

### Unit 3: Learning Activities

#### Activity # 1: "Explore your own cultural background."

Step 1. Print this page by clicking on the "Print" button of our browser.

Step 2. Read each of the questions listed below and write brief responses.

1. What is your cultural heritage?
2. Do you identify with that culture?
3. What are some family traditions or practices related to it? a. Food? b. Music? c. Holidays?
4. What, if anything, did your cultural background say to you about schooling, teachers, etc.?
5. What do you know about the cultural traditions of your co-workers and students?
6. What would you like to know?
7. In what ways did your culture affect your (or your family's) participation in school?
8. Was there ever a time when the school or services provider acted in a way that was insensitive to your culture?

Step 3.

- a. After you have reflected on the questions above ask the teacher or special educator any questions you have about the cultural background of the students with whom you work.
- b. Ask the teacher or special educator if there is anything particular that you need to know about the cultural background of the students with whom you work.

#### Activity # 2: "Understanding the importance of families"

Step 1. Print this page by clicking on the "Print" button of your browser.

Step 2. Read the contents of the table below and choose the answer that best describes the extent to which each statement is true.

<p>In the columns below identify the extent to which each statement is true for each group listed. Use the following key for your answers:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <b>A</b> = Always (or Almost Always) True  <b>S</b> = Sometimes True  <b>N</b> = Not True </p>			
STATEMENT	Students without disabilities	Students with disabilities	Your own family
Families know certain aspects of their children better than anyone else.			
Families have the greatest vested interest in seeing their children learn.			
The family is likely to provide the only adults involved with a child's educational program throughout his or her entire school career.			
Families have the ability to positively influence the quality of educational services provided in their communities.			
Families must live with the outcomes of decisions made by educational teams, all day, everyday.			

Step 3. Given your responses in the table above, answer the following questions:

- a. Was there any significant difference in the truth of these statements for students with and without disabilities?
- b. Which of the statements provides the best reason for developing strong family-school relationships and including families in decisions that affect their children?

Step 4. Ask the teacher or special educator if there is anything particular you need to know about the families of children with whom you work.

Activity # 3: "Addressing confidentiality"

Step 1. Print this page by clicking on the "Print" button of your browser.

Step 2. Read and answer the following questions listed below in the table.

## ADDRESSING CONFIDENTIALITY

**Directions:** Members of the education team need to meet to discuss the policies and procedures related to confidentiality as they apply to both students with and without disabilities, as well as their families.

1. How is “confidentiality” defined in our school policies?
2. What are the policies and procedures in this school related to confidentiality?
3. What are the expectations of the members of our team regarding confidentiality?  
How can our team support one another in maintaining respectful interactions and confidentiality in relation to the students and their families with whom we work?
4. How will we ensure that confidentiality is maintained in our daily work with students and their families?
5. What do we do when we are in situations in which we believe confidentiality is being breached? What are some phrases that we might use to remind another person of this issue?

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Activity # 4: "Assessing own biases"

Step 1. List three cultural groups (e.g., African-Americans, Jewish, Hispanic, Asian, etc.) that are different than your own cultural background.

Step 2. For each group, make a brief list of assumptions or biases you have about people from these different cultural backgrounds.

Step 3. Ask yourself how you think you developed your cultural assumptions and biases about these groups. Was it from direct experience? Is it what you learned growing up? Is it what is portrayed on TV and other media?

Step 4. Pick at least one of the three cultural backgrounds group. With the assistance of a teacher or special educator select two specific actions you can take to learn more about a different cultural background than yours.