



The Cultural Competence Project developed curriculum, training, coaching, and assessment tools to increase the cultural and linguistic competence of the early childhood workforce.

The Cultural Competence-Breakthrough Series Collaborative was developed to build, integrate and sustain cultural competence within North Carolina's early childhood system.

The overall goal of the project was to improve the cultural competence of the early childhood workforce in order to develop and strengthen culturally responsive teaching practices, culturally inclusive program policies, and respectful, strength-based engagement with families. North Carolina serves an increasingly diverse group of children in our early childhood programs and schools. During the early childhood years, gaps are identified in social and cognitive development by socioeconomic factors.

The Winston-Salem State University Cultural Competence-Breakthrough Series Collaborative project developed a curriculum and process utilizing a participatory action training approach. The project developed and implemented policies that facilitate culturally competent organizations to strengthen the ability of teachers, early childhood programs, and agencies to offer high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and family engagement.

Cultural Competence

PARTNERS



The project included:

- Extensive training to build awareness, knowledge, sensitivity and competence
- Collaborative teams (teachers, administrators, technical assistance providers and families) working with coaches to become skilled at the Breakthrough Series Collaborative methodology, to set specific goals and test improvements

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Cultural Competence

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- Use of Small Tests of Change (STOC) to build evidence to implement and spread improvements in teaching practice and program policies
- Technological support to promote ongoing learning and sharing

The key domains and goals for the project participants were:

- Family and Community Engagement Domain - Goal No. 1 - Engage families, children, and communities to accurately learn about, be informed by and respond to the social and cultural backgrounds of children and families.
- Professional Development and Technical Assistance Domain - Goal No. 2 - Commit to ongoing reflection and action about cultural differences that affect attitudes, beliefs, methods and practice in the classroom and administration of the early childhood program.
- Teaching and Classroom Practices Domain - Goal No. 3 - Demonstrate awareness of how cultural groups and communities nurture a growing child to ensure his/her survival and optimal development by continuously creating responsive classroom and teaching practices that support every child's success.
- Program and System Policies - Goal No. 4 - Develop organizational capacity and commitment to value culture in ways that transform policies, practices, and teaching to ensure the ability to function as cultural and linguistically competent organizations.

As a result of the grant, participants were more flexible and open to change.

“We think that it is clear from both the quantitative and qualitative analysis that the Breakthrough Series Collaborative Cultural Competence Project was a resounding success. Although the quantitative analyses frequently resulted in non-significant results, this is likely due to a small sample size. Indeed, the qualitative results clearly indicate that the project resulted in life altering perspective changes for many participants. We believe that the project can be used as a model for other states and regions as they undertake cultural competence projects of professional development” (Mims, Sumrall, Cassidy: UNCG Research Team’s Final Report, 2015, p. 31).

A directory of endorsed technical assistance and professional development providers is available through the N.C. Division of Child Development and Early Education. These providers continue to offer training in Cultural Competence throughout the state. For more information on professional development for the early childhood workforce in North Carolina, go to <http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/>