

# Guiding Principles\*

## for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

In Illinois we share a collective vision that each and every child will have early childhood experiences that promote healthy development and learning that respects, promotes, and builds on their cultural, racial, ethnic, and other family backgrounds and experiences.

### We Believe:

- Every individual is rooted in culture.
- The cultural groups within communities and families are the primary sources for culturally relevant programming.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming requires learning accurate information about the culture of different groups and discarding stereotypes.
- Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice.
- Every individual has the right to maintain his or her own identity while acquiring the skills required to function in our diverse society.
- Effective programs for children who speak languages other than English require continued development of the first language while the acquisition of English is facilitated.
- Culturally relevant programming requires staff who both reflect and are responsive to the community and families served.
- Multicultural programming for children enables children to develop awareness of, respect for, and appreciation of individual cultural differences.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming examines and challenges institutional and personal biases.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming and practices are incorporated in all systems and services and are beneficial to all adults and children.

*\*Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs*



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### We Are Committed to:

- Early childhood professionals who understand that developing a child's first language supports the acquisition of a second language.
- Early childhood classrooms that embrace and include a rich range of diversity, allowing all to learn from it and enhancing all children's healthy development and learning.
- Teacher preparation programs that incorporate the individual and unique needs of each child and family and the experiences they bring to the classroom.
- Culturally responsive and diverse programming that incorporates all types of diversity, including but not limited to: gender, culture, language, ethnicity, ability, race and economic status.
- Policy implementation that reinforces families and communities as children's first teachers.
- Diverse state and local organizations and agencies that are meaningfully responsive to each and every child and family they serve.

### We Will Act to:



- Enable professionals to incorporate the authentic language and culture of the children and families they serve.
- Increase professional development opportunities and resources addressing all types of diversity, including understanding stereotypes and biases.
- Increase all types of diversity content in teacher preparation programs.
- Increase and enhance teacher preparation practicum experiences in diverse settings.
- Promote practices in classrooms and programs that incorporate and address the diverse needs of children.
- Use an "all types of diversity" lens whenever we develop and implement policy, staff our agencies & organizations and evaluate our programming, systems and services.

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