Cultural Brokering: An Effective Approach for Engaging Diverse Communities in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Services and Supports

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FORUM PRESENTERS

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FORUM OBJECTIVES

Participants will:
1. Define the concepts of cultural brokering.
2. List the attributes, knowledge and skills of a cultural broker.
3. Describe the role of cultural brokering in the provision of services and supports in IDD programs.
4. List at least two situations from the literature on cultural brokering.
5. Describe best practices in cultural brokering implemented by programs in two states.
6. Reflect on the implications of leading cultural brokering initiatives.
Concept of Cultural Brokering

The act of bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change.


Definition of Cultural Broker

a go-between, one who advocates on behalf of an individual or group

Who is the Cultural Broker?

- liaison
- cultural guide
- mediator
- catalyst for change

Characteristics & Attributes of a Cultural Broker

- trust & respect of the community
- knowledge of values and belief systems of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups about disability
- understanding of traditional & indigenous networks of support within diverse communities
- experience navigating disability, health, behavioral health, education, and other systems

Guiding Principles for Cultural Broker Programs

*Cultural brokering* ...

- honors & respects cultural differences within communities
- is community-driven
- is provided in a safe and non-judgmental manner
- involves service delivery that is accessible & tailored to communities served
- acknowledges reciprocity & transfer of assets between community and service agencies


Key Strategies and Approaches for Engaging Diverse Communities

1️⃣ Learn about communities.
2️⃣ Enter communities respectfully.
3️⃣ Elicit and consider the interests and needs of communities *before* declaring the goals of your program.

Data source: Goode & Jackson, 2010
Key Strategies and Approaches for Engaging Diverse Communities

- Explore areas of mutual interests and benefits.
- Foster relationships and partnerships that are built on mutual trust, reciprocity, and respect.
- Commit to the long-haul.

Data source: Goode & Jackson, 2010

POLLING QUESTION

Currently does your organization or setting have:

Staff whose positions formally includes the role of cultural brokering? Yes  No  Don’t Know

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities serving as cultural brokers? Yes  No  Don’t Know

A formally designated cultural broker program? Yes  No  Don’t Know
A Cultural Brokering Model:
Adapted to Ensure Culturally Competent Supports for Foreign-born Individuals with Disabilities

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Culture Brokering

• In 1998, Mary Ann Jezewski, a nurse and anthropologist at the University of Buffalo, originally developed a theoretical model of culture brokering in the health services.

• This model was then adapted by Paula Sotnik to develop culturally competent supports for foreign-born individuals with disabilities by US rehabilitation systems. Publications and a curriculum were also developed.


http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/culture/monographs/cb.php
Culture Brokering

The act of bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of differing cultural systems to prevent or reduce conflict or produce change.

Culture Broker:

• Functions as a “cultural bridge” between diverse communities and mainstream service systems
• Understands how a diverse community’s culture differs from the mainstream service system’s culture
• Can explain nuances & values of one culture to the other culture.
• Tolerates different views, values & beliefs
Culture Brokering Model


Intervening Conditions

1. Student is from a very traditional Nepali family.
2. University has a Nepali student population.
3. Professor talked to the student regarding reasonable accommodations for students who may have difficulties learning.
4. Student remembers a village member who could not walk and was "transported to another country to beg."
5. Student never heard the term "learning disability."
6. The Institute for Asian American Studies at UMASS is knowledgeable and sensitive to cultural issues of disability. Has many connections to Asian CBO's.

STAGE 1 – Conflict
Following a meeting with his professor, a student is referred to the Student Disability Office and agrees to an appointment. He does not show up for his appointment and does not attend his classes.

STAGE 2
INTERVENTION
• Establishing trust and rapport
• Maintaining connections
• Another Asian student with a disability identified through the Disability Office to serve as a mentor.
• Asian CBO provides culturally responsive disability training to faculty.
• Disability inclusion concepts integrated in Asian courses.
• Professor visits/meets with Nepali community center in family’s neighborhood, initiated by Institute.

STAGE 3
SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES
• Student starts attending classes.
• Student receives assistance with learning accommodations from mentor.
• Nepali community receives info about "disability" and services through community center.
• Faculty receives training on Asian perception of disability from Institute.

or LACK OF RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION

Culture Brokering Model

STAGE 1
Type of Disability
Communication
Age
Culture Sensitivity
Time
Cultural background
Gender

STAGE 2
Power/powerlessness
Economics
Bureaucracy
Politics
Network
Sigma

STAGE 3
Establishing connections between consumers and the rehabilitation system
Maintaining facilitation across systems

LACK OF RESOLUTION
Continued breakdown

STRATEGIES
• Advocating
• Negotiating
• Interacting
• Sensitizing
• Networking
• Innovating
• Mediating

or LACK OF RESOLUTION
Intervening Conditions

Disability
Communication
Age
Culture Sensitivity
Time
Cultural Background
Gender
Education
Power/Powerlessness
Economics
Bureaucracy
Politics
Networks
Stigma

Stage 1

Perception
Perception of the need for brokering
Conflict, breakdowns

Problems
Barriers to access and utilization
Breakdowns in connections

Now being viewed and used as a more proactive strategy
Stage 2

**Intervention**
Establishing trust and rapport
Maintaining connections

**Strategies**
Linking through:
- advocating
- negotiating
- intervening
- sensitizing
- networking
- innovating
- mediating
- educating

Stage 3

**Outcome:**

**Resolution**
Established connections between individuals and the service system
Maintaining facilitation across systems
*OR*

**Lack of Resolution**
Continued breakdown/conflict
Culture Brokering Model


INTERVENING CONDITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Disability</th>
<th>Power/powerlessness</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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STAGE 2 – Intervention

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STAGE 3 – Successful Outcomes

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

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or LACK OF RESOLUTION

LACK OF RESOLUTION

• Continued breakdown
Attributes of a Culture Broker

- A willingness to be a risk taker
- Able to tolerate ambiguous roles
- Comfortable functioning at the margins of various systems (the person’s cultural system and the service delivery system.)
- Good communication skills

Attributes of a Culture Broker

- The ability to network
- Effective problem solving skills
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn and perfect the culture brokering role
Thank You!

For further information, please feel free to contact us:

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For further reading and resources, please see:
www.serviceandinclusion.org/culturebrokering/
www.serviceandinclusion.org
http://InclusiveEvents.org/
https://www.nationalserviceresources.org/expert-sotnik-inclusion
http://www.communityinclusion.org/staff.php?staff_id=38
http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/culture/monographs/cb.php
Implementing Cultural Brokering: Organizational Self-Assessment

A few questions to consider:

• Identify the community you are serving:
  – Who are you currently serving?
  – Are you serving the community effectively?
  – Who are you not serving? Why?

• Identify barriers:
  – What are the barriers experienced by the community you are serving?
  – What are the organizational barriers?

• Identify Goals:
  – What are the goals of the community?
  – What are your organization’s goals?
  – Do you share the same goals as the community that you are serving?

Polling Question

How often does your organization self-assess the efficacy in serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities?

- My organization often performs self-assessments to measure the efficacy of serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- My organization sometimes performs self-assessments to measure the efficacy of serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- My organization rarely performs self-assessments to measure the efficacy of serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- My organization has never performed a self-assessment to measure the efficacy of serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
Implementing Cultural Brokering:
Examples of Tools Used for Organizational Self-Assessment

External Resources:
• Census Data - Examine the demographics of Tennessee.
• Immigrant and Refugee Community Organizations Needs Assessments/Annual Reports - Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)

Internal Resources:
• Impact Survey - an internal reporting tool used to gage the effectiveness and what demographics our programs serve.
• Cultural and Linguistic Readiness Self-Assessment - an internal faculty and staff survey to measure the capacity to serve culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Identifying Cultural Brokers

Cultural Brokers may be any of the following:

• Peer Mentor
• Community Member
• Interpreter
• Program Manager
• Board Member
• Social Worker
• Outreach or Program Educator
• Administrative Leader

Identifying Cultural Brokers

Cultural Brokers may work in a various settings:

- Disability-related community organizations
- Community-based organizations
- Government Organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Schools/Universities


Identifying Cultural Brokers: Attributes and Skills

Attributes:

- Assess and understand their own cultural identities and value systems
- Recognize the values that guide and mold attitudes and behaviors
- Understand and respect a community's traditional beliefs, values, practices and changes that occur through acculturation
- Understand and practice the tenets of effective cross-cultural communication (verbal and non verbal nuances)

Identifying Cultural Brokers: Attributes and Skills

Skills:

• Assessment
• Problem-solving
• Conflict Resolution
• Cross-Cultural Communication


Examples of Cultural Brokering

• Cultural broker as a Liaison
  – Serve as communicators between consumers and the disability service system
  – Knowledgeable in two realms:
    • The values, beliefs, and practices within their own cultural group or community
    • The disability service system that they have learned to navigate either for themselves, their family member, and/or service provider.

Program example:
Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Limited English Proficiency

Examples of Cultural Brokering

- Cultural broker as Cultural Guide
  - Serve as guides for disability service that are in the process of incorporating culturally and linguistically competent principles, values, and practices.

- Program example:
  - LEND Family Trainee


Examples of Cultural Brokering

- Cultural broker as a Mediator
  - Can help to ease the historical and inherent distrust that communities may feel towards the disability service system

- Program example:
  - Hispanic Family Foundation

Examples of Cultural Brokering

- Cultural broker as Change Agents
  - Can initiate transformation within the disability service system creating an inclusive and collaborative environment for service providers, consumers, and families.

- Program example:
  - Multicultural Alliance on Disability

Reference Material


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Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Social Media
Twitter: @Vanderbilt_KC
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VanderbiltKennedyCenter
Cultural Brokers: An Effective Approach for Engaging Diverse Families

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Federation for Children with Special Needs

Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)

• Special Education Center: Parent Training & Information Center, LINK Center

• Family Support Center: Family TIES of Massachusetts, Pathways For Parents

• Health Care Advocacy Center: Family-to-Family Health Information Center @ Mass. Family Voices

• Family and Community Engagement Center: FACET, Recruitment, Training & Support Center for Special Education Surrogate Parents

• Parent-Professional Leadership Center: Advancing Parent-Professional Leadership in Education, MASSPAC
My own journey as a cultural broker

Why Are Cultural Brokers Valuable?

• Different cultural values
• Language barriers
• Different disabilities
• Different perspectives about disability
• Complicated support system, including terminology
• Different service delivery across the lifespan
How FCSN Addresses This Challenge

- Apply the Cultural Broker model by recruiting bilingual/bicultural staff.
- Collaborate with community leaders to:
  - Identify parent leaders;
  - Empower them to take the lead in providing support to parents from their own communities;
  - Help FCSN understand the needs of their communities;
  - Review training materials to ensure that they are culturally and linguistically appropriate; and
  - Encourage parents to participate in research.

What Do Cultural Brokers Do?

Collaborate with a family’s interdisciplinary team
- Family Members and Child
- Medical Team
- Educational Team
- Health Insurance Team
- Social and Recreational Team

Support positive outcomes
- Educate and empower Parents
- Collaborate with Professionals (reciprocal and mutual understanding)
- Increase access to services
What Roles Can Cultural Brokers Serve?

• Liaison
• Cultural guide
• Mediator
• Change agent or Catalyst for Change
• Advocate

Increased Contact For Parents And FCSN

– Cultural brokers help increase the frequency of contact of parents with FCSN.

– Families can address all sorts of information, including education, medical needs, and social services.

– One family may easily interact with FCSN staff more than 100 times over the course of one year.

– One family might interact with 3 or 5 different projects at the Federation, depending on their unique needs.
Number of Diverse Families
Reaching Out To FCSN

The number of parents speaking different languages has increased from 2013 to 2015:

- Chinese: 5 to 78
- Portuguese: 9 to 118
- Spanish: 21 to 778
- Vietnamese: 1 to 73

Story Vignette

- PTI takes a call on behalf of a 17-year-old young man who has been diagnosed with DiGeorge syndrome and developmental delay: His family has been in the US for less than 6 years. Mom speaks no English.
- At an IEP meeting with the school district, the Team discussed transition goals, including skills of independence, employment and travel training for the youth, as well as guardianship when he turns 18.
- School Team suggested starting to teach the youth to take public transportation to increase his skills of independence.
- Mom is very scared and emotionally shut down after the meeting.
Resources

Bridging Cultural Divide in Health Care Settings
http://www.culturalbroker.info/1_overview/index.html

Cultural Competence Standards in Managed Care Mental Health Services: Four Underserved/ Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Groups
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA00-3457/preface.asp

Multicultural Support Manual
http://www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Multicultural_Support1/AAPIManual.pdf

National Center for Cultural Competence
http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/

NCCC Resources on Self-Assessment for Providers
http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/information/providers.html

The Provider's Guide to Quality and Culture
http://erc.msh.org/mainpage.cfm?file=1.0.htm&module=provider&language=English

Resources

• Chua, Amy. Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother. (2011)
• Fadiman, Anne. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down. (1998)
• Kalyanpur, Maya, Ph.D. and Harry, Beth, Ph.D. Cultural Reciprocity in Special Education: Building Family-Professional Relationships. (2005)
Key Strategies and Approaches for Engaging Diverse Communities

To engage communities successfully, organizations must understand:

- their own organizational culture, and the cultures of their personnel;
- the diverse cultures represented within the communities they serve or seek to serve;

Key Strategies and Approaches for Engaging Diverse Communities

To engage communities successfully, organizations must understand:

- the social, political, and economic climates of communities within a cultural context;

- the inherent ability of communities to recognize their own problems, including the well-being of its members, and intervene appropriately on their own behalf.


Cultural Brokering: Implications for Leaders

A leader is:

- someone who shows the way (that is conducts, directs, escorts, guides, pilots, shepherds, ushers, navigates, steers)

- a person who inspires and engenders trust in others

- uses and shares power to achieve a desired outcome or goal

- conscious and aware of the influence of cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors both of his or her own and those of others

- a person of influence

Source: Goode & Jackson, 2010
Leaders use power in alignment with the values & principles of cultural and linguistic competence.

Leaders are cognizant of the power and influence they possess, exercise that power wisely and respectfully, and use it to achieve organizational goals for cultural and linguistic competence.