



**GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE
FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT
LEGAL INSTITUTE**

**The Impact of Child Trauma on System-Involved
Children and Youth in Kansas
Part V
Cultural Competency
and Trauma Responsiveness**

**Part V Overview: Cultural Competency
and Trauma Responsiveness**

- The influence of culture on child trauma
- Minority children in Kansas' child welfare system
- Cultural competency in the child welfare system

How does culture impact trauma?

- Social and cultural realities strongly influence children's risk for—and experience of—trauma
- Children from minority backgrounds are at increased risk for trauma exposure and subsequent PTSD
- Children's, families', and communities' responses to trauma vary by group

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
Training materials

How does culture impact trauma?

- Many children entering the child welfare system come from groups that experience:
 - Discrimination
 - Negative stereotyping
 - Poverty
 - High rates of exposure to community violence
- Social and economic marginalization, deprivation, powerlessness can create barriers to service
- These children can have worse symptoms, and for longer periods of time, than majority children

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
Training materials

Why does culture matter?

- People of different backgrounds may define “trauma” in different ways
- Child welfare workers’ backgrounds will influence their perceptions
- Assessment of a child’s trauma history should always take into account their cultural background

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
Training materials

Why does culture matter?

- Shame is a very common reaction to trauma
- Various components of shame will be affected by a child’s cultural background:
 - Responsibility for the abuse
 - Failure to protect
 - Fate
 - “Damaged goods”
 - Predictions of a shameful future
 - Revictimization

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
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Why does culture matter?

- Experts recognize that trauma-informed child welfare systems must take the child's culture into account
- Cultural, racial, and immigrant experiences with oppression are recognized instances of historical trauma
- Strong cultural identity and community/family connections can enhance a child's resiliency

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
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Minority children in foster care

- Nationwide, African-American and American Indian children are three times more likely to be in foster care compared to Caucasian children
- African American children stay in foster care for an average of nine months longer than their Caucasian counterparts

Adapted from NCTSN Child Welfare Trauma
Training materials

Minority children in foster care in Kansas

Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin		
	In out-of-home care ¹	In state child population ²
White	78%	88.7%
Black or African American	20%	6.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1%	1%
Asian	0%	2.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%	.01%
Hispanic or Latino Origin (of any race)	10.7%	9.3%

- White children are under-represented
- African-American, Latino, and Asian children are over-represented; white children under-represented
- According to NCJFCJ, in 2009 African-American children were over-represented by 3.2x in Kansas

Source: State of Kansas and U.S. Census Bureau; figures last updated March 2011

Trans-racial adoption in Kansas

- Kansas law requires agencies to address the unique racial and cultural needs of children of color in care
 - The requirement includes seeking families who reflect the children's race and ethnicity
- Many Kansas children are adopted transracially
 - In 2012, 18.5% of the children adopted in Kansas were children of color adopted by white parents; 2.9% were white children adopted by parents of color; 4.5% were children of color adopted by parents of another race

Native American children in foster care in Kansas

Historical trauma suffered by Native tribes:

- Loss of land
- Loss of children and culture:
 - Boarding schools
 - Out-adoption and removal of children
 - Forced sterilization

Native American children in foster care in Kansas

Indian Child Welfare Act

- Passed in 1978 in response to the widespread removal of Indian children from their families
- Recognizes what research has demonstrated: tribes are best suited to understand tribal children's needs and improve their outcomes
- Culturally competent support and technical assistance are key

Cultural competency in the child welfare system

The first step in gaining cultural competency is understanding whom you serve.

- Data collection:
 - Use client addresses crossed with census and other public data to understand demographics
 - HHS requires collection of race and ethnicity data
- Understanding clients' communities
 - Collaborate with community partners, advocacy groups to stay aware of contextual factors
- Supports effective and efficient service

Adapted from NCTSN materials on cultural competency

Cultural competency in the child welfare system

The second step in gaining cultural competency is building a diverse workforce.

- Incentives can help: for example, increase pay for bilingual/bicultural staff members; underwrite professional development
- Build cross-cultural awareness and understanding of trauma experiences
- Reinforce the importance of cultural and linguistic competency

Adapted from NCTSN materials on cultural competency

Cultural competency in the child welfare system

The third step in gaining cultural competency is managing the budget to support these services.

- Delivery of culturally and linguistically competent services requires allocation for personnel training and ongoing supervisions, coaching and guidance
- It's challenging to allocate these resources, but at the same time, they help alleviate the problem of avoided treatment and no-shows
- Development of cultural and linguistic competency is a quality improvement effort

Adapted from NCTSN material on cultural competency

Cultural competency in the child welfare system

The fourth step in gaining cultural competency is the development of shared language about trauma.

- The best way to begin trauma work with any community is to start by listening
- Through dialogue, a common understanding and language will develop

Adapted from NCTSN material on cultural competency