Patterns of Cultural Differences: A Conversation

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Objectives:

Identify and emphasize attitudes that enhance the opportunities for persons with DD to achieve their optimal potential

Develop strategies to promote community inclusion in meeting the needs of persons with developmental disabilities

Identify cultural communication nuances which may impact understanding

Notes:
PATTERNS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: A CONVERSATION

A presentation by the Michigan Special Education Mediation Program

March 16, 2017

MSEMP

To make dispute resolution available to all Michigan students with disabilities.

ADMINISTRATION

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
- Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education
- Dispute Resolution Education Resources, Inc. (DRER)
- Michigan Special Education Mediation Program (MSEMP)

MICHIGAN CONTINUUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Conflict</th>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
<th>Stage 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Intervention</td>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Procedural Safeguards</td>
<td>Legal Review</td>
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<td>Assistance, Intervention Options</td>
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<td>Conflict resolution skills training</td>
<td>Informal party-to-party discussions</td>
<td>MDE toll-free information phone line 888-320-8384</td>
<td>Conciliation (telephone intermediary)</td>
<td>IEP, IFSP facilitation</td>
<td>Pre-filing mediation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>Third party assistance</td>
<td>Third-party intervention</td>
<td>Decision making by parties</td>
<td>Third-party decision making</td>
<td>Interest-based</td>
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<td>Informal, flexible</td>
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POPULATION FRAMEWORK

Population predictions by US Census

Nationally: by 2050
54% of population will be other than non-Hispanic White for children, minorities will be the majority by 2023
Part of the population over 65 will more than double

Michigan: by 2060
There will be a 60% chance that any two people will be of different races

POPULATION FRAMEWORK
1. Communication is rule governed
2. Context helps specify communication rules
3. Communication rules are culturally diverse

**BASIC ASSUMPTIONS**

- Different Communication Styles
- Different Attitudes Toward Conflict
- Different Approaches to Completing Tasks
- Different Decision-Making Styles
- Different Attitudes Toward Disclosure
- Different Approaches to Knowing

**PATTERNS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE**

- Eye contact
  - Facial expression
  - Dress
  - Body movements
  - Personal space/touching

**COMMUNICATION DIFFERENCES**

- Culturally Rooted

- Eye contact
- Vocal patterns
- Time relationship
- Directness
- Response style/speed

**EYE CONTACT**

- “Dress for success” has different meanings
- Accessories also carry meaning:
  - Piercings
  - Tattoos
  - Large or a lot of jewelry
  - Expensive jewelry

**DRESS**

- We communicate attention, interest, and many other things with our eyes.
- Eye communication varies from culture to culture.

- We communicate in many ways with our bodies.
  - Our posture often communicates our attentiveness.
  - Gestures can have very specific meanings, and tend to be very culture-specific.

**BODY MOVEMENTS**
Touch is a human being’s first sensation. It is also our first communication.

- We all use space differently.
  - Intimate: less than 18”
  - Casual/personal: 18”-4ft
  - Social: where most interact
  - Public: presentations

PERSONAL SPACE/TOUCHING

- Vocal qualities:
  - Volume
  - Inflection
  - Speed
  - Pitch

- Vocal Characteristics
  - Vocalizations that convey a learned meaning for a specific culture
  - Vocal Segregates
    - Audible sounds not words

VOCAL PATTERNS

- Our use of time is culturally based and varies from culture to culture. In the mainstream culture in the United States, we expect exactness of time. We feel it rude if someone is late. “Time equals money” is a common expression.

- Informal Time
  - Punctuality
  - Pace
  - Past, present & future
    - Past
    - Present
    - Future
  - Monochronic & polychronic time

TIME RELATIONSHIP

- Directness of questions
- Directness of answers
- Rhetorical style
- Response to accusation
- Groups that “beat around the bush” are often considered evasive, disorganized or intellectually weak, when it could be “the journey is part of the experience”

DIRECTNESS

- Speed of response
- Tums
  - Regulators
    - Silence
    - Nodding
    - Raising eyebrows
    - Leaning forward

RESPONSE STYLE/SPEED
HOW WILL YOUR WORK CHANGE?

Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like to be treated

Platinum Rule: Treat others as they would like you to treat them

HOW TO CONTACT THE MSEMP

- Services
  1-800-8RESOLVE 1-800-873-7658

- Program Information
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  Lansing, MI 48917
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  Fax: 517.220.4381
  Email: info@msemp.org

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THANK YOU