



*Making Evidence-Based Programs  
More Culturally Relevant*

- **If possible, have program in the language of the particular group.** For example, in working with the Hmong community the role-play vignettes for the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) were taped in the Hmong language. When Working with Latino Families, especially newcomers or first generation, it may be important to have the sessions in Spanish. While youth may be bilingual, their parents may speak mostly Spanish.
- **Choose facilitators with knowledge of the culture when conducting the program.** This may help families feel more comfortable when participating in the program. In fact, you may want to include facilitators FROM the culture AND community. Grant funding in the Eau Claire project allowed us to hire a Hmong facilitator who lived in Eau Claire and knew the families. Hispanic families feel more confident and safe participating in the program if the facilitators are from their culture.
- **Recruit families in a way that is culturally appropriate.** For example, in Eau Claire we recruited through the Hmong community leaders, who made personal phone calls to invite families to participate in the SFP 10-14 program. In recruiting Hispanic families, using a personal approach – inviting families either by phone or face to face - and treating them as your guests (providing for their comfort and convenience, and using a touch of Latino culture) may make coming to class easier and more attractive.
- **Select a place to hold the program that is comfortable for the particular group.** For instance, choose a place where families often meet for other purposes, such as local schools, churches, community centers, etc. When working with Latino/Hispanic families, for example, churches and community centers may be the most popular places, since families may feel safer and won't need transportation (which makes coming to class easier).

**If you make program adaptations do so cautiously, and**

- **Stay in contact with program developers to help maintain program fidelity.** Evidence-based programs have core components that need to be included for the program to be effective. Some evidence-based programs, such as SFP 10-14, already have curricula adapted for other cultures (e.g. Familias Fuertes). When we worked with the Hmong community in Eau Claire, the program developers were committed to helping make culturally appropriate adaptations.
- **Involve the group you are working with in making adaptations.** They will let you know what their community's needs are and also assist you in making culturally appropriate changes. Adaptations may include such things as making changes to program activities, games, or role-playing vignettes. These changes may help the families feel more comfortable when participating in the program. Examples from the Hmong adaptation of SFP 10-14 in Eau Claire included not suggesting they hold hands for the balloon game, and replacing the family card games because cards are used in gambling. Examples from working with Native American families included using a round shape for a shield rather than the traditional shield shape, and passing a talking stick during the closing circle to give each person a chance to talk.



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