From We to Me

A Curriculum on Working with Transitioning Youth from the Perspective of Culture

Developed by:

Jane Berdie, MSW

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This one day training includes the following materials

1. Trainer curriculum
2. Participant handouts
3. Curriculum Assessment (a paper/pencil exam for participants designed to help the trainers learn how well the curriculum is working in helping participants gain knowledge covered in the training)
4. A satisfaction/opinion evaluation form
SECTION I
Orientation to Culture

➢ Welcome the group to the training, introducing yourself. Explain that the participants will introduce themselves as part of an exercise in a few minutes. Explain the purpose of the training, referring to a pre-printed flip chart that has three points on it:
  o What motivates youth
  o How youth use help
  o How to frame your interactions and interventions based on this

Cover the following: Understanding the cultures that influence a young person is one way to better understand what motivates them and how they can best use help. Culture is the “we” of a youth’s world. The youth as an individual within the culture is the “me”. Understanding the youth within the context of his or her cultures can give the adult some new ways to think about how to frame interactions and interventions to help the young person move successfully on the path towards becoming a young adult.

➢ James Leigh is a social worker at the University of Washington who has helped the social work field find ways to work with families that take into account their cultures. Let’s look at what he says culture is and what cultural competence is. Refer to Handout I-a and invite comments on each definition:

  Culture: The way a group lives, the ethnic background, the values and norms of behavior, and ways of thinking that are passed down through generations and make the person a member of an identifiable group in society. Myriad forces affect every aspect of a person’s life and give order to that life.

  Central tendencies: Commonalities among people who shared a culture with regard to factors such as beliefs, values, child
rearing, age-stage transitions, relationships, and preferences such as food, clothing, and music. People who are part of a culture may vary greatly in terms of how much they adhere to the central tendency of any factor.

Cultural Competence: The ability to give assistance to clients in ways that are acceptable and useful to them.

In Leigh’s definition of culture, he refers to cultures which pass traditions through generations. This may imply to you that culture refers only to people who live together in intergenerational groups. However, in this training we will also be using “culture” to refer to groups who share values and norms even if they do not live together in intergenerational groups. So, examples such as the youth culture and lifestyle cultures (Harley riders, bird watchers, and drug users) fit our definition.

Leigh’s point about central tendencies reminds us that cultures are not monoliths that define all aspects of a person’s life, nor are they immutable. Cultures change constantly and the people who are members of a culture vary in the degree to which they follow the cultural norms and beliefs. Over a lifespan, any one individual may go back and forth in how much he/she adheres to norms and beliefs.

In Leigh’s definition of cultural competence, he indicates that if a client finds the assistance acceptable and useful, then likely the person giving the assistance is doing so in a way that fits with, is compatible with, the person’s cultures. Leigh stresses that assistance will be more successful if it is given in a way that creates congruence with culture, rather than conflict with culture. In a way, it is a variation of a social work principle: “start where the client is”.

In this training we will focus both on ways to better understand youth within the context of their culture and how to use that information in helping them.

Before you introduce yourselves, let’s go over the “Rules of the Road for Training”, including confidentiality, staying present, respect for
others, taking responsibility for learning, and having fun. Do so, stressing confidentiality, explaining that culture is sensitive and we will experience that during the training. When we talk about culture, we talk about an aspect of life that is heartfelt; it is important to people and therefore sensitive. Delving into sensitive issues makes us all feel vulnerable and yet the way that everyone will get the most out of this training will be if we all feel safe in talking about these issues. So confidentiality (keeping all that is said in this room) is imperative.

**Activity 1-1 Introductions**

Tell participants that we will all introduce ourselves in a few minutes. In preparation for that, turn to Handout I-b and take about 6-7 minutes to think about and record some information about yourself on the handout. All of us are a part of many cultures. Identify three of your cultures – give them a name. These might be related to ethnicity, lifestyle, religion, work, hobbies or many others. Also, all of us have been influenced by a culture of which we are not a part. Identify one of those also and for that one, identify how it has had an effect on your life (positive, negative or mixed). Describe the effect. After participants have had a chance to complete this handout (about 6-7 minutes), ask them to discuss their responses in dyads or a small group. Give them about five minutes for this. After that, bring them back to plenary and introduce yourself, giving this information (three cultures you are a part of and, additionally, another culture of which you are not a part but which has had an influence on you; describe the influence). Then ask each participant to introduce himself (first giving name, job and county or agency) to the whole group and talk a bit about themselves in relation to the cultures they chose. Tell them that we have about 3-4 minutes (depending on number of people in the room) for each person. During the discussion, probe a bit about effects of culture on the lives of a few of the participants. The purpose of this is to get at specific effects people believe their cultures have on them. As you process the introductions, explain that getting at specifics is difficult since many of us experience the effects of our cultures as second nature and we may not have thought this through in any detail. Also, we may be uncomfortable talking about effects in a training session because culture is a sensitive issue. Be sure to note
both of these issues and ask people to keep these in mind: it is not always easy to talk with people about culture because of both reasons.

➢ Review housekeeping items including mileage, restrooms and lunch.

➢ Refer trainees to Handout I-c “Agenda”. Go over the blocks of time. (An addendum Trainer Note to this curriculum addresses the specifics of each time period.) Also refer them to Handout I-d “Competencies and Objectives” and briefly cover these: Over the course of this training we will cover five areas related to a cultural perspective on working with youth in relation to independent living: 1) what a cultural perspective and what can be learned from this, 2) how developmental cognitive stages of cultural sensitivity form a foundation for how we are able to view youth from a cultural perspective, 3) an approach to learning more about a youth’s culture based on a social work interviewing technique called ‘ethnographic interviewing”, 4) how to help youth find resources that are culturally relevant, and 5) how interactions and interventions can be framed based on what is known about a youth’s cultural influences.

Activity I-2: Identifying Cultures
➢ Ask the group to identify types of culture that may affect youth. Relate them to cultures identified in Activity I-1. Record these on flip chart.

Trainer Note: Be sure the following are identified:
- Ethnicity/race
- Religion
- Income
- Lifestyle
- Profession
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Sports and recreation
- Military
- Violence
- Age, e.g., youth
- Incarceration (related to what used to be called the culture of deviancy)
- Foster care/group homes
- Psychiatric hospitals
- Child welfare
- Alcohol and drugs
- Prostitution/pimping
- Body modification, body art

Note that cultures and cultural indicators can overlap, e.g., many of these cultures have distinctive clothing but also “clothes” can be a culture in itself, e.g., high fashion.

Ask about subcultures. Elicit examples, e.g., the following:
- Youth: subcultures include posers, jocks, frats, freaks, geeks, wangsters, neo hippies, mainstreamers; youth music subcultures include rap and nu metal.
- Lifestyle subcultures might overlap with other cultures such as youth culture. This might include street youth and weekend street youth for example. Drug subculture is another example.

How many cultures do you think most people have as a part of their lives? What is the impact of this? Stress that there is no right/wrong answer to this: the purpose is to encourage participants to think about the complexity of life in relation to culture and how most of us are influenced by multiple cultures.

Let’s identify what about a person’s life is influenced by their cultures (give an example to get them started and then facilitate discussion and record on flip).

Trainer Notes: examples:
- How they see the world, e.g., what is important, what is right and wrong, what is fun, what is shameful, what is embarrassing.
- How they want to spend their time
- How they make decisions
Family roles
- What makes them feel worthwhile, important, powerful, good, bad.
- How they interact with others, particularly given their perceptions of another person’s role or demeanor.
- Where they live, who friends are
- What they eat and wear; where they live, what vehicles they have.

Activity 1-3: How Culture Can Influence Youth Learning Independent Living Skills

Write the following on a flip chart:
- cultural issues/ dynamics affecting transition
- learning about these issues and dynamics

Like all people, youth are influenced by their cultures, sometimes overtly, and sometimes in subtle ways. Like all people they may or may not be aware of the impact of their cultures on them. Let’s take a look at three youth and the adults who are working with them. Our main purpose here is to see if we can get a sense of what cultural issues or dynamics may be affecting the youth’s progress in transition or learning skills that will help with this. For each youth we will focus on one of their primary cultural influences. Remember, although cultural influences are often mixed with many other dynamics and issues, it can be useful to parse out what is cultural and how it exerts influence. Think about how the adult in the case scenario tried to learn more about the issue. What did he or she do to gain information and do you think they did this in a useful way?

Let’s look at some case examples of how cultural influences affect how youth see issues of their lives and how they are motivated. Explain that as a group we will all go over one example and then the participants will deal with other examples in two groups.

Ask them to read about Eduardo from Handout II-e, Part I only at this point. After they have read Part I, facilitate a discussion of the questions on Part I. Use Trainer Notes on Eduardo, Janice and Thomas to help process this.
discussion. Then, ask for one or more volunteers to read the Part II dialog (either with you or with another volunteer). Once this has been done, lead a discussion on the question following Part 2. Record the main points on flip chart labeled “Eduardo”. You will use this later, in Section IV.

Divide the participants into small groups of 4-5 and assign each group either Handout I-f: Janice or Handout I-g: Thomas (more than one group may have each case.) Ask them to follow the same process as we just did for Eduardo, except that one person should record their answers on the handout. Give them about 20 minutes for this. Then bring them back to plenary and go over each of the two examples. Ask for a volunteer to summarize the case (using Part I) for the whole group. Then ask participants from a Janice group first to read the dialog and then to discuss their answers to the questions. Get input from all Janice groups if there is more than one. Facilitate input from all participants, including those not in a Janice group. Repeat for Thomas. In all of the discussions, be sure to address what they may have missed about the importance of culture if the cultural interview had not taken place. Emphasize that this afternoon we will use this information in planning interactions and interventions with these youth.
Trainer Note on Eduardo, Janice and Thomas

Eduardo, Part 1

1. **What might be cultural aspects to this situation, including those that have to do with Eduardo’s age and his living arrangement?**

   Eduardo is from northern Mexico originally. It may be that there are some issues of his Mexican culture that affect his opinions about what he should be doing with his life at the age of 16, especially as this relates to working and where he should live. Without a cultural interview, we won’t know.

2. **How would you explore this to find out more?**

   Talk with Eduardo, his mother and his grandmother about what 16 year old Mexican males typically are doing both in Chihuahua and here. Ask about how they see Eduardo’s situation as the same or different from other males this age. Find out their opinions about how the group home fits or doesn’t fit with this.

Eduardo, Part 2

3. **From these conversations, what did Michael learn about cultural aspects of Eduardo’s transition towards independent living?**

   In Eduardo’s Mexican culture (at least the part of rural northern Mexico where his family is from) it is typical for young men his age to be out on their own more than is so in America. They are seen as young men and it is common for them to be living at home only as they choose to do so. They may well be away from home for periods of time – they are not expected to sleep there every night. In fact, they may be away, working or looking for work. Working and not necessarily living at home all of the time appear to be a milestone of coming of age for males where Eduardo is from.

   Eduardo’s transition in America is playing out quite differently than if he still lived in Mexico. He is living in a group home with many restrictions and does not yet have the okay to find a job (which is likely associated with his “level” in the group home). The group home experience, which is difficult for many youth, may be particularly hard for Eduardo because for
him it signifies all of the restrictions associated with **not** being allowed to transition to adulthood.

**Janice, Part 1**

1. **What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Janice’s mother’s church might be having an effect on Janice’s readiness to work on these two self-sufficiency skills?**

While we don’t yet know much about Janice’s mother’s church, it may be that tenets of the church have an impact on Janice regarding these two self-sufficiency skills: 1) learning to cook and shop for food and 2) learning to identify her own feelings and talk about them. It may be that the first one is valued and the second is not. Additionally, sexual abuse has its own culture, i.e., one of secrecy. This could interfere with Janice’s comfort in talking about her feelings.

2. **How would you explore this to find out more?**

Talk with Janice about her mother’s church: what do people in the church think about girls her age in relation to these two skills. What are examples of girls practicing or not practicing these skills? Other useful resources would be Janice’s mother and her pastor.

**Janice, Part 2**

3. **What did Mrs. Bennett learn about the cultural influences on Janice?**

Janice sees her mother’s church as supporting girls in learning the skill of cooking but there is ambivalence about identifying and talking about one’s feelings because it may become self-centered and complaining, both of which are frowned upon.

**Thomas, Part 1**

1. **What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Thomas is being harassed?**

Thomas views his sexual orientation as a challenge to others in terms of their willingness to honor his civil rights. He feels that acting as gay as he wants
to is an indication of pride and a demonstration of human rights. There may be a cultural dimension to this, i.e., a gay cultural subgroup that supports this position.

2. **How would you explore this to find out more?**
Talk with Thomas about what gay subgroups he identifies with and what their beliefs and actions are. Visit websites or read literature that explains the views of these groups. Talk with Thomas about how he is similar or different from them.

**Thomas, Part 2**

3. **What did Carla learn about cultural aspects of Thomas’ life?**
Thomas is identifying with a group of other young gay men who believe that the civil rights of gay people will best be enforced when gays no longer accommodate straight views about how they should behave. Based on this, he behaves how he feels and may even be behaving in a way that baits some straights. Carla also feels that this could be intertwined with a “culture of victimization” that he learned from childhood abuse.
Activity I-4: Openness to Seeing the Impact of Culture

We can see from the last exercise some examples of how culture might affect a young person’s way of learning and practicing self-sufficiency skills. For each of us, as adults who work with youth, our own ability to see cultural issues and to utilize them in working with youth rests in part in our own awareness level. Milton Bennett, an interculturist, has developed a developmental scheme for assessing our own cognitive perspective on culture.

Draw a continuum on the flipchart and mark six points along it, labeling them as per Handout I-h. Explain each point, asking for examples and giving some personal ones reflecting your own development. Ask participants to evaluate their own place and progress and ask for volunteer examples. Facilitate a discussion on how being in one place or another might affect one’s ability to deal with cultural issues affecting youth. Note that this discussion may be much more sensitive for people than the discussion of personal cultures earlier this morning. Remind them again of how difficult it can be to talk about culture although the rewards in terms of understanding self and others are great.
SECTION II
Talking to Youth about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing

Most of us have been trained to professionally talk with (i.e., interview) others from a perspective of individual or small group issues. Small groups might be family or peer groups. We haven’t been trained to think as much about cultural issues and we haven’t been trained to interview with this in mind. So, to get a grasp on how to understand and then utilize cultural issues in practice, we need an additional perspective. One such perspective comes from James Leigh, a social worker at the University of Washington who has developed an approach called “ethnographic interviewing.”

Activity II-1: Ethnographic interviewing overview
Ethnographic interviewing is an approach to interviewing that attempt to understand the cultural influences on people’s thoughts and behaviors. The idea is that understanding these influences helps the worker or foster parent to find ways of helping the youth or family that is consistent with their world views. It is easier for all of us to change or make progress if our world views are not challenged (i.e., if we can avoid cognitive dissonance). Refer them to Handout II-a and ask them to read pages one and two. After they have read it, summarize the main points from pages 1 and 2 only. Ask for questions or comments as you do so. The purpose is to ensure that they have the background for the next activity, which is to begin to learn how cultural (ethnographic) interviews are conducted, and how they differ from interviews about the individual.

Activity II-2 How Ethnographic Interviewing is Different than Other Forms of Interviewing
In ethnographic interviewing the idea is to first learn about the culture and only after that find out how the culture influences the individual. So, it’s important to ask questions about the culture(s) first. Let’s see if you can identify the difference – when a question is about culture, when it is about individuals, and when it is bridging from one to the other. Ask for a volunteer to help you read dialogs to demonstrate several approaches to interviewing. Refer them to Handout II-b to follow the dialogs. See if you
can identify which approach is being used, individual or cultural. What are the indicators?

Read the dialogs form Handout II-b. After each, ask the participants whether it is an example of a cultural or individual focused interview and what are the indicators.

**Trainer Notes on Differentiating Cultural from Individual Interviewing**

Example 1 is cultural.
Example 2 is individual. It MAY have cultural origins but the worker has not explored this.
In Example 3 the worker first clarifies the cultural information and then asks about how the cultural and the individual conform.

**ACTIVITY II-3: Missed Opportunities: When A Cultural Focus Can Be Helpful**

Omitting a cultural perspective can lead to poor assessments and planning as well as missed opportunities to connect with clients, to build a working relationship with them. Let’s look at a couple of cases where that happened. Read the first example on Handout II-c. (*Lead a discussion on what was lost using the Trainer Notes below. Then do the same for the other example if there is enough time.*)

**Trainer Notes on Missed Opportunities**

**Example 1:** It would make sense for the adults working with Rose to get a better handle on the influence of the gang. Even if it is true that she has had no contact with them, there well may be a real influence at work. Gang experts say there has been a precipitous rise in girl gangs in recent years, particularly Hispanic and Asian girl gangs. (*See Juvenile Justice Bulletin March 2001, an issue on female gangs – www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2001  www.gangsorus.com*). While gangs vary greatly, the grip of the gang on girls is generally as strong as it is on boys. Most girls who join gangs have been abused at home, often sexual abused. They are likely to make pledges of fidelity to sister members of the gang as well as to male gangs with whom they are affiliated. Rose’s behavior may reflect allegiances that she has to the gang and beliefs that she
has that come from the gang. Even if she has had no recent contact, she may be highly influenced by loyalty and shared beliefs.

**Example 2:** Jack and the Ellisons could benefit from talking to Melissa about the church. It is possible that the church has some specific values and beliefs about children and young people lying and about how parents should respond. For instance, the church doctrine could be that lying is a direct blasphemy against God and that punishment is the only means to expiate the child. It would be important to know how Melissa feels about all of this. She may agree and thus feel that she was saved by the spanking. She may totally disagree. She may be ambivalent. It is likely, though, that this issue about what her mother's church believes about lying and punishment is having a real impact on Melissa and may be standing in the way of her being able to communicate with the Ellisons and Jack and to be able to work on other issues.

**ACTIVITY II-4: Key Terms in Ethnographic Interviewing**

Before we go into the steps of ethnographic (or cultural) interviewing, let’s go over the key terms. Look at Handout II-d and I’ll read each definition and we will talk about it. *(Read and lead brief discussion using the examples given and some from your own experience.)*

**ACTIVITY II-5: The Steps of an Ethnographic Interview**

To cover the steps of an ethnographic interview, we are going to follow a case and see some of what happens and how the information is used. We’ll be using Handout II-e, which first identifies Leigh’s steps of an ethnographic interview and then gives an example of a worker and her teenage client and her aunt. While in actual practice you may not use such a formal approach, it helps to know what the model is, so we will cover it with all the steps. I’d like three volunteers to read the parts of the supervisor (Mara), the youth (Jackie) and the aunt (Dora) with me from the script in Handout II-e. I’ll read the worker’s part.
Let’s start by going over the first step and then listening to a dialog (or monolog in the case of the first step). Our example will be an Angla worker with a Native American youth as her client.

*Discuss the step briefly and then read the dialog or monolog. After the entire dialog has been read, facilitate a discussion about what was learned from this approach using the Trainer Notes.*

**Trainer Notes on Jackie**
We learned some information about culture that may help us to understand Jackie better. Jackie is from the Northern Cheyenne Nation in Montana. She and her mother moved back and forth over the years between here and there. Now, the Social Service and school people who work with Jackie are concerned about several things and we find that there is a cultural aspect to each of them:

- **Not doing well in school:** Jackie is not doing well in school. We get some inkling into what might be contributing to this from this cultural interview. Jackie’s tutor says that Jackie doesn’t ask questions and doesn’t let her know what she does and doesn’t understand. This may be related to Jackie’s “passivity” and understanding this better may give some insight to this.

- **Passivity/quietness:** Here Jackie is seen as passive and quiet. Jackie describes some time in Lame Deer in Montana, when she is not that way. She describes going to 49 dances and singing loud. She says that she feels good, “really free. No one criticizes you.” There is an indication here that when Jackie feels comfortable and in harmony with her environment, she does not act quietly. Her aunt Dora also gives us some insight to “passivity”. She says that “its kind of embarrassing to us to see other Indian people being so forward as non-Indians are...saying everything you want or whatever is on your mind. To us, its not polite.” Thus, she clarifies that what non-Indians see as shyness or passivity is a form of politeness in her culture. Jackie has two non-congruent messages being given to her abut quietness and non-assertiveness and her workers and tutor are not taking this into account.

- **Joking in the face of problems** There seems to be a cultural difference about “locus of control”, that is, who has control over what. Dora feels there is a cultural difference with non-Indians having a
high level of internal locus of control and Northern Cheyenne’s a much lower level.

- **Not saving money** There is a major cultural difference being explained here. Apparently among Northern Cheyennes there is a great value placed on helping one’s relatives with material goods; it is honorable to stay aware of the needs a relative may be having and to bring the relative what is needed. This is more important than accumulating wealth for oneself. Thus, if one of Jackie’s relatives is in need, then she has a moral dilemma about saving money the way her IL worker wants her to do.
SECTION III
CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

One of the things we know about helping youth along their paths of transition is that a variety of other people and resources can be useful in helping youth learn, in making connections and in serving as role models. Other people and resources may offer support and help that are different than that which is usually provided by caseworkers, IL workers, and out of home care providers. This is especially true for potential helpers who share a culture with a youth. However, it can be difficult to find these resources because not all of them are as well known as traditional resources. Also, cultural resources may be less available in some areas of the state than others. Others may not be particularly useful for young people.

Some youth tend to find their own resources on the internet: remember Thomas and the chat room he found for gay youth.

Finding resources often means going beyond the United Way resource directory, although that is a good place to start. Often it means calling traditional organizations and asking not only what they provide but what other organizations or individuals they know about who provide help or information. For instance, PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) may be able to refer you to not only their own support groups for youth and for their parents or foster parents, but also to churches and community college-based youth groups for gays and lesbians. Increasingly, national and local area groups have 800 numbers and websites as well as resource directories and internet links to other groups (some of them local) which offer services. However, often the best local directory is compiled and updated by county staff who work with youth.

Activity III-1 Brainstorming Possible Resources

Among the desired outcomes for youth of the Independent Living program is the ability to find and use resources, including people who will mentor and provide assistance. In relation to culture, this means youth finding and using culturally relevant mentors and resources.
Take a look at Handout III-a. *(Note, this handout must be developed locally for anyone using this curriculum. The Colorado Institute for Families project resource list can be found at the website ifduonline.org. The matrix shell of common cultures that influence youth are provided in Handout III-a.)*

Let’s do some brainstorming about where you can look for resources and help youth to find them.

*Facilitate a discussion of where they look for resources. Be sure the following are included:*

- Directories compiled by others such as yellow pages and United Way
- Card file/electronic director kept and updated by people in the office
- Contacts in the community
- Internet: look up organizations and topics (e.g., girl gangs)
- Self help groups, often under the aegis of local colleges, hospitals etc.

*Each training group should develop this handout using resources for its state and local areas.*
SECTION IV
INCORPORATING CULTURAL ISSUES INTO WORKING WITH YOUTH

Let’s look now at how gaining a better understanding about a youth’s culture can help in working with youth on transitioning to independent living. It is good practice to involve all youth in identifying and working on some knowledge and skills that will help them transition to young adulthood.

Remember, the idea of learning about culture is to find some ways to work with a young person that deal with the reality of the cultural issues. This might mean finding strategies or solutions that are congruent with the cultural issues or at least do not confront them in a no-win kind of way. Or, it might mean putting the cultural issue on the table with the youth and exploring the congruences and conflicts with the goals of independent living and the constraints and resources of the DSS and the independent living program. In any event, it means planning with the youth in such a way so that cultural issues are at the forefront. Let’s go back to some of the youth we met earlier and see what a focus on culture might suggest in terms of intervention.

Activity IV-1 Planning and Assessing Progress

We are going to go back to four of the youth we met earlier in this training in order to use what we have learned about the cultural aspects of their lives in our work with them. Before doing so, let’s identify some ways that we can use what we learn about culture.

Facilitate a discussion and record on the flip chart, covering at least the points identified here:

Strategies for Using Cultural Knowledge in Working with Youth

➢ Anticipate cultural issues as you get to know the youth and family – try to figure out what they might be. Anticipate the cultural issues that might affect youth. Use these as a basis for your hunches/hypotheses and, thus, what you want to find out more about.

➢ Conduct culturally focused interviews (e.g., ethnographic interviewing) with the youth and others.
During discussions with youth and others, bring up key issues, especially those that may cause discomfort. For instance, “I don’t know much about this part of your life and am kind of worried that I might offend you. So, as we talk about it, if I am offending you in any way, please let me know. That is not my intent.”

- Learn more about culture from others
- Use the internet and library to learn more about cultural issues
- Use culture-focused organizations as a source of information for you and support/mentoring for youth.
- When working with foster parents, find out what the “button-pushers” are and act accordingly, e.g., some foster parents can’t handle youth who they see as Satan worshippers – don’t place youth there if youth’s beliefs are inclined that way.
- Once you understand cultural issues, search for ways to intervene that accommodate or fit with the culture rather than butting heads with it.
- Help youth find and use cultural mentors and models.
- Help youth find and use cultural resources.

Activity IV-2 Strategic Use of Cultural Knowledge: Case Examples

Put the participants in four groups: Eduardo, Janice, Thomas and Jackie. Make sure that the Janice and Thomas groups have only people in them who worked in these groups before. Refer them back to the appropriate handouts (and for Eduardo there will be a flip chart of notes). Their task is to identify ways to work with the youth based on what is known about their cultural influences. Use the set of questions (found on Handout IV-1) to address this issue. Give each group about 30 minutes and then bring them back to plenary. Process by asking each group to give a brief summary of their youth and then the answers to the questions. Use the Trainer Notes to help facilitate the discussion.

Activity IV-3 Strategic Use of Cultural Knowledge: Youth with Whom Participants work

Afterwards, ask participants to think of one youth with whom they are working and identify 1) the cultural issues they think may be present and 2) how knowledge of these issues may affect how they work with the youth. Ask them to discuss this with a partner (or in a triad). Give them about 10
minutes and then ask for examples. Reinforce the importance of finding ways to work with youth that do not create a direct clash with aspects of their cultural beliefs.
Name of Youth: Eduardo

1. What are the main cultural issues for this youth?
Eduardo’s Mexican culture defines transition to manhood for males earlier than does mainstream American culture. In his own eyes, Eduardo at age 16½ should be working at least some of the time and free to live where he wants, including sometimes at his parent’s home but not always. Instead, he is in a group home with strict rules that do not allow him to leave without a pass (or be AWOL) and require him to achieve a certain level before he can work. The rules are in direct conflict with his cultural transition path.

2. What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?
Eduardo’s sense of how he should be transitioning is being roadblocked. He seems aware of the differences in cultures but it is unclear how well he connects his low level of cooperation at the group home and the dissonance being created by different cultural views on the path of manhood.

3. What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?
Despite the cultural clash, it would not be possible or in Eduardo’s interest to let him purpose the transition as his Mexican culture would indicate should occur. Instead, it is important to work with Eduardo on what he needs to do at the group home to be allowed to find a job. Working would likely help Eduardo feel that he was more on the right path. A plan for return to his grandmother’s house should be explored. Other relatives (e.g., his uncle) should be explored as placement resources. His relatives should be brought into the planning for Eduardo’s self-sufficiency IL plan.

Name of Youth: Janice
1. **What are the main cultural issues for this youth?**
Janice has a cultural tradition of a Christian fundamentalist church as well as a history of sexual abuse. The sexual abuse history means that there has been a high value placed on secrecy in her house, of not talking about what is really going on or one’s feelings about it. The religious culture may feed into this is in that it may be that identifying and talking about feelings is in conflict with service towards God and others. However, the religious culture supports Janice learning to cook, an important self sufficiency skill.

2. **What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?**
Janice says she is uncomfortable talking about her feelings. While this is true for many youth, it may be that both her religious cultural view and the family dynamic of secrecy associated with sexual abuse contribute to this difficulty. We don’t know how much Janice believes the same as her mother’s church but, as her foster mother says, “I do know that what the people who mean the most to us think has a big influence on how we think and feel.” It is unclear whether Janice has sorted any of this out; it is unlikely given her age and the fact that to sort it out would mean to grapple with feelings, itself somewhat of a taboo subject.

3. **What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?**
For the self sufficiency skill of learning to cook, the cultural background is a plus and promotes Janice’s competency. For the skill of learning to identify and talk about feelings, the two cultural influences are inhibiting. It would be useful for Mrs. Bennett and her Child Welfare workers to talk with Janice about what she thinks and feels about this. She has already said she thinks talking about feelings is probably good for her but she is uncomfortable. It would help to talk with her about how her family’s beliefs and behaviors affect her. Mrs. Bennett has begun to do this. If Janice’s mother and or her mother’s pastor are amenable to talking, it would be useful for the worker to explore with them what is meant by too much focus on self and to see if it is possible to differentiate this from the focus of the IL skill of understanding and expressing oneself. It is
possible that there is room for this within her mother’s religion and understanding this might help Janice to feel more comfortable.

Name of Youth  Thomas

1. **What are the main cultural issues for this youth?**
   Thomas is gay and has experienced rejection and harassment due to this. Thomas identifies with what may be a subculture of young gay men who believe their behavior should not be influenced by attempts to accommodate straight views about how they should behave. Based on this, he behaves how he feels and may even be behaving in a way that baits some straights. Carla also feels that this could be intertwined with a “culture of victimization” that he learned from childhood abuse.

2. **What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?**
   At this point Thomas’s identification with this culture seems to be putting him at risk for harm. He may be aware of this but likely sees it as a “badge of honor” by being true to who he is as a person. One of the self sufficiency skills Thomas needs to work on during his transition to adulthood is the ability to protect himself from harm and this is impaired by his view of self.

3. **What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?**
   Thomas’s worker and foster parents might be best able to help him by seeking to understand the views of the cultural group with which he identifies in terms of what it means to be gay. It may be that Thomas, who is relatively new to this culture, has interpreted beliefs differently than others. Also, it may be that there are other perspectives in gay subcultures about how to be true to oneself and still be self-protective. Exploring this with Thomas rather than criticizing it may help Thomas to be less rigid. At this point he likely feels like he is in this alone and this may make him all
the more rigid. It may help to help him find other gay groups to be a part of, e.g., through campus and street youth programs for young gays.

Name of Youth Jackie

2. What are the main cultural issues for this youth?
The main cultural issues revolve around differences between her Northern Cheyenne culture and her mainstream American culture. They include:

- Assertiveness – valued broadly in American culture. Often seen as disrespectful and impolite in Northern Cheyenne culture. Likewise, “passivity” is not valued in American culture but the same behaviors in northern Cheyenne culture would likely be seen as respectful.

- Loud vs. Quiet - There are times within Northern Cheyenne culture when “loud” is acceptable, e.g., at 49 dances. But generally “quiet” is valued, again as a sign of respect. American culture sees “quiet” as a form of passivity at certain times, e.g., when the tutor is trying to get the youth to talk to him about homework needs.

- Locus of control - In American culture, a young person who assertively asks for and actively uses help in homework is seen as responsible. Performance in school is highly valued and is seen as within the student’s span of control as well as responsibility. We are getting an indication that Northern Cheyenne culture may not have the same view. While we are unclear of specifics, it appears as though being assertive about using homework help might be construed as trying to control an outcome that is not within one’s power.

- Use of money – In American mainstream culture, saving money is valued and most IL programs require youth to save. Saving money is a key aspect of money management, which in turn is a highly valued IL skill for transition. However, there is a clash with Northern Cheyenne values about taking care of relatives. Apparently, saving money when one’s relatives are in need is frowned upon.

2. What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?
These issues likely are creating dissonance for Jackie. We would need to explore this further, but it appears as though Jackie feels uncomfortable in asserting herself around homework needs and in other situations. She spends money on relatives instead of saving. But none of this has been discussed with any of the people who work with her, probably because they do not realize the cultural issues involved. We are not sure if Jackie does or not. Here aunt seems quite aware of the issues and has thought about similarities and differences between the two cultures.

3. **What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?**

   Each of the issues that has been identified is having a direct impact on Jackie’s success in her IL plan. It is important for each person working with Jackie to learn more about these issues by talking with Jackie and her aunt. Together, they need to explore ways to move forward on the plan that won’t create such dissonance for Jackie, or in which she can understand the culture clash and make some choices if compromises are not possible. For instance, it may work out that it would be okay for Jackie to be more assertive about using help from her tutor if her tutor used more active listening communication strategies and cooperative problem solving with Jackie (e.g., “Seems like this confusing, let’s see if we can go over each step and see where the confusion begins” rather than “What part of this do you need help with?”). Perhaps a method of saving some money and having some available for other uses could be worked out.
SECTION V
Exercise and Wrap-up

We are going to conclude with an exercise to help us as the trainers to get a sense of whether this training curriculum is getting across the points we want to be making. This is NOT an assessment of your individual learning. As you complete these we will ask you NOT to write down your name. After doing this, we will talk about the questions you’re your responses and then ask you to give your sheets to us so that we can see how well the class as a whole is getting the points. This, along with your evaluations after this exercise, will help make changes in the training.

Pass out the Culture Exercise. Give people about 15 minutes to complete it and then go over the responses using the Trainer Notes. Collect the sheets after this for data analysis.

Ask people to complete the Workshop evaluation.
AGENDA

8:30 – 9:20  Welcome and Overview  
I-1  50 minutes  Introduce selves and cultures

9:20 – 10:15  The Influence of Culture  
I-2  15 minutes  Identify cultures and their influences  
I-3  15 minutes  Eduardo and Small group work on about Janice and Thomas

10:15-10:30  BREAK

10:30 – 11:00  I-3  Report outs on Janice and Thomas

11:00-11:25  Cognitive Frameworks for “Seeing” Culture  
I-4  25 minutes  Milton Bennett

11:25 - 12:00  Talking about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing  
II-1  10 minutes  Overview  
II-2  10 minutes  What makes E interviewing different  
II-3  15 minutes  Missed Opportunities

12:00 – 1:00  LUNCH

1:00 – 1:15  Talking about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing  
II-4  15 minutes  Key Terms

1:15 - 2:00  Ethnographic Interviewing (cont)  
II-5  45 minutes  Kyla, Mara, Jackie and Aunt Dora

2:00 – 2:15  Identifying Resources  
III  15 minutes
2:15 – 2:30  BREAK

2:30 – 4:00  Planning with Youth within the Context of Culture
IV-1  15 minutes  Brainstorm list of actions
IV-2  50 minutes  Eduardo, Janice, Thomas, Jackie
IV-3  25 minutes  Application to youth with whom they work

4:00 – 4:30  Exercise and Wrap-up
Exercise       20 minutes
Evaluation     10 minutes
A. For questions 1-5, identify whether the adult’s statement addresses culture, individual issues, or both.

1. Tell me about people who follow nu metal music. What is important to them?
   x culture  ___ individual issues  ___ both

2. So, part of being in the gang is keeping this kind of information secret. What would members do if someone talked about this stuff?
   x culture  ___ individual issues  ___ both

3. You say that there is a whole different way of looking at life for kids growing up on a military base. How would young people on a military base describe their lives?
   x culture  ___ individual issues  ___ both

4. I know you’ve said that you as a male shouldn’t have to learn to do some of the things on this IL list – you call them “housework”. Tell me more about that.
   ___ culture  x individual issues  ___ both
   (There may be a cultural view behind the individual one, but that is not what this question addresses.)

5. Do you feel like the rest of your group, that you are safe using meth if you know who’s cooked it?
   ___ culture  ___ individual issues  x both

B. From the case scenarios we talked about today, which of the statements BEST reflects what we learned? (Be careful of making assumptions beyond what was actually addressed.)

6. In Eduardo’s culture, by age 16, males (select one only)
   ___ a. Move out of the home
   ___ b. leave school to work
   x   c. live off and on at home
   ___ d. take on financial responsibility for the family
7. In Janice's mother's church, an important value or belief is (select one only)
   ___ a. women should work only in the home
   __x__ b. discussion of negative feelings reflects self-centeredness
   ____ c. typical adolescent interests and behaviors endanger the youth's relationship with God.
   ____ d. honoring one's mother and father

8. In Thomas's view of gay youth culture, it is imperative that gay youths (select one only)
   __x__ a. act as they really feel
   ____ b. use violence against violence
   ____ c. stick together
   ____ d. segregate from straights

9. In Jackie's situation, which of the following dissonances are relevant? The statement under the first column pertains to the Independent Living service culture. The statement under the second column pertains to N. Cheyenne culture. Check all that apply based on Jackie's scenario.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IL Culture</th>
<th>N. Cheyenne Culture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x__ a. save money</td>
<td>help relatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>____ b. be self sufficient</td>
<td>depend on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x__ c. assert yourself</td>
<td>be polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ d. plan ahead</td>
<td>be spontaneous</td>
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<tr>
<td>____ e. achieve individual</td>
<td>goals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>be part of a group</td>
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C. Which term from Ethnographic Interviewing best describes each of the following statements?

Terms: cover term descriptor central tendency cultural knowledge cultural guide global question ethnology

10. That's sweet ___________ cover term______________
11. A wangster is a White guy trying to act Black ___________ descriptor_____________
12. Tell me about how young people in foster care feel about learning independent living skills. ___________ global question_____________
13. Sad Girls ___________ cover term______________
14. Miqua has lived there all her life and has been describing the community to me. ___________ cultural guide_____________
15. Sad girls are all kinda mopey like in the movie, La Vida Loca, you know what I'm sayin. ___________ descriptor_____________
16. If you want to make it on the street, you need to know stuff like what john is gonna hurt you, what pimp gonna steal from you, what john is a cop. __cultural knowledge_______

17. Most people from home think that teenagers need to stay real busy all the time or they will get into trouble. __central tendency_________

18. According to Mrs. Alverez, there used to be a lot expected of a girl once she has had her quinciniera. She was expected to act more lady like and to take on more responsibilities. However, here, that is changing. Many parents don't seem to expect much of anything anymore, they just see it as a party. ___ethnology__________
From We to Me

A Curriculum on Working with Transitioning Youth from the Perspective of Culture

Trainee Handouts

Developed by:

Jane Berdie, MSW

For:

Institute for Families at the University of Denver

Funded through Federal Grant #90CT00XX

September, 2003

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Culture and Cultural Competence

as defined by James Leigh
University of Washington School of Social Work

Culture: The way a group lives, the ethnic background, the values and norms of behavior, and ways of thinking that are passed down through generations and make the person a member of an identifiable group in society. A myriad of forces that affect every aspect of a person’s life and give order to that life.

Central tendencies: Commonalities among people who shared a culture with regard to factors such as beliefs, values, child rearing, age-stage transitions, relationships, and preferences such as food, clothing, and music. People who are part of a culture may vary greatly in terms of how much they adhere to the central tendency of any factor.

Cultural Competence: The ability to give assistance to clients in ways that are acceptable and useful to them.

Leigh, James W. *Communicating for Cultural Competence*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1998
My Cultural Matrix

A. List three cultures that you are a part of:

1.  

2.  

3.  

B. What is one culture that you are not a part of but has influenced your life?

What has been the influence of this culture on you (positive, negative or both)?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<td>Exercise and Wrap-up</td>
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Competencies and Objectives

Competency 1
Able to identify ways in which culture influences how youth transition to independent living.

Learning Objectives
1.1 Able to identify common types of cultures to which youth belong.
1.2 Able to identify ways in which cultures influence perceptions, motivations, and actions.
1.3 Able to identify common ways in which youth think about culture and its influence.

Competency 2
Able to identify ways in which adults working with youth can learn more about youths' cultural influences and use this to guide their interactions and interventions.

Learning Objectives
2.1 Able to identify the rationale and steps of conducting an ethnographic interview.
2.2 Able to identify approaches to finding resources to help youth.
2.3 Able to strategize about interactions and interventions based on cultural issues.
Eduardo Part 1

Michael is an African-American caseworker who recently began working with Eduardo, age 16½. Eduardo was born in a rural area of Chihuahua, Mexico and came here with his mother and other relatives 12 years ago. Eduardo was placed in a RTC last month after he had been released from Detention, where he wound up when he was caught driving a vehicle that he and another boy “borrowed” from the other boy’s foster family. Prior to this Eduardo had been living with his grandmother for four years. His grandmother told the judge she can’t be responsible for his whereabouts; he is too old for that now. She said she had been caring for him ever since his mother, her daughter, had gone with her new husband to work as harvesters.

Eduardo does not want to be in the RTC. He hates the rules and restrictions. He wants to live on his own; in his mind it’s time for him to be a man. He has been minimally cooperative at the RTC and has stayed out of serious trouble since being there. He says he is doing so in order to be allowed to get a job.

Eduardo’s mother has been contacted. She and her husband and two young children are traveling the Northwest, picking crops. She said she didn’t think she would be able to handle Eduardo and says she wishes they would just let him work towards emancipation. She does not know Eduardo’s father’s whereabouts and has not seen him since Eduardo was an infant.

Questions:
What might be cultural aspects to this situation, including those that have to do with Eduardo’s age and his living arrangement?

How would you explore this to find out more?
Eduardo Part 2

Michael wondered whether there were any cultural aspects to this situation that might help him to understand the interests, beliefs, and motivations of the key people: Eduardo, his grandmother and his mother. Here are a few excerpts of conversations he had about this:

**With grandmother**

Michael: I wonder about other males you know who are about Eduardo’s age. What are they doing?

Grandmother: His cousin Arturo is 18. He joined the Navy.

Michael: How about when he was Michael’s age?

Grandmother: He worked some. He mowed lawns with his uncle.

Michael: Where did he live?

Grandmother: Some with his uncle. Sometimes at his mother’s place.

Michael: How come not just with his mother?

Grandmother: He was getting too old for that.

Michael: What do you mean?

Grandmother: They get to a certain age, the boys, and they don’t live at home as much.

Michael: Why is that?

Grandmother: They are just at that age -- they want to be out on their own more.

Michael: How about in Chihuahua, where you come from. Where do they live?
Grandmother: Oh, they are more on their own there, sometimes they come home and sometimes not. They stay in touch though.

Michael: At what age?

Grandmother: About like Michael.

Michael: How about girls?

Grandmother: Oh, no, they stay home. With their parents or grandparents.

**With Eduardo**

Michael: You are 16 now.

Eduardo: Yeah. Actually 16½.

Michael: Sometimes getting to a certain age means some things are changing. Like for girls from Mexico I guess 15 is important.

Eduardo: Yeah, their quinceanera is at 15. It's like a growing up kind of thing.

Michael: Part of the culture from where your family comes in Mexico?

Eduardo: Yeah, I guess so. The girls get all get these parties and stuff.

Michael: What is expected of them after that – like what is different from when they were just 14?

Eduardo: I don't know for sure. Like, I think they are supposed to be more grown-up. Getting ready for being women, but not really there yet. They wear these, like, bride dresses at their parties – I think it is to remind them to stay pure. Its like they are growing up and they need to be more like women, have responsibilities and stuff, but remember to be good too. My
grandmother said after her quinceanera she took over some of the house duties at her home. Her parents expected her to be more responsible.

Michael: How about boys?

Eduardo: Nothing really, I mean nothing like the party.

Michael: Well, so no celebration. But are there differences in what is expected of a boy at 14 and then when he is a few years older?

Eduardo: 14 – he’s mainly a boy. At 16, its more like he is a man.

Michael: In what ways?

Eduardo: Like working, taking care of himself a lot. By 16, he’s just more of a man.

Michael: How do people let the young man know about that, about being more of a man by 16?

Eduardo: They are out on their own more. The parents aren’t all over them, like “when are you coming home?” and stuff like that.

Michael: Where is a young man of 16 likely to be, to sleep and eat?

Eduardo: Back in Mexico, my uncle says most of the boys are out on their own; like, they are home at their parents’ sometimes - but they don’t have to be. It’s ok for them to live other places, to take care of themselves more. Lots go off looking for work.

Michael: What do the parents think about that?

Eduardo: It’s OK, like that’s the way they do it there. That’s part of why I hate this group home. It should be OK for me to be out on my own. They try to keep you from growing up here, keep you a boy when you are ready to be a man.
**With Eduardo’s mother (by phone)**

**Michael:** We are trying to figure out where it would be best for Michael to live and I wanted to know your ideas about this.

**Mother:** You have him in that group home now?

**Michael:** Yes.

**Mother:** He’s not really bad, I don’t think. He shouldn’t have taken that car, though. But he isn’t bad.

**Michael:** What do you think he needs now?

**Mother:** Well, he needs some guidance, I guess. So he avoids trouble. I wish he would finish school.

**Michael:** Yes, good points. Where do think he should be living?

**Mother:** I don’t know for sure.

**Michael:** Eduardo is 16 ½. Where would other boys his age who you know be living?

**Mother:** Different places. Some kind of go back and forth to their homes.

**Michael:** At about what age do they start to do that?

**Mother:** About Eduardo’s age. I know here the parents are supposed to keep them home until 18 but where I am from in Mexico, well, they kind of start going back and forth from home at Eduardo’s age. But I know that doesn’t work so well here.

**Question:**
From these conversations, what did Michael learn about cultural aspects of Eduardo’s transition towards independent living?
Janice is 13 years old and an Angla and she has been living in the Bennett foster care home for four months, following having been molested by her step-father over a period of two years. She was raised in a fundamental Christian home. The Bennetts are members of a conservative Christian church. They do not know much about the church that Janice’s mother belongs to, but they speculate that it is more strict than their own. They aren’t really sure what the mother’s involvement in this church has meant for Janice. They wonder what Janice believes and what she thinks about it.

Right now the permanency plan is for Janice to return home but her step-father, who is still in the home with her mother, denies the abuse and refuses counseling. Janice’s mother says she is not sure what happened but she wonders if Janice has made this accusation in order to get her husband out of the house. She has said that Janice is not herself and hasn’t been since about her 13th birthday; she just seems hateful and wants to hurt the family.

Janice’s foster parents, Joe and Elaine Bennett, told the caseworker that they have been working with Janice on some skills of self-sufficiency that Janice felt she wanted to work on: learning to cook and shop for food and learning to identify her own feelings and talk about them. She is doing well in learning to shop and cook but has been quite reluctant to talk about feelings.

Questions:
What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Janice’s mother’s church might be having an effect on Janice’s readiness to work on these two self sufficiency skills?

How would you explore this to find out more?
Mrs. Bennett wondered whether there were any cultural aspects to this situation that might help her understand Janice's interests, beliefs, and motivations. Here is an excerpt of a conversation they had about this:

Mrs. Bennett: Janice, two weeks ago you picked two goals to work on with us. The first was learning more about cooking and shopping for food and the second was being able to talk about what you are feeling. How do you think things are going?
Janice: OK, I guess.
Mrs. Bennett: Let's talk about what have you accomplished with the cooking and shopping. What have you done?
Janice: Well, we shopped twice and I listed out the stuff we need for some meals and we went and found the stuff we need to make them and we got the ones that didn't cost too much – like when we bought carrots for cole slaw we got the big ones, not the baby ones and we saved money.
Mrs. Bennett: Yes, you really have learned a lot about where to look in the store and how to compare prices. How about with the cooking?
Janice: We made hamburgers and homemade cole slaw and then we made tuna noodle casserole and I made scramble eggs myself.
Mrs. Bennett: Yes, you have learned a lot. And the eggs were delicious, not easy to get them that fluffy.
Janice: Uh huh.
Mrs. Bennett: Another goal you chose was to talk more about your feelings. How is that going?
Janice: Not so good as the cooking. You already know that.
Mrs. Bennett: Yes, you are finding it hard to say what you are feeling sometimes. What times are those?
Janice: When I am mad or sad.
Mrs. Bennett: Yes. And those ARE hard times. You know sometimes whether something comes easier or harder (like cooking or talking about feelings) has to do with how we grew up.
Janice: Yeah, I guess so.

Mrs. Bennett: Which would be easier in your home: talking about feelings or cooking?

Janice: Cooking. My mom taught me some already. She thinks that’s good for girls to learn – they should know about cooking. It’s something women do.

Mrs. Bennett: Where did she learn that?

Janice: I guess from her mom. I don’t know for sure.

Mrs. Bennett: I know your mom’s church is important to her. What would people in the church say?

Janice: Oh, they would like that. Her and me cooked for potluck sometimes.

Mrs. Bennett: How does your mom feel about you talking about what you are feeling?

Janice: Sometimes OK, sometimes not. Like, we should not be complaining and not have so much focus on ourselves. We need to think about God and other people and not be all self-centered.

Mrs. Bennett: How would people in church feel?

Janice: I guess the same. That is where she gets that. Well, there’s some truth to it.

Mrs. Bennett: What do you mean?

Janice: I don’t know. I don’t like talking about my feelings, I know that.

Mrs. Bennett: How do you feel now?

Janice: Like I wish you wouldn’t ask me all this stuff. I know it will help but I don’t want to.

Mrs. Bennett: Do you feel a bit like your mother does? And her church?

Janice: I guess. You think I got it from her? The part about not wanting to talk?

Mrs. Bennett: I don’t know for sure. I do know that what the people who mean the most to us think has a big influence on how we think and feel.

Question:
What did Mrs. Bennett learn about the cultural influences on Janice?
Thomas, Part 1

Thomas is Anglo and 17 ½ and has lived in the Griego foster home for eight months. He has been in and out of foster care four times since age 6 due to physical abuse by two of his mother’s boyfriends. Twice he returned to his mother, but she suffered permanent, extensive brain damage as a result of a beating by a boyfriend when Thomas was 12. She is unable to care for him. His potential adoption by an aunt and uncle disrupted last year when they found Thomas in his room engaged in sexual activities with a boy from school. They did not know that Thomas is gay and felt they could not care for him adequately having learned this.

Thomas says he is fairly happy in the Griego home but he wants to be out on his own by the time he turns 18. He recently passed the GED and is currently planning to attend community college next semester. He is looking for work, having recently been fired from a job at a fast food restaurant for flipping off a customer who called him a faggot. Over the past several months Thomas has been increasingly overt about his sexual orientation and he as been harassed on several occasions. The worst was when he attended a rave and was beat up. He told the Griegos that the closer he gets to being on his own, the more he wants to be his own person: not living any lies and being true to himself.

Carla, who is Hispanic and straight, is Thomas’s caseworker. She is concerned about Thomas’s safety. She thinks that perhaps his way of defining what it is to be gay is mixed up with the victimization that he and his mother experienced. Yet Carla also knows that harassment of gays and lesbians is a real concern. She wonders how Thomas views all of this.

Questions:
1. What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Thomas is being harassed?

2. How would you explore this to find out more?
Carla wants to better understand how Thomas views gay culture and the impact of this perception on his ability to protect himself from harassment and violence.

Carla: Thomas, I’m concerned about your safety.
Thomas: What do you mean?
Carla: You’ve gotten harassed several times and beat up once.
Thomas: Yeah, but I can take care of myself.
Carla: Tell me about what has led up to these incidents.
Thomas: I’m gay. People can’t handle it. They want the whole world to be straight, gung-ho jock types. If you’re not, then you are a target.
Carla: Are there some straight people who have this attitude and some who don’t?
Thomas: Yeah, of course. Not the Griegos. Not you. But even Mr. Griego – he doesn’t completely get it.
Carla: How do you mean?
Thomas: He said: “Thomas, you set yourself up. Don’t be swishing around in front of the rednecks like that. You’re inviting trouble.”
Carla: What do you think?
Thomas: I think that is part of the problem. Queers got to be queer. I am not faking anymore. From now on - I am who I am.
Carla: What’s the balance between not setting yourself up to be messed over and being true to yourself?
Thomas: There is no balance. The rest of the world’s got to accept who we are.
Carla: How would you say other gay young men feel about this?
Thomas: The same as me I guess.
Carla: Do you feel you are part of a gay culture that shares common views?
Thomas: Yeah, for sure.
Carla: How long have you felt part of the culture?
Thomas: Well, maybe since I was 12 and started to meet some gay people and get on the internet and see magazines and stuff.
Carla: Tell me about what other gays say about this issue of balance, being who you are but not walking right into dangerous situations.

Thomas: Mostly what you read and what people talk about in chat rooms and stuff is that we ought to act how we feel, not covering up, not being phony straight. We got to watch out for each other too because there's a lot of prejudice out there. Lots of rednecks like those guys who killed Mathew Shepard.

QUESTION:
1. What did Carla learn about cultural aspects of Thomas' life?
The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
By Dr. Milton Bennett

This is a model of development that explains people’s reactions to cultural difference. It focuses on a cognitive (rather than just attitudinal) structure and an assumption is that exposure to cultural difference and opportunities to explore reactions help people to move forward along the developmental continuum.

Stages of Cultural Sensitivity

1. Denial
One’s own culture is viewed as the only real culture. One is usually indifferent to other cultures but may act aggressively to reduce the influence of another culture if it threatens to impinge.

2. Defense
One sees one’s own culture as the good one. Others are inferior. There is an “Us/Them” feeling, i.e., other cultures are recognized but seen as a threat. The characteristics of other cultures are compared to one’s own and criticized.

3. Minimization
Cultural differences are denied or minimized and in so doing, are often trivialized. One looks for and expects similarities. Often one looks for idealistic common denominators (e.g., “people are all good no matter what their differences”)

4. Acceptance
One experiences one’s culture as just one of many of equally complex worldviews. Acceptance does not necessarily mean agreement – cultural differences may be judge negatively, just not solely on the basis of one’s own cultural tenets. Usually a person in this stage is curious about other cultures.
5. **Adaptation**
One experiences another culture in ways that expand one’s own worldview. Able to intentionally “see through the eyes of another”, that is, to somewhat see the culture as those who are in it do. One’s own perceptions change somewhat and one is able to behave in ways that are appropriate to that culture.

6. **Integration**
Able to move in and out of different cultural viewpoints. Often people self question about their own culture. Common among people who are expatriates or cultural nomads.

Ethnographic Interviewing in Child Welfare
Working with Youth on Independent Living Skills

From Anthropology
Ethnography, developed in the field of anthropology, is the description of (and the process for learning about) cultural groups, including their values, worldviews and common ways of behaving. Ethnographic interviewing is a critical tool of ethnography. In ethnographic interviewing, the “informant” (that is, the person interviewed by the anthropologist) is assumed to have knowledge about the culture that the anthropologist does not have.

The informant is both the expert and the cultural guide for the anthropologist. The anthropologist’s approach is to first tell the cultural guide what the areas of interest are (such as child rearing practices or how adolescents make a path to becoming young adults) and then to ask questions in such a way as to encourage the cultural guide to describe and tell stories about these. The approach assumes that some of the richest material about a culture is in stories about how people behave, view the world, and make decisions.

The anthropologist expects to hear terms that have special meaning within the culture and about which more information and clarification is needed. These are called cover terms. The anthropologist knows to guard against his/her own tendency to assume an understanding of these terms. Instead, the anthropologist seeks to clarify the meaning with the cultural guide. Understanding the meaning of cover terms helps the anthropologist gain a better understanding of how people in the culture make meaning of their world as well as how they tend to act in various situations. The anthropologist looks to the cultural guide to understand “what happens” and “what it means.”

From Anthropology to Social Work
The ethnographic approach has been adapted by social workers to better understand individuals and families within the context of their cultures. In his book Communicating for Cultural Competence (1998), James W. Leigh
writes about the study and practice of ethnographic interviewing in social work that he and his colleagues have developed. The fundamental points are as follows:

**Why understanding culture is important**
- A youth’s or a family’s culture is as important to assessment and planning as are their individual and family dynamics. People’s attitudes, worldviews, behavior, motivation, and decision-making are greatly influenced by cultural norms.
- Not everyone in a given cultural group share all values, beliefs and ways of behaving. Instead, there are *central tendencies* to which many people in the cultural group gravitate. It is useful to understand the degree of congruence people have with these central tendencies of their culture.
- Interventions will be more effective if they are congruent with cultural ways of finding solutions and resolving problems. Understanding cultural patterns is critical to forging this congruence.

**What Can Be Achieved with Ethnographic Interviewing**
- The worker can learn more about the culture, e.g., what are typical views, beliefs, and ways of responding to situations.
- The worker can acquire information that helps to assess the degree to which a youth’s or a family’s beliefs, values and behavior do or do not reflect their culture.
- The process can help the worker avoid making errors of judgment about beliefs and behaviors by systematically clarifying information that might otherwise fit too quickly into the worker’s stereotypes.
- The process often helps reduce the power disparity between the worker and the youth or family by making it clear that the worker needs to learn from them and that they have expertise and knowledge that will help the worker.
- The process gives the message of shared responsibility for assessment and planning, a fundamental tenet of youth development as well as family-focused decision making.
Often the process encourages the youth or family members to think more reflectively about themselves: what they believe, why they do what they do.
Basic Approach to Ethnographic Interviewing: Leigh’s Formal Steps and Tasks for the Interviewer

1. **Self-Reflection:** Think about what you think you do and don’t know about the youth or family’s culture(s). Question yourself about stereotypes and simplistic beliefs.

2. **Be clear about the focus:** The focus is to find out about the youth or family’s cultures and how their cultures affect them, especially in key areas such as moving towards self-sufficiency, building and sustaining relationships with others, and (in the case of families) child rearing. It is not focused on the psychological frame of a person’s world, except as that has cultural origin.

3. **Be clear about the reasons for and the place of an ethnographic interview:** Ethnographic interviewing helps to increase understanding about the cultural context of a youth’s or family’s life. There are additional related benefits: better assessment, increased involvement of the youth or family etc. An ethnographic interview is not the only tool that should be used. An ethnographic interview by itself will not be sufficient to gather all information needed to assess or to involve a youth or family in case planning or case evaluation. However, it can help the worker understand the impact of culture on the youth or family.

4. **Formulate global questions:** Ethnographic interviewing begins with broad, open-ended questions about the culture, often called global questions. The worker generally needs to plan how to ask these questions ahead of time because most workers have not been trained to conduct interviews in this way: in other words, it doesn’t come as second nature. Worker training has focused more on the personal rather than the cultural. Note this example:

   **Personal:** How do you handle this stress when this occurs?

   **Cultural:** How would people in your group (culture, neighborhood) handle this stress?

   (Note that staying away from the word “you” helps to keep the focus on the cultural rather than the personal.)
Formulating global questions also helps the worker to think about the categories of questions to ask, e.g.,

For youth: what do the youth’s cultures have to say about

- Moving towards being on one’s own – independence, interdependence and the manifestations of these, e.g., where a youth lives at what age.
- Youth making decisions – what kinds of decisions do youth make and at what age: who else has influence on these decisions.
- Gender and age expectations for responsibility to family members.

For families: what do the family’s cultures have to say about

- Child rearing (what constitutes misbehavior, who metes out discipline, what is useful discipline, what are age variables)
- Who makes which kinds of decisions in the family.
- Children’s responsibilities (at what age do children get responsibilities and what are they, are there gender differences).
- Family and community support (who is turned to, for what and under what circumstances).

5. **Prepare the youth or family for the ethnographic interview:**
   Most youth and family members, especially those who have dealt with social service agency workers, likely will not expect to be asked about their culture. Also, they are usually not prepared for the worker to express both ignorance and a desire to learn. Prepare them. Examples:

- It would be helpful for me to understand more about your community as a way of understanding you (or your family). So, I’d like to ask you some questions about your group (culture, community, people, religion). You know more about this than I do and it would be helpful to me.
I know that different groups of people have different ways of seeing the world and different ways of handling things. I would like to know more about your group (——— say the name of the group). So I'd like to ask you some questions; I think the knowledge you have could be a help to me in helping you.

6. **Ask global questions:** As above, remember to ask global, not individual, questions. Use the name of the group in asking questions, e.g., “families from Mexico”, “gay and lesbian community”, “your church”, “other young people living on the street”. Examples of global questions:

   **For youth**
   - When do youth in your group start to move away from home? Do they move away gradually or all at once? Is it different for males and females? What else might make a difference in when they move?
   - What responsibilities do young people have towards their families – is there a difference between males and females?
   - What does your group do to get the kinds of things you want (e.g., music, clothes)?

   **For families**
   - I’d like to know more about who families turn to in your group when they are in a crisis or under a lot of stress.
   - Let’s say a family has a 16 year old boy. What would be typical in your group in terms of what kind of freedom this young person would have?
   - Children can do things that really embarrass their families. What might children do that would embarrass families in your group? How would these situations typically be handled?

7. **Listen for and clarify cover terms:** The worker needs to listen for cover terms, terms that might have a different meaning for the family than it does for the worker or worlds that are unfamiliar to the worker. They might be jargon or words that seem to have a commonly held meaning but perhaps do not. Examples:

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Worker: You said that many people in your group would turn to a curandero if their child were sick in that way. I think I know a little about that - I think it means healer, but I don't know much more. Can you tell me about curanderos.

8. **Probe for descriptors:** Often the worker will best get at meanings by asking for descriptors. Examples:
   - Worker: So the curandero has a "special" way of seeing problems. How would you describe that special way?

9. **Taking notes:** It is often useful to take notes because a lot of information comes quite quickly in ethnographic interviewing. This should be explained to the family. Example:
   - Some of what you say will be new to me and all of it is important so I will take some notes to help myself get it right and to remember. You can feel free to read these if you want.

10. **Transitioning from or ending the ethnographic interview:** Often the worker will want to transition to other forms of interviewing; other times he/she may want to end the interview. It is helpful to thank the client and reinforce how helpful the interview has been. When transitioning, the relationship of the ethnographic part of the interview to the next phase should be made clear. Examples:
   - Thank you for helping me to understand more about how your group sees things. I have learned a bit about your group's view of the world and I can see some of the strengths that have helped your group cope with problems. This will help me to help you find ways of approaching the work that lies ahead that fit with your culture.
   - Now I'd like to know more about how you see yourself as the same or different from others in your group.

In actual practice, the worker might not go through all of these steps so formally, but learning the steps helps the worker understand the reasons for the process.
Cultural, Individual or Both?

Example 1
Worker This is something I'd like to know more about. You say that its different growing up around here than it is in Mexico in lots of ways. You said something about grandmothers not always being here but they are in Mexico. Can you tell me more about that?

Youth One thing my mom and her friends say is that here most of us kids run around a lot more free because our mothers and fathers are working and there's no grandmothers. Back at home the grandmothers are always watching the kids.

Example 2
Worker I think I understand but I want to clarify so that I know I have it right. You are saying that you believe that you should be able have a job at your age.

Youth Yes, of course. I am old enough to work and make my own decisions about that.

Example 3
Worker I think I understand now about how people in your family’s church view this. Am I right in saying that they believe children would be corrupted in the eyes of God if they were to see the kinds of things we were talking about on TV or in the movies?

Youth Yes, they say God wants the child’s mind to be pure, not corrupted by this sort of thing and it is the job of the parents to do God’s will on this.
Worker  Sometimes individuals hold exactly the same views as do their churches, sometimes a bit different. How about you?

Youth  See, that’s the problem. My mom sees things this way. But I don’t, well not exactly. I mean I think I am old enough but I guess it was wrong of me to let my younger sisters watch – I mean maybe they will get their minds corrupted or something. Anyway, that’s what caused a big fight between us.
Example 1

Jennifer, a Japanese-American, is the caseworker for Rose, a Vietnamese-American 15 year old who has been in a residential treatment center (RTC) for three months following several incidents in which she and her uncle were involved in several physical brawls when he attempted to discipline her for not following family rules. Rose had been affiliated with a group of girls that were believed to have ties to male gangs. However, since her placement she has had no known contact with any of these girls or with any of the males and gang involvement seems to be much less of an issue.

Jennifer and the RTC staff have been frustrated by Rose’s lack of progress. She is a self-defined loner and has made no close relationships with any of the girls in the RTC. She is often defiant of the staff and sometimes refuses to cooperate with procedures. She has not made connections with any of the staff. As one counselor says, “It’s like her head and her heart are elsewhere.”

Do you think that the issue of gangs is more salient than the worker and staff are acknowledging? If so, how would you go about finding out?
Example 2

Jack, a caseworker, has been working with Melissa Benson, an Anglo 12 year old, who is in the Ellison foster home. Melissa was removed from her home two months ago due to physical abuse. Melissa has been withdrawn and talks very little with Jack or even the Ellisons. Mr. Ellison says she seems to be carrying the weight of the world on her shoulders but doesn’t talk about it. Jack says that he hasn’t gotten too much from Melissa’s mother either. She acknowledges whipping Melissa on several occasions and says she feels that it was justified given Melissa’s lying.

Mr. Ellison says he knows that Melissa’s mother attends a church called In the Hands of God. Jack said yes, he has seen some pamphlets on her table and he has asked her about the church’s beliefs. She hasn’t said much other than that the church is a support to her and that it has helped her raise her daughter. He thinks they are fundamental Christian and probably support spanking. Neither Jack nor the Ellisons have talked with Melissa about the church and its impact on Melissa.

What would be the value of talking to Melissa and her mother about the church?
What might Jack and the Ellisons learn that could be helpful in working with Melissa?
Handout II-d

Key Terms of Ethnographic Interviewing*

Central Tendencies
Commonalities among people who shared a culture with regard to factors such as beliefs, values, child rearing, age-stage transitions, relationships, and preferences such as food, clothing, and music. People who are part of a culture may vary greatly in terms of how much they adhere to the central tendency of any factor.

Cover term
A linguistic label that covers a range of meanings and usage of a culture. It may mean something different in one culture than it does in another or it may have certain nuances in one culture. You can learn about the meaning by asking for “descriptors” (see below).

Examples of cover terms for “excellence” from youth cultures over the years:
Cool, hot, hip, groovy, swift, rad, bad, narly, sweet

Cultural guide or informant
A person who assumes the role of teacher about the culture of which he or she is a member.
Example: often this is your client but it may be another family member or someone else who knows the culture well.
Cultural knowledge
The acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior.
Examples:
A common feature of youth gangs is a set of rituals known only to the members. This may include hand signs used to convey information to each other.

In many Plains Native American cultures, there is a kinship network based on a clan system and support for child rearing may be carried out through this system.

Culture
The way a group lives, the ethnic background, the race, the values and norms of behavior, and ways of thinking that are passed down through generations and make the person a member of an identifiable group in society. A myriad of forces that affect every aspect of a person’s life and give order to that life.
Example: There are differences among cultures in terms of when teenagers are given autonomy. In much of America adolescents are expected to live at home and be largely supported by parents until age at least age 18. In Mexico it is common for boys to be on their own by 16 while girls are home with their families until they marry.

Descriptors:
The information that depends on an understanding of the cover term.
Example: Youth says: “You think ‘bad’ means bad, but “bad” isn’t not bad, its good!”
**Ethnography:** The work of describing culture.

**Examples:**

"Mindy says that one of the youth subcultures at her suburban high school is the “wiggers”, a group of White males who are wannabe Black guys. She says a lot of girls get attracted to these guys because they are the closest thing they can get to actual Black guys."

"Mrs. Jackson said that in the South it is common for African American families to be quite extended and for one older woman to have a matriarchal role in making family decisions, even for family members who don’t live close by."

**Global question:** An open ended inquiry to discover the why, when, and what of an area of culture that the social worker in interested in learning about.

**Examples:**

Foster parent: “I’m interested in how your girls’ group has come to have such a tight bond with each other. What do the girls do that leads to this?”

Social Worker: “I’d like to understand more about how the various members’ families from your country divide up the tasks of raising children, like who would generally be responsible for disciplining children.”

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- The key terms are from Leigh, James W. *Communicating for Cultural Competence*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1998
Handout II-e

Ethnographic Interviewing Example: Jackie Stiff Arm, Age 16

1. Self-Reflection:
   Think about what you think you do and don't know about the youth or family’s culture(s). Question yourself about stereotypes and simplistic beliefs.

Kyla, Jackie’s Worker (in soliloquy)
Ok, what do I know so far? Jackie Stiff Arm is a 16 year old Northern Cheyenne girl who came to the attention of Social Services two months ago after her mother abandoned her, apparently leaving the state, whereabouts not yet clear. Jackie found her way over to an aunt’s house (Dora Bear Below) and the aunt kept her for several weeks and then called Social Services saying she couldn’t afford this. Jackie remains with her aunt and Social Services is working with the aunt to get fully licensed as a foster care home. Jackie has lived back and forth between here and Lame Deer, Montana all of her life. Her mother’s pattern has been to live for a year or two in each place. This is not the first time Jackie has lived with relatives, although it’s never before been with Social Service involvement.

Jackie is having a difficult time in school. She is pretty quiet and isn’t in trouble but she rarely does her work. She has a tutor but the tutor says Jackie is just so passive and SO QUIET - she doesn’t ask questions and doesn’t really let on when she gets it or not.

Her IL group leader told me there are some issues she is concerned about. One of them is money management. Jackie just isn’t saving money even though she has a job. She seems to buy stuff all the time – some for herself and some for her aunt and some for people in town that are friends of her and her mother’s. Also, she is just so passive about expressing her beliefs and she has a way of kind of joking about everything to minimize it. I can see it’s very frustrating for the IL worker, who is really an assertive woman.

I feel like I have a set of stereotypes about Native American families and who knows which of them are true. Besides, I kind of lump all Indian people together; I wouldn’t have a clue about tribal or reservation

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differences. I think I’ll bring this up when I meet with Mara, my supervisor, and talk to her before I go out.

2. **Be clear about the focus:**

   The focus is to find out about the youth or family’s cultures and how their cultures affect them, especially in key areas such as moving towards self-sufficiency, building and sustaining relationships with others, and (in the case of families) child rearing. It is not focused on the psychological frame of a person’s world, except as that has cultural origin.

Kyla

Mara, I want to talk to you about Jackie Stiff Arm before I see her again. I am thinking that I should be using part of my time to find out some more about her culture, maybe talking to both her and her aunt together. Her aunt grew up on the same reservation, although she has mostly lived here for the past twenty years. It might help me to figure out more about how she sees all of this and how I might find an angle for framing interventions.

Mara

Sure, good idea. You have already covered the other basics of this case with me so let’s talk about the cultural part. Tell me what you are thinking about for the focus of the cultural part of the interview.

Kyla

Well, there’s so much, isn’t there? I don’t exactly know what all to focus on but a couple of the things I’d like to know more about are this passivity and views about school and working at it, and the last has to do with money. She never saves any.

Mara

Yes, those seem like good topics.

Kyla

I’d like to understand these issues better in terms of her culture. Also, I know I will need to check out how she sees herself in relation to her culture – the part about the personal “congruence” with the cultural.
3. **Be clear about the reasons for and the place of an ethnographic interview**

*Ethnographic interviewing helps to increase understanding about the cultural context of a youth's or family's life. There are additional related benefits: better assessment and increased involvement of the youth or family. An ethnographic interview is not the only tool that should be used. An ethnographic interview by itself will not be sufficient to gather all information needed to assess or to involve a youth or family in case planning or case evaluation. However, it can help the worker understand the impact of culture on the youth or family.*

**Mara**

How do you see the ethnographic part of the interview fitting into what else you want to get accomplished?

**Kyla**

Well, I think this should be the first part but I do want to cover with both of them the issues about getting her driver’s license. Her aunt says she will sign for her and she has been taking driver’s ed this term at school.

**Mara**

That makes sense. What are the advantages of starting with the ethnographic piece?

**Kyla**

I think I need to do some rapport building with both Jackie and her aunt. I think I’ll make some progress in forming a relationship with her plus I hope I get some insight into how the cultural piece fits into the picture. I really am hoping that once she starts talking, I can get somewhere. Right now she doesn’t say much to me and I feel like I have no idea what would motivate her. Her aunt is a bit more forth coming but not a lot.

4. **Formulate global questions**

**Mara**

Well, I think you have defined some worthwhile areas to begin in and you have a good sense of the reasons for doing it and how it fits into the overall picture of what you want to accomplish. Which area are you thinking about starting with and how would you ask questions?
Kyla  Yeah, this is the hard part huh? Well, maybe I would start with something kind of general and then move into the money issue. Now, I need to figure out how to word the questions.

Mara  Yes, it’s a lot easier to talk about what to do and why than to actually form the questions. Well, let’s just take a crack at it. Throw out a question and then let’s see about it.

Kyla  Ok. How about this: “I am really interested in learning more about the Northern Cheyenne Nation. I think it would help me to understand better and be able to help you more.

Mara  Good start. Where to go from here?

Kyla  OK. Well, maybe I should ask a general question first, like “Tell me about some of the things that are the same or different living here and living in Lame Deer for a 16 year old girl.”

Mara  Yes, see where they take it. Then what?

Kyla  Well, depending on where they go, I’d like to narrow it down to the money issue at some point. So, maybe “How do young people at Lame Deer make decisions about what to spend money on?”

Mara  Maybe you need to find out though whether young people in Lame Deer actually have money, whether there are jobs. My impression is that unemployment is high.

Kyla  Good point. How about “Here a lot of young people work. You have a job. How about in Lame Deer – do young people have jobs?” Then I could move on to how they spend money.

Mara  That sounds like a good plan.

5. Prepare the family or individual for the ethnographic interview
Most youth and family members, especially those who have dealt with social service agency workers, likely will not expect to be asked about their culture. Also, they are usually not prepared for the worker to express both ignorance and a desire to learn. Prepare them.

Kyla  Mrs. Bear Below and Jackie, I’d like to talk to you about several things today. One is that I would like to learn more about Lame Deer and the Northern Cheyenne Nation, especially about life for teenagers there. I feel like there is a lot I don’t know and you do know and could help me with. I think if I knew more I could be of more help to you.

6. Ask global questions
Ethnographic interviewing begins with broad, open-ended questions about the culture, not about the individual. These are called global questions. The worker generally needs to plan how to ask these questions ahead of time because most workers have not been trained to conduct interviews in this way: in other words, it doesn’t come as second nature. Worker training has focused more on the personal rather than the cultural.

So, depending on where the conversation goes:

Kyla  “Here a lot of young people work. You have a job. How about in Lame Deer – do young people have jobs?”

Jackie  “Not so much while there’s school. But in the summer the Tribe has some jobs for kids. But I never got one. You got to know someone.”

7. Listen for and clarify cover terms:  
The worker needs to listen for cover terms, terms that might have a different meaning for the family than it does for the worker or worlds that are unfamiliar to the worker. They might be jargon or words that seem to have a commonly held meaning but perhaps do not.

Kyla  “Tell me about some of the things that are the same or different living here and living in Lame Deer for a 16 year old girl.”
Jackie When I am in Lame Deer in the summer, we stay out real late – going to 49s way out in the fields, wherever they have one. We just sing and finally before the sun comes up we go to sleep in the car. Here it’s hard to stay out late, the cops get you on curfew.

Kyla Tell me about 49s. I don’t know about them.

Jackie They’re dances, well sort of. Singing and a drum.

Dora The 49s are from the boarding school days when all the tribes were mixed together and could only speak English or they got in trouble. They made up these songs, part English and part what non-Indians call chant singing, like you hear at pow wow.

8. **Probe for descriptors:**

*Often the worker will best get at meanings by asking for descriptors. Descriptors provide the meaning of the cover terms, the literal and the emotional meaning.*

Kyla This is interesting. Tell me more about the 49s that you and your friends go to.

Jackie We just hear about them kind of through the grapevine - because nobody really plans them, it’s not like a rave or something. You just hear like “oh, there’s going to be a 49 tonight over there by the bend in the river, up that road from St. Labre’s.” So then you go. Different ones show up and usually its guys that bring the drum but sometimes now these days girls do but if no one brings a drum then they use a car hood for the drum.

Kyla How does it feel, being at a 49?

Jackie Good. Like really free. No one criticizes you. You just have fun and sing really loud.

Kyla Everyone sings loud?
Jackie Yeah. You bet.

Kyla Tell me about the singing really loud.

Jackie Its like you are so free and everybody can be themselves.

Another example
Kyla "Here a lot of young people work. You have a job. How about in Lame Deer – do young people have jobs?"

Jackie Some, I never did, but my cousins do.

Dora There’s a lot of unemployment but some have jobs working for the Tribe or the BIA or IHS – there are summer jobs for the ones who want it. Working all around the reservation, fixing up stuff and cleaning. And some in the Tribal offices.

Jackie What are those agencies – BIA and something else?

Dora Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service, they are the federal government on the rez.

Another example
Kyla Tell me about how people, adults and young people, decide how to spend money.

Jackie Stuff they want. Or maybe presents for other people.

Kyla Tell me about presents for others.

Jackie If somebody needs something, like one of your relatives.

Kyla Then you get it?

Jackie Yeah, if they need it.
Dora  We kind of know about how all our relatives are doing and we buy stuff for the ones that aren’t doing so well if it’s needed. And them for us.

Kyla  Tell me about who are considered relatives.

Dora  You know if you live there – it’s much more than your mother and father and aunts and uncles. There is a whole bigger system of who your relatives are than the non-Indian has.

Kyla  And you help them out. What would happen if you didn’t?

Dora  That would bring you and your family shame.

Kyla  How do you know when they need help?

Dora  You just know. You watch how they are doing. You hear from other ones. They don’t ask you. You take it stuff they need to them.

Another example

Kyla  If a Cheyenne person really wants to get a point across, how do they do that?

Dora  I think I know what you are talking about. I have spent a lot of time here and I know a lot of non-Indians think that we Indians are kind of shy. Is that what you want to talk about?

Kyla  Yes, I guess so. Jackie is seen that way and I want to understand better.

Dora  It’s kind of embarrassing to us to see other Indian people being so forward as non-Indians are.

Kyla  What would be an example of too forward?
Dora  Saying everything you want or whatever is on your mind. To us, it’s not polite. But I think the non-Indians see it as shy and not sure of ourselves.

Kyla  Yes, I think you are right. Another thing I don’t really understand is the way young Indian people, like Jackie, seem to joke a lot about things that are worrisome, like having trouble in school.

Dora  I think you non-Indians see it as these kids not taking responsibility. But it’s not that. It more has to do with our way of dealing with problems that we don’t have any control over. The way I see it, most non-Indians think you can control almost anything in your lives and we are kind of at the opposite end, we think a lot has to do with just the way things are and we handle it by joking. That’s our way of just accepting what is.

Kyla  Is that how it seems to you, Jackie?

Jackie  I guess. I didn’t really think about it. I know it makes me feel uncomfortable when all of you, my teacher and everybody, are always telling me to change everything.

Dora  I’m not saying that’s good but I know we look at this different from you.

9. **Taking notes:**
*It is often useful to take notes because a lot of information comes quite quickly in ethnographic interviewing. This should be explained to the family.*

Kyla  I know you are going to be giving me a lot of information that will help me understand Cheyenne people better. I’m going to take some notes so I remember. You can feel free to look them over if you like.

10. **Transition from or end the ethnographic interview:**
Often the worker will want to transition to other forms of interviewing; other times he/she may want to end the interview. It is helpful to thank the client and reinforce how helpful the interview has been. When transitioning, the relationship of the ethnographic part of the interview to the next phase should be made clear.

**Kyla**

I think I am getting a better understanding of how people at Lame Deer see this. I’d like to know whether you see your own views and your ways as the same or different?
### Brainstorming Resources

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<tr>
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<th>Possible Resources</th>
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<td>Gangs</td>
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Planning and Assessing Progress in the Context of Culture

Name of Youth______________________________

1. What are the main cultural issues for this youth?

2. What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?

3. What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?
From We to Me

A Curriculum on Working with Transitioning Youth from the Perspective of Culture

Developed by:

Jane Berdie, MSW

For:

Institute for Families at the University of Denver

Funded through Federal Grant #90CT00XX

September, 2003

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This one day training includes the following materials

1. Trainer curriculum
2. Participant handouts
3. Curriculum Assessment (a paper/pencil exam for participants designed to help the trainers learn how well the curriculum is working in helping participants gain knowledge covered in the training)
4. A satisfaction/opinion evaluation form
SECTION I
Orientation to Culture

Welcome the group to the training, introducing yourself. Explain that the participants will introduce themselves as part of an exercise in a few minutes. Explain the purpose of the training, referring to a pre-printed flip chart that has three points on it:
- What motivates youth
- How youth use help
- How to frame your interactions and interventions based on this

Cover the following: Understanding the cultures that influence a young person is one way to better understand what motivates them and how they can best use help. Culture is the “we” of a youth’s world. The youth as an individual within the culture is the “me”. Understanding the youth within the context of his or her cultures can give the adult some new ways to think about how to frame interactions and interventions to help the young person move successfully on the path towards becoming a young adult.

James Leigh is a social worker at the University of Washington who has helped the social work field find ways to work with families that take into account their cultures. Let’s look at what he says culture is and what cultural competence is. Refer to Handout I-a and invite comments on each definition:

Culture: The way a group lives, the ethnic background, the values and norms of behavior, and ways of thinking that are passed down through generations and make the person a member of an identifiable group in society. Myriad forces affect every aspect of a person’s life and give order to that life.

Central tendencies: Commonalities among people who shared a culture with regard to factors such as beliefs, values, child
rearing, age-stage transitions, relationships, and preferences such as food, clothing, and music. People who are part of a culture may vary greatly in terms of how much they adhere to the central tendency of any factor.

Cultural Competence: The ability to give assistance to clients in ways that are acceptable and useful to them.

In Leigh’s definition of culture, he refers to cultures which pass traditions through generations. This may imply to you that culture refers only to people who live together in intergenerational groups. However, in this training we will also be using “culture” to refer to groups who share values and norms even if they do not live together in intergenerational groups. So, examples such as the youth culture and lifestyle cultures (Harley riders, bird watchers, and drug users) fit our definition.

Leigh’s point about central tendencies reminds us that cultures are not monoliths that define all aspects of a person’s life, nor are they immutable. Cultures change constantly and the people who are members of a culture vary in the degree to which they follow the cultural norms and beliefs. Over a lifespan, any one individual may go back and forth in how much he/she adheres to norms and beliefs.

In Leigh’s definition of cultural competence, he indicates that if a client finds the assistance acceptable and useful, then likely the person giving the assistance is doing so in a way that fits with, is compatible with, the person’s cultures. Leigh stresses that assistance will be more successful if it is given in a way that creates congruence with culture, rather than conflict with culture. In a way, it is a variation of a social work principle: “start where the client is”.

In this training we will focus both on ways to better understand youth within the context of their culture and how to use that information in helping them.

Before you introduce yourselves, let’s go over the “Rules of the Road for Training”, including confidentiality, staying present, respect for
others, taking responsibility for learning, and having fun. Do so, stressing confidentiality, explaining that culture is sensitive and we will experience that during the training. When we talk about culture, we talk about an aspect of life that is heartfelt; it is important to people and therefore sensitive. Delving into sensitive issues makes us all feel vulnerable and yet the way that everyone will get the most out of this training will be if we all feel safe in talking about these issues. So confidentiality (keeping all that is said in this room) is imperative.

Activity I-1 Introductions

Tell participants that we will all introduce ourselves in a few minutes. In preparation for that, turn to Handout I-b and take about 6-7 minutes to think about and record some information about yourself on the handout. All of us are a part of many cultures. Identify three of your cultures – give them a name. These might be related to ethnicity, lifestyle, religion, work, hobbies or many others. Also, all of us have been influenced by a culture of which we are not a part. Identify one of those also and for that one, identify how it has had an effect on your life (positive, negative or mixed). Describe the effect. After participants have had a chance to complete this handout (about 6-7 minutes), ask them to discuss their responses in dyads or a small group. Give them about five minutes for this. After that, bring them back to plenary and introduce yourself, giving this information (three cultures you are a part of and, additionally, another culture of which you are not a part but which has had an influence on you; describe the influence). Then ask each participant to introduce himself (first giving name, job and county or agency) to the whole group and talk a bit about themselves in relation to the cultures they chose. Tell them that we have about 3-4 minutes (depending on number of people in the room) for each person. During the discussion, probe a bit about effects of culture on the lives of a few of the participants. The purpose of this is to get at specific effects people believe their cultures have on them. As you process the introductions, explain that getting at specifics is difficult since many of us experience the effects of our cultures as second nature and we may not have thought this through in any detail. Also, we may be uncomfortable talking about effects in a training session because culture is a sensitive issue. Be sure to note
both of these issues and ask people to keep these in mind: it is not always easy to talk with people about culture because of both reasons.

➢ Review housekeeping items including mileage, restrooms and lunch.

➢ Refer trainees to Handout I-c “Agenda”. Go over the blocks of time. (An addendum Trainer Note to this curriculum addresses the specifics of each time period.) Also refer them to Handout I-d “Competencies and Objectives” and briefly cover these: Over the course of this training we will cover five areas related to a cultural perspective on working with youth in relation to independent living: 1) what a cultural perspective and what can be learned from this, 2) how developmental cognitive stages of cultural sensitivity form a foundation for how we are able to view youth from a cultural perspective, 3) an approach to learning more about a youth’s culture based on a social work interviewing technique called ‘ethnographic interviewing”, 4) how to help youth find resources that are culturally relevant, and 5) how interactions and interventions can be framed based on what is known about a youth’s cultural influences.

Activity I-2: Identifying Cultures
➢ Ask the group to identify types of culture that may affect youth. Relate them to cultures identified in Activity I-1. Record these on flip chart.

Trainer Note: Be sure the following are identified:
  o Ethnicity/race
  o Religion
  o Income
  o Lifestyle
  o Profession
  o Gender and sexual orientation
  o Sports and recreation
  o Military
  o Violence
  o Age, e.g., youth
- Incarceration (related to what used to be called the culture of deviancy)
- Foster care/group homes
- Psychiatric hospitals
- Child welfare
- Alcohol and drugs
- Prostitution/pimping
- Body modification, body art

Note that cultures and cultural indicators can overlap, e.g., many of these cultures have distinctive clothing but also “clothes” can be a culture in itself, e.g., high fashion.

Ask about subcultures. Elicit examples, e.g., the following:

- Youth: subcultures include posers, jocks, frats, freaks, geeks, wangsters, neo hippies, mainstreamers; youth music subcultures include rap and nu metal.
- Lifestyle subcultures might overlap with other cultures such as youth culture. This might include street youth and weekend street youth for example. Drug subculture is another example.

How many cultures do you think most people have as a part of their lives? What is the impact of this? Stress that there is no right/wrong answer to this: the purpose is to encourage participants to think about the complexity of life in relation to culture and how most of us are influenced by multiple cultures.

Let’s identify what about a person’s life is influenced by their cultures (give an example to get them started and then facilitate discussion and record on flip).

Trainer Notes: examples:

- How they see the world, e.g., what is important, what is right and wrong, what is fun, what is shameful, what is embarrassing.
- How they want to spend their time
- How they make decisions
o Family roles
o What makes them feel worthwhile, important, powerful, good, bad.
o How they interact with others, particularly given their perceptions of another person’s role or demeanor.
o Where they live, who friends are
o What they eat and wear; where they live, what vehicles they have.

Activity I-3: How Culture Can Influence Youth Learning Independent Living Skills

Write the following on a flip chart:

➢ cultural issues/ dynamics affecting transition
➢ learning about these issues and dynamics

Like all people, youth are influenced by their cultures, sometimes overtly, and sometimes in subtle ways. Like all people they may or may not be aware of the impact of their cultures on them. Let’s take a look at three youth and the adults who are working with them. Our main purpose here is to see if we can get a sense of what cultural issues or dynamics may be affecting the youth’s progress in transition or learning skills that will help with this. For each youth we will focus on one of their primary cultural influences. Remember, although cultural influences are often mixed with many other dynamics and issues, it can be useful to parse out what is cultural and how it exerts influence. Think about how the adult in the case scenario tried to learn more about the issue. What did he or she do to gain information and do you think they did this in a useful way?

Let’s look at some case examples of how cultural influences affect how youth see issues of their lives and how they are motivated. Explain that as a group we will all go over one example and then the participants will deal with other examples in two groups.

Ask them to read about Eduardo from Handout II-e, Part I only at this point. After they have read Part I, facilitate a discussion of the questions on Part I. Use Trainer Notes on Eduardo, Janice and Thomas to help process this.
discussion. Then, ask for one or more volunteers to read the Part II dialog (either with you or with another volunteer). Once this has been done, lead a discussion on the question following Part 2. Record the main points on flip chart labeled “Eduardo”. You will use this later, in Section IV.

Divide the participants into small groups of 4-5 and assign each group either Handout I-f: Janice or Handout I-g: Thomas (more than one group may have each case.) Ask them to follow the same process as we just did for Eduardo, except that one person should record their answers on the handout. Give them about 20 minutes for this. Then bring them back to plenary and go over each of the two examples. Ask for a volunteer to summarize the case (using Part I) for the whole group. Then ask participants from a Janice group first to read the dialog and then to discuss their answers to the questions. Get input from all Janice groups if there is more than one. Facilitate input from all participants, including those not in a Janice group. Repeat for Thomas. In all of the discussions, be sure to address what they may have missed about the importance of culture if the cultural interview had not taken place. Emphasize that this afternoon we will use this information in planning interactions and interventions with these youth.
Trainer Note on Eduardo, Janice and Thomas

Eduardo, Part 1

1. **What might be cultural aspects to this situation, including those that have to do with Eduardo’s age and his living arrangement?**
   Eduardo is from northern Mexico originally. It may be that there are some issues of his Mexican culture that affect his opinions about what he should be doing with his life at the age of 16, especially as this relates to working and where he should live. Without a cultural interview, we won’t know.

2. **How would you explore this to find out more?**
   Talk with Eduardo, his mother and his grandmother about what 16 year old Mexican males typically are doing both in Chihuahua and here. Ask about how they see Eduardo’s situation as the same or different from other males this age. Find out their opinions about how the group home fits or doesn’t fit with this.

Eduardo, Part 2

3. **From these conversations, what did Michael learn about cultural aspects of Eduardo’s transition towards independent living?**
   In Eduardo’s Mexican culture (at least the part of rural northern Mexico where his family is from) it is typical for young men his age to be out on their own more than is so in America. They are seen as young men and it is common for them to be living at home only as they choose to do so. They may well be away from home for periods of time – they are not expected to sleep there every night. In fact, they may be away, working or looking for work. Working and not necessarily living at home all of the time appear to be a milestone of coming of age for males where Eduardo is from.

   Eduardo’s transition in America is playing out quite differently than if he still lived in Mexico. He is living in a group home with many restrictions and does not yet have the okay to find a job (which is likely associated with his “level” in the group home). The group home experience, which is difficult for many youth, may be particularly hard for Eduardo because for
him it signifies all of the restrictions associated with not being allowed to transition to adulthood.

Janice, Part 1
1. What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Janice’s mother’s church might be having an effect on Janice’s readiness to work on these two self sufficiency skills?
While we don’t yet know much about Janice’s mother’s church, it may be that tenets of the church have an impact on Janice regarding these two self-sufficiency skills: 1) learning to cook and shop for food and 2) learning to identify her own feelings and talk about them. It may be that the first one is valued and the second is not. Additionally, sexual abuse has its own culture, i.e., one of secrecy. This could interfere with Janice’s comfort in talking about her feelings.

2. How would you explore this to find out more?
Talk with Janice about her mother’s church: what do people in the church think about girls her age in relation to these two skills. What are examples of girls practicing or not practicing these skills? Other useful resources would be Janice’s mother and her pastor.

Janice, Part 2

3. What did Mrs. Bennett learn about the cultural influences on Janice?
Janice sees her mother’s church as supporting girls in learning the skill of cooking but there is ambivalence about identifying and talking about one’s feelings because it may become self-centered and complaining, both of which are frowned upon.

Thomas, Part 1

1. What might be cultural aspects to this situation, particularly with regard to how Thomas is being harassed?
Thomas views his sexual orientation as a challenge to others in terms of their willingness to honor his civil rights. He feels that acting as gay as he wants
to is an indication of pride and a demonstration of human rights. There may a cultural dimension to this, i.e., a gay cultural subgroup that supports this position.

2. **How would you explore this to find out more?**
Talk with Thomas about what gay subgroups he identifies with and what their beliefs and actions are. Visit websites or read literature that explains the views of these groups. Talk with Thomas about how he is similar or different from them.

**Thomas, Part 2**

3. **What did Carla learn about cultural aspects of Thomas' life?**
Thomas is identifying with a group of other young gay men who believe that the civil rights of gay people will best be enforced when gays no longer accommodate straight views about how they should behave. Based on this, he behaves how he feels and may even be behaving in a way that baits some straights. Carla also feels that this could be intertwined with a “culture of victimization” that he learned from childhood abuse.
Activity I-4: Openness to Seeing the Impact of Culture

We can see from the last exercise some examples of how culture might affect a young person's way of learning and practicing self-sufficiency skills. For each of us, as adults who work with youth, our own ability to see cultural issues and to utilize them in working with youth rests in part in our own awareness level. Milton Bennett, an interculturist, has developed a developmental scheme for assessing our own cognitive perspective on culture.

Draw a continuum on the flipchart and mark six points along it, labeling them as per Handout I-h. Explain each point, asking for examples and giving some personal ones reflecting your own development. Ask participants to evaluate their own place and progress and ask for volunteer examples. Facilitate a discussion on how being in one place or another might affect one's ability to deal with cultural issues affecting youth. Note that this discussion may be much more sensitive for people than the discussion of personal cultures earlier this morning. Remind them again of how difficult it can be to talk about culture although the rewards in terms of understanding self and others are great.
SECTION II
Talking to Youth about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing

Most of us have been trained to professionally talk with (i.e., interview) others from a perspective of individual or small group issues. Small groups might be family or peer groups. We haven’t been trained to think as much about cultural issues and we haven’t been trained to interview with this in mind. So, to get a grasp on how to understand and then utilize cultural issues in practice, we need an additional perspective. One such perspective comes from James Leigh, a social worker at the University of Washington who has developed an approach called “ethnographic interviewing.”

Activity II-1: Ethnographic interviewing overview
Ethnographic interviewing is an approach to interviewing that attempt to understand the cultural influences on people’s thoughts and behaviors. The idea is that understanding these influences helps the worker or foster parent to find ways of helping the youth or family that is consistent with their world views. It is easier for all of us to change or make progress if our world views are not challenged (i.e., if we can avoid cognitive dissonance). Refer them to Handout II-a and ask them to read pages one and two. After they have read it, summarize the main points from pages 1 and 2 only. Ask for questions or comments as you do so. The purpose is to ensure that they have the background for the next activity, which is to begin to learn how cultural (ethnographic) interviews are conducted, and how they differ from interviews about the individual.

Activity II-2 How Ethnographic Interviewing is Different than Other Forms of Interviewing
In ethnographic interviewing the idea is to first learn about the culture and only after that find out how the culture influences the individual. So, it’s important to ask questions about the culture(s) first. Let’s see if you can identify the difference – when a question is about culture, when it is about individuals, and when it is bridging from one to the other. Ask for a volunteer to help you read dialogs to demonstrate several approaches to interviewing. Refer them to Handout II-b to follow the dialogs. See if you
can identify which approach is being used, individual or cultural. What are the indicators?

Read the dialogs from Handout II-b. After each, ask the participants whether it is an example of a cultural or individual focused interview and what are the indicators.

Trainer Notes on Differentiating Cultural from Individual Interviewing
Example 1 is cultural.
Example 2 is individual. It MAY have cultural origins but the worker has not explored this.
In Example 3 the worker first clarifies the cultural information and then asks about how the cultural and the individual conform.

ACTIVITY II-3: Missed Opportunities: When A Cultural Focus Can Be Helpful

Omitting a cultural perspective can lead to poor assessments and planning as well as missed opportunities to connect with clients, to build a working relationship with them. Let’s look at a couple of cases where that happened. Read the first example on Handout II-c. (Lead a discussion on what was lost using the Trainer Notes below. Then do the same for the other example if there is enough time.)

Trainer Notes on Missed Opportunities
Example 1: It would make sense for the adults working with Rose to get a better handle on the influence of the gang. Even if it is true that she has had no contact with them, there well may be a real influence at work. Gang experts say there has been a precipitous rise in girl gangs in recent years, particularly Hispanic and Asian girl gangs. (See Juvenile Justice Bulletin March 2001, an issue on female gangs – www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2001 www.gangsorus.com). While gangs vary greatly, the grip of the gang on girls is generally as strong as it is on boys. Most girls who join gangs have been abused at home, often sexual abused. They are likely to make pledges of fidelity to sister members of the gang as well as to male gangs with whom they are affiliated. Rose’s behavior may reflect allegiances that she has to the gang and beliefs that she
has that come from the gang. Even if she has had no recent contact, she may be highly influenced by loyalty and shared beliefs.

**Example 2:** Jack and the Ellisons could benefit from talking to Melissa about the church. It is possible that the church has some specific values and beliefs about children and young people lying and about how parents should respond. For instance, the church doctrine could be that lying is a direct blasphemy against God and that punishment is the only means to expiate the child. It would be important to know how Melissa feels about all of this. She may agree and thus feel that she was saved by the spanking. She may totally disagree. She may be ambivalent. It is likely, though, that this issue about what her mother’s church believes about lying and punishment is having a real impact on Melissa and may be standing in the way of her being able to communicate with the Ellisons and Jack and to be able to work on other issues.

**ACTIVITY II-4: Key Terms in Ethnographic Interviewing**

Before we go into the steps of ethnographic (or cultural) interviewing, let’s go over the key terms. Look at Handout II-d and I’ll read each definition and we will talk about it. *(Read and lead brief discussion using the examples given and some from your own experience.)*

**ACTIVITY II-5: The Steps of an Ethnographic Interview**

To cover the steps of an ethnographic interview, we are going to follow a case and see some of what happens and how the information is used. We’ll be using Handout II-e, which first identifies Leigh’s steps of an ethnographic interview and then gives an example of a worker and her teenage client and her aunt. While in actual practice you may not use such a formal approach, it helps to know what the model is, so we will cover it with all the steps. I’d like three volunteers to read the parts of the supervisor (Mara), the youth (Jackie) and the aunt (Dora) with me from the script in Handout II-e. I’ll read the worker’s part.
Let's start by going over the first step and then listening to a dialog (or monolog in the case of the first step). Our example will be an Angla worker with a Native American youth as her client.

Discuss the step briefly and then read the dialog or monolog. After the entire dialog has been read, facilitate a discussion about what was learned from this approach using the Trainer Notes.

**Trainer Notes on Jackie**

We learned some information about culture that may help us to understand Jackie better. Jackie is from the Northern Cheyenne Nation in Montana. She and her mother moved back and forth over the years between here and there. Now, the Social Service and school people who work with Jackie are concerned about several things and we find that there is a cultural aspect to each of them:

- **Not doing well in school:** Jackie is not doing well in school. We get some inkling into what might be contributing to this from this cultural interview. Jackie’s tutor says that Jackie doesn’t ask questions and doesn’t let her know what she does and doesn’t understand. This may be related to Jackie’s “passivity” and understanding this better may give some insight to this.

- **Passivity/quietness:** Here Jackie is seen as passive and quiet. Jackie describes some time in Lame Deer in Montana, when she is not that way. She describes going to 49 dances and singing loud. She says that she feels good, “really free. No one criticizes you.” There is an indication here that when Jackie feels comfortable and in harmony with her environment, she does not act quietly. Her aunt Dora also gives us some insight to “passivity”. She says that “its kind of embarrassing to us to see other Indian people being so forward as non-Indians are....saying everything you want or whatever is on your mind. To us, its not polite.” Thus, she clarifies that what non-Indians see as shyness or passivity is a form of politeness in her culture. Jackie has two non-congruent messages being given to her abut quietness and non-assertiveness and her workers and tutor are not taking this into account.

- **Joking in the face of problems** There seems to be a cultural difference about “locus of control”, that is, who has control over what. Dora feels there is a cultural difference with non-Indians having a
high level of internal locus of control and Northern Cheyenne's a much lower level.

➢ **Not saving money** There is a major cultural difference being explained here. Apparently among Northern Cheyennes there is a great value placed on helping one's relatives with material goods; it is honorable to stay aware of the needs a relative may be having and to bring the relative what is needed. This is more important than accumulating wealth for oneself. Thus, if one of Jackie's relatives is in need, then she has a moral dilemma about saving money the way her IL worker wants her to do.
SECTION III
CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

One of the things we know about helping youth along their paths of transition is that a variety of other people and resources can be useful in helping youth learn, in making connections and in serving as role models. Other people and resources may offer support and help that are different than that which is usually provided by caseworkers, IL workers, and out of home care providers. This is especially true for potential helpers who share a culture with a youth. However, it can be difficult to find these resources because not all of them are as well known as traditional resources. Also, cultural resources may be less available in some areas of the state than others. Others may not be particularly useful for young people.

Some youth tend to find their own resources on the internet: remember Thomas and the chat room he found for gay youth.

Finding resources often means going beyond the United Way resource directory, although that is a good place to start. Often it means calling traditional organizations and asking not only what they provide but what other organizations or individuals they know about who provide help or information. For instance, PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) may be able to refer you to not only their own support groups for youth and for their parents or foster parents, but also to churches and community college-based youth groups for gays and lesbians. Increasingly, national and local area groups have 800 numbers and websites as well as resource directories and internet links to other groups (some of them local) which offer services. However, often the best local directory is compiled and updated by county staff who work with youth.

Activity III-1 Brainstorming Possible Resources

Among the desired outcomes for youth of the Independent Living program is the ability to find and use resources, including people who will mentor and provide assistance. In relation to culture, this means youth finding and using culturally relevant mentors and resources.
Take a look at Handout III-a. (Note, this handout must be developed locally for anyone using this curriculum. The Colorado Institute for Families project resource list can be found at the website ifduonline.org. The matrix shell of common cultures that influence youth are provided in Handout III-a.

Let's do some brainstorming about where you can look for resources and help youth to find them.

Facilitate a discussion of where they look for resources. Be sure the following are included:

- Directories compiled by others such as yellow pages and United Way
- Card file/electronic director kept and updated by people in the office
- Contacts in the community
- Internet: look up organizations and topics (e.g., girl gangs)
- Self help groups, often under the aegis of local colleges, hospitals etc.

Each training group should develop this handout using resources for its state and local areas.
SECTION IV
INCORPORATING CULTURAL ISSUES
INTO WORKING WITH YOUTH

Let's look now at how gaining a better understanding about a youth's culture can help in working with youth on transitioning to independent living. It is good practice to involve all youth in identifying and working on some knowledge and skills that will help them transition to young adulthood.

Remember, the idea of learning about culture is to find some ways to work with a young person that deal with the reality of the cultural issues. This might mean finding strategies or solutions that are congruent with the cultural issues or at least do not confront them in a no-win kind of way. Or, it might mean putting the cultural issue on the table with the youth and exploring the congruences and conflicts with the goals of independent living and the constraints and resources of the DSS and the independent living program. In any event, it means planning with the youth in such a way so that cultural issues are at the forefront. Let's go back to some of the youth we met earlier and see what a focus on culture might suggest in terms of intervention.

Activity IV-1 Planning and Assessing Progress

We are going to go back to four of the youth we met earlier in this training in order to use what we have learned about the cultural aspects of their lives in our work with them. Before doing so, let's identify some ways that we can use what we learn about culture.

Facilitate a discussion and record on the flip chart, covering at least the points identified here:

**Strategies for Using Cultural Knowledge in Working with Youth**

- Anticipate cultural issues as you get to know the youth and family – try to figure out what they might be. Anticipate the cultural issues that might affect youth. Use these as a basis for your hunches/hypotheses and, thus, what you want to find out more about.
- Conduct culturally focused interviews (e.g., ethnographic interviewing) with the youth and others.
During discussions with youth and others, bring up key issues, especially those that may cause discomfort. For instance, “I don’t know much about this part of your life and am kind of worried that I might offend you. So, as we talk about it, if I am offending you in any way, please let me know. That is not my intent.”

Learn more about culture from others.
Use the internet and library to learn more about cultural issues.
Use culture-focused organizations as a source of information for you and support/mentoring for youth.
When working with foster parents, find out what the “button-pushers” are and act accordingly, e.g., some foster parents can’t handle youth who they see as Satan worshippers – don’t place youth there if youth’s beliefs are inclined that way.
Once you understand cultural issues, search for ways to intervene that accommodate or fit with the culture rather than butting heads with it.
Help youth find and use cultural mentors and models.
Help youth find and use cultural resources.

Activity IV-2 Strategic Use of Cultural Knowledge: Case Examples

Put the participants in four groups: Eduardo, Janice, Thomas and Jackie. Make sure that the Janice and Thomas groups have only people in them who worked in these groups before. Refer them back to the appropriate handouts (and for Eduardo there will be a flip chart of notes). Their task is to identify ways to work with the youth based on what is known about their cultural influences. Use the set of questions (found on Handout IV-1) to address this issue. Give each group about 30 minutes and then bring them back to plenary. Process by asking each group to give a brief summary of their youth and then the answers to the questions. Use the Trainer Notes to help facilitate the discussion.

Activity IV-3 Strategic Use of Cultural Knowledge: Youth with Whom Participants work

Afterwards, ask participants to think of one youth with whom they are working and identify 1) the cultural issues they think may be present and 2) how knowledge of these issues may affect how they work with the youth. Ask them to discuss this with a partner (or in a triad). Give them about 10
minutes and then ask for examples. Reinforce the importance of finding ways to work with youth that do not create a direct clash with aspects of their cultural beliefs.
Trainer Note for Planning Interventions with Four Youth

Name of Youth: Eduardo

1. What are the main cultural issues for this youth?
   Eduardo's Mexican culture defines transition to manhood for males earlier than does mainstream American culture. In his own eyes, Eduardo at age 16½ should be working at least some of the time and free to live where he wants, including sometimes at his parent's home but not always. Instead, he is in a group home with strict rules that do not allow him to leave without a pass (or be AWOL) and require him to achieve a certain level before he can work. The rules are in direct conflict with his cultural transition path.

2. What effects do these issues have on the youth — particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?
   Eduardo's sense of how he should be transitioning is being roadblocked. He seems aware of the differences in cultures but it is unclear how well he connects his low level of cooperation at the group home and the dissonance being created by different cultural views on the path of manhood.

3. What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?
   Despite the cultural clash, it would not be possible or in Eduardo's interest to let him purpose the transition as his Mexican culture would indicate should occur. Instead, it is important to work with Eduardo on what he needs to do at the group home to be allowed to find a job. Working would likely help Eduardo feel that he was more on the right path. A plan for return to his grandmother's house should be explored. Other relatives (e.g., his uncle) should be explored as placement resources. Hus relatives should be brought into the planning for Eduardo's self-sufficiency IL plan.

Name of Youth: Janice
1. **What are the main cultural issues for this youth?**
Janice has a cultural tradition of a Christian fundamentalist church as well as a history of sexual abuse. The sexual abuse history means that there has been a high value placed on secrecy in her house, of not talking about what is really going on or one’s feelings about it. The religious culture may feed into this is in that it may be that identifying and talking about feelings is in conflict with service towards God and others. However, the religious culture supports Janice learning to cook, an important self sufficiency skill.

2. **What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?**
Janice says she is uncomfortable talking about her feelings. While this is true for many youth, it may be that both her religious cultural view and the family dynamic of secrecy associated with sexual abuse contribute to this difficulty. We don’t know how much Janice believes the same as her mother’s church but, as her foster mother says, “I do know that what the people who mean the most to us think has a big influence on how we think and feel.” It is unclear whether Janice has sorted any of this out; it is unlikely given her age and the fact that to sort it out would mean to grapple with feelings, itself somewhat of a taboo subject.

3. **What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?**
For the self sufficiency skill of learning to cook, the cultural background is a plus and promotes Janice’s competency. For the skill of learning to identify and talk about feelings, the two cultural influences are inhibiting. It would be useful for Mrs. Bennett and her Child Welfare workers to talk with Janice about what she thinks and feels about this. She has already said she thinks talking about feelings is probably good for her but she is uncomfortable. It would help to talk with her about how her family’s beliefs and behaviors affect her. Mrs. Bennett has begun to do this. If Janice’s mother and or her mother’s pastor are amenable to talking, it would be useful for the worker to explore with them what is meant by too much focus on self and to see if it is possible to differentiate this from the focus of the IL skill of understanding and expressing oneself.
possible that there is room for this within her mother’s religion and understanding this might help Janice to feel more comfortable.

Name of Youth Thomas

1. What are the main cultural issues for this youth?
Thomas is gay and has experienced rejection and harassment due to this. Thomas identifies with what may be a subculture of young gay men who believe their behavior should not be influenced by attempts to accommodate straight views about how they should behave. Based on this, he behaves how he feels and may even be behaving in a way that baits some straights. Carla also feels that this could be intertwined with a “culture of victimization” that he learned from childhood abuse.

2. What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?
At this point Thomas’s identification with this culture seems to be putting him at risk for harm. He may be aware of this but likely sees it as a “badge of honor” by being true to who he is as a person. One of the self sufficiency skills Thomas needs to work on during his transition to adulthood is the ability to protect himself from harm and this is impaired by his view of self.

3. What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?
Thomas’s worker and foster parents might be best able to help him by seeking to understand the views of the cultural group with which he identifies in terms of what it means to be gay. It may be that Thomas, who is relatively new to this culture, has interpreted beliefs differently than others. Also, it may be that there are other perspectives in gay subcultures about how to be true to oneself and still be self-protective. Exploring this with Thomas rather than criticizing it may help Thomas to be less rigid. At this point he likely feels like he is in this alone and this may make him all
the more rigid. It may help to help him find other gay groups to be a part of, e.g., through campus and street youth programs for young gays.

**Name of Youth Jackie**

2. **What are the main cultural issues for this youth?**
The main cultural issues revolve around differences between her Northern Cheyenne culture and her mainstream American culture. They include:

- **Assertiveness** – valued broadly in American culture. Often seen as disrespectful and impolite in Northern Cheyenne culture. Likewise, “passivity” is not valued in American culture but the same behaviors in northern Cheyenne culture would likely be seen as respectful.
- **Loud vs. Quiet** - There are times within Northern Cheyenne culture when “loud” is acceptable, e.g., at 49 dances. But generally “quiet” is valued, again as a sign of respect. American culture sees “quiet” as a form of passivity at certain times, e.g., when the tutor is trying to get the youth to talk to him about homework needs.
- **Locus of control** - In American culture, a young person who assertively asks for and actively uses help in homework is seen as responsible. Performance in school is highly valued and is seen as within the student’s span of control as well as responsibility. We are getting an indication that Northern Cheyenne culture may not have the same view. While we are unclear of specifics, it appears as though being assertive about using homework help might be construed as trying to control an outcome that is not within one’s power.
- **Use of money** – In American mainstream culture, saving money is valued and most IL programs require youth to save. Saving money is a key aspect of money management, which in turn is a highly valued IL skill for transition. However, there is a clash with Northern Cheyenne values about taking care of relatives. Apparently, saving money when one’s relatives are in need is frowned upon.

2. **What effects do these issues have on the youth – particularly in relation to how the youth is making his or her way in transitioning and learning independent living skills? Do you think the young person is aware of this?**
These issues likely are creating dissonance for Jackie. We would need to explore this further, but it appears as though Jackie feels uncomfortable in asserting herself around homework needs and in other situations. She spends money on relatives instead of saving. But none of this has been discussed with any of the people who work with her, probably because they do not realize the cultural issues involved. We are not sure if Jackie does or not. Here aunt seems quite aware of the issues and has thought about similarities and differences between the two cultures.

3. What might be some ways to work with this youth so that the cultural issues are an integral part of the strategies and solutions?
Each of the issues that has been identified is having a direct impact on Jackie’s success in her IL plan. It is important for each person working with Jackie to learn more about these issues by talking with Jackie and her aunt. Together, they need to explore ways to move forward on the plan that won’t create such dissonance for Jackie, or in which she can understand the culture clash and make some choices if compromises are not possible. For instance, it may work out that it would be okay for Jackie to be more assertive about using help from her tutor if her tutor used more active listening communication strategies and cooperative problem solving with Jackie (e.g., “Seems like this confusing, let’s see if we can go over each step and see where the confusion begins” rather than “What part of this do you need help with?”). Perhaps a method of saving some money and having some available for other uses could be worked out.
SECTION V
Exercise and Wrap-up

We are going to conclude with an exercise to help us as the trainers to get a sense of whether this training curriculum is getting across the points we want to be making. This is NOT an assessment of your individual learning. As you complete these we will ask you NOT to write down your name. After doing this, we will talk about the questions you’re your responses and then ask you to give your sheets to us so that we can see how well the class as a whole is getting the points. This, along with your evaluations after this exercise, will help make changes in the training.

Pass out the Culture Exercise. Give people about 15 minutes to complete it and then go over the responses using the Trainer Notes. Collect the sheets after this for data analysis.

Ask people to complete the Workshop evaluation.
Trainer Notes on Agenda

Handout I-b

AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 9:20</td>
<td>Welcome and Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20 - 10:15</td>
<td>The Influence of Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:30</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Report outs on Janice and Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:25</td>
<td>Cognitive Frameworks for “Seeing” Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:25 - 12:00</td>
<td>Talking about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 1:00</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 - 1:15</td>
<td>Talking about Culture: Ethnographic Interviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 - 2:00</td>
<td>Ethnographic Interviewing (cont)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 - 2:15</td>
<td>Identifying Resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institute for Families at the University of Denver
From We to Me
September, 2003
29
2:15 – 2:30

BREAK

2:30 – 4:00

Planning with Youth within the Context of Culture
IV-1 15 minutes  Brainstorm list of actions
IV-2 50 minutes  Eduardo, Janice, Thomas, Jackie
IV-3 25 minutes  Application to youth with whom they work

4:00 – 4:30

Exercise and Wrap-up
Exercise 20 minutes
Evaluation 10 minutes
TRAINER NOTES

Culture Curriculum Assessment

Please answer the following questions. Feel free to use your handouts.

A. For questions 1-5, identify whether the adult’s statement addresses culture, individual issues, or both.

1. Tell me about people who follow nu metal music. What is important to them?
   - culture
   - individual issues
   - both

2. So, part of being in the gang is keeping this kind of information secret. What would members do if someone talked about this stuff?
   - culture
   - individual issues
   - both

3. You say that there is a whole different way of looking at life for kids growing up on a military base. How would young people on a military base describe their lives?
   - culture
   - individual issues
   - both

4. I know you’ve said that you as a male shouldn’t have to learn to do some of the things on this IL list – you call them “housework”. Tell me more about that.
   - culture
   - individual issues
   - both
   (There may be a cultural view behind the individual one, but that is not what this question addresses.)

5. Do you feel like the rest of your group, that you are safe using meth if you know who’s cooked it?
   - culture
   - individual issues
   - both

B. From the case scenarios we talked about today, which of the statements BEST reflects what we learned? (Be careful of making assumptions beyond what was actually addressed.)

6. In Eduardo’s culture, by age 16, males (select one only)
   - a. Move out of the home
   - b. leave school to work
   - c. live off and on at home
   - d. take on financial responsibility for the family
7. In Janice’s mother’s church, an important value or belief is (select one only)
   _____ a. women should work only in the home
   ______ b. discussion of negative feelings reflects self-centeredness
   _____ c. typical adolescent interests and behaviors endanger the youth’s relationship with God.
   _____ d. honoring one’s mother and father

8. In Thomas’s view of gay youth culture, it is imperative that gay youths (select one only)
   ______ a. act as they really feel
   _____ b. use violence against violence
   ______ c. stick together
   _____ d. segregate from straights

9. In Jackie’s situation, which of the following dissonances are relevant? The statement under the first column pertains to the Independent Living service culture. The statement under the second column pertains to N. Cheyenne culture. **Check all that apply** based on Jackie’s scenario.

   IL Culture          N. Cheyenne Culture
   ______ a. save money          help relatives
   _____ b. be self sufficient    depend on others
   ______ c. assert yourself     be polite
   _____ d. plan ahead           be spontaneous
   ______ e. achieve individual goals    be part of a group

C. Which term from Ethnographic Interviewing best describes each of the following statements?
   Terms: cover term   descriptor   central tendency   cultural knowledge
           cultural guide   global question   ethnology

10. That’s sweet    ___________________ cover term
11. A wangster is a White guy trying to act Black ___________________ descriptor
12. Tell me about how young people in foster care feel about learning __________ global question
    independent living skills.
13. Sad Girls     ___________________ cover term
14. Miqua has lived there all her life and has been describing the community to me. ___________________ cultural guide
15. Sad girls are all kinda mopey like in the movie, La Vida Loca, you know what I’m sayin. ___________________ descriptor
16. If you want to make it on the street, you need to know stuff like what john is gonna hurt you, what pimp gonna steal from you, what john is a cop. cultural knowledge

17. Most people from home think that teenagers need to stay real busy all the time or they will get into trouble. central tendency

18. According to Mrs. Alverez, there used to be a lot expected of a girl once she has had her quinciniera. She was expected to act more lady like and to take on more responsibilities. However, here, that is changing. Many parents don't seem to expect much of anything anymore, they just see it as a party. ethnology
From We to Me Curriculum Assessment

Please answer the following questions. Feel free to use your handouts.

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1. Tell me people who follow nu metal music. What is important to them?
   ___ culture   ___ individual issues   ___ both

2. So, part of being in the gang is keeping this kind of information secret. What would members do if someone talked about this stuff?
   ___ culture   ___ individual issues   ___ both

3. You say that there is a whole different way of looking at life for kids growing up on a military base. How would young people on a military base describe their lives?
   ___ culture   ___ individual issues   ___ both

4. I understand that where you come from you as a male shouldn't have to learn to do some of the things on this IL list – the “housework”. Do I have that right?
   ___ culture   ___ individual issues   ___ both

5. Do you agree with the rest of your group, that you are safe using meth if you know who’s cooked it?
   ___ culture   ___ individual issues   ___ both

B. From the case scenarios we talked about today, which of the statements BEST reflects what we learned? (Be careful of making assumptions beyond what was actually addressed.)

6. In Eduardo's culture, by age 16, males (select one only)
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C. Which term from Ethnographic Interviewing best describes each of the following statements?

   Terms: cover term descriptor central tendency cultural knowledge cultural guide global question ethnology

   10. “That's sweet”
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   13. Sad Girls
   14. Miqua has lived there all her life and has been describing the community to me.
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   18. According to Mrs. Alvarez, there used to be a lot expected of a girl once she has had her quinciniera. She was expected to act more lady like and to take on more responsibilities. However, here, that is changing. Many parents don't seem to expect much of anything anymore, they just see it as a party.
WORKSHOP EVALUATION

From We To Me
Date:
Trainer:

I. Please mark your top two reasons for attending this workshop.

- Thought it might be interesting/fun
- Recent change in job duties/clients
- Day away from office
- Wanted to know more about this area
- Having difficulty with this area
- I was told to attend
- I needed training hours
- Other (specify)

II. Your Education

Highest level: __ high school/GED __ Associate’s Degree __ Bachelor’s __ Master’s __ Doctorate

If you have Bachelor’s or higher: ___ Social Work ___ Related degree (psych, counseling)
___ Other (specify)

III. Trainer Feedback

The trainer

1. Knew the subject area
2. Was prepared and organized
3. Related well to the group, answered questions, and responded to concerns
4. Provided enough explanations and examples.
5. Involved us in analyzing skills
6. Used visual aids to illustrate points
7. Motivated me to want to try to out the training ideas on the job
8. Modeled cultural sensitivity

IV. Workshop Content

1. Subject matter was at right level
2. Content is compatible with my agency’s philosophies and policy.
3. My agency will support me in using this training on the job
4. I learned specific job-related knowledge and/or skills
5. I will use knowledge and/or skills on the job
6. I will be able to do my job better because of this training
7. Youth will benefit from my taking this workshop

Please explain any Strongly Disagree, Disagree or Don’t Know Ratings
V. Competencies
This course has included the following competencies. Has your knowledge and/or skills increased in these areas after completing this training?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Able to identify common types of cultures to which youth belong.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Able to identify ways in which cultures influence perceptions, motivations, and actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Able to identify common ways in which youth think about culture and its influence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Able to identify the rationale and steps of conducting an ethnographic interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Able to identify approaches to finding resources to help youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Able to strategize about interactions and interventions based on cultural issues.</td>
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In the space below, please write any suggestions or comments for improving this training. Thank you
From We to Me Curriculum Assessment

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<td>c. assert yourself</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. plan ahead</td>
<td>be spontaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. achieve individualgoals</td>
<td>be part of a group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Which term from Ethnographic Interviewing best describes each of the following statements?

Terms: cover term descriptor central tendency cultural knowledge cultural guide global question ethnology

10. “That’s sweet”  
11. “A wangster is a White guy trying to act Black”  
12. “Tell me about how young people in foster care feel about learning independent living skills”.  
13. Sad Girls  
14. Miqua has lived there all her life and has been describing the community to me.  
15. “Sad girls are all kinda mopey like in the movie, La Vida Loca, you know what I’m sayin”.  
16. “If you want to make it on the street, you need to know stuff like what john is gonna hurt you, what pimp gonna steal from you, what john is a cop”.  
17. “Most people from home think that teenagers need to stay real busy all the time or they will get into trouble”.  
18. According to Mrs. Alverez, there used to be a lot expected of a girl once she has had her quinciniera. She was expected to act more lady like and to take on more responsibilities. However, here, that is changing. Many parents don’t seem to expect much of anything anymore, they just see it as a party.
WORKSHOP EVALUATION

From We To Me

Date:

Trainer:

I. Please mark your top two reasons for attending this workshop.

- Thought it might be interesting/fun
- Recent change in job duties/clients
- Day away from office
- Wanted to know more about this area
- Having difficulty with this area
- I was told to attend
- I needed training hours
- Other (specify)

II. Your Education

Highest level: ___ high school/GED ___Associate's Degree ___ Bachelor's ___ Master's ___ Doctorate

If you have Bachelor's or higher: ___ Social Work ___ Related degree (psych, counseling)

___ Other (specify)

III. Trainer Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The trainer</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Knew the subject area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Was prepared and organized</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Related well to the group, answered questions, and responded to concerns</td>
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<td>4. Provided enough explanations and examples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Involved us in analyzing skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Used visual aids to illustrate points</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Motivated me to want to try to out the training ideas on the job</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Modeled cultural sensitivity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

IV. Workshop Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subject matter was at right level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Content is compatible with my agency's philosophies and policy.</td>
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<td>(__)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. My agency will support me in using this training on the job</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I learned specific job-related knowledge and/or skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(__)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I will use knowledge and/or skills on the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(__)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I will be able to do my job better because of this training</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(__)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Youth will benefit from my taking this workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(__)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please explain any Strongly Disagree, Disagree or Don’t Know Ratings
V. Competencies
This course has included the following competencies. Has your knowledge and/or skills increased in these areas after completing this training?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Able to identify common types of cultures to which youth belong.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Able to identify ways in which cultures influence perceptions, motivations, and actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Able to identify common ways in which youth think about culture and its influence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Able to identify the rationale and steps of conducting an ethnographic interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Able to identify approaches to finding resources to help youth.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Able to strategize about interactions and interventions based on cultural issues.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the space below, please write any suggestions or comments for improving this training. Thank you