24
- **Native Americans/Alaska Natives**: https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=39
- **Asian Americans:** https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=54
- **Latinx Americans:** https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=69
- **Pacific Islanders/Native Hawaiian:** https://www.samhsa.gov/behavioral-health-equity/aanhpi

Have resources to inform organizations and colleagues about minorities and health data? Share here for our growing resource library.