Cultural Enrichment and Family Engagement

Petrea J. Hicks M. Ed.
Icebreaker – Sorting People
In 2011, Maryland received funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge to enhance family engagement efforts in the state.

- **Maryland's Family Support Center Network** offers high-quality care and education for children from birth to age four in 19 Family Support Centers across Maryland.

- **Judith P. Hoyer ("Judy") Early Child Care and Family Education Centers** provide coordination of early childhood education programs.

- **Reach Out and Read** partners with pediatricians to provide young children with more than medical care.

- **Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library**

- **Strengthening Families Parent Cafes**
The Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework puts forth a set of common goals for family engagement to be used across the Maryland early childhood system and within individual early care and education programs. These goals are realized by implementing family engagement strategies that focus on foundational areas like leadership and professional development as well as strategies that focus on the “points of impact” in early care and education settings. The successful implementation of the strategies promotes positive school readiness outcomes.
Guiding Principles for Family Engagement

The Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Coalition has identified three guiding principles for promoting family engagement:

1. Positive, respectful and empathetic relationships between providers and parents are the foundation for successful family engagement strategies.

2. Family engagement strategies must be appropriately resourced and designed to meet the specific needs of Maryland’s low-income population.

3. Family engagement practices operate within a larger state system and can be enhanced or inhibited by other early childhood policies.
### Minorities Account for a Large Share of Population in Many States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading States for Minorities</th>
<th>Percent of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hawaii</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. California</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. New Mexico</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Texas</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nevada</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maryland</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maryland is Among the Most Diverse States in the Nation

- 5.9 million people live in Maryland
- Minorities account for 47% of the State’s population
- African Americans are the State’s largest minority group
- Hispanics are the second largest minority group followed by Asians
What is Culture?

The way of life of a particular people as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other.

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.
Every Individual is rooted in culture

- Culture has an influence on the beliefs and behaviors of everyone.
- Culture is passed from generation to generation.
- Home language is a key component of children’s identity formation.
- Successful programs respect and incorporate the cultures of children and families.

Source: Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Program Serving Children Ages Birth to Five
As children develop, they demonstrate increasing levels of cultural knowledge. By the time children are old enough to attend preschool, they will already have cultural knowledge about the rules of their environments.
Cultural in my life

What do you remember about how you were raised? How might your personal background or upbringing influence your thinking about children’s development?
Individual families make different decisions about how to live their lives.

Each individual chooses to participant and passes on the traditions, beliefs, and values of his or her group and family.

Human behaviors are patterned in ways that are shaped from childhood.

Individual families make different decisions about how to live their lives.

---

Culture Viewed from Four Levels. Based on text in Cohen, 1978
Mirrors, windows and sliding doors
Rudine Sims Bishop

- Mirrors – We see ourselves reflected in our own groups.

- Windows - You can look through and see other worlds and see how they match up or don't match up to your own.

- Sliding Glass Doors – You can easily move between one world to another.
Family Engagement Goals

Promote positive parent-child relationships
Promote parents as life-long educators

- Family engagement is one of the strongest predictors of children’s school success, according to more than 40 years of steadily accumulating evidence

Promote positive parent-child relationships
Touchpoints™ Parent Assumptions

- The parent is the expert on his/her child
- All parents have strengths
- All parents want to do well by their child
- All parents have something critical to share at each developmental stage
- All parents have ambivalent feelings
- Parenting is a process built on trial and error


www.touchpoints.org
Different Perspective
Promote parents as life-long educators

- Some families may not think of themselves as learners, especially if they have had limited positive schooling experiences. They may not recognize that they have been learning while creating meaningful lives for themselves and their children.
Reflection

When do your values and beliefs about children conflict with those of families enrolled in your program? How can you discuss and work with these differences in values and beliefs with families in order to benefit the children?

- School readiness
- Child-rearing practices
- Discipline
- Language
Building Family Engagement

- Which family strengths should we make use of in our classrooms? In our school?
- How can we help families see the strengths they have to support their children’s learning?
Family/Parenting Resources

- [http://www.readyatfive.org/for-parents/parent-tips.html](http://www.readyatfive.org/for-parents/parent-tips.html)
- [https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/family-engagement/](https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/family-engagement/)
- [http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/healthybeginnings](http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/healthybeginnings)
Thank you

Dziękuję

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you