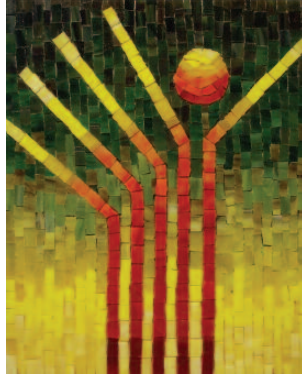


Training Staff to Work with

IMMIGRANT YOUTH



National Collaboration for Youth



Training Staff to Work with IMMIGRANT YOUTH



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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Making a commitment to serve immigrant youth affects every dimension of an organization. A key ingredient to success is hiring and supporting effective staff. The report entitled, *Preparing Staff to Work with Immigrant Youth*, provides guidance for program directors and other managers who are responsible for hiring and supporting staff in youth organizations. This training module is a companion piece and contains activities that will support staff at several levels. The first training activity, "Overview: Preparing Staff to Work with Immigrant Youth" is a PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the content of the report. This presentation is an effective tool to use with your leaders, champions and even board members to encourage an understanding of the importance of serving immigrant youth and the organizational implications.

All of the activities in the module address knowledge, attitudes, and skills that frontline staff need to work effectively with immigrant youth. The activities can be used as a full-day workshop or implemented individually to address specific staff needs. Each of the activities in the module is appropriate for staff who work directly with immigrant youth.

These activities reflect the Advisory Group's guidance, support, and encouragement, as well as information gathered from member organizations who were interviewed for the report.

None of this would not have been possible without generous funding from the Lilly Endowment. The suggestions presented here are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Lilly Endowment.

Thanks also to the staff and consultants whose work provided the substance for these training pieces:

Pam Wilson, who wrote the activities with guidance provided by the Advisory Group.

Amy Scharff and Jimena Quiroga from California Tomorrow who conducted the interviews.

Shawn Newton for her creativity with design.

I am grateful to be able to offer these activities for your work.

With much appreciation,

Pam Garza, Director
National Youth Development Learning Network
National Collaboration for Youth



OVERVIEW:

PREPARING STAFF TO WORK WITH IMMIGRANT YOUTH



Purpose: To give organizational leaders, managers, and/or board members an overview of the issues involved with getting staff prepared to work with immigrant youth.

Materials:

- PowerPoint Presentation, *Preparing Staff to Work with Immigrant Youth*
- LCD Projector and Laptop Computer

Trainer Notes:

1. This activity would be appropriate to use with agency directors, board members, managers, and any other individuals who have responsibility for hiring staff to work with immigrant youth and families.
2. In advance of this activity, read and digest the report, *Preparing Staff to Work with Immigrant Youth* so that you can have fuller and more comprehensive information to support the PowerPoint presentation. Go to <http://www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce/PreparingStafftoWorkwithImmigrantYouth.htm> for the full report.
3. Preview the PowerPoint presentation and make changes or adaptations to meet your specific needs. For example, you might add in information about specific immigrant populations that you are serving. Or you might decide to delete sections that are not important for your particular audience.
4. Make individual notes about specific immigrant populations that you are serving or any issues specific to your agency. Rehearse your presentation.
5. Be prepared to have the group follow up by completing some of the checklists included in the report, for example, the Organizational Assessment of Staff Characteristics located in Appendix A of the report on pages 36 and 37.

Time: 45 minutes

Procedure:

- 1. (Presentation—30 minutes)** *Show and narrate the PowerPoint presentation that you have adapted for your audience. Take care to avoid simply reading slides. Engage the audience in two-way communication, by asking them to make comments and by encouraging them to ask questions.*

- 2. (Discussion—15 minutes)** *Discuss the PowerPoint presentation with the following questions:*
 - What's your reaction to this presentation?

 - What are your thoughts and feelings about being more proactive about serving immigrant youth and families?

 - What should our agency response be? (The group might decide to do an organizational assessment of staff's readiness to work with immigrant youth as suggested in step 5 of the Trainer Notes.)



Preparing Staff to Work with Immigrant Youth

National Collaboration for Youth
August 2007

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Why Serve Immigrant Youth?

- Youth Development Mission
 - ✓ To support *all* young people in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and empowerment
- The Business Case
 - ✓ To remain relevant—continue to be used and funded given changing demographics

2



Youth Organizations' Response

- Some organizations have an already proven track record with immigrant youth
- Some have begun but are working through the challenges
- Others are not sure if this work is a part of their mission

Where is your organization on this issue?

3



Overview of Presentation

- The context—background information & current issues
- What staff need to work with immigrant youth & families
- Strategies for recruiting and retaining staff
- Professional development strategies
- Leadership and vision required for success

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The Context: Immigrant Youth are Diverse

- They come from every corner of the globe
- Latinos, the largest immigrant group, come from around 25 different countries
- Even when from the same region, immigrant youth are diverse re: education, social class, urban vs. suburban or rural



5



Test Your Knowledge

- **Question:** As of 2004 what are the top 10 countries from which immigrants have come to the US?
- **Answer:** 1) Mexico, 2) India, 3) Philippines, 4) China, 5) Vietnam, 6) Dominican Republic, 7) El Salvador, 8) Cuba, 9) Korea, & 10) Colombia

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Some Statistics

- Over 35.7 million immigrants living in the U.S.*
- An increase of 16% in just the last five years*
- 80% increase since 1990*
- 1 in 5 children in the US is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant (U.S. Census)
- Numbers continue to rise

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Test Your Knowledge

- **Question:** What states have the fastest growing immigrant populations?

■ **Answer:**

State	Growth
■ South Carolina	47.8%
■ New Hampshire	44.9%
■ Tennessee	42.6%
■ Arkansas	40.6%
■ Delaware	40.5 %
■ Georgia	39.0%
■ Alabama	38.9%
■ Nebraska	34.3%
■ Kentucky	32.2 %
■ North Carolina	31.9%

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Why Families Migrate

- Some leave their families and everything they know behind in search of a better life, education, or financial opportunities.
- Others come to escape war, poverty, famine or persecution.



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Immigrant Capacities

- Naturalized U.S. citizens
- Lawful permanent residents (LPR)—granted visas through sponsorship by family member, employer or via Diversity Lottery
- Individuals with temporary visas—(students and temporary workers)
- Undocumented immigrants

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Immigrant Youth Needs

- Specific Needs Vary—i.e., May need to heal after persecution
- General Needs:
 - ♦ Must adapt to a new country (new societal norms, social institutions, etc.)
 - ♦ Must learn a new language
 - ♦ Must struggle to forge a new bi-cultural identity

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Immigrants Face Fear & Mistrust

- Changing Demographics—Make local residents uncomfortable; fear that immigrants are taking jobs away; discomfort related to language differences & cultural clashes
- National Debate on Immigration—Has fueled anti-immigrant attitudes often directed at Latinos regardless of their status in the U.S.
- War on Terrorism—Has led to mistrust of Muslims specifically & all persons who look non-Christian & non-white more globally

12



Given this context...

- What do staff need to work effectively with immigrant youth and families?



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All Youth Workers Need to Be...

- Open-minded
- Resourceful
- Good “networkers”
- Positive about all young people



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Staff working with immigrant youth also need...

- Knowledge of local immigrant communities and specific immigrant experiences
- Cultural competence
- Language proficiency
- Ability to relate to immigrant populations
- Connections with immigrant families & communities



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How do you recruit such staff?

- Identify the specific needs in your community
 - Conduct research on immigrant populations
 - Engage in organizational dialogue
 - Identify specific staff skills needed
- Advertise/Make use of networks
 - Advertise in culture-specific media
 - Enhance your reputation on this issue
 - Utilize community networks
 - Offer college credit for interns & volunteers

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Staff Recruitment (cont.)

- Recruit from within the organization
 - Hire past participants
 - Outreach to staff member friends & contacts
- Interview creatively & sensitively
 - Create a thoughtful interview process
 - Use creative alternatives to identify a candidate's qualifications

17



Staff Recruitment (cont.)

- Offer incentives
 - Professional development opportunities
 - Incentive pay for bilingual staff



18



Retention: How do you hold on to staff like this?

- Nurture passion
 - Connect staff to mission
 - Promote healthy caring relationships
- Provide leadership development
 - Identify & nurture individual strengths
 - Create pathways for increased responsibility
 - Promote from within



19



Staff Retention (cont.)

- Create a culture of appreciation
 - Express appreciation regularly
 - Hold appreciation events
 - Incorporate cultural traditions
 - Tap into strengths of immigrant staff & participants



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Professional Development

- Focus on immigrant youth in staff orientation
 - Include issues in organizational mission
 - Educate re: specific immigrant populations
 - Communicate organizational values
- Encourage individual learning & reflection
 - Expect staff to do individual work on these issues
 - Provide resources
 - Design individualized planning tools & curricula

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Professional Development (cont.)

- Implement training on immigrant issues
 - Incorporate issues in cultural competence workshops
 - Conduct specific training on working with immigrant youth
 - Ask experienced staff to design & deliver training
 - Invite community leaders to come in & educate staff
- Set up staff dialogues
 - Hold a dialogue in response to a specific issue or challenge
 - Provide safe space for staff to challenge their own stereotypes & assumptions
 - Include dialogue about these issues in regularly scheduled meetings

22



Professional Development (cont.)

- National organizations create networking opportunities
 - National professional affinity groups
 - Local-to-local mentoring & conference calls



23



Begin with Leadership & Vision

- Be proactive
 - Communicate expectations clearly and affirmatively within the organization
 - Communicate goals, philosophy, services, staffing needs, and opportunities to external stakeholders
- Tap into leaders' strengths
 - Individual strengths of immigrant & non-immigrant leaders
 - Strive to have leadership reflect population being served

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Leadership & Vision (cont.)

- Be explicit and intentional
 - Use the word "immigrant" in new initiatives
 - Establish credibility with immigrant communities
 - Build partnerships with ethnic- and immigrant-serving organizations
 - Go after funding, including pass-through funding from national organizations for local outreach positions
 - Attract strong immigrant staff and other staff who are passionate about working with immigrants

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Leadership & Vision (cont.)

- Create an inclusive organization
 - Assess how immigrant staff & participants experience the organizational culture
 - Model being open to discover own biases & "growing edges"
 - Take steps to ensure that *all* youth and staff feel welcomed, valued, respected and supported



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CULTURAL DIVERSITY PROFILE



Purpose: To enable the entire staff team to recognize and discuss major aspects of its cultural diversity.

Materials:

- Handout, *Cultural Diversity Profile*

Trainer Notes:

1. When you conduct this activity, you will need enough space for the entire group to stand and move into different corners or areas of the room. Think in advance about where in the room you can have people stand for each of the responses. You will want people to be able to spread out into different areas rather than just form a line along an imaginary continuum. Plan to use corners of the room and other areas in the center of the room.
2. Make any adaptations to the handout so it reflects specific diversity issues and uses language that is specific to your organization or community.
3. A variation for processing this activity is to have people form small groups of 3-4 people by joining with 2-3 people who appear to be different than them in some way. Have people share the responses from their handout in the small group.

Time: 60 minutes

Procedure:

1. (Introduction/Overview—7 minutes) *Introduce this activity with the following points:*

- If we are going to get better prepared to work with immigrant youth and families, it is important to be comfortable dealing with diversity. Sometimes we might feel uncomfortable talking about human differences...we almost feel that we are walking on egg shells. This is an attitude that we were taught as young children by well-intended adults so as not to embarrass anyone. However, it hinders our ability to discuss diversity issues openly and honestly.

- We want to create a norm in this group that says, “It is OK to see and discuss differences, to ask questions, and to seek awareness of any of our misconceptions or misinterpretations. We will always assume good will—that everyone in this group means well.”
- It is also important to recognize our own diversity as a work team so we can be more aware of perspectives that might already exist in our group and be intentional about bringing in other perspectives.
- We are going to do a diversity profile. I am going to distribute a handout that I ask you to complete individually. You will be sharing your responses later with the group.

Distribute the handout for participants to complete.

2. (Movement Activity—33 minutes) *Give the following directions:*

- We are going to share our responses on the handout by getting up and moving to different positions in the room.
- For each item on the handout, I’m going to read the possible answers and ask you to stand in the position that fits for you.

Begin reading the first item on the *Cultural Diversity Profile*. Indicate where in the room people should stand for each response. Remember to assign areas so that people are spread out in the room and can see one another.

For each item give participants a couple of minutes to connect with each other around this aspect of diversity. Then open up the conversation to have 2-3 volunteers share any observations or reflections.

When you get to the issue of family income specifically, be intentional about where you place people in the room. Ask people who grew up in low-income families to stand in one corner of the room; those from middle-income families to stand in the middle of the room; and those from upper-income families to stand in another corner. Often participants will comment on the physical distance the “low-income” folks felt from the “upper-income” folks and how this correlates to what is experienced in real life.

When you get to the last item, encourage people to tell stories about their experiences with discrimination. Be sure to highlight any immigrant experiences. At some point during the discussion make the following points:*

- People who are culturally different (e.g., people of color and immigrants) often have a challenge in terms of:
 - **Being seen:** Sometimes they are ignored; sometimes individuals want to say that they are color-blind and don't see differences; sometimes people who are culturally different are intentionally overlooked as a result of prejudice such as not being waited on in a department store
 - **Being heard:** Sometimes people who are culturally different are not heard—people don't listen because they don't think what is being said is important or relevant; sometimes messages from people who are culturally different are misinterpreted; sometimes due to language differences people are not heard at all
 - **Being understood:** The net result of not being seen or heard accurately is that individuals are not understood
- It is paramount for immigrant youth and their family members to be accurately seen, heard, and understood in order to feel affirmed and valued in youth organizations.

3. (Discussion—20 minutes) *Process the activity with the discussion questions below:*

- What stands out for you from the activity?
- What kinds of diversity in our group had you not seen until today?
- What aspects of diversity might exist in this group (and any other group) that we need not focus on today? (sexual orientation, disability, gender, family composition, etc.)
- On which issues did we have a big majority?
- What was it like to be standing in a minority position on any of the items? What is that like in U.S. society?
- What privileges go along with the majority position?
- What can we do in our organization to keep the playing field level across all of these aspects of diversity?

**These points were developed in consultation with Alfonso Carlon, Trainer, Center for Health Training, Austin, TX in August 2007.*

HANDOUT

Cultural Diversity Profile

Directions: Please answer every question. If you fit into more than one category among the responses, choose the one that fits best for you. Write in a response if nothing fits for a specific question. You will share your responses with the entire group.

1. What is your age?

16-25 26-35 36-50 51-64 65+

2. What is your racial identity?

Black White Asian Latino/Hispanic Biracial
 Native American/Indian _____

3. What is your connection to the immigrant experience?

Immigrant myself Parents were immigrants
 Grandparents were immigrants Partner is an immigrant
 Have lived/worked in another country _____

4. What is your first language?

English Spanish French German Italian
 Chinese Arabic Polish Korean _____

5. What is your language proficiency?

Speak only English Bilingual
 Speak 3 languages fluently _____

6. What was your family income growing up?

Low income Middle Income Upper Income

7. What is your religious identity?

Catholic Protestant Muslim Agnostic/Atheist
 Jewish Hindu Buddhist Jehovah's Witness
 Pentecostal Unitarian Spiritual _____

8. What is your experience with discrimination?

Never/isolated experience Occasional but rare experience
 Frequent experience over lifetime Constant ongoing experience



IMMIGRANT FRIENDLINESS ASSESSMENT



Purpose: To enable participants to assess the “friendliness” of their agency with regard to working with immigrant youth, families, and communities.

Materials:

- Trainer Resource, *Immigrant Friendliness Assessment*
- Four small placards or posters on which you have written the following:
 - 1 = Haven’t thought about it/completely disagree
 - 2 = Started to think about it/not much progress
 - 3 = Made some good efforts/more work needed
 - 4 = Have successfully done it/completely agree
- Tape

Trainer Notes:

1. When you conduct this activity, you will need enough space for the entire group to stand and move back and forth along a continuum. Use one side of your meeting room or move out into a hallway if your group will not interrupt, nor be overheard by, others.
2. Tape the placards/posters along one wall in sequence, spaced several feet apart.
3. Review the Trainer Resource, *Immigrant Friendliness Assessment* so you will be familiar with the items.
4. Put the incomplete sentences from Step 3 of the Procedure on a chart.

Time: 60 minutes

Procedure:

1. (Introduction/Overview—5 minutes) *Do a self assessment of the immigrant-friendliness of your organization.*

- There are many kinds of challenges that limit a youth organization's ability to involve immigrant youth, families, and communities. Examples include:
 - When they arrive in the U.S., immigrant youth and their families face cultural differences, language barriers, unfamiliar systems and rules, prejudice, and political controversy.
 - They may also be unfamiliar with the basic concept of youth programming which can lead to lack of interest, distrust, and/or fear.
 - Youth organizations face the challenge of finding the funds they need to broaden their efforts while simultaneously making the organization visible in immigrant communities, building relationships, finding and preparing staff, and building inclusive environments.
- This activity provides you with an opportunity to do a self-assessment of the immigrant-friendliness of your organization.

2. (Individual Assessment—10 minutes) *Distribute and review the handout, Immigrant Friendliness Assessment, and ask participants to complete it individually. Tell them they will share their responses in a movement activity. Call time when it is obvious everyone has finished.*

3. (Group Assessment—30 minutes) *Review these instructions:*

- I'll read each of the qualities aloud and ask you to go stand in the position that you chose for your organization: (1) Haven't thought about it/completely disagree; (2) started to think about it/not much progress; (3) have made some good efforts/more work needed; or (4) have successfully done it/completely agree.
- There are a few important ground rules:
 - There are no right or wrong answers in this exercise.
 - Do not try to influence where anyone else is moving.
 - It's OK if a colleague moves to a different position than you. Remember, our perception is our reality and it isn't ever right or wrong.

- When everyone has moved to one of the posters, I will ask one or two volunteers to share why they chose their position.

Read the first category and the first item. Ask participants to move to their positions and then call on a few volunteers to say why they chose the position they took. Encourage the participants who rate their agencies as “3” and “4” to share their success strategies with those who are at “1” and “2.”

Go on to the next category and follow this process until you have completed the entire assessment. Then ask participants to return to their seats.

4. (Discussion—10 minutes) *Display the chart you made of the following incomplete sentences. Have participants choose any one of the sentences and complete it, then share the reasons for their comment.*

- From participating in this activity I learned...
- I was surprised to learn that...
- When I think about my own organization’s immigrant friendliness, I feel...
- Now that we’ve done this assessment I hope...

Conclude the activity by commenting on the work of the group, the immigrant friendliness of their organizations, and your hope that they will move forward in the direction of increased immigrant friendliness.

Immigrant Friendliness Assessment

Directions: Use the following scale to rate your organization on each of the qualities included in the assessment:

- 1 = We haven't even thought about it/completely disagree with statement
- 2 = We've started to think about this but haven't made much progress
- 3 = We've made some good efforts but still have some work to do
- 4 = We have successfully completed this step/completely agree with statement

How much support is there within our organization for working with immigrant youth?

- ___ Involving immigrant youth is clearly spelled out in our agency's mission.
- ___ We have a specific immigrant youth initiative.
- ___ Agency leaders are committed to and intentional about working with immigrant youth.
- ___ Literature and publicity about the organization reflect a commitment to working with all youth including immigrant youth.
- ___ We are recognized by community partners as an agency that works effectively with immigrant youth.
- ___ One staff member has been designated to manage or coordinate the agency's outreach to immigrant youth, families, and communities.
- ___ All staff have received specific training on working with immigrant youth.

To what extent do staff attitudes and behaviors reflect a commitment to working with immigrant youth, families, and communities?

- ___ Staff members think that immigrant youth should be served by the agency.
- ___ Staff greet immigrant youth, family and community members warmly when they enter the building for any reason.
- ___ Staff make a special effort to reach out to the family members of immigrant youth.
- ___ Staff have built partnerships with immigrant community leaders and organizations.
- ___ Staff regularly invite family and community members to be involved in programs and activities.

How inviting and welcoming is the environment for immigrants?

- ___ Staff have knowledge and understanding of each immigrant youth's country of origin, culture, family background, and local community connections.
- ___ Programs, services, and resources are linguistically and culturally accessible to immigrant youth and families.
- ___ Displayed images of youth and families are inclusive of immigrants.
- ___ Staff members include individuals who are immigrants and speak the languages of the youth and families they serve.
- ___ Literature is available in languages spoken by families and communities served.
- ___ Staff members interact with immigrant youth, families, and community members in ways that are respectful, warm, and engaging.
- ___ Immigrant staff report feeling respected and valued within the organization.
- ___ Immigrant youth and family members report feeling welcomed, respected, and valued in the organization.



NUWOKNUS:

A STRATEGY FOR INCREASING CULTURAL COMPETENCE



Purpose: To increase awareness of cultural differences; to identify strategies for interacting effectively with people who have cultural traditions and practices different from one's own.

Materials:

- Trainer Resource, *Nuwoknu Cultural Messages*

Trainer Notes:

1. In this activity participants encounter unfamiliar cultural cues during an interpersonal interaction. Upon reflection on the cross-cultural interaction, participants identify ways to discover another culture's cues or messages. They also discuss the importance of not making assumptions about or misinterpreting these cues.
2. This is a complex activity. Make sure that you thoroughly understand all of the steps of the activity before implementation.
3. Take steps to make sure people feel particularly safe. You might need to review your ground rules before this activity. It is a risk-taking activity where people are venturing into the unknown (Nuwoknu – is unknown backwards)
4. Make note of any local or agency-specific examples of cross-cultural miscommunication to bring forward in this activity.

Time: 60 minutes

Procedure:

1. (Introduction/Overview—3 minutes) *Introduce the activity with the following information:*

- We are going to do an experiment to help us explore cultural differences.

- In this experiment, there are a group of people called Nuwoknus who have just migrated to the U.S.
- Five of you will be Nuwoknus. I will give you cards that describe some of your cultural traits and traditions.
- Five of you will be outreach workers who must meet and interact with the Nuwoknus to find out more about them and to encourage them to send their youth to the community youth program.
- The rest of you will be observers who watch the interaction carefully which you will share later.

2. (Experiment—15 minutes) *Ask for five volunteers to be the Nuwoknus and five to be the outreach workers. Send the outreach workers out of the room for 5 minutes to put together a strategy for approaching the Nuwoknus so they can learn about this new cultural group. The outreach workers should come up with a couple of questions to ask the Nuwoknus.*

Tell the Nuwoknus that they are all parents and give them the cards that explain their cultural traits. Get the observers to help you move the chairs around in the room to create enough open space for the Nuwoknus and the outreach workers to interact openly.

Once the Nuwoknus are clear about what they are doing, go to the outreach workers and make sure they are clear. Bring the outreach workers back into the room and have them begin interacting with the Nuwoknus in the center of the room. Allow the interaction to go on for about 3-4 minutes or until you see the outreach workers exhaust their methods of engaging the Nuwoknus.

3. (Experiment-Take 2—10 minutes) *Stop the interaction and ask the outreach workers to go back outside and discuss what they've learned so far about the Nuwoknus. Have them discuss ways to adjust their approach in order to learn more about the Nuwokus.*

While the outreach workers are outside the room, ask the observers what kinds of cultural messages or cues they've been observing among the Nuwoknus. Ask the Nuwoknus not to participate in this discussion and not to share any of their cultural messages at this point. Explain that cultural messages are what everyone in a group knows that outsiders do not know. They are a series of lenses that shape our perceptions, interpretations, boundaries, and values.

Bring the outreach workers back in after 5 minutes or so and have them begin the interaction again. Stop the interaction after 3-4 minutes.

4. (Initial De-Brief—15 minutes) *Ask everyone to take their seats. Use the following questions to process the activity:*

- Outreach workers, what was that like for you? What did you talk about when you were outside? What did you learn from this?
- Nuwoknus, what was that like for you? What did you think about the outreach workers when you first met them? What differences did you see in them the second time you met them? What did you learn from this?
- Observers, what did you see? What did you learn?

5. (Further Processing—17 minutes) *Explain the following information:*

- Cultural messages are what everyone in a group knows that outsiders do not know. They are a series of lenses that shape our perceptions, interpretations, boundaries, and values.
- When we meet someone who does not behave as we expect, it can be a signal or cue of a cultural difference. It is wrong to assume that the other person is being rude, lacks social skills, or lacks common sense. Remember, what seems like common sense to one culture may not be the case for another culture.
- When you encounter unfamiliar cultural cues, ask yourself:
 - Does the person understand what I'm trying to say? Does the person's response show that s/he truly understands? (More than saying "yes" or nodding the head.)
 - Do I understand what the person is saying? What about body language? Might I be misinterpreting something?
 - What is the mood of the interaction? (positive, negative, neutral)
 - Does there seem to be trust between us?

Ask these final questions:

- What cultural cues or messages have you picked up from immigrant youth or family members? When have you possibly misunderstood cultural cues?
- What cultural cues or messages do you have that immigrant youth or family members may not be privy to?
- What learning can we take back to our organization about working with immigrant youth and families?

Cultural Messages

Only talk to the same gender

Cannot make eye contact

Cannot smile at strangers

Don't use the word "no"

Only talk to the same gender

Cannot make eye contact

Cannot smile at strangers

Don't use the word "no"

Only talk to the same gender

Cannot make eye contact

Cannot smile at strangers

Don't use the word "no"

Only talk to the same gender

Cannot make eye contact

Cannot smile at strangers

Don't use the word "no"



ROLE-PLAYS: WELCOMING IMMIGRANT YOUTH



Purpose: To have participants identify strategies and then practice specific behaviors for welcoming immigrant youth, family, and community members.

Materials:

- Trainer Resource, *Role-Play Scenarios*

Trainer Notes:

1. The goal of this activity is to have youth workers practice using skills and strategies to connect with and welcome immigrant youth and family members.
2. Feel free to adapt any of the Role Play Scenarios or to create additional scenarios of your own that reflect actual situations you have faced in your organization.
3. Make a chart of the role-play de-brief process from step 3 of the procedure.

Time: 60 minutes

Procedure:

1. (Introduction—10 minutes) *Tell participants that it is time to identify and practice some ways to welcome immigrant youth and family members into the organization and to take initial steps to build meaningful connections. Ask:*

- What are some ways you have tried to make immigrant youth feel comfortable with you or with being in a new group or program?
- How have you been successful in building connections across cultural differences?
- How might you find out what makes a specific immigrant youth/family member feel comfortable?

2. (Instructions for Role-plays—5 minutes) *Invite participants to do some role-playing so they can practice using some of the strategies they just discussed. Divide participants into small groups of 6-8 people and give these instructions:*

- Each small group will focus on one scenario involving a youth worker and an immigrant youth/family member/community member. The role-plays will take place in the small group (not the large group).
- Each small group will divide in half. Half of the group will prepare for the role of the immigrant youth/family member/community member and the other half will prepare for the role of the worker.
- You will have about 5 minutes to prepare the role-play and assign roles. Individuals who are not playing roles will act as coaches and observers.
- After the preparation time, the actors will begin the role-play. When the role-play ends, there will be a debriefing in the small group. The actors will report on their experience during the role-play and the observers will give feedback.

3. (Preparing for Role-plays—8 minutes) *Ask the small groups to divide in half and then distribute the roles to each half of the group. Circulate and make sure that the groups are on track and that they are planning for their role and that they have chosen an actor. After 6-7 minutes of planning time, get everyone's attention. Give these final instructions:*

- Get started with your role-play as soon as possible. When it is finished, use this process (on a chart) to debrief:
 - Immigrant youth/family member/community member explains how s/he experienced the communication and says whether s/he would seek out the youth worker in the future.
 - Youth worker says what s/he thinks went well and what s/he would do differently next time.
 - Coaches/observers give feedback on what the youth worker did well and offer any suggestions.

4. (Role-Plays and Small-Group De-Brief—22 minutes) *Tell the small groups to get started with their role-play. Circulate and listen to the role-plays. Make sure that the small groups move right into their de-brief when they have finished the role-play.*

5. (Discussion—15 minutes) *Lead a discussion of the activity using the following questions:*

- How did things go in your small group?
- What did you learn about what does and does not work when trying to connect with an immigrant youth/family member/community member?
- Who are the champions in a specific immigrant community that might help you think more about this?

Role-Play Scenarios

First Day in the Program:

Worker Role: It's the first day of a new session at Downtown Youthworks. A number of new immigrant youth will be attending. You've been thinking long and hard about how to make them feel really welcome. At 3:30 pm a teenager that you don't recognize walks through the front door. You hurry over to welcome her/him.

Immigrant Youth Role: You are 15-years old and recently migrated to the U.S. to join your mother. You had been living with your grandmother in your home country. You don't have a close relationship with your mother because you saw her rarely over the last 8 years. And you really miss your grandmother. In general, you feel very overwhelmed...there's been so much change. It's your mother's idea for you to start coming to Downtown Youthworks everyday after school. She doesn't get home until 7pm and she wants you to have something to keep you occupied and she thinks it might help you adjust to things in the U.S. English is not your first language but you speak fluently because you studied English in your home country. It seems like you are the first to arrive after school on the first day. As soon as you walk in, this person comes over to talk with you.

School Function:

Worker Role: A community school has taken the lead in educating a specific immigrant population. They have hired staff and educators from the target population. You are going to meet with the community liaison (who is an immigrant who has been in the U.S. for three years) to explore how your agency—Youth Services USA—might be able to provide after-school programming to immigrant students in the school.

Immigrant Community Member Role: A community school has taken the lead in educating a specific immigrant population. You are an immigrant who has been in the U.S. for three years and you were hired by the school last year to be a community liaison who helps establish relationships between the school and the local community. Today you are going to meet with a youth worker from Youth Services USA who wants to inform you about after school programs available to students in your school.

Dealing with Parent Concerns:

Worker Role: You are attending a community meeting that has been convened by a grassroots immigrant organization. The goal of the meeting is to make parents aware of the various after-school programs that are available to young people in the local community. You are a youth worker from a local well-respected youth program that has been making slow but steady progress in serving immigrant youth. You have gotten to know a 12-year-old boy named Kehinde at a program you offered in his school. Yesterday when you told the youth group to encourage their parents to attend this meeting, Kehinde told you that his father would be attending. Kehinde also told you that his father doesn't understand or see the importance of "programs" for young people after school. Kehinde wants to start coming to your agency after school but his father would prefer to see him come home and help with chores or focus on his school work. When you arrive at the meeting you seek out Kehinde's father for a conversation.

Parent's Role: You are attending a community meeting that has been convened by a grassroots immigrant organization. The goal of the meeting is to make parents aware of the various after-school programs in the local community that are available to their children. You are the father of Kehinde, a 12-year-old, and three other children. Your family migrated to the U.S. six months ago and you and your wife are both working long hours to earn enough money to support the family and also send some money home to other relatives. It's been a struggle but you feel committed to helping your family live a better life with more opportunities. You feel that it is your job to keep your family safe and you have a lot of questions and concerns about the activities that your children want to get involved with here in the U.S. You think it's important for them to hold onto their cultural traditions and values. Kehinde and your wife talked you into coming to this meeting today



STAFF WITH THE MOST POTENTIAL



Purpose: To have participants identify qualities that staff believe are most desirable in staff members who will work effectively with immigrant youth and their families.

Materials:

- Handout, *Candidate Descriptions*

Trainer Notes:

1. Review the descriptions of candidates on the handout and feel free to adapt them to make them more relevant for your situation.

Time: 45 minutes

Procedure:

- 1. (Introduction and Overview—5 minutes)** *Tell participants that you want to do an activity to help them consider what is most important when hiring a staff person to work with immigrant youth and families. The activity is called "Staff with the Most Potential."*

Give the following instructions:

- Imagine that you are serving on a search committee to select a candidate—the staff person with the most potential—to recommend to your agency's CEO.
- You will get into small groups. I'll distribute a handout that describes three candidates.
- Read each description and discuss the merits of each candidate.
- Decide as a group which staff person you want to recommend and be prepared to tell us the qualities that make your candidate the best choice.
- Select a reporter who will explain which staff person you chose and why.

2. (Small Group Activity—15 minutes) *Divide participants into small groups of about six people and distribute the handouts. Allow about 15 minutes for the small group work.*

3. (Reports—15 minutes) *When most groups have reached consensus, reconvene the large group. Have each reporter name their winning candidate and the reasons they chose him or her. Try to make sure that the strengths of each of the three staff persons get identified during this discussion.*

4. (Discussion—15 minutes) *Process the activity using the following questions:*

- How easy was it to pick your final candidate? What were the competing issues?
- Which staff characteristics were most important to you and why? (Encourage people to identify their own preferences and values as well as organizational preferences and values.)
- Each candidate had specific strengths and challenges, how might you work with each of them to help them increase their effectiveness with immigrant young people? What kind of professional development or support would be important for each?

By the end of the discussion, be sure the following points have been made:

- There were no absolute right or wrong answers in this activity.
- All of the candidates had strengths to build upon and challenges to address.
- Each organization needs to engage in dialogue to figure out which staff characteristics are most important to you and how they will help each member of the staff develop professionally.

Candidate Descriptions

A small local community agency—Putting Youth in Charge (PYIC)—has been around for the last 5 years. It was founded by a charismatic and caring leader, Patricia Gaines, who has been a champion for local young people. PYIC now employs 8 full- and part-time staff who work directly with youth (most of whom are white and black). In the last year or so there has been a large influx of Mexican families moving into the area. At a recent staff meeting Patricia and the staff decided to make a concerted effort to reach out to the Mexican community, build partnerships, and get Mexican youth involved in the organization. Patricia advertised for a new staff position and convened a selection committee made up of staff and board members to review the applicants' qualifications and to recommend a final candidate to her.

Here is a summary description of the three candidates:

1. **Emily Wilson** is an experienced 28-year-old white youth worker who is currently employed by a sister organization. Emily has worked in partnership with PYIC staff on a variety of projects. She is known to be a caring and open-minded worker who is highly respectful of young people, works hard to learn from and with youth, and who has a reputation for being innovative, fun, and dynamic. Emily is applying for this position because she is very interested in taking on new challenges and would find it “intriguing” to build partnerships within the Mexican immigrant community. She does not speak Spanish and is planning to go to Mexico for the first time this summer.
2. **Hector Gonzales**, age 26, was born in Mexico and moved to South Carolina a year ago after getting a bachelors degree in Communication from a university in Texas. Hector is bilingual although Spanish is his first language. He has been unsuccessful finding a job in his field and applied for this job because it sounded like fun. He has never worked with youth but he has a great sense of humor and is the oldest of five sisters and brothers. Because he is fairly new to the area, he is just beginning to make connections with the local Mexican community. He did join a local Catholic Church and has met a lot of Mexican families there.
3. **Rodney Smith** is a 30-year-old black man who was recently laid off from a job teaching in an alternative school with kids who have dropped out of high school. He has worked successfully with lots of culturally diverse youth including Latinos although not necessarily recent immigrants. Rodney has traveled extensively throughout Mexico—not just the tourist centers. He is taking his third Spanish class at the local community college but feels pretty uncomfortable trying to speak any Spanish at this point.



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