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Culturally Responsive Family Engagement

What is Culture?



Culture:

- The way we live
- Values, mores, customs
- Behavioral expectations
- Belief Systems
- Communication styles
- Traditions that are shared and passed between generations



Culture impacts the way children:

- Learn
- Cope
- Solve problems
- Communicate

Viewing the child through this cultural context provides an understanding of the child and the factors that influence behaviors

(Gay, Geneva 2010. Culturally Responsive Teaching)



**Hey girl and then I told him,
is you crazy?**

Elements: Of Culture



We must be aware of our own cultural framework and context

Kozleski, (2010). Culturally Responsive Teaching Matters! Equity Alliance

Culture: Everyone has one!

- We must recognize the culture of we bring with us.
- White people must also recognize they have a culture.
- We must avoid “othering” those whose culture is different from ours so that they are not viewed as outsiders.



The Cultural Background We Bring With Us:



Kozleski, Elizabeth (2010). Culturally Responsive Teaching Matters! Equity Alliance

The Branch/Leaves: What we see:

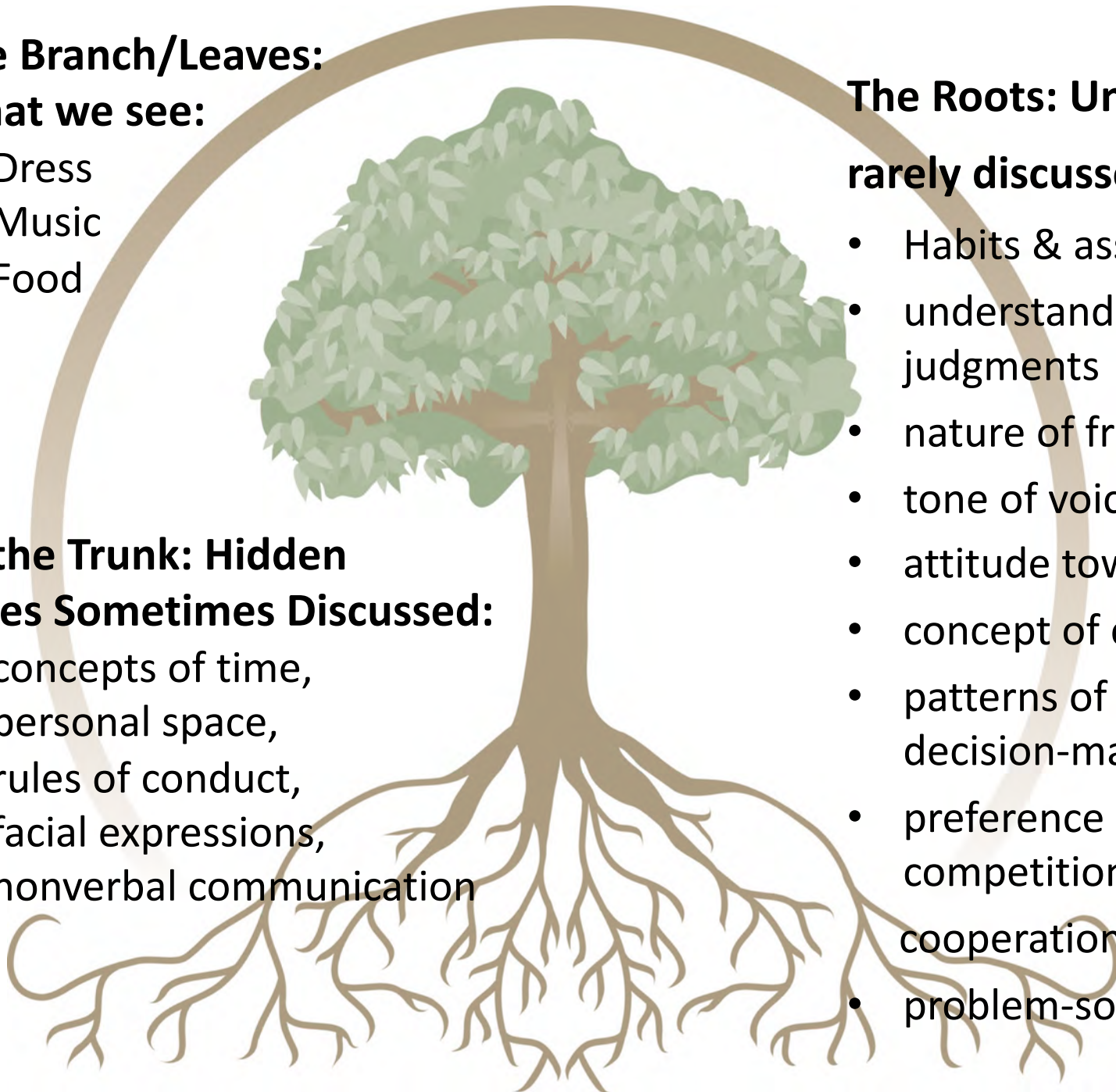
- Dress
- Music
- Food

At the Trunk: Hidden Rules Sometimes Discussed:

- concepts of time,
- personal space,
- rules of conduct,
- facial expressions,
- nonverbal communication

The Roots: Unseen and rarely discussed:

- Habits & assumptions,
- understandings, values, judgments
- nature of friendships,
- tone of voice,
- attitude toward elders,
- concept of cleanliness,
- patterns of group decision-making,
- preference for competition or cooperation,
- problem-solving

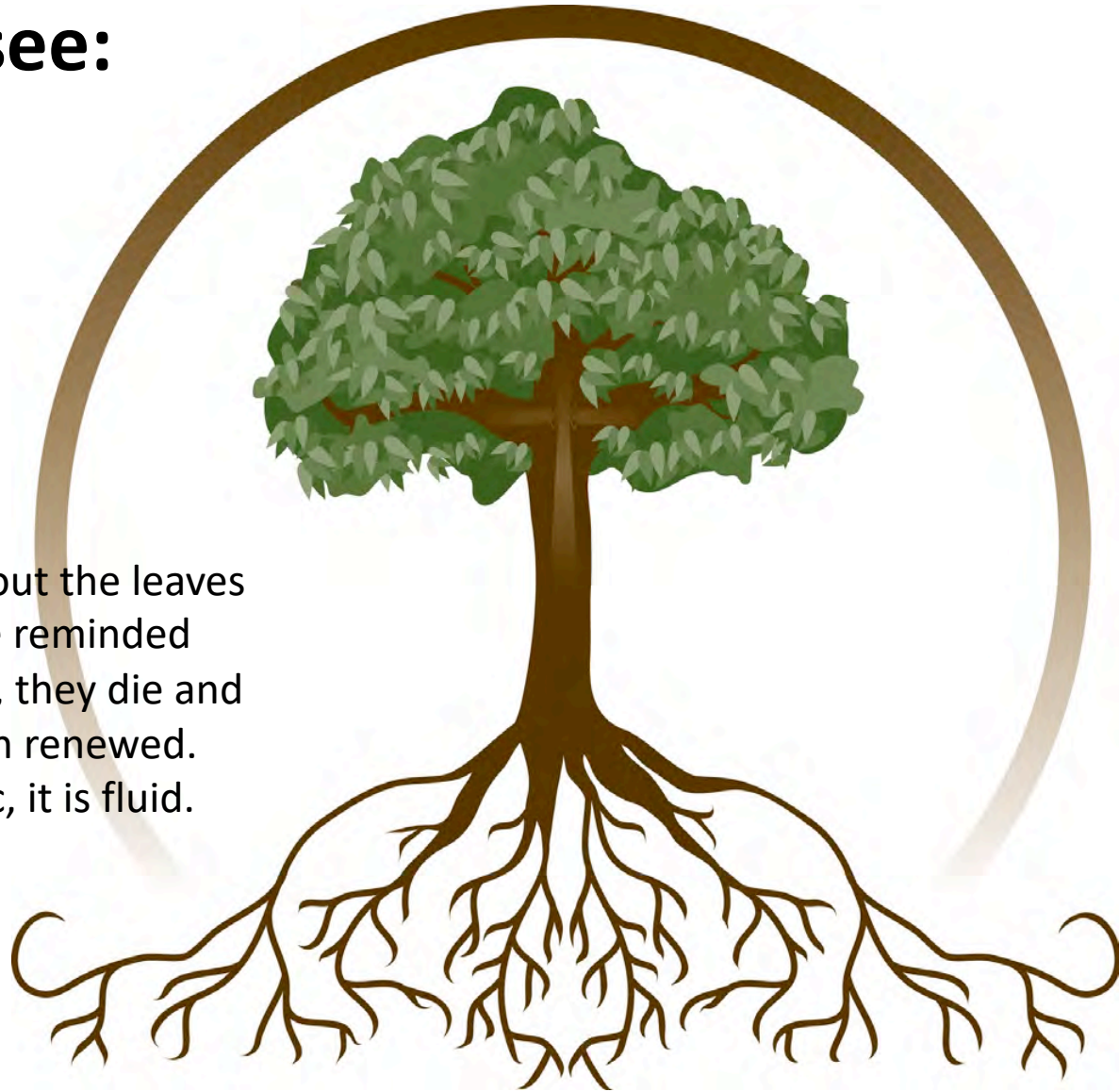


The Branch/Leaves:

What we see:

- Dress
- Music
- Food

When we think about the leaves on the tree, we are reminded that leaves change, they die and fall off and are then renewed. Culture is not static, it is fluid.



**At the Trunk:
Hidden
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The Roots: Unseen and rarely discussed:

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Activity: Elements of Culture



DIFFERENT IS NOT DEFICIT

DIFFERENT IS NOT DEFICIT

Let's Play a Game



Michael I. Norton





We Must Talk About Race

Why Don't We Want to Talk About Race?

“We have become so politically correct that we don't know what to say and when to say it. We don't know what to say to anyone anymore.”

Lee Jones, Florida State University.



Black

Negro

Colored

Afr. Am.

*the beach!
in constant time*

Danger of Color-blind ideology



Color Blind Ideology:

Issues of equity
are often
avoided by
adopting a
colorblind
ideology



Asserting that skin color does not matter allows for the existence of implicit bias and racism that is inherent in American society



Promotes racial
inequities by silencing
racial discourse and
purporting practices
without regard to skin
color



Contributes to
racial inequities by
invalidating the
experiences and
identities of people
of color



Racial blindness promotes the fallacy that people are beyond bias and racism, ignores racial disparities, and places blame on the behaviors of communities of color



We Don't
Know Each
Other!





Blue Eyes

Your Child's Hair Stinks!



It's Delicious!

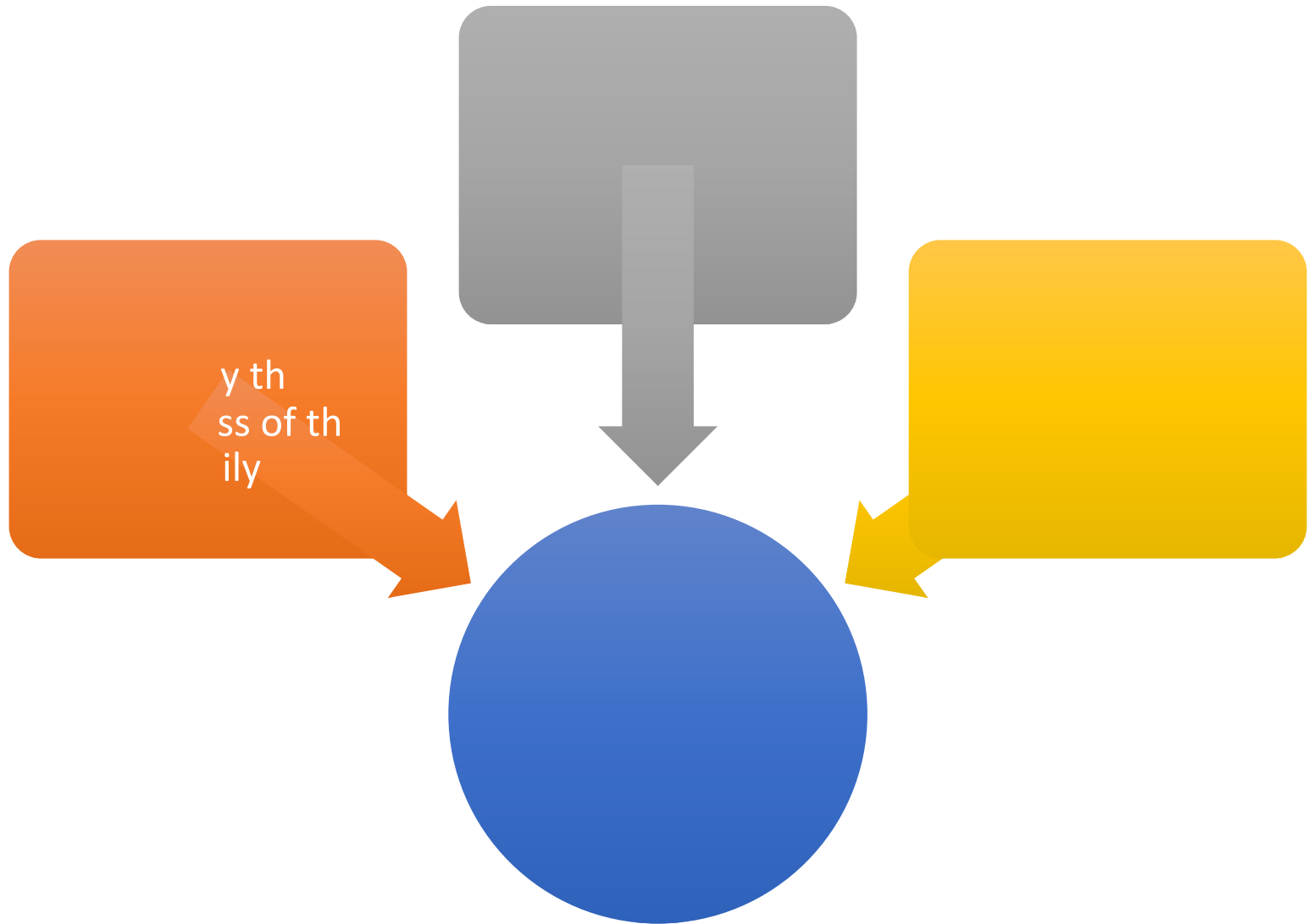


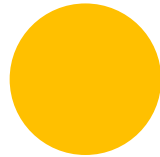
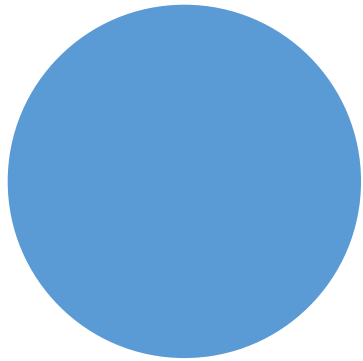


Hair Rules




Acknowledge The Race and Culture of the Family





Connecting With Parents Using Culturally Responsive Practices

Dr. Rosemarie
Allen



What are your
“take aways” from
this Tedx Talk?

What Experts Say

Culturally Responsive Family
Engagement Practices by:

[Jessica Lavgna](#)

Five key practices to consider





In order to develop authentic partnerships with parents, the practitioner must honor the parent as the child's first and best teacher.

1. Build Relationships and Be Present

- Start with a conversation
- Be present in students' communities
- Develop mutual understanding and respect

Lavorgna, n.d.





Do We Really Honor Parents As the Child's First and BEST Teacher?

2. Recognize, Honor, and Promote Existing Knowledge

- Learn and understand what families know, then honor it
- Send a clear message to all families: they matter and they are a vital component of their child's education



3. Identify and Use What Works for Families

- The “one-size-fits-all” approach does not work
- Does the school’s culture and a family’s culture align?
- Imagine what family engagement looks like by engaging families in nontraditional, yet culturally responsive ways



4. Promote a culture of awareness, learning, and sharing

- Listen and observe before talking and acting
- Examine and challenge preconceived notions of others
- Take the time, energy, and effort to promote a culture of awareness, learning, and sharing



What Are Some Non- Traditional Ways to Engage Families?





5. Foster Community by Building Social Capital

- Develop, support, and sustain community
- Establish an authentic sense of oneness
- Bring dissimilar groups together to build unity
- Focus on relationship building and resource-sharing on and *off* school property


What Parents Say

The following statements were made at a parent workshop at the Division of Early Childhood Conference, 2014 in San Francisco



Parents want
professionals to
understand they have
the same hopes and
dreams that all
parents have for their
children



A young child and a woman are laughing joyfully outdoors. The child, wearing a white t-shirt, is holding a large cardboard airplane high in the air with their right hand. The woman, wearing a blue polka-dot dress, is holding the child from behind. The background is a bright, sunny day with trees and a clear sky. A white rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text.

It is important to parents that
their child is viewed through
a strengths-based lens that
recognizes them as
“extraordinary” children



It is important that practitioners not assume parents are in denial, but recognize they are hopeful that their child will reach their full potential

When making
recommendations for
services and activities,
ensure the strategies
work for the family and
are flexible enough to
occur within the
contexts of the family





Professionals must be willing to hear the desires of parents and listen to their concerns



Parents want
to be trusted
that they are
making the
best decisions
for their child
and family

Parents want their families valued as a fully functioning entity that is not defined by the child receiving services





Parents want to be respected in exercising their right to use the information in a way that insures the best outcome for the family



They want to participate in open dialogues about the law, policies, their rights, and resources for their child

Parents want
professionals to
remember parents
are balancing the
needs of the child
being served with
the needs of all
family members



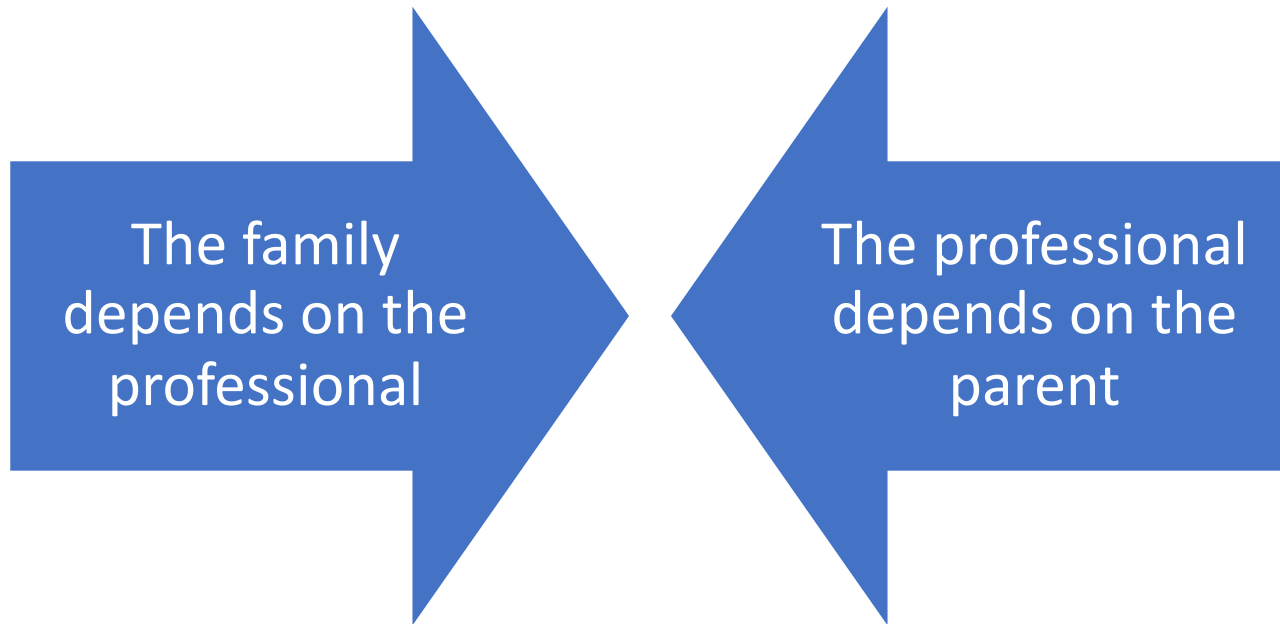


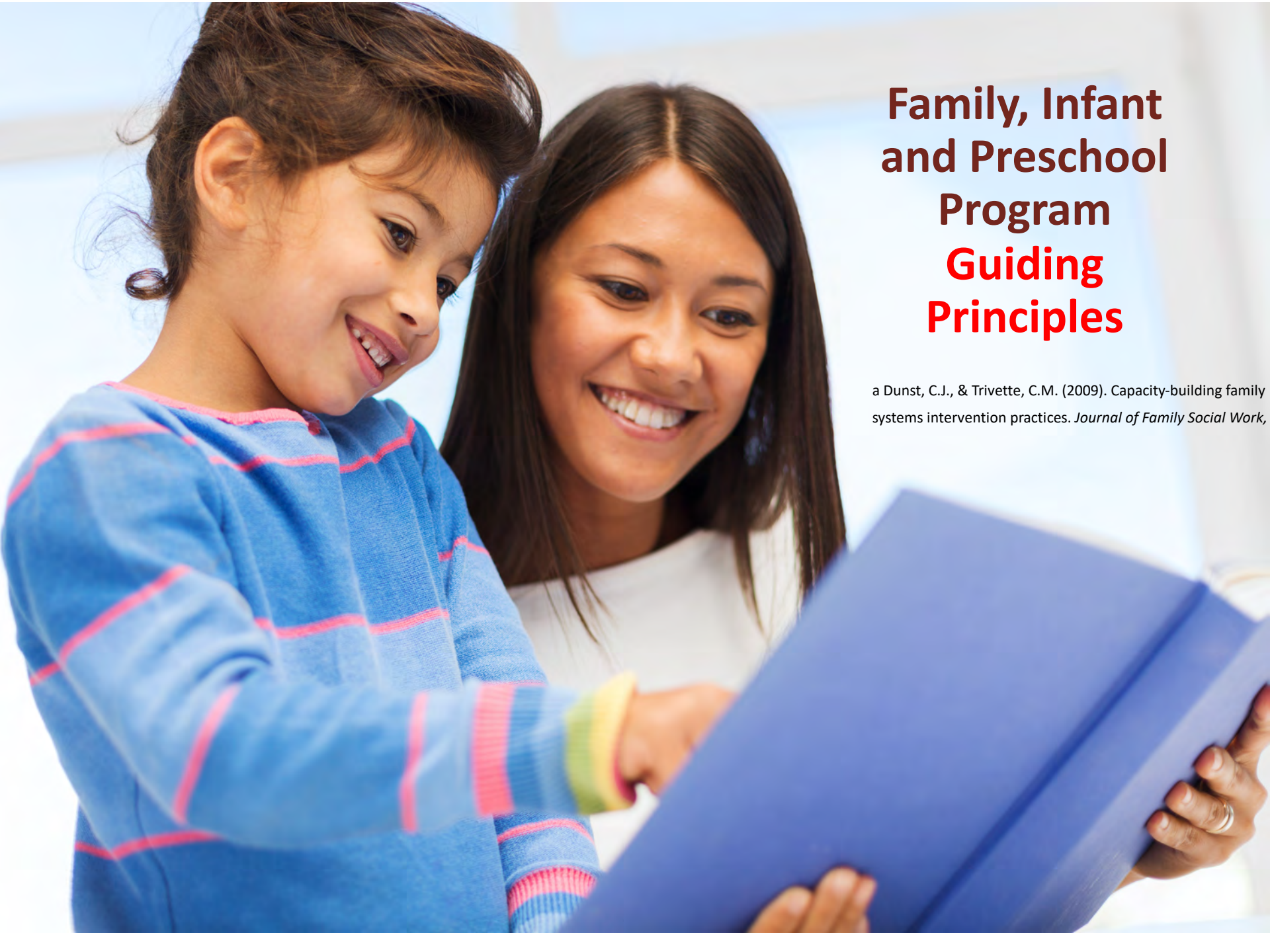
It is important to include siblings and members of the extended family to participate in activities for the child with receiving services

To have access to the
same information used by
professionals in order to
make informed decisions



Interdependence



A young girl with dark hair, wearing a blue and pink striped sweater, is smiling and looking at a large blue folder. A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white top, is also smiling and looking at the folder. They are both holding the folder, which is open, showing its pages. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting.

Family, Infant and Preschool Program Guiding Principles

a Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,

Families and family members are treated with dignity and respect at all times.



a Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,



**Staff are sensitive,
knowledgeable, and
responsive to family's,
cultural, ethnic, and
socio-economic
diversity.**

a Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,

**Family choice and
decision-making
occur at all levels of
participation in the
program.**



Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,



**Information necessary
for families to make
informed choices is
shared in a sensitive,
complete, and
unbiased manner.**

a Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,



**Practices are
based on family-
identified desires,
priorities, and
preferences.**

a Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*,



Staff provide supports, resources, and services to families in a flexible, responsive and individualized manner.



Staff--family relationships are characterized by partnerships and collaboration based on mutual trust, respect, and problem solving.

A broad range of informal, community and formal supports and resources are used for achieving family-identified outcomes.

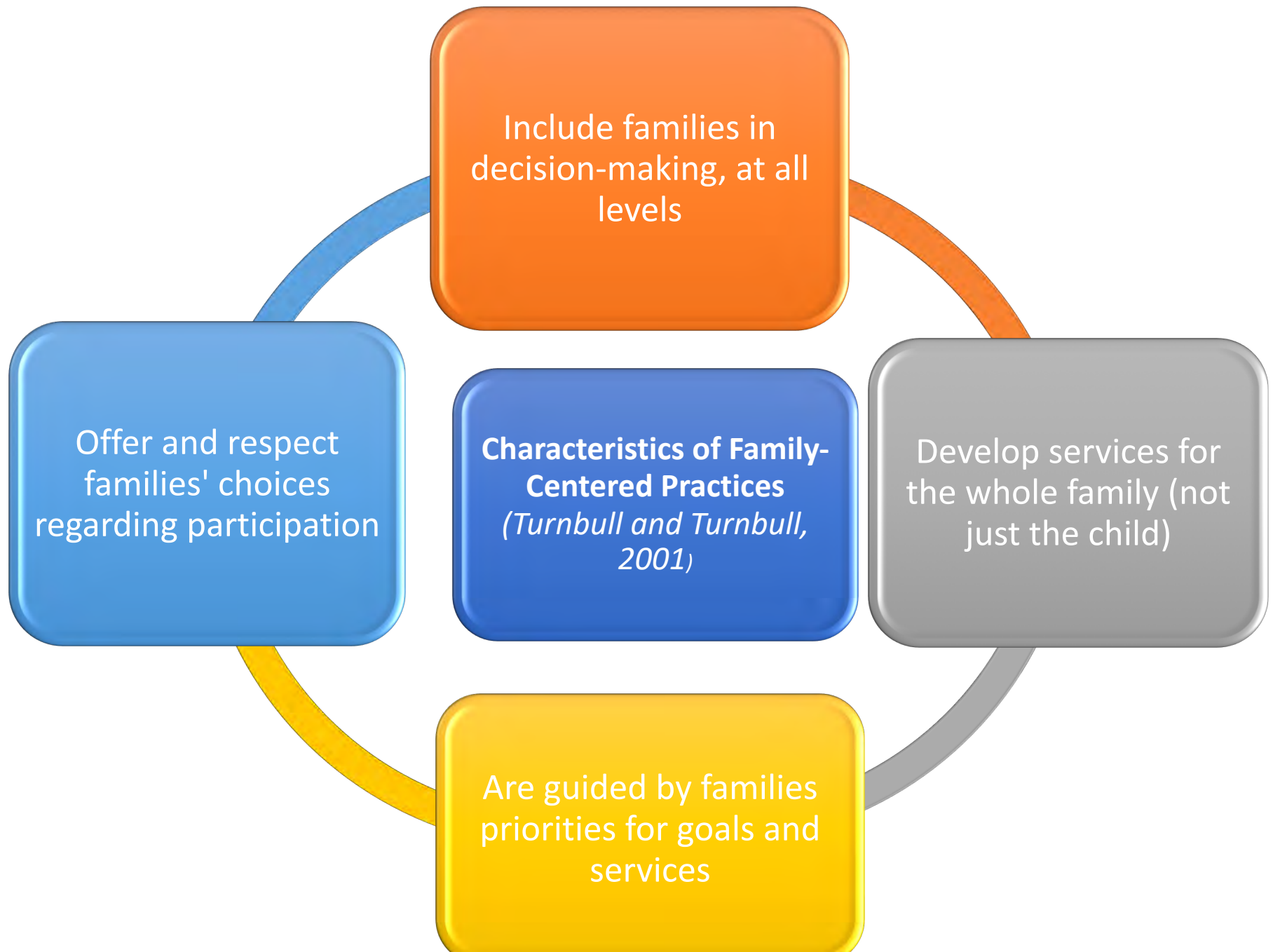




Staff use help-giving styles that support and strengthen family functioning.



**Staff build on child,
parent and family
strengths, assets, and
interests as the
primary way of
strengthening family
functioning.**





Its All About Relationships!