


Title Description	Effective Date 10/26/98	Chapter A8
Cultural Competency and Diversity	Revised Date 10/01/14	Page 1 of 3
Unit/Department Human Resources	Authorized 	

POLICY: It is the policy of Twin Cedars Youth and Family Services, Inc. (TCYFS) that the cultural diversity of the organization shall be recognized and celebrated as the cornerstone to the success of our endeavors.

PROCEDURE: This policy applies to all terms, conditions and privileges of employment and all policies of TCYFS; including hiring, introductory period, training, orientation, placement, employee development, promotion, transfer, compensation, benefits, layoff and recall, social and recreational programs, employee facilities, termination and retirement.

1. Definitions:
 - A. Culture: The thoughts, ideas, behavior patterns, customs, beliefs, values, skills, arts and religions of a particular people at a given point in time.
 - B. Cultural Diversity: The rich mixture of ethnic, racial, religious, national, and individual characteristics that colors the landscape of the world in which we live.
 - C. Cultural Competence: The ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds and religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.
2. TCYFS recognizes and appreciates the differences in individuals both currently on staff and those joining us. We appreciate the uniqueness that each employee brings to the workplace. By our individuality and our uniqueness, we can come together as a diverse group

and positively impact the lives of those we are here to serve. Each of us brings a level of value to the task at hand and these individual differences, when managed properly, can mean the difference between a mediocre organization and a first-class operation.

3. Cultural diversity is not race relations. It is a process where we manage the changes that occur all around us in a positive manner. Diversity characteristics relate to many areas: abilities, class, education, religion, language, age, marital status, and sexual orientation, to name a few. We need to help one another see the complexity of the nature of diversity. It goes beyond racial and gender differences. Diversity means allowing for different viewpoints and perceptions, different ways of thinking and processing information, different methods of interaction and different ways of approaching problem solving.
4. TCYFS will manage the diversity of our staff through our in-service training in cultural diversity and through our problem solving procedures. Cultural diversity is a continual process that involves education, communication and human relations interaction and skills. It will require each of us to confront and look at ourselves. It is constructive training because it results in new communication and interaction skills, and it is an empathetic training because it promotes respectful and trusting behavior between people. The Director of Human Resources will report to the PQI Committee, at scheduled meetings, the following:
 - Personnel turnover
 - Demographic trends of its consumers and personnel
 - Training of personnel in the area of cultural diversity (upon hire and annually)
 - Any other findings related to cultural diversity
5. Diversity training and implementation will allow TCYFS to move forward in the twenty-first century and be a leader in our field. If we fail to embrace diversity, we run the risk of not satisfying our customers and any organization failing to exceed customer expectations will not survive. Survival of any organization depends on the

strength of its framework - its Executive Director, its senior managers, as well as the entire work force.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Interpretation and implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Executive Director. Overall Personnel functions are the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources.

Cultural Competency Plan

Children's Tree House and Children's Advocacy Center of Troup County

Introduction

Cultural competency is defined as *"the capacity to function in more than one culture and requires the ability to appreciate, understand and interact with members of diverse populations within the local community."* We recognize that cultural competency impacts every aspect of the work that we do in serving children and families. Sound, universally accepted cultural competence practices will be at the core of every aspect of service delivery. Through the creation of a culturally competent environment, we acknowledge and respect the values of the many diverse populations within this community and will adapt practices as needed to achieve this ongoing endeavor.

Community Assessment

The Center for Community Studies conducts ongoing studies to supply child welfare organizations in both the LaGrange and Columbus communities with valid research and data needed to understand the demographics of our community including but limited to race, ethnicity, gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, economics, urban vs. rural, religion and culture. The Center has a proven record of conducting and research and evaluation for a variety of organizations and programs within this community. This data is readily available and is used by both Georgia Family Connection partnerships in the LaGrange and Columbus communities to better understand the unique demographics of the communities that we serve.

The demographics of these communities continue to be impacted by the military's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) initiatives. It is projected that BRAC will ultimately result in a small city of soldiers and civilians being reassigned to Ft. Benning over the next several years. Community forums are relied upon and utilized in designing and adapting service delivery models that meet the diversity issues that are evolving on a daily basis.

Data extrapolated from the Troup County Strategic Plan which was rolled out in 2010 has been useful in creating a service model which will meet the anticipated growth in this community's diversified population which is a result of both the Ft. Benning expansion and opening of the KIA auto manufacturing plant.

Goals and Strategies and Evaluation

- 1) At the onset, the CAC/MDT will assess and address any cultural or linguistic issues that may affect service delivery. Provisions will be made for non-English speaking and hearing impaired child victims and their non-offending caregivers. Once staff assesses the need for an interpreter, arrangements will be made by the referring agency (law enforcement and/or the Department of Family and Children Services) to obtain an interpreter through Court Services which utilizes the Translation Station located in Atlanta, GA. This service is available to county and state courts throughout Georgia and consists of certified translators in 130+ languages. Children and family members are not to be utilized as a resource in the area of translations.
- 2) MDT members have knowledge of this resource through the courts and the CAC to assist in overcoming communications/language barriers. The CAC physical facility reflects surroundings that are both inviting and reflective of the demographics that we serve. Art work, reading material and toys reflect the interests of all developmental ages, genders and ethnicities of the children and families served through the CAC.
- 3) The CAC is located in a culturally diverse neighborhood that is centrally located within the community and is easily accessible to both law enforcement and DFCS.
- 4) Anatomical drawings and dolls used as interviewing aids in the forensic interview process represent all ethnic groups and signify the cultural sensitivity of the CAC.

- 5) CAC will engage in community outreach to educate underserved populations and will partner with key state, local and national child welfare organizations that serve and represent the broad range of demographics that are unique to this community. CAC staff will be actively involved in local Georgia Family Connection partnership initiatives which promote evidence-based public policy and focus on improving services and supports for families.
- 6) An integral component of CAC new employee orientation includes training in cultural competence and diversity. MDT members are afforded an annual team building training opportunity in cultural competency.
- 7) The umbrella organization for the CACs strives to recruit board members that reflect the demographics of the community. It is the policy of this organization to provide equal opportunity to all employees as well as applicants for employment. This organization strongly adheres to its anti-discrimination policy. Staffing patterns and board composition reflect diversity throughout the organization.
- 8) Each case presented at the CAC undergoes a pre-interview MDT staffing to ensure that all cultural factors of the family are fully evaluated and adaptations will be made to accommodate the diversity of the families that we serve.
- 9) Annual surveys are conducted on families/stakeholders to assess the level of satisfaction with culturally competent services. Because both CACs receive federal funding through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), we administer the required CJCC Client Satisfaction Survey to ensure continuous quality improvement in all aspects of CAC service delivery. Results from an electronic survey designed for MDT stakeholders will be presented to the MDT on an annual basis. Results from these surveys will be utilized to make improvements in service delivery.

Implementation Timeline

Goals and strategies are in effect immediately and will be evaluated annually by the organization's HR/PQI Departments for effectiveness. CAC policies will be revised to reflect the most current findings of the community assessments.