

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 385 360

PS 023 416

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 TITLE Culturally Competent Inservice Training for Home Visit Personnel.
 PUB DATE Apr 95
 NOTE 21p.; Paper presented at the National Head Start Association's Annual Training Conference (22nd, Washington, DC, April 18-22, 1995).
 PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Beliefs; Bias; Child Rearing; Cultural Activities; *Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Differences; Cultural Influences; Culture Conflict; Family Influence; Home Programs; *Home Visits; *Inservice Education; Program Descriptions; Program Design; Values

IDENTIFIERS Cultural Literacy Test; Cultural Studies; Cultural Values; Family Values; *Home Visitors; Parenting Styles

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a culturally competent inservice training program for home visit personnel. The program is designed to help home visit personnel become more aware of their own beliefs and values, and develop an appreciation and respect for others' differences. The program is divided into three sections. Each section offers various activities that illustrate the purpose of that section. Section 1 focuses on reflecting on personal and family values and identifying personal biases. Section 2 focuses on recognizing differences between and within cultures and the ways in which families differ from each other. Section 3 is devoted to the practical aspects of making a home visit. Questionnaires, Q-Sort values and a list of home visit goal perceptions are appended.
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CULTURALLY COMPETENT INSERVICE TRAINING FOR HOME VISIT PERSONNEL

MARILYN SEGAL & PAT FRANCO

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The design of a culturally competent inservice training program for home visit personnel is both a challenge and an opportunity. In the best of all possible worlds we would hire home visitors who were a part of the culture of the families they visit. We would also identify home visitors whose personal beliefs and values were in synchrony with the beliefs and values of the program and the families. It is not a perfect world. Each of us brings to the job our own beliefs, values and biases. Every family that we visit has its own set of beliefs, values and ways of interacting within and outside of the family. In part these beliefs and values are culturally determined.

In part they are idiosyncratic. The most we can hope for in an inservice program is that we can become more aware of our own beliefs and values and can develop an appreciation and respect for values and beliefs that do not agree with our own. A genuine respect for differences is the starting point for building a mutually trusting relationship with our fellow workers as well as the families we visit.

The inservice training program developed by the Family Center of Nova Southeastern University is divided into three sections.

Section I: Knowing Ourselves and our Family:

In this section we focus on our personal beliefs and values. What do we believe and value and want most for our own children? How are our beliefs shaped by our life experiences? What can we learn from comparing our own beliefs with the beliefs of our colleagues?

Section II: Recognizing Differences Between and Within Cultures:

In this section we focus on the ways in which culture influences child-rearing beliefs. In what aspects of child-rearing are we most likely to find culturally determined differences? To what extent can we expect to find child-rearing beliefs within the same culture that are related to individual family styles and interactions?

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Section III: The Nuts and Bolts of a Home Visit:

The third section is devoted to the practical aspects of making a home visit. How can we develop a trusting relationship with families? How can we make sure that our perceptions of the role of a home-visitor are congruent with the role of the home visitor implicit in the program we are working for? How can we be sure that the curriculum selected for home visits is supportive of the mission of the program, appropriate for the families we visit and congruent with our own beliefs, values and styles of interacting?

SECTION I: Knowing Ourselves and Our Family:

Recognizing that adults like children learn best by doing and experiencing, the first part of the training program involves four different hands on experiences: a Q-Sort of Values, the drawing of a family crest, the sharing of family stories and a bias check list. As we complete these four activities we increase our own understanding of what we believe and the way our beliefs have been activity each participant is asked to complete a Q-Sort of Values that will provide an opportunity to reflect on their personal values and to prioritize these values in terms of their relative importance. The Q-Sort of Values was originally developed at Nova Southeastern University for use in a home visit program. The statements included in the Q-Sort were collected from families who were asked to describe in a single statement what they hoped their child would be like. The thirty statements which were most commonly voiced by the families became the basis of the Q-Sort.

REFLECTING ON OUR OWN VALUES

Our beliefs about the right way to bring up a child are so much a part of our own value system that we seldom describe them in words. The first activity we are asked to engage in is a Q-Sort of Values. This activity gives us opportunity to reflect on our personal values related to child-rearing and to prioritize these values in terms of

their relative importance. The Q-Sort of values was originally developed at Nova Southeastern University for use in a home visit program. The statements included in the Q-Sort were collected from families who were asked to describe in a single statement what they hoped their child would be liked. The thirty statements most commonly voiced by the families became the basis of the Q-Sort.

Activity I: The Q-Sort of Values:

Using the directions, questions and scoring sheet included in Appendix A, ask each home visitor to complete the Q-Sort on Values. As we become more aware of the qualities we value in our own children we become sensitized to the ways in which our own value system is similar or different from the values of the families we are working with or the values prioritized by the program.

REFLECTING ON OUR OWN FAMILY VALUES.

Once home visitors have had an opportunity to sort out and discuss their own values related to child rearing, the next logical step is to reflect on ways in which our values are influenced by our family of origin. Activities that help us reflect on family values include the development of a family crest and the recall of family stories.

ACTIVITY II: Making a Family Crest:

Give each home visitor a box of crayons and a cut-out crest divided into four quadrants. Ask the group to draw a picture or put a symbol in each quadrant that represents a value that is shared by his or her family. If they choose, home visitors can share their crests with the group and interpret their meanings..

ACTIVITY 111: Recalling Family Stories:

In every family there is one or more stories about family events that are repeated over and over again. Perhaps the story is related to a time when a child was punished, to a visitor who was welcome or not welcome, to a particular time when a family member either lost his cool or accomplished the impossible.. Inevitably these oft repeated stories reflect a special value that the family shares. As we talk about the stories we remember, we will recognize ways in which each story reflects a family value.

IDENTIFYING OUR OWN BIASES

A third type of self-reflection that increases self-knowledge is the examination of our own biases. As we talk together, we are likely to be offended by ethnic biases and to pride ourselves on our own ability to respect and appreciate differences. Unfortunately, as we take a close and honest look at our own beliefs and behaviors it is almost inevitable that we will identify some areas of biases that we have not recognized or explored.

ACTIVITY IV Bias Identification:

An activity that is effective in helping home visitors become aware of their biases is to present a list of common phrases. Ask the participants to mark the type of biases that each of the following statements portray.

A - Gender, B - Race/Ethnicity, C - Age, D - Sexual Preference, E - Religion, F - Ability, G - Class, H - Physique

- _____ That's a home for crippled children
- _____ There are lots of postmen in our town.
- _____ Did you hear the latest Polish joke?
- _____ You can tell those two guys are gay.
- _____ The restaurant is full of goyim...the food must be terrible.
- _____ Watch out...here comes a woman driver.

- _____ Stay away from that dirty old man.
- _____ Don't vote for him - he's an Uncle Tom.
- _____ Here comes "Whitey" trying to tell us what to do.
- _____ What do you expect from a Kike?
- _____ You can't trust those slanty-eyed kids.
- _____ Stop eating so much pasta, you'll turn into a Dago.
- _____ That country club is for WASPS only.
- _____ He's deaf as a doornail.
- _____ That's a high class joint.
- _____ Thank God I have "chinks" in my math class this year. Our achievement scores will go up.
- _____ Did you see the size of that woman's rear end?
- _____ Can you believe it...my son wants to be a nurse and my daughter wants to be a construction worker.
- _____ Look at those two women holding hands. We know what they are.
- _____ No...not that hotel. It's for old geezers.

Give the home visitors an opportunity to talk about when they have heard these statements. Which of the statements do they find most offensive? Are there statements that do not really bother them?

SECTION II: BEING SENSITIVE TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AND WITHIN CULTURES

This section of the inservice training moves from a focus on ourselves and our families of origin to a consideration of the different meanings and facets of culture, and to the ways in which families differ from each other.

THE MEANINGS AND FACETS OF CULTURE

Often when we think of culture we think about differences in language, differences in the way people dress, the festivals they celebrate, the kinds of houses they live in, and the kinds of recreation they enjoy. While certainly this list represents one way of understanding differences between cultures, the more significant differences relate to underlying beliefs. These beliefs include both the nature and centrality of religion, the views of the meaning of life,

views about health, death and after-death, and views related to child rearing practices. Because views on child rearing practices are central to the goals and outcomes of a home visit, home visitors need to be particularly sensitive to culturally based differences in child rearing beliefs.

Areas of child rearing beliefs include beliefs related to early independence. In some cultures, children are expected to play alone, to be toilet trained, to dress themselves and to take care of their own toys at a very early age. In other cultures, there is a belief that independence is not an important value and that children will become independent when they are ready.

A second major difference in culturally based child rearing beliefs is related to obedience and respect and how respect is expressed. In some cultures it is considered inappropriate to maintain eye contact with an adult when you are being scolded. In other cultures, it is considered disrespectful to look down when an adult is speaking to you. In some cultures, any expression of anger toward adults is frowned upon. In other cultures answering back parents or hitting parents when you are angry is considered acceptable.

In some cultures there is a firm belief that expectations and activities for boys should not be the same as girls. Other cultures believe that boys and girls should be treated alike in as many ways as possible.

In some cultures taboos related to sex are strictly enforced. In other cultures sex is considered to be a normal human drive and there are few taboos related to sex.

In some cultures family cohesion is highly valued. In other cultures, it is considered acceptable and appropriate for family members to go their separate ways.

ACTIVITY V: Beliefs Related To Culture:

Small group activities are especially appropriate for discussing cultural beliefs. Divide the participants into small groups. Using the following five categories, beliefs about independence, beliefs about obedience and respect, beliefs related to gender differences, beliefs related to sexual taboos, and beliefs related to the importance of family togetherness. Ask each group to select three cards in each

category that characterized their own family when they were growing up, and three cards that definitely did not. (Reproduce several sets of each card so that home visitors could collect similar cards if they wanted to.

1. Beliefs About Independence

My parents believe that babies should comfort themselves and not be picked up every time they cried.

We were allowed to sleep in our parents bed until we were five or six years.

We had a curfew in our family until we were eighteen years old.

My mother always said "I don't care if you think it is warm out side, you must wear a sweater."

My parents insisted two years old should be toilet trained.

Mother always said "It is okay to carry a baby, even when they are three years old."

My family felt strongly that children should not be placed in a nursery school until they are at least four years old.

In our house we were never permitted to sleep in bed with our parents.

2. Beliefs About Obedience and Respect

As children we were allowed to call our parents' friends by their first names.

My grandparents said "Children should be seen but not heard."

In our family, you did what you were told or else.

My parents never allowed us to talk back or disagree with them.

I was not allowed to bring a friend home unless my parents approved.

My parents' word was law.

We were always told that children should be quiet when adults are speaking.

3. Gender Roles

Boys and girls were not allowed to sleep in the same bed.

Boys and girls in our family did different chores: boys emptied the garbage and girls set the table.

In my family, boys were not allowed to play with dolls.

Girls in the family were allowed to wear slacks or shorts at a family gathering.

My father never washed the dishes or changed a baby's diaper.

The boys in our family were allowed to play shooting or army games. The girls were not.

4. Sexual Taboos

My parents feel it is wrong to breastfeed in public.

Even when the boys in our family were under two, they were not allowed to urinate in the grass.

Masturbation with young children was strictly forbidden.

Preschool boys and girls were not allowed to bathe together.

My family always taught us to use anatomically correct terms for body parts.

5. Family Togetherness

Our extended family gets together at least once a year.

When we have a family outing, all the children must be part of it.

We always said a prayer before we ate our dinner.

Sunday was "family day" and the whole family did something together.

If anyone in our family had a problem, everybody knew about it and everybody helped out.

Before I went to bed as a young child, I had to kiss everyone goodnight.

Our family always ate dinner together. It was a time when we could talk about what happened during the day.

Next, ask the group members to compare the cards that they selected. Can they identify beliefs related to culture?

DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY BELIEFS

While there are unquestionably culturally related beliefs in appropriate child rearing practices within different cultures, there are many differences in child rearing practices and beliefs within the same cultures. Differences within the same cultures include views on appropriate discipline, the responsibilities children should assume, the role of the parent, and the amount of time and the type of activities families do together. Even when inservice programs have helped home visitors recognize ways in which cultural beliefs effect child rearing practices, it is important to help home visitors recognize that even within the same culture, families are different from each other. In many instances home visitors will discover that they do not agree with each other about what practices are appropriate or the practices that they feel are appropriate may not be endorsed by the program that they work with.

ACTIVITY VI: Beliefs embraced by different families within the same culture.

Provide each home visitor with the following questions:

- A. The family is the child's first and most important teacher.
- B. Parents primary role is child guidance. Education is up to the school.

- A. A good spanking never hurt a child.
- B. Children should not be spanked under any circumstances.

- A. By the time children are four years old they should be expected to bathe themselves, dress themselves, and to help around the house.
- B. We should not expect children to help around the house and take responsibility for self care before they are at least six or seven.

A. Evening meals should be a time when families get together and talk about their day.

B. We should not insist on the whole family eating together at night and remaining at the table until the meal is over.

A. It is important for children to do what the other children are doing even if it means restricting some television shows or not allowing children to use guns.

B. Children should not be allowed to watch cartoons or television shows that are violent or play with guns.

Divide into small groups. Ask each home visitor to check off an A or a B statement in each couplet. Identify statements in which home visitors check off a different letter within a couplet. As home visitors discuss their differences they will recognize that even within the same culture families have different points of view related to child rearing. Recognizing and talking over differences is the basis for developing and maintaining a trusting relationship.

IDENTIFYING THE MATCH BETWEEN OUR OWN GOALS AND THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM.

A particular difference among home visitors that effects their interactions with the parents are differences related to their own role as home visitors. Some home visitors see themselves as primarily family support personnel, others see themselves as parent teachers, others see themselves as family friends, while still others define their primary role as empowering parents to participate in the education of their own children and to take an active role in :accessing resources and serving as advocates for their children and family.

ACTIVITY VII: Identifying the match in home visitor role perceptions.

Using the role perception priority list included in Appendix B ask each home visitor to rate their own role priorities. Ask each of the program administrators to complete the same task. If there are differences between the role priorities as viewed by the home visitors and role priorities as viewed by the administrators discuss these differences and try to find ways to resolve them.

SECTION THREE: THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF A HOME VISIT

DEVELOPING A TRUSTING RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

In every study of home visits, the most critical factor associated with success is the development of a trusting relationship. A beginning point, as we have already pointed out, is the home visitors ability to know, appreciate and respect the culture and family style of the family. Steps for helping this happen include the following:

Describe to the family the purpose and benefits of the program.

Arrange a time for the visit that is convenient both for you and the family.

Be familiar ahead of time with names of family members so that you call each member by name as you introduce yourself.

Begin the session by asking the parents if they have questions about the program or particular concerns they would like to ask about the program.

Present clearly the purpose, goals, the logistics of the program, how often you will meet, how long you will stay, what kinds of things you will do, and what resources the family will be able to access.

Present at least one activity that will be included in the program.

If the family asks questions that you cannot answer, assure them that you will find out the answer before your next visit.

Seek out opportunities to compliment the different members of the family.

Leave the family with a brochure of the program, a set of crayons, or whatever items are suggested by your supervisor.

As you leave the family, review what took place during the day, repeat any information you are planning to the family. Make definite plans with the family about when you will visit next, and be sure to leave a telephone number where you can be reached if they cannot keep an appointment. Address each member of the family by name as you say good-bye

ACTIVITY VIII: Role Play a Home Visit:

In small groups role play a home visit with different members of the group assuming different roles.

ASSURING THAT THERE IS A MATCH BETWEEN A HOME VISITOR'S ROLE PERCEPTION AND THE ROLE PERCEPTION DELINEATED BY THE PROGRAM

Even when we have a well thought out program and an excellent set of home visitors programs may experience a mismatch between the roles expected by the program and the roles the home visitors feel comfortable with. A frequent problem that arises relates to the expected outcome of a home visit and the techniques that the home visitor uses to achieve that outcome.

ACTIVITY IX: Role Perception Questionnaires:

Distribute the Role Perception Questionnaires to the program administrators as well as the home visitor; Using a 1-10 scale ask each group to rate the importance of the different role home visitors might play. Identify ways in which the priorities described by the home visitors are similar or different from the priorities described by the administrators.

THE SELECTION OF A HOME VISIT CURRICULUM

The selection of a curriculum is dependent both on the purpose or mission of the program and on the age of the child. From a generic point of view we can identify characteristics that identify an appropriate curriculum regardless of the basic purpose of the program or the population that is being served. Spend time discussing the more blatant differences and try to reach a consensus.

HOME VISIT PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH GOOD OUTCOMES::

The development of trust and friendship between home visitor and family.

A flexible and broad-based curriculum that meets individual client needs.

A carefully selected and supervised home visitor staff with on-going inservice training.

The combination of home visits with center-based programs.

Small caseloads that allow frequent home visits.

In selecting a home visit with a particular articulated purpose and an identified population, the list of criteria becomes longer. Creative Beginnings, Beginning at Home is designed for families with children ages two to five years old, where the purpose of the program is to place the parent in the role of teacher and prepare the child for school, and help parents develop their own literacy skills and their ability to identify and access the community resources they need. Creative Beginnings includes the following characteristics:

- Easy to Use
- Readies the Child for School
- Casts Family in the Role of Teacher
- Enhances Parent Literacy
- Developmentally Appropriate
- Language Rich
- Multicultural/Anti-Bias
- Supports Positive Values
- Provides Alternatives
- Fun for the Family and Home Visitor
- Links Home and Center-Based Activities
- Materials Used by the Home Visitor are Left in the Home

While home visitors differ in their reliance on a particular curriculum, most home visitors at least, in the beginning, are comfortable with a curriculum that provides specific directions and at the same time offers options. We would urge all programs to review different types of home visiting curriculums in order to determine the curriculum that is best suited for their program.

ACTIVITY X: Identifying Culturally Competent Features

Using a curriculum such as *Creative Beginnings*, ask the participants to identify the features that make it a culturally-competent

EVALUATION: Leave at least fifteen minutes at the end of the final session for questions, discussions and both formal and informal feedback. Ask the group to describe activities that were interesting and instructional. Which of the activities were either not very useful or not very interesting? Next, identify questions or issues that were not covered by the in-service course and invite suggestions for covering these topics in future inservice sessions.

APPENDIX A

1.
I want my child to be helpful and considerate.

2.
I want my child to get along well with other children.

3.
I want my child to achieve at or above grade level in reading and mathematics.

4.
I want my child to be an independent learner.

5.
I want my child to have good communication skills.

6.
I want my child to get good grades in school.

7.
I want my child to fight his/her own battles.

8.
I want my child to be competitive.

9.
I want my child to defend himself/herself.

10.
I want my child to be a good student.

11.
I want my child to make friends with culturally different children.

12.
I want my child to be aggressive.

13.
I want my child to be imaginative.

14.
I want my child to go to college.

15.
I want my child to listen to his/her elders.

16.
I want my child to fight for his/her rights.

17.
I want my child to be obedient.

18.
I want my child to have the capacity to love and care for other people.

19.
I want my child to share.

20.
I want my child to have a good sense of values.

21.
I want my child to have a good foundation in reading and mathematics.

22.
I want my child to be a good problem solver.

23.
I want my child to be truthful.

24.
I want my child to have a code of ethics.

25.
I want my child to be curious.

26.
I want my child to recognize that his/her parents are the boss.

27.
I want my child to do what he/she are told.

28.
I want my child to listen to the teacher.

29.
I want my child to have a sense of right and wrong.

30.
I want my child to be responsible.

Q-SORT INSTRUCTIONS

Tell the home visitors you want them to:

- 1.) Divide the stack into (3) piles with (10) cards per pile. The right-hand pile indicates values you hold most strongly for your child. The center pile indicates those values which are second in importance. The left-hand pile will indicate that values which are third in importance.
- 2.) From the right-hand pile, pull out three values which you give top priority and put those three to your extreme right. From the left-hand pile, pull out three values which you give the lowest priority and put these three to your extreme left.

There should now be (5) piles. The pile on the extreme right has 3 cards, next pile 7, middle pile 10, next pile 7, and extreme left pile 3.

- 3.) Each pile is assigned a number - starting on the left, all cards in the extreme left pile are assigned the number - 1, next pile - 2, next pile - 3, next pile - 4, and the extreme right pile - 5.
- 4.) Use the following chart to record the score for each value you sorted. Example:

<u>Lowest</u> <u>Pile # 1</u>	<u>Pile # 2</u>	<u>Pile # 3</u>	<u>Pile # 4</u>	<u>Highest</u> <u>Pile # 5</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	
	_____	_____	_____	
	_____	_____	_____	
	_____	_____	_____	
	_____	_____	_____	

- 5.) After listing the cards on the above chart, proceed to score them on the chart below: Example: If card #4 was placed in Pile #3, put a 3 next to 4 under Process Goals etc. After listing all the numbers, total each column.

SAMPLE:

Process Goal's	Cooperation	Obedience	Success & School	Competition	Ethical Values
4	1	15	3	7	20
5	2	17	6	8	23
13	11	26	10	9	24
22	18	27	14	12	29
25	19	28	21	16	30

HOME VISIT GOAL PERCEPTIONS

Directions: Number the following sentences, giving a "1" to the statement that you feel represents the clearest attainment of the goal of your home visit, and a "2" to the statement that second best reflects the goal of your home visit. Continue numbering the statements "3" to "8" so that "8" describes the statement that is the least reflective of your goals.

_____ The family trusts me and I trust the family.

_____ The mother feels that I am her friend.

_____ The children look forward to my coming and greet me by calling, "Teacher, teacher."

_____ The mother is taking charge of her family, helping the children with their lessons, getting them to their doctor's appointments, and accessing community resources.

_____ The mother feels that I am her confidante and shares her problems with me.

_____ The children have learned so much since I've been visiting. Even the three year old is counting to ten and reciting part of the alphabet.

_____ The mother really values the time she spends with me. She is always waiting when I come on my weekly visit.

_____ The whole family is involved in helping Viola learn. They are singing songs, making crafts, and even reading books together.

APPENDIX B

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