

Understanding the Rural Latino Culture and Values

West Central Integration Collaborative

Integrating the communities of:

ACGC;BOLD;KMS;MACCRAY;MONTEVIDEO;
NL-S;RCW; and WILLMAR

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Goals for Today

- Increase awareness of Cultural Competency with Chicano/Latinos.
- Gain skills required to work with the needs of a changing minority population.



Minnesota's Latino Population

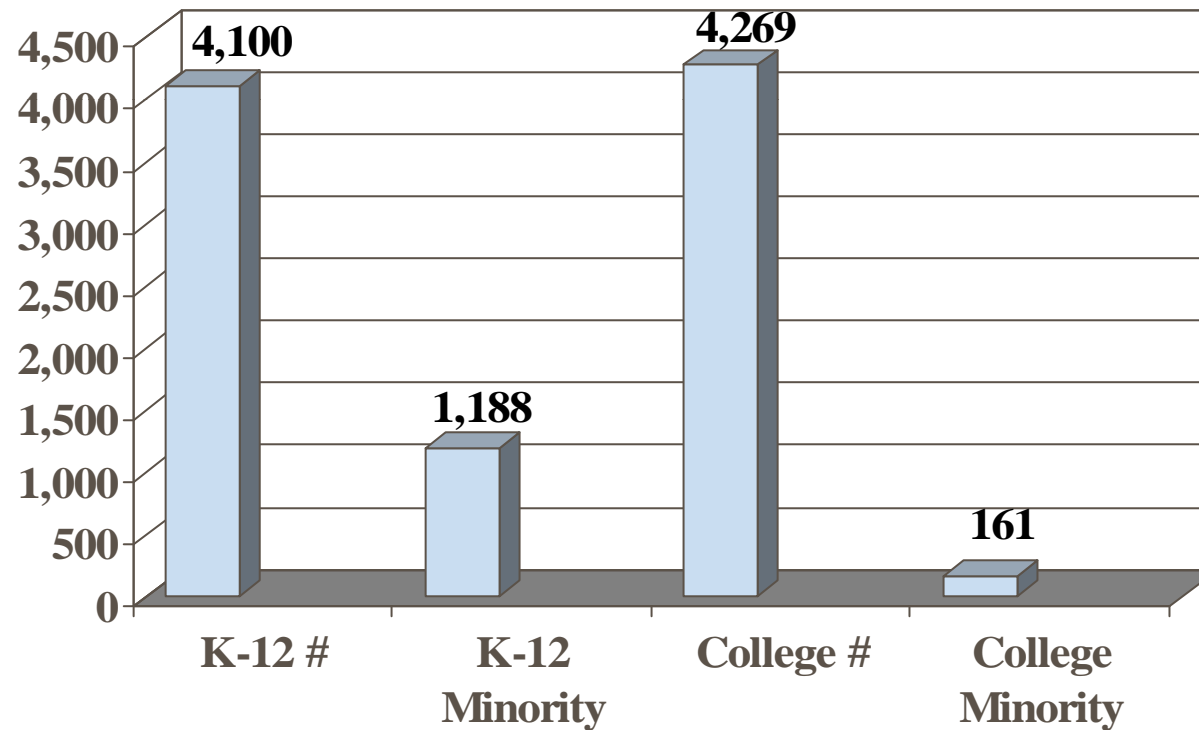
- Top 4 Cities

1. Minneapolis
2. St. Paul
3. Worthington
4. Willmar

- Willmar's total population:
18,351

- Hispanic/Latino (any race): 2,911
- Mexican: 1,809
- Puerto Rican: 29
- Cuban: 18
- Other Hispanic/Latino: 1,058
- Honduran, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Peru

Who We are in Willmar





Today's Immigrants to Minnesota

- 1990 = 6.5% Minnesota's foreign born population;
- 2004 = 13% according to the Center for Rural Policy Development & State Demographic Center.
- Why are immigrants coming to Minnesota?
 - Most are refugees and in search of work and a better life.
 - 2000 Latinos = 3%
 - 2030 Latinos = 6%

Growth in South, West Central, and Suburbs of MN.

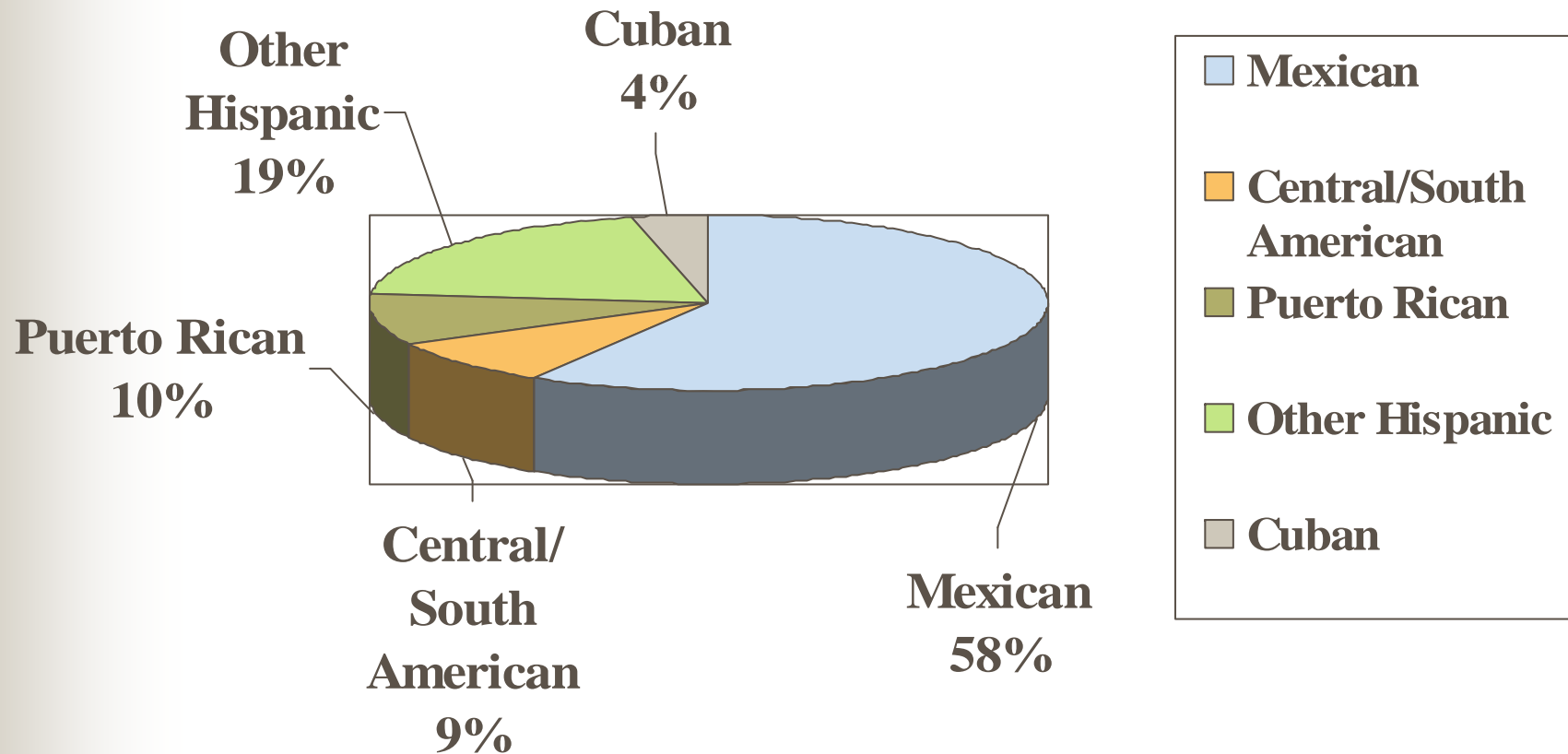


Today's Immigrants

- Approximately 175,000 members of the Chicano/Latino population lived in Minnesota in 2004. (60% are native-born and more than 11,000 are naturalized citizens.)
- Estimated 18,000 to 45,000 undocumented Latinos. (Source: Minneapolis Foundation)
- According to reports from the Hmong and Somali communities, Minnesota is home to the largest Hmong and the largest Somali population in the United States.
- Willmar 26 foreign languages spoken in schools (Source: MN Dept. Education.)

Hispanic Population of the United States by Origin, 2000

Source: Guzman 2001



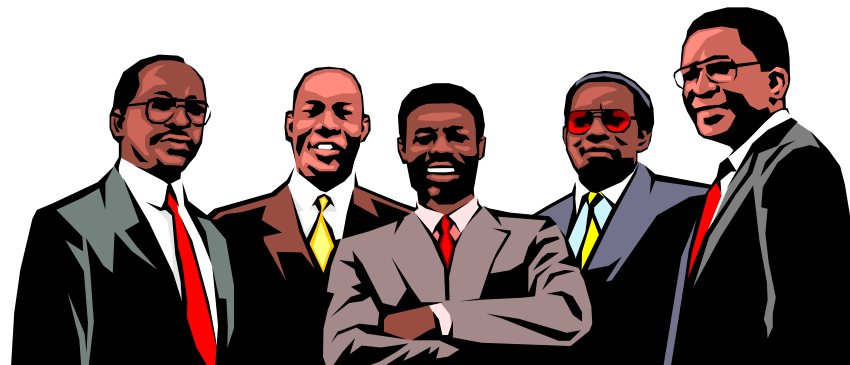
- CULTURE is part of a child's identity. If a child is in an environment that respects their culture, the child's identity is much stronger.



By: Beverly Propes

Cultural Competency is...

- A set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups.





Culture

- Culture includes cognitive systems such as beliefs, attitudes, and values.
- Once conditioned by culture, we tend to become set in our ways; we perceive change as a threat to personal and interpersonal stability and continuity.
- However, change is essential for ongoing adaptation and optimal adjustment to an ever-changing environment.
- While cultural traditions sustain us, we must be open to learning new ways and integrate change into our lives in order to survive in our changing world.



Norms

- Norms are rules regarding appropriate behavior and definition of roles which are the appropriate and expected behaviors of certain people based upon their gender, social position, or area of responsibility in the society.
 - These include:
 - Spiritual or religious systems and institutions.
 - Language which is the principal for communication among group members.
 - The products of life, art and artifacts produced by the group.



Customs

- The variety of customs found throughout the world is staggering.
- The members of one society typically view the customs found elsewhere as weird, cruel, and immoral.
- If we understand the cultural context of a given society, however, their practices generally make sense, which is cultural relativity.



Language

- 93% of our communication is non-verbal.
 - i.e.: Body language
- 7% of our communication is verbal.
- Communication is learned and transmitted through cultural and gender upbringing.
- Verbal and non-verbal communication express a person's feelings, ideas and world view developed in a particular cultural context.



Diversity in Context

<u>Low</u>	<u>Medium-Low</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>High</u>
Northern European	Anglo-American Male	Southern European	Asian
Swiss	Anglo-American Female	Middle European	Hispanic
			American Indian
			African American

Culture may be placed on continuum of low to high-context, based on relative importance of non-verbal communication. High-context cultures place more value on body language and other cues.

Non-verbal Communication

- Much of what is communicated is not verbalized but conveyed through facial expressions and body movements that are specific to each culture. It is important to understand the cross-cultural variations in order to avoid misunderstandings and unintentional offenses.





Non-Verbal Communication

■ **Silence:**

- Some cultures are quite comfortable with long periods of silence while others consider it appropriate to speak before the other person has finished talking. Learn about the appropriate use of pauses or interruptions in the family/students' culture.



Non-Verbal Communication

■ Distance:

- Some cultures are comfortable with close body space, while others are more comfortable at greater distance. In general, Anglo Americans prefer to be about an arm's length away from another person, while Hispanics prefer closer proximity and Asians prefer greater distance. Give your family/students the choice by inviting him or her to “have a seat wherever you like.”



Non-Verbal Communication

■ **Eye Contact:**

- **Anglos:** prefer strong eye contact.
- **Blacks:** Consider eye contact disrespectful
- **Asians and Native Americans:** sign of hostility or impoliteness
- **Hispanics:** consider strong eye contact disrespectful.



Contrasting Cultural Values

■ Collective Cultures

- Being
- Family/Group/Community Emphasis
- Interdependence
- Cooperation
- Person-to-Person Orientation
- Authoritarian Orientation

■ Individualist Cultures

- Doing
- Individual Emphasis, Privacy
- Independence
- Competition
- Person-to-Object Orientation
- Democratic orientation



Acculturation Phases

Traditional	Transitional	Bicultural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear values/beliefs ▪ Clear identity/positive ▪ Religion ▪ Language ▪ Education ▪ Family Role ▪ Strong values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Honor • Family • Pride • Responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased stress due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role conflicts • Changing roles • Language/mix • Identity clash • Culture shock ▪ Values challenged: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride • Honor • Respect • Family • Responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop strong dual identity ▪ Adapting values from native culture to host culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Economic Level • Honor • Family • Food • Customs • Beliefs



Transitional Phase

- **Family**: My primary family may be complete, however, my extended family may be very far away.
- **Responsibility**: YOUTH: Why do I have so much responsibility if I am supposed to be a child?
- **Guilt/Loss**: I feel guilty and am full of anxiety because I don't know how to fit in both cultures.
- **Confusion**: Who do I please?

Community?	School?	Myself?
Parents?	Peers?	Co-workers?



Bicultural Phase

- **Economic Level**: Higher education = better pay and better/safer work environment.
- **Food**: Learn to appreciate a large variety of food.
- **Customs**: Keep the ones you feel are more important.
- **Music**: Variety—Rock, Country, Salsa, Classical, etc.
- **Beliefs**: Keep the traditional ones and create new ones.



Most Confusing Stage

- Transitional Phase
 - Increased stress due to:
 - Changing Roles—*Interdependence vs. independent
 - Family Foundation
 1. Single-parent household
 2. No extended family
 3. Family is in transition
 - Identity Clash
 - Who am I in this school environment?
 - Who are my teachers? Do they know my cultural background? Should I (the student) share my cultural background? I also want to be like the rest of the students—Why am I different?



Reasons Latinos Miss School

- **Economic-** High School drop-outs
- **Child care**—take care of siblings (no child care accepted outside of the family)
- **Language**—student interprets for adults
- **Lack of Acceptance** in majority culture
- **Culture shock**—Don't fit in because they are not from the majority culture.



Culture Shock

- What is culture shock?
 - I don't hear or see myself in this community, therefore my values are challenged.
- Challenged values:
 - Pride in Culture
 - Honoring Family
 - Respect



Latino Youth Protective Factors

- Have strong connection with their families.
- Have clear cultural values.
- Have a strong connection with their school.
- Experience less prejudice in school and community.
- Ability to integrate a healthy attitude and balance of both Latino and American culture beliefs and values.



More Protective Factors

- No involvement in gang violence
- Strong spirituality/faith/religion
- Delaying sexual involvement
- Good academic experience
- Positive teacher/student relationships
 - A feeling of ultimate acceptance in both cultures and society in general



Bicultural Continuum

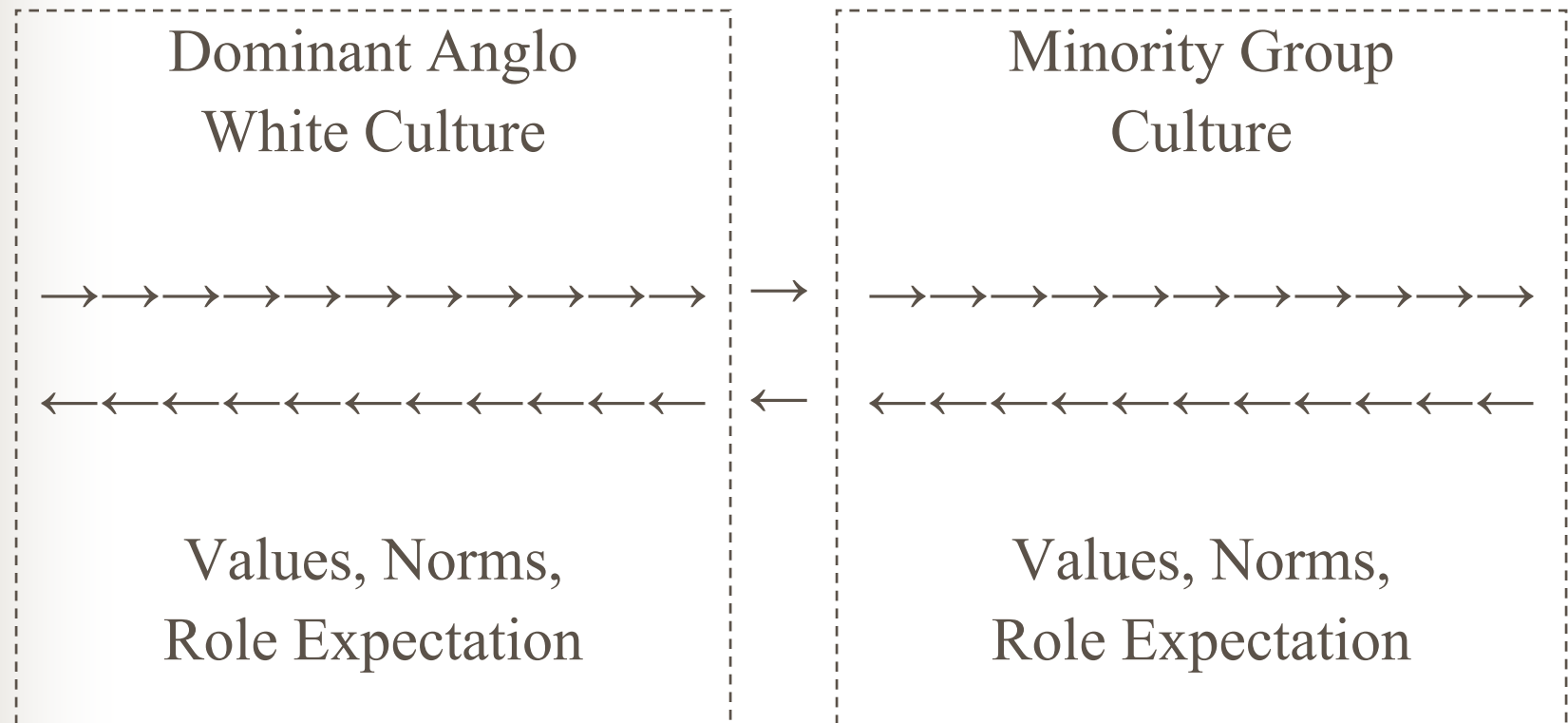
- Culture is defined as a relatively unified set of shared values, ideas, beliefs, and standards of action held by an identified people; numerous cultural groups can be an identified people and numerous groups can be identified in this country.
- The dominant culture integrated the values and norms of European immigrant groups as each was encouraged to drop its language and become assimilated by the majority.



Bicultural Continuum

- Minority groups with recognizable physical characteristics have also been pushed to accept the dominant culture as their own; yet have also been responded to as separate and inferior groups and thus not allowed to participate fully in it.
- Due to this exclusion and the desire on the part of some to retain their original culture, distinct groups exist.
 - Retention of one's culture of origin is desirable.
 - The perspective of biculturalism encourages acceptance of difference and the capacity to work with it.

Bicultural Continuum Relationship



Movement across the continuum in either direction indicates exposure to another cultural system and generally occurs as one interacts with members of the other group.



Under and Over Acculturation in Bicultural Families

- Individuals living in a bicultural environment/context and do not interact with dominant culture will tend to UNDER-ACCULTURATE.
- Individuals who do not develop the necessary skills to interact within the Latino culture fail to acquire the flexibility necessary to understand and cope with their bicultural reality. OVER-ACCULTURATE



Hypothetical Situations: Case 1

An in-home worker has been given a referral to start mental health services for a Hispanic client (Carlos) who is 14 years old. The worker gathers his papers and heads out to the family's home. Upon knocking on the door, the worker notices a Latino male about 35 years old. The worker proceeds and asks if he is Mr. Ramirez, Carlo's father? He responds "no English" and rattles something that the worker thinks is Spanish.

What is likely to be Mr. Ramirez's level of acculturation?
Why?

What might be his attitude toward mental health workers?



Case 2

A Hispanic client agrees to receive the services of a nutrition specialist as part of her family's plan of care. The Hispanic woman is 40 years old and is considered obese by her medical doctor. The Hispanic woman is non-English speaking and will have to count on her oldest daughter (17) to interpret for her when the lessons start and the nutritionist visits the family on a bi-weekly basis and demonstrates how to cook healthy meals by preparing them. The Hispanic client is very thankful that this lady comes over with all the groceries and cooks all these wonderful American dishes with them at her house. The family was very thankful to be receiving this assistance.

What could the nutritionist done different?

What is likely to be the mother's level of acculturation?

Why?

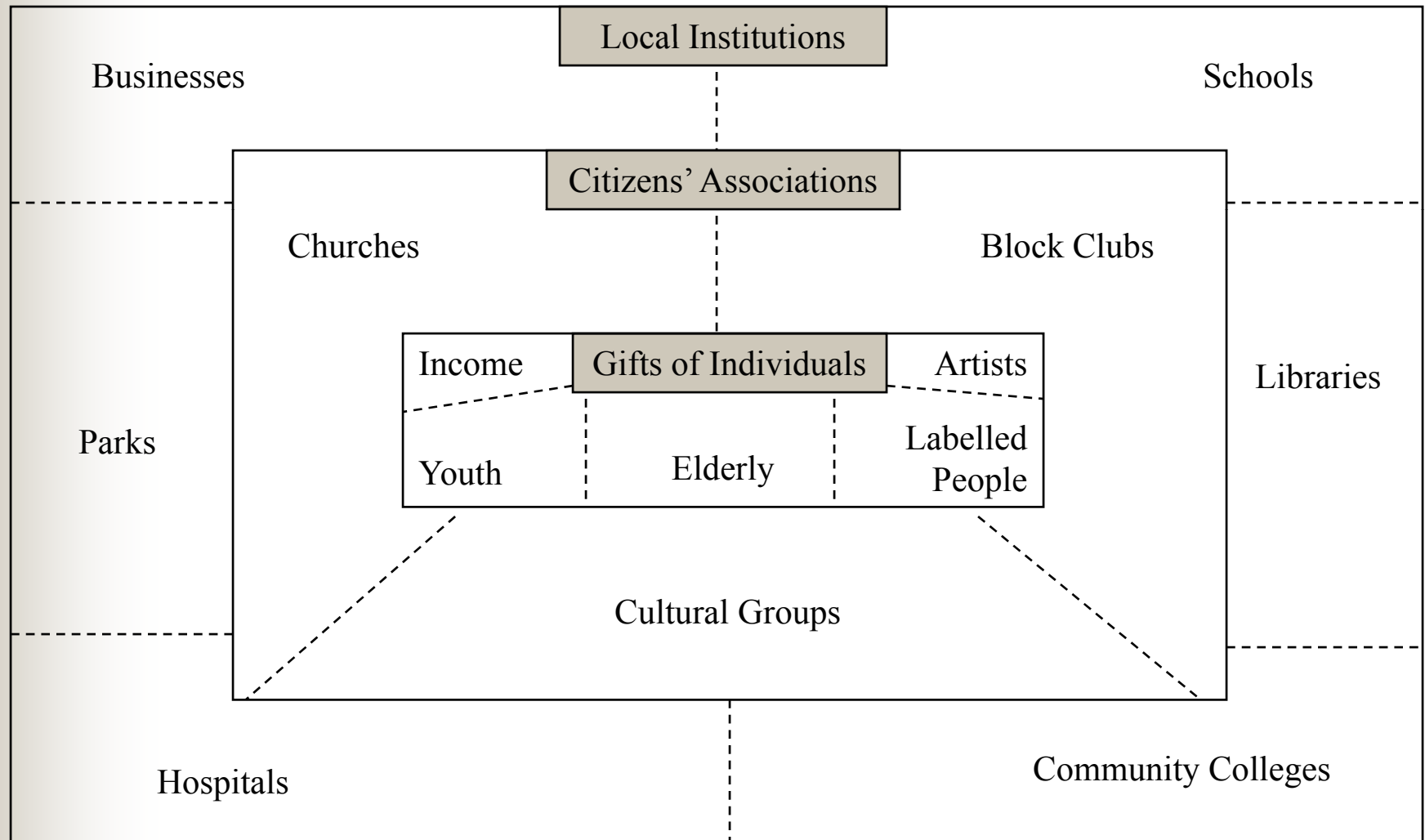
What might be her attitude toward the nutritionist?



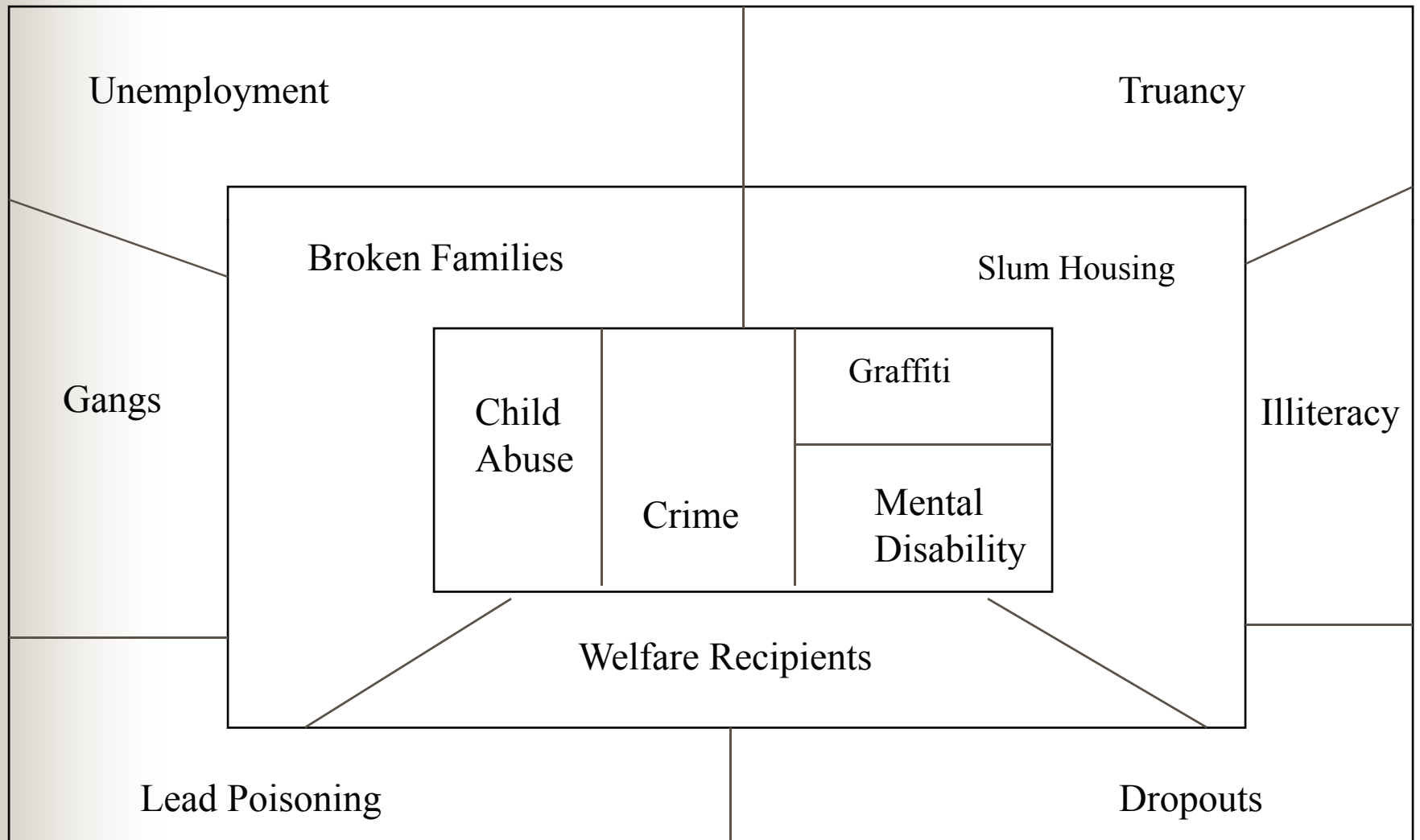
School Procedures: Cultural Comparison

	In (<u>native country</u>)	In the U.S
1. What do parents do when a child is sick and can't go to school?		
2. What happens when a child gets sick in school?		
3. Do children go on field trips? Where? Do parents sign permission forms?		
4. Do parents visit their children's schools? When? Why?		
5. Do schools ever close because of bad weather?		

Community Assets Map



Neighborhood Needs Map





Principles for Working with People From Different Cultures

- **Assess, don't assume.** Assess the influence of each person's cultural background on the person's behavior specific to school issues. Don't assume that this family/student will act the same as the last family/student you interacted with from the same cultural/ethnic group.
- **See the individual—not a type of person.** Consider that the family/student is/are persons with unique personal experiences in the educational care system, and then see the family/students as members of a specific cultural/ethnic group.
- **Confirm** the “facts, hunches, information” that you may have about a cultural/ethnic group.



More Principles

- **Listen to the family/student's perspective and elicit** from the family/student what their cultural traditions, practices or explanations should be considered.
- **Consider that all school/family/student interactions are bicultural** at least:
 - The educational culture and the lay culture.
 - Most school/family/student interactions are multicultural.
- **Identify your own attitudes** about working with staff and with families and students' whose backgrounds differ from your background.



More Principles

- **Identify the family/student's cultural influenced practices**, strengths, and/or beliefs that you can include or support in what will be a mutually agreed upon education plan.
- **Recognize that a family's cultural background** will influence educational – related behaviors as will previous educational experiences, level of education, degree of acculturation, speaking knowledge of English and socioeconomic status.



How does one become Culturally Competent?

- By:
 - Gaining self-awareness and self-acceptance of one's own culture and identify development.
 - Working with knowledgeable persons of and from the community. Ask for their input when developing focused interventions, communication, and other supports
 - Creating, including, and making room for many diverse and unfamiliar resources.