The Miami Diversity Model:
A Toolbox for Multi-Cultural Family Mediation

K.T. Flanigan Witte MSE, CPP; Sonya Boyne, MACP

“One Voice” Community Coalition
A Member of The Miami Coalition Alliance
Strengthening Families: Creating a New Normal

A New Normal
Families and Communities, Service Systems and Organizations in Partnership:

- Focus on Building Protective Factors
- Recognize and Support Parents as Decision Makers, Advocates and Leaders
- Value the Culture and Unique Assets of Each Family
- Are Mutually Responsible for Better Child & Family Outcomes
Parent Protective Influence

Teens report that parent disapproval is number one reason NOT to use drugs.

(Monitoring the Future 2001, WWW.DrugFree.org 2012)
Protective Factors Conducive to Changing Family Norms

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Parenting Intervention Can Teach Resiliency Skills

- Parenting Social Skills (Speaking & Listening)
- Planning and Organizing
- Problem Solving
- Peer Resistance
- Restoring Self-Esteem
- Identifying Feelings
- Managing Feelings
Family Centered Outcomes Improve Over Time

- Whereas youth only prevention have reduced outcomes; in longitudinal studies family programs have improved outcomes over time.
- Improving parenting skills reduce relapse and recidivism in drugs, crime and child maltreatment.
- Parents are less stressed and depressed.

www.hsph.harvard.edu, 2012
Equivalent brain slices from two study subjects of the same sex and age. The image on the reader's left is from a subject who was exposed to alcohol, cigarettes, cocaine and marijuana during the prenatal period while the image on right is from a control subject who had none of these prenatal exposures. Note that the cortical gray matter appears thinner in the subject with pre-natal exposures than is found in the control subject (see black arrowheads). In addition, the subcortical gray matter appears fuller and more robust in the control subject (B., arrows) than in the subject with the four pre-natal exposures (A., arrows) (Credit: Image courtesy of Children's Hospital Boston) www.ScienceDaily.com, 2012
Miami Residents in Transition

Place of Birth by Citizenship

- 62% In state resident
- 11% out of state
- 27% out of US/foreign
Overview of Miami Culture

- Greetings
- Miami Time
- Latin Politics
- Dinner Hour
- Tossed Salad
- Drivers
- Spanglish
What is culture?

“Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Tylor, 1871)

Thus, culture is not a synonym for race, ethnicity but a broader term encompassing influences by these and other factors in one’s personal environment.
Culture informs a group’s way of life with a shared system of social meaning, values and relationships that are transmitted between generations.

I’m going back
Going back to my own ones
Come back to talk...
Talk a while with my own ones
cause the world is so cold
Don’t care nothing ‘bout your soul
You share with your own ones

~Irish Heartbeat Van Morrison
So what about those outside of our culture? Is this the neurology of prejudice?
Perceptual illusions result from the way the brain decodes sensory information. Observers are predisposed to bias signals by making judgments according to established (previously encoded) neural pathways.

Source: Center for Neural Science, New York University, 4 Washington Place, New York, New York 10003, USA

Much research has been conducted by social psychologists; but, most agree that when people are made aware of the racial cross over effect they become wary of it.
What is Cultural Humility?

Among other definitions this phrase refers to:

The capacity to identify experiences and cultural information that are outside of one’s own cultural references.

The capacity to identify contextual or relational barriers as well as one’s own limitations in communications. (Byrd, 2010)

These skills are especially important in adapting culturally sensitive family EBPs.
Early Attempts at Cultural Adaptation for Prevention Programs

- Only considered surface structure or “first cut” racial modifications such as:
  --Hiring racially matched staff
  --Modifying graphics to show racially similar families

- These adaptations were a good start but ignored within race cultural distinctions:
  -Geographic location
  -Language dialects
  -Educational achievement
  -Culture Shock phase
  -Socio-economic status

Kumpfer, 2001
# Cultural Adaptation Tools
Stages of Acculturation (Culture Shock)

- **Elation** - Jubilation, Excitement at newness;
- **Resistance** - Frequent comparisons to home or the familiar and comfortable; You dislike the culture, the language, the food. You reject it as inferior or hostile.

(Many people remain “stuck” in this stage. This incomplete acculturation informs many difficulties and dysfunction found in relocated families. The children tend to acculturate more easily than adults and become trapped between two worlds.)
Stages of Acculturation

Cathy Tsang-Feign, 2010

- **Integration**: This is the first stage in acceptance. Sometimes called the *emergence* stage when you start to come out of the ‘fog’ and finally begin to feel like yourself again;

- **Autonomy**: You embrace the new culture and see everything in a new, yet realistic light. Things start to become enjoyable. You feel comfortable, confident, able to make decisions based on your own preferences and values. You no longer feel alone and isolated. You understand and appreciate both the differences and similarities of both your own and the new culture.
## 10 Ways to Overcome Culture Shock

1. Get an informant
2. Get a “same culture” buddy
3. Everyday find something you like culturally
4. Be a tourist
5. Do something courageous everyday
6. Do something familiar
7. Go for walks
8. Journal
9. Ask for packages from home
10. Do your research
Program Selection Strategies for Culturally Sensitive EBPs

1. Needs Assessment-first collect data information on family needs;
   -existing data
   -survey of families
   -key stakeholders
2. Service Gap Analysis- Is there a need for family programs
   -Which type of families need services/
   -Where?
   -Community or agency readiness
   -Select BEST program based on critical mediators.
Translation Strategies for Culturally Relevant EBPs

3. First Cut Translations, Create a Cultural Adaptation Team (CAT) to translate materials to local language.

4. Do minor cultural adaptations by changing graphics, stories, songs to reflect local culture.

5. Remove obvious culturally inappropriate materials (e.g. look at person when speaking)

6. Do Not remove core content or shorten.
Implementation Strategies for Culturally Sensitive EBPs

7. Implement basically “as is” with minimal written curriculum at first

8. Have CAT from local culture who make gradual changes based on what works (culturally relevant songs, stories etc.)

9. Continuously make additional cultural adaptations and add curriculum with program developer approval

10. Continuously conduct process and outcome evaluations of cultural adaptations

11. Disseminate culturally adapted version to similar cultural groups, if effective.
# Engaging Families
How do you Engage Families to Attend?

1. Personal Invitation to Attend (home visits, calls, printed welcome letters)
2. Meals – a draw and a barrier removed
3. Transportation Help - vouchers, bus tokens, phone trees, vans
4. Child Care Groups - for younger & older kids
5. Rewards for attendance, participation, graduation
6. Weekly Calls - “check-in” from Leaders
7. BIG Graduation: ceremony, party
In Conclusion

“We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion.”

Max de Pree