

## FAMILY ORIENTATION

Many culturally & linguistically diverse families are supportive of their children attending formal childcare. Some however have concerns that may be based on some of the following:

- Unfamiliarity with the concept of care outside the family.
- Reluctance to place their children with strangers.
- Concerns over their own and their children's ability to speak English.
- Anxiety over the potential loss of language, religion and moral values.
- Anxiety about an emphasis on independence and the potential weakening of the value their culture places on interdependence.
- Worry over the costs of care.
- Health and safety concerns.

A comprehensive family orientation program may alleviate many of these concerns. Some ideas for family orientation:

- Arrange a suitable time for the family and you to meet. Be clear about the amount of time that may be needed.
- It is recommended that an interpreter be engaged for all formal interviews or when family information is recorded (e.g. enrolment forms). It is important that the parent is aware when an interpreter will be involved.
- Invite the parent to bring a trusted friend/relative as a support person. Having a support person does not negate the need for an interpreter, nor does an interpreter exclude the option of bringing a support person.
- Offer to provide information in the parent's home language where possible.
- Be clear to the parent/parents that they are the expert in their child's life.
- Explain a typical daily routine in the centre and ask the parents can they foresee any difficulties that may need to be negotiated.
- Discuss the types of activities the child might be doing during the day and talk about appropriate clothes and footwear.
- Be aware that not all parents can read or write in their home language.
- Find out a little about the family's culture beforehand, families may be more willing to share information if they realize you are genuinely interested. But remember, no two families are the same, we can't assume that all people from the same cultural background will have the same values, beliefs and lifestyles.
- Explain you are hopeful that the parents will participate in helping the service learn more about their culture.
- Encourage the parent/parents to visit with their child/children on several occasions before leaving the child for the first time.
- Encourage parents to explain the events of the day to their child in their own language.
- Suggest to parents that they make the first few occasions when children are left at the centre/service brief.
- Make sure parents say goodbye when leaving and tell the child when they will return.
- Ensure that you speak to the parents and give regular feedback. Ask their opinion on how their child is progressing. Ask is there anything that is causing concern?

## CHILD & FAMILY PROFILE

Develop an initial profile for the child/family. Questions to think about asking include:

- Religious and dietary practices and taboos (include dates for special celebrations).
- Find out about the home language... is that the only language written, spoken & read?
- Are there phrases/words you can learn that will be of benefit to welcoming the child/children?
- Ask about any special clothing or jewellery that the child may wear?
- Are they able to provide any books, music, posters etc that may help their child feel more comfortable and welcome?
- Ask about sleeping arrangements, toileting and dressing.
- Are there non verbal or verbal clues that the child will give when they are anxious or upset?
- Ask how the parents settle their child/children when they are anxious or upset?
- Ask about special interests of the child and what they enjoy doing?
- Ask what they believe the child may have difficulty doing.

## BILINGUALISM

Strategies Which Promote Bilingualism

- Respect and support the home language/s of the children.
- Encourage parents to read to children in their home language.
- Incorporate key words and phrases in home languages.
- Provide opportunities for children to interact nonverbally if they are not ready to speak.
- Monitor the environment regularly to ensure that children are stimulated by the activities offered.
- Encourage children to work with others collaborating on projects.
- Provide opportunities for children who speak the same language to play together.
- Use songs, books and puzzles etc that represent the cultural diversity of the centre.
- Ask parents to provide tapes, CDs of stories and music in home languages.
- Ensure that written and pictorial displays reflect cultural diversity.
- Use active listening techniques such as repeating key words.
- Encourage other children to be sensitive to the needs of children learning English.
- Before assuming a child has a language delay, try to discover if the child can speak in their own language.

Research has shown that the first 6 years are as critical for language development as for all other development. It is essential that children have the opportunity to continue developing the home language as it has been shown that a strong foundation in the first language provides the basis for the learning of English as a second language.

## MYTHS ABOUT FAMILIES FROM CALD BACKGROUNDS

**Myth 1: CALD families are hesitant about participating in early childhood services.**

**Finding:** Many CALD families would like to participate in early childhood services. Our research has shown that most families are eager to take part in their early childhood service, but they may be unclear about how to do this. Some CALD families believe they are not welcome participants in the service and some families reported that they lacked the confidence to offer their skills to the service. When families understood their role and the expectations of the early childhood service, CALD families were very pleased to share their skills, knowledge base and time with the service.

**Myth 2: Translating information into home language is the most effective means for communicating with families from CALD backgrounds.**

**Finding:** Translations are welcome but some caution is advised. Research showed the following obstacles with the use of officially translated documents for circulation to CALD families. Even with nationally accredited translations, it is sometimes difficult to develop documents with the correct tone and wording for families. A trusted individual who knows the language should check all translated documents before they are handed out to families. Some homespeak languages are not the same language which are used for reading and writing. Services should check with families to find out what language they read or write. Some CALD families actually prefer to receive written information in English. This should be checked before handing out translated documents.

**Myth 3: Families from CALD backgrounds tend to have a lot of support from extended families and/or from their communities.**

**Finding:** Many CALD families do not have support from relatives and/or close friends. Many CALD families reported that extended family support was not available. Many were in Australia without relatives or close friends. Families also reported that it was common for one family member to be working very long hours while the "stay at home" family member (usually the mother) was often left to make decisions about their children with little input or opportunity for discussion. ("A sense of belonging..." Hayden, De Gioia, Hadley 2004)

# Central Coast Children's Services

## CREATING A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE SERVICE

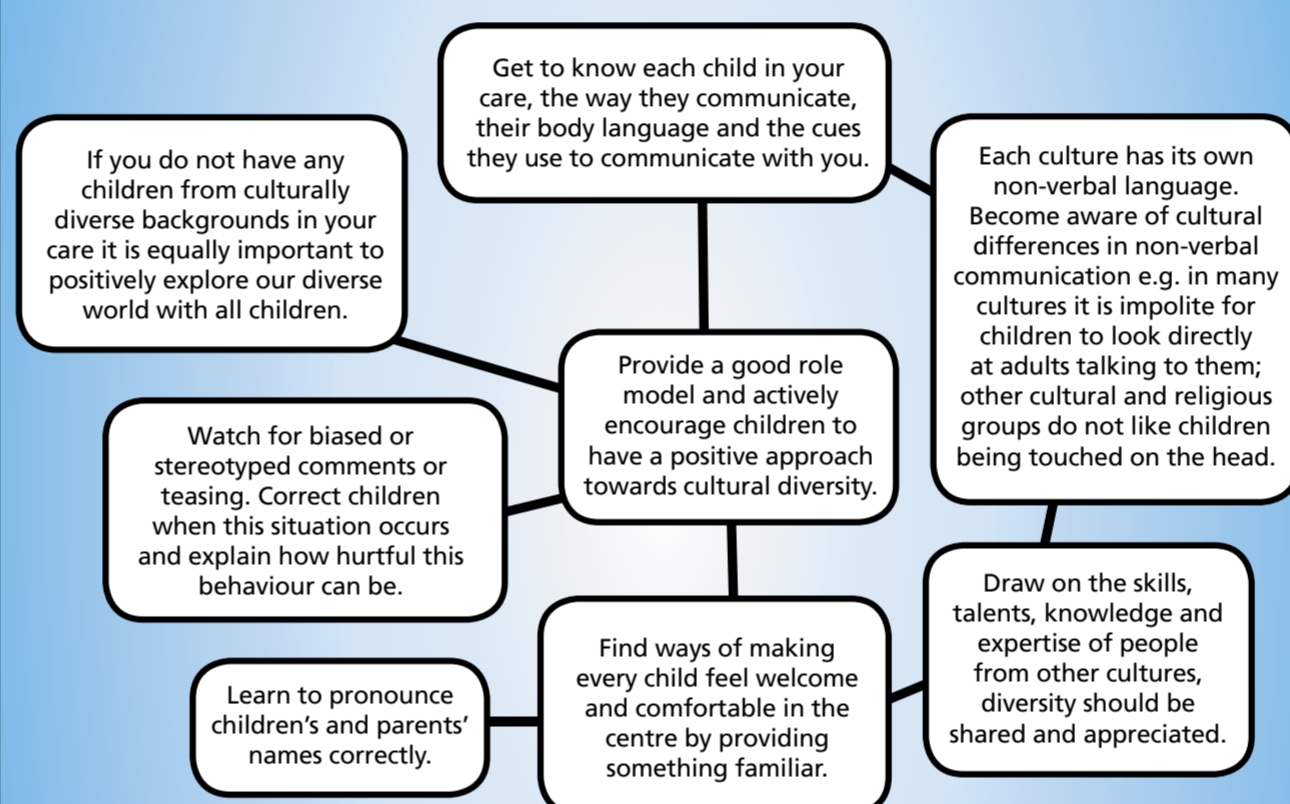
"Inclusion in child care services reflects the acceptance in society of the principles of social justice - that children of all ability levels and cultural and ethnic backgrounds have the same intrinsic value and are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. Therefore, it is important that all people in children's services help to provide positive experiences and promote positive attitudes in children about ethnicity, race, skin colour, gender and ability in relation to self and others. Through such efforts child care workers are helping to promote a fair and just society for all." (PlayC.A.R.E Childcare Access Resource & Equity Program QLD)

### Strategies for Creating a Culturally Inclusive Service

Think of the impression your service is making? Does it reflect the service's commitment to cultural diversity? Some ideas:

#### A Respectful Atmosphere

"All children growing up in Australia today need to be given valid images of Australian society as a whole. It could be argued that children in a service where cultural backgrounds are all similar are in the greatest need of raised awareness of the variety of Australian people". (Sebastian-Nickell and Milne, 1992)



### Indoor Environment

- How about displaying greetings in other languages... especially community languages
- Display interesting books about aspects of other cultures (e.g. books about traditional art & craft that may reflect some of the centre's activities)
- Use some colourful cushions from around the world for parents' seating areas and children's areas
- Include cultural equipment in play (e.g. musical instruments, baskets, cooking utensils... explain their origin and how they are used)
- Parent Pockets (parent notes and messages) - why not make them out of fabrics that depict other cultures patterns, colours and images?

### Outdoor Environment

- Datner wrote: "A playground should be like a small scale replica of the world". (Datner in Greenman 1988) If the outdoor environment is a small scale replica of the world, it follows to make the environment multicultural, just as the world really is! Some ideas:
- Consider that in some cultures some compass directions are sacred or preferred
  - Some cultures have no word for privacy and because people don't like to be alone there is no partitioning of space.
  - Provide a space that is full of things. Eg. Equipment, plants and people
  - Provide space that is empty
  - Provide public and private spaces
  - Exchange items you have always used for an equivalent from another culture (e.g. a shovel in the sandpit may be replaced by a basket)
  - Plan some activities/games that have origins in other cultures. Explain the activity and its cultural origin to the children.

## HELLO IN LANGUAGES AROUND THE WORLD

Hindi	hello	na ma ste
Italian	hello	ciao (chow)
German	hello	guten tag or hallo
Arabic	hello	mar h.a ban (mer hhuuh bun)
Mandarin	hello	ni haw (knee-how)
Greek	hello	kalimera or ya soo
Malay	hello	apa khabar
Dutch	hello	hallo (ha-loh)
Filipino	hello	kamusta (kah mus tah)
Indonesian	hello	selamat pagi (se-LA-maht Pa-ge)
Spanish	hello	hola ola (OH - la)

"HELLO"

## COUNT IN LANGUAGES AROUND THE WORLD

Isizulu	One	kunye	kun-ye ('u' sound as in put & 'e' as in pet)
Indonesian	Two	dua	doowa ('oo' as in moon & 'a' as in part)
Spanish	Three	tres	tress (rhymes with dress, but roll the 'r' sound a bit)
Thai	Four	si	see
Polish	Five	piec	pyench ('p' as in pet, "yench" rhymes with bench)
Japanese	Six	roku	looco ('o' as in hoe & 'oo' as in moo)
Mandarin	Seven	qi	chee ('ch' as in choke & 'ee' as in feet)
Hindi	Eight	ath	art
Russian	Nine	devyat	devet (both 'e's as in pet with stress on de)
Burmese	Ten	tiq 's'eh	de sair

# RESOURCES

Who should I contact for a translator/interpreter?

- TIS Translating & Interpreting Service..... 131 450  
..... 1300 655 080  
(to book in advance)
- Community Relations Commission - Multicultural ..... 1300 651 500
- Multicultural Health Care Interpreter Service..... 1800 674 994

Who should I contact for a parent who would like English Classes?

- TAFE Wyong ..... 4350 2324
- TAFE Gosford..... 4348 2290
- Central Coast Community College ..... 4348 4336
- Adult Migrant English Program (Hornsby)..... 9476 2500

Can I get some help to include a child from an Indigenous or CALD background?

- KU Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) Gosford/Wyong ..... 4340 5300
- Commonwealth Funded Services are eligible to get help from a Bicultural Support Worker through the Bicultural Support Pool (Children Services Central) ..... 1800 157 818 Or
- State Funded Services are eligible for support through the Supporting Children with Additional Needs Scheme (SCAN) ..... 4334 7902
- Department of Education & Training ..... 4348 9100

Is there a Multicultural service at Centrelink?

- Centrelink Multicultural Office ..... 4328 6319  
..... or 131 202

A parent needs to find out more about their visa and other immigration requirements, who can they contact?

- Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs..... 131 881

I've got a few questions and I need someone to point me in the right direction - who could I call?

- The Central Coast Multicultural Project ..... 4323 7483
- Ethnic Communities Council of Newcastle & Hunter ..... 4929 5880
- Central Coast Multi-Cultural Children's Resource Centre .. 4365 1101
- Ethnic Child Care, Family and Community Services..... 9569 1288
- Transcultural Mental Health ..... 9840 3800
- STARTTS ..... 9794 1900  
(Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors)
- Newcastle Migrant Resource Centre..... 4969 3399
- National Auslan Interpreter Booking Service (NABS)  
..... TTY 1800 246 948  
..... Voice 1800 246 945

## EXCELLENT INFORMATION IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

For articles and resources including information about taboos and traditions and written material in different languages try:

- Free Kindergarten Association..... www.fka.com.au

For health publications including many on child & family health - translated in over 15 community languages:

- NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service  
..... www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

For articles and online services including Cultural Profiles and purchasing resources:

- Diversity in Child Care Queensland  
..... www.sttar.org or www.diversity.net.au

For many articles including tips for talking to children about Cultural Diversity:

- Ethnic Child Care Resource Unit  
..... www.multicultural.online.wa.gov.au/eccru

For Cultural Information including information on multicultural programming for children's services:

- Inclusive Directions ..... www.divdir.asn.au
- Early Childhood Australia (search:diversity)  
..... www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

For information on refugees and asylum seekers:

- Dept. of Immigration and Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs  
..... www.immi.gov.au
- Refugee Council of Australia ..... www.refugeecouncil.org.au

For resources and teaching aides around diversity and inclusion:

- Bilingual child ..... www.upabebe.com
- Windmill Education ..... www.windmill.net.au
- Modern Teaching Aides ..... www.teaching.com.au
- On line books ..... www.gowrie-melbourne.com.au
- Educational Experience ..... www.edex.com.au
- Judius Kindergarten Catalogues ..... www.judius.com.au