Module 4:

Increasing Resilience and Family Support

Objectives

1. To be aware of the risks, resilience, and protective factors in African American and Black communities.
2. To understand the processes of racial identity development and racial socialization.
3. To appreciate the diversity of African American and Black young people and their families and mental health disparities.
4. To address oppression and trauma with African American and Black youth.
5. To gain skills for increasing youth resilience.
6. To build support for African American and Black young people and their families.

Scenario

Working with Peer Support Providers to Bridge Cultural Difference ~ Tracey and Anna

Tracey is a 16-year-old African American young woman living with her grandparents in kinship foster care. Tracey is part of a large and very close extended family. There was conflict with her grandparents because Tracey was staying out late and wanting to bring friends to their home. The grandparents kicked her out several times because she wasn't following their rules. When this happened, she would stay with other family members or sneak back into the house later to sleep in her own room. At times she was homeless, moving from family member to family member.

Tracey was involved in a peer support project with a focus on preparing youth for the transition to adulthood, including attending college, and was working with a peer support provider, Anna. Coming from an Irish American background, Anna had grown up in a family where family members avoided each other when there was conflict and she found it hard to understand Tracey's choice to keep returning to her grandparents and arguing with them. There was cultural tension because Anna could not understand why Tracey kept going back to the grandparents' home after a conflict. Anna reported to the team her frustration with trying to help Tracey and disagreeing with her choices.

Questions for "Tracey and Anna" Scenario

After reading and thinking about the scenario above, think about the following questions:

1. Why is Anna frustrated?

2. How do your own cultural background, experiences, and attitudes affect your responses?

3. As a colleague, how would you respond to Anna's frustration?

4. What approach might you suggest in her work with Tracey?

5. What resources or supports might you suggest that Anna exploreto assist with her work with Tracey?

6. If you work as a member of a team, how does the team support staff members who are experiencing challenges in their work related to cultural difference? How do you support other team members who encounter cultural tensions?

7. What is your racial/ethnic/cultural background? How has this shaped your beliefs and how do your beliefs affect how you do your work? How have your beliefs interfered with your work with young people and how can you avoid that?

———

Module 4 Questions

Here we offer questions to guide your examination of how module 4 content could be applied in your work with young people:

1. What do you see as the benefits for African American youth and families of having a service provider that understands their racial/cultural experience?

2. What have you done to prepare yourself for working effectively with African American youth and families? How have your perceptions of African American youth and families changed as a result of your work?

3. What are the risk and protective factors affecting the African American youth you have worked with? Give an example of how you have worked with a youth to reduce the impact of risk factors and increase protective factors.

4. What have you done to strengthen family and community support for an African American youth? Can you think of an example?

5. How have you addressed oppression and/or trauma with an African American youth? Think of an example of what you did that was most helpful.

6. How has your cultural identity intersected with your other personal characteristics (such as race, gender, age, educational level) to shape the ways you relate to other people?

7. This module describes how taking account of intersectionality leads to exploring how young people emphasize certain aspects of their identity (or choose not to) in each specific situation. How do you define intersectionality? How do you address intersectionality in your work?