

# Module 3:

## Increasing Cultural Awareness and Building Community Support

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### Objectives

1. To understand the continuum of cultural awareness and development of cultural responsiveness.
2. To gain self-awareness, getting past stereotypes and biases.
3. To be aware of the diversity of Native American communities and issues affecting Native young people in their historical and community contexts.
4. To appreciate Native American ethnic and cultural identity development.
5. To address oppression and trauma with Native American young people.
6. To build support for Native American young people.

### Scenario for Team Discussion

#### Communication Breakdown in Team Planning ~ Karen

Karen, a young Native American woman aged 17 was doing well in high school, despite being diagnosed with an anxiety disorder and depression. She was living with her grandmother who had some health problems and needed help. However, there was conflict between Karen and her grandmother linked to the grandmother's demands. Karen had support from a Native American peer support provider from a local Native American serving community center. She was also working with a mental health counselor and the transition provider at her high school, both of whom were White. There was a team-planning meeting with Karen, her grandmother, and the three service providers focused on her transition plan. The meeting went very well. Karen and her peer supporter had planned and developed goals and steps, and shared the progress she had made. At the end, the counselor unexpectedly made a very negative remark about Karen's relationship with her grandmother. The grandmother expressed anger that Karen did not help her more. Karen got upset and shut down. The peer supporter was there as an ally but she was inexperienced and did not know what to say. The meeting ended with nothing being decided and Karen refusing to speak to anyone.

## Questions for Team Discussion

After reading and thinking about the scenario above, engage in a staff discussion of the following questions:

1. If you had been the peer support provider, what would you have done in this situation?
2. What assumptions or biases are you aware of in yourself as you think about this scenario?
3. What (if anything) would you say to the counselor?
4. How would you respond to Karen's distress?
5. What would you do next?
6. If you could re-play this meeting, what would you do differently?

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## Debriefing

After discussing the scenario, it may be useful to reflect on what staff members learned from each other, using the following questions to guide the conversation:

1. What ideas for facilitating a positive discussion seem to be most appropriate?
2. How have you responded in conflict situations with people from different racial/ethnic identities?
3. How have you experienced this type of conflict in your own family or community and how does this affect your responses with the young adults you work with?
4. Where are the areas of agreement and disagreement among team members?
5. In what ways did team members' responses contribute to changes in your own thoughts about how to respond in a situation like this?

### Training Video



#### Increasing Cultural Awareness



View the video at YouTube:  
<https://youtu.be/TrCS81Suzcg>

## Video Discussion Questions

In this video clip, the young woman talks about her exploration of her cultural identity through learning about her family's African American and Native American cultural roots, and connecting with a culturally specific youth-serving organization. After viewing the video segment, discuss the following questions:

1. Why is it important for her recovery to look at the complex cultural heritage that is part of her life?
2. How does she see her family as both supportive and as problematic?
3. What is the added support she can receive from a culturally-specific youth development organization?
4. How would you approach this scenario if you don't share the same cultural or racial background? Regardless of your background, how do you think you could support this young person? Conversely, what challenges do you think you would encounter?
5. What questions might you ask this young woman about if you were working with her on examining her life goals?

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## Module 3 Discussion Questions

Here we offer questions to guide discussion of how module 3 content could be applied in your team's work in the local area and with the young people you serve:

1. What is your cultural identity? How important was your cultural identity to your family and/or community growing up? What are the ways in which your cultural identity combines with your other characteristics (such as age, gender, race, education) to shape the way you relate to other people?
2. How is your sense of cultural identity helpful in your work with Native American youth and young adults and/or other youth whose racial/ethnic/cultural identity is different from yours? Can you give an example?
3. What have you done to prepare yourself to provide culturally responsive services to Native American youth and/or other youth whose background is different from yours? Can you give an example of how you prepared to work with a specific Native youth?
4. How have you addressed trauma and oppression in your work with Native youth?
5. How can you work with Native American youth to help them to develop a sense of positive ethnic and cultural identity? Give an example of what you did to support young persons in their cultural identity development.
6. What have you done to connect youth with their cultural community?