

# SUPPORTING DIVERSITY AND REDUCING HEALTH DISPARITIES

## Tip Sheet 1



The Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) seeks to work with community-based programs in vulnerable and underserved communities to improve access to care and to reduce health care costs through health promotion, prevention, and early intervention. Two of HTPCP's key goals are to:



1) support programs that address disparities and inequities through

the development of inclusive, family-centered, and culturally and linguistically competent practice environments; and



2) develop and disseminate new knowledge and innovations in

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) practice and policy across HTPCP programs and with key partners to inform and influence MCH policies.

## Engage Community and Staff Members as Program Liaisons

- Establish staff liaisons to work hand in hand with parents and family members. Liaisons can assist families and work with them to support, educate and help gain resources for those who need them.
- Provide cross-agency training for liaisons to include medical translation, sensitivity training on how to be more family centered and taking the parents' roles into account in the decision making process.
- Offer a parent/family support group to bring families together and participate in community activities.
- Include families in all aspects of the program such as:
  - Program evaluation
  - Development of tools needed to meet the community's needs
  - Reviewing and translating health education information to ensure it is culturally and family friendly
- Establish Community-Family Advisory Board to provide feedback and guidance to projects about issues of most importance to communities and families.
- Recruit family members to become parent leaders in projects, using a peer-to-peer approach to educate communities and families.

### Suggested Resources

- [Bridging the Cultural Divide in Health Care Settings](#)
- [Cultural Brokers Help Families and Providers Bridge the Cultural Divide](#)
- [The Cultural and Linguistic Competence Family Organization Assessment](#)

*Thank you to the many grantees who shared these tips through focus groups, interviews and in progress reports.*



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## Assess Cultural & Linguistic Competence among Program Staff

- Create opportunities for staff to complete their own cultural competence self-assessment
- Develop a Cultural Competence Plan outlining training plans and how staff or trainees will use that training. The plan should address both cultural and linguistic competencies. Training ideas include:
  - Offer training to project staff that focuses on identifying and reducing biases
  - Consider Lunch and Learn training sessions to avoid scheduling conflicts and staff availability
  - Offer client-centered training to encourage staff to ask questions about patient/client perceptions, not to just interpret behaviors.
- Create staff tools or prompts to remind them to ask patients questions related to cultural beliefs and norms that may impact their health.
- Conduct focus groups with clients to understand the barriers they are encountering in accessing services
- Examine how changes to the language used in materials and the way materials are marketed can reduce stigma and encourage children and families to use clinical and preventive services.
- Hire culturally/linguistically competent staff (including Patient/Parent Navigators, and Community Health Workers) to work as interpreters and as care coordinators for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients.

### Suggested Resources

- [A Practical Guide to Implementing the National CLAS Standards: For Racial, Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities, People with Disabilities, and Sexual and Gender Minorities](#)
- [The Provider's Guide to Quality and Culture](#)
- [A Guide to Choosing and Adapting Culturally and Linguistically Competent Health Promotion Materials](#)
- [Cultural Competency Capacity Building Plan](#)

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## Develop Public-Private Partnerships to Support Interdisciplinary Practice

- When possible, establish a method for interdisciplinary collaboration. Having an integrated team allows scheduling and registration to be done in the same waiting room.
- Consider a morning staff “huddle” to discuss cases or individuals being seen that day.
- Establish a learning collaborative between public and private partners for peer learning and information exchange.
- Attend health fairs to meet staff from other like-minded organizations. These connections have led to referrals and new partnerships with organizations trying to reach the same target populations.
- Develop partnerships with local academic institutions. Having student volunteers cuts down on personnel costs and gives students an opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- Form linkages with community-based organizations that provide support to families so that patients and families are introduced to other patients and families of similar cultural/linguistic backgrounds.
- Participate in local Refugee Stakeholder Group, if applicable, to help build resources for families throughout the community and gain greater knowledge and understanding of the needs and challenges resettled families face.

### Suggested Resources

- [Seven Keys to Success in Public Private Partnerships](#)
- [Fostering Partnership and Teamwork in the Pediatric Medical Home – How To Videos](#)
- [Community Engagement and Partnerships Improve Access to Medical Homes](#)

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## Hire Bi-Lingual and Bi-Cultural Program Staff

- Understand the linguistic needs of your community and hire staff fluent in those languages.
- Create internship opportunities for bi-lingual students to develop community-specific education materials tailored specifically for children and families in the target population.
- Organize a Diversity Council on a quarterly basis that provides learning opportunities for staff and discusses hiring opportunities for diverse staff members.
- Assure that all new hires are assessed for language capabilities as part of the organization's hiring procedure.
- Use bilingual, bicultural staff, families, and community members to provide guidance, feedback on service delivery.

### Suggested Resources

- [Think Cultural Health Videos](#)
- [Cultural and Linguistic Competence Health Practitioner Assessment](#)

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