



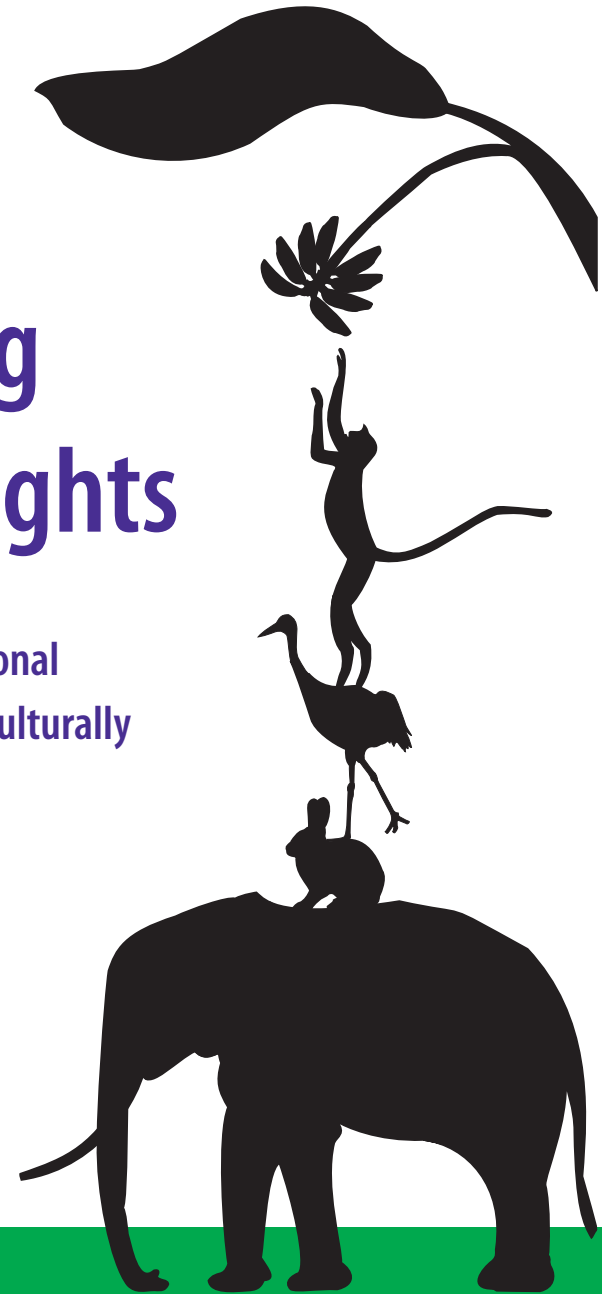
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Reaching New Heights

Assessing Organizational
Capacity To Provide Culturally
Competent Services



A culturally competent system of care acknowledges and incorporates—at all levels—the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs.

—Terry L. Cross, MSW, ACSW, Executive Director,
National Indian Child Welfare Association

In order to provide the most effective services, organizations understand the importance of diverse cultures within the communities they serve. The road to providing culturally competent services is a journey. Cultural competency training is a common approach to help staff work more effectively with diverse communities. Cultural competency training is critical and often short lived. Training should be supported by systems change to have lasting impact on the way services are provided.

This module provides guidelines for a systems change approach to cultural and community competency using organizational assessment tools. It includes tools for:

- Organizational assessment—examining organizational management and systems, current cultural competency initiatives and services
- Protocol review—analyzing administrative, human resources and service-related policies, protocols, and procedures
- On-site assessment—reviewing the physical facility in which services are provided

- Community mapping and assessment—developing demographic and health profiles of communities of interest
- Action Plan—helping implement recommendations using “stages of readiness” approach to implement appropriate and realistic changes

These tools are designed to be completed by our staff in partnership with your organization. We are flexible about designing an approach that will best meet your organization’s needs. In addition, our expert team is available to provide ongoing support through training and technical assistance.

A systems change approach to cultural and community competency is a way to ensure sustainable actions regarding difficult issues of culture, diversity and parity in how clients access and are provided services. Organizations committed to this value don’t simply want it attached to a group of administrators, board members and staff but hope it lives and breathes within the organization.

Each individual brings to their work environment their own values, beliefs and judgments and misconceptions about the clients and communities they serve.