




REGION VII HEAD START TA SYSTEM

“Your  to Continuous Quality Improvement”

**Iowa Head Start Association
Diversity Networking
October 30, 2007
Des Moines, IA**

Presenter: Jhumur Murkerjee, Region 7 Head Start TA Content Specialist

The Networking Group hoped to discuss issues including:

- How to assist staff working with families (resources & strategies)?
- The diversity of families in Iowa
- What the role of government policy is to diverse families?
- New ideas for working with families
- How to help families with current immigration practices?
- How to work with diversity and culture in group meetings?
- How to work with translators?
- How to develop the culture within?
- How can Programs develop a training curriculum for staff?

Jhumur reviewed the PIR data for Region 7 reflecting Regional diversity and then specific data for the state of Iowa. The group discussed the trends that they have noted.

Jhumur and the group then discussed the handout “10 Myths that Prevent Collaboration Across Cultures”.

Jhumur presented information from the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) regarding understanding child care and education among immigrant families.

After lunch, Dena Goplerud, from Iowa Public Television shared resources available in Spanish from IPT.

Staff from Tri-County Head Start, Waterloo, IA shared information from the State Diversity Conference that was held in September in Des Moines.

The group then spent the afternoon in small groups discussing the following questions (with comments) below:

1. Ways to work with diverse families in a group setting:
 - Celebrate diversity with food and artifacts
 - HELLP Program- helps ELL celebrate their culture
 - Incorporate fun activities

- Create an environment that is culturally sensitive
 - Allow time for sharing
 - Prepare families before group meetings
 - Deal with bias of others in the group
 - Provide Transportation
2. Working with families (strategies & resources)
 - Home Visits: respect differences and let them self-disclose, give helpful information
 - Try to determine if parents are understanding and comprehending information
 - Be a good listener! Be open to learning from them.
 - Let families bring their own interpreter.
 - What are the family dynamics?
 - Know your biases!
 3. How do you develop a cultural within?
 - Develop a mutual understanding and respect differences
 - Focus on similarities
 - Look at multi-generational aspects
 - Educate cultures about U.S. laws
 - Provide better education on immigration laws
 - In home environment complete a cultural profile
 - No Tolerance Policy
 - Poverty Training
 - Investment of Management Staff in diversity
 4. Professional Development: Curriculum for Staff and Children (resources)
 - HELLP- Bring it home...and keep it alive
 - Parent/Staff Panel to discuss issues
 - FDC Training
 - ELL Training by Heartland AEA
 - Foreign Language instruction for staff
 - Have specific people to contact regarding diversity
 - Social/Emotional Awareness- respect, uniqueness
 - Anti-bias curriculum

Resources Shared:

- Anti-Bias Curriculum by Louise Sparks (NAEYC)
- Rhinos & Raspberries: Tolerance Tales available free from www.tolerance.org/teach/resources/rhinos
- Head Start Multicultural Principals
- Early Childhood Learning Center www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc
- Janice Gonzales Mena- Author- PITC-West Ed. (California)
- What Works Briefs: www.vanderbilt.edu/CSEFEL