EC-K3: Awareness of health care providers, social services and other resources available in the community to assist families

EC-K4: Understanding of the paraprofessional’s role in enhancing interactions between parent(s) and child by using and demonstrating effective techniques and materials to stimulate cognitive, physical, social and speech/language development under the direction of a licensed professional.

EC-S4: Ability to communicate and work effectively with parents, primary caregivers, and education team (IFSP, IIIP, and IEP) members to meet the needs of the child and family.

Developing Cultural Self-Awareness (Lesson 5)

This activity is designed to help you become familiar with your own culture and its effect on the ways in which you think and behave. As you learned in the lesson, one of the first steps in understanding individuals from other cultures is to think about our own values, beliefs, and behaviors that are influenced by our cultural backgrounds. It is not possible to be sensitive to someone else’s culture until you are sensitive to your own cultural and family background.

Answer the following questions to reflect upon your own values, beliefs, and cultural practices. If you are working with a learning group, share your responses and discuss similarities and differences among them.

1. When thinking about culture, people often think first about country of origin. Are there any countries other than the United States that you identify as a place of origin for your family?

2. Describe any ceremonies, rituals, or traditions that your family celebrates that reflect your country of origin or cultural background.

3. Describe any foods or special meals that your family prepares that reflect your country of origin or cultural background.
4. Our definition of culture can include more than just country of origin, and it is important to think about other influences on your cultural background. Think about groups that you belong to, and list at least 5 below. Several examples are provided to help you get started.

   Examples:
   Religion: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist . . .
   Politics: conservative, liberal, indifferent . . .
   Physical ability: wheelchair, hearing loss . . .
   Employment: management, work from home, student . . .
   Activities/Interests: sports, music, dance . . .

5. From the list you just created, identify three groups that have the largest impact on your beliefs and behavior. List them below.

6. How does your country of origin and group identities impact your ideas about parenting and family relations?
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EC-S4: Ability to communicate and work effectively with parents, primary caregivers, and education team (IFSP, IIIP, and IEP) members to meet the needs of the child and family.

7. How does your country of origin and group identities impact your ideas about education and home-school relationships?