



Cultural and Linguistic Competence

Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) describes a set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable individuals, agencies, and systems to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. CLC represents a philosophy of integration and transformation that extends beyond simple increasing of diversity statistics.



Culturally competent individuals and organizations (Cross, et al, 1989):

- Accept and respect differences
- Engage in continuous self-assessment regarding culture
- Pay specific attention to the dynamics of difference
- Commit to ongoing development of cultural knowledge
- Take advantage of available resources
- Develop and adapt service models to meet the needs of diverse ethnic and cultural communities

CLC is a journey and not an endpoint. Instead, it requires that individuals and organizations engage in continual learning, and assess and apply acquired knowledge and skills in their work. CLC also requires building a broad and deep understanding of cultural customs, traditions, and networks to inform all aspects of their ongoing work.

CLC in Project LAUNCH

Accountability to CLC serves as a necessary component of meeting the Project LAUNCH goals to promote young child wellness. Project LAUNCH grantees are developing programming and providing services to a wide array of culturally diverse communities nationwide, including families representing Latino, African-American, Native American/Tribal Nations, Asian, immigrant/refugee, and rural Appalachian communities.

Cultural beliefs, practices, structure, history, and language of diverse racial and ethnic communities influence many aspects of help-seeking—including how families communicate needs, access support, and use services. Therefore, Project LAUNCH leaders need to consider how they can incorporate a respect and understanding of the unique strengths and distinctions of their community members in every aspect of their planning and program implementation including council development, EBP choice, and staffing.

Approach

Assessing the knowledge and practice of CLC within projects serves as an essential first step to with regards to CLC. Project LAUNCH leaders can also use CLC as an important guide in defining how they will conduct their

Environmental Scan and develop their Strategic Plan, as well as in setting benchmarks for achieving Project LAUNCH goals.

For example, Project LAUNCH leaders from the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians approached their Environmental Scan in a culturally sensitive manner by incorporating community focus groups as the central way to capture information. By including the multiple and collective voices of members of the tribe, they honored a Native American value and ethos that reflects a relational worldview.

Visit the Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence Web site or more information on [Tools and Processes for Self-Assessment](#) and developing a [CLC framework](#).

Application

Project LAUNCH leaders can apply CLC in all areas of their work, both in internal processes and external program development across the prevention and promotion strategies. Project LAUNCH sites can apply CLC by:

- **Hiring a culturally and linguistically diverse staff** that reflect the demographics of the community and demonstrate an awareness of CLC.
- **Developing State and Local Councils** that incorporate members of the target cultural community and build active collaborative partnerships with stakeholders from those communities, including leaders, workforce members, and families
- **Including screening tools and developmental assessments** reviewed and validated with culturally diverse populations
- **Creating or using existing training curricula that include CLC as a central component** for practitioners who are [integrating behavioral health in their primary care](#) settings. For example, in [Rhode Island](#), Project LAUNCH collaborates with Americorps volunteers, some of whom are Spanish bilingual/bicultural and reside in or come from the communities of the families being served in the pediatric units. This partnership allows for successful consultation and integration of behavioral health into primary care services by providing connections and practical supports to participating families
- **Representing the specific mental health needs, issues, and beliefs** of the cultural community served in [mental health consultation](#) models
- **Respecting and complementing family traditions and community dynamics** when implementing [home visiting](#) programs
- **Using community engagement and partnership as the cornerstone of developing and conducting successful [family strengthening](#)** and parent skills training. These programs should apply tools, curricula, and instruments designed, adapted for, and responsive to culturally diverse families. For example, in [Illinois](#), Project LAUNCH leaders replaced the parent education curriculum they originally planned to use

with an evidenced-based program that had been more successful and relevant to the African-American families in their community.

The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Web site offers an example of a [CLC Toolkit](#).

Assistance

The [Project LAUNCH TA Team](#) is available to provide assistance with:

- Facilitation, introduction, and expanding connections and collaborations with CLC organizations to help grantees to gain access to materials and experts in the field
- Strategic consultation and resources that may be helpful in the ongoing development and incorporation of CLC in Project LAUNCH