



Defining Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is the respectful and effective response by individuals and/or systems to people in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values their worth (*adapted from NASW*).

A child advocate who is culturally competent...

- Has an awareness of own culture and values.
- Recognizes cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors contribute to an individual's uniqueness.
- Has an awareness of, and is open-minded to, differences in communication, worldview, and definitions of family and community.
- Affirms the worth of an individual, family, and community and acknowledges that their cultural beliefs, customs, and practices are valid.
- Recognizes there is no universal child-rearing practice and affirms that one culture is not superior to others.
- Seeks knowledge and understanding about the history, traditions, values, and family systems of children and families served.
- Recognizes their own personal biases and assumptions, is aware of the implications, and works to challenge them.
- Recognizes ways that culture impacts problem solving, asking for help, healing, etc.
- Examines the function of power and powerlessness when individuals from different racial and cultural groups interact.
- Engages in continuous self-assessment in order to examine one's cultural competence and identify areas of personal and professional growth.
- Avoids operating off of assumptions by seeking information from an appropriate and knowledgeable source.
- Adapts interaction and communication to accommodate others in order to promote optimal and effective cross-cultural exchanges resulting in positive outcomes.

(Adapted from a variety of sources and customized to meet AK CASA's needs)