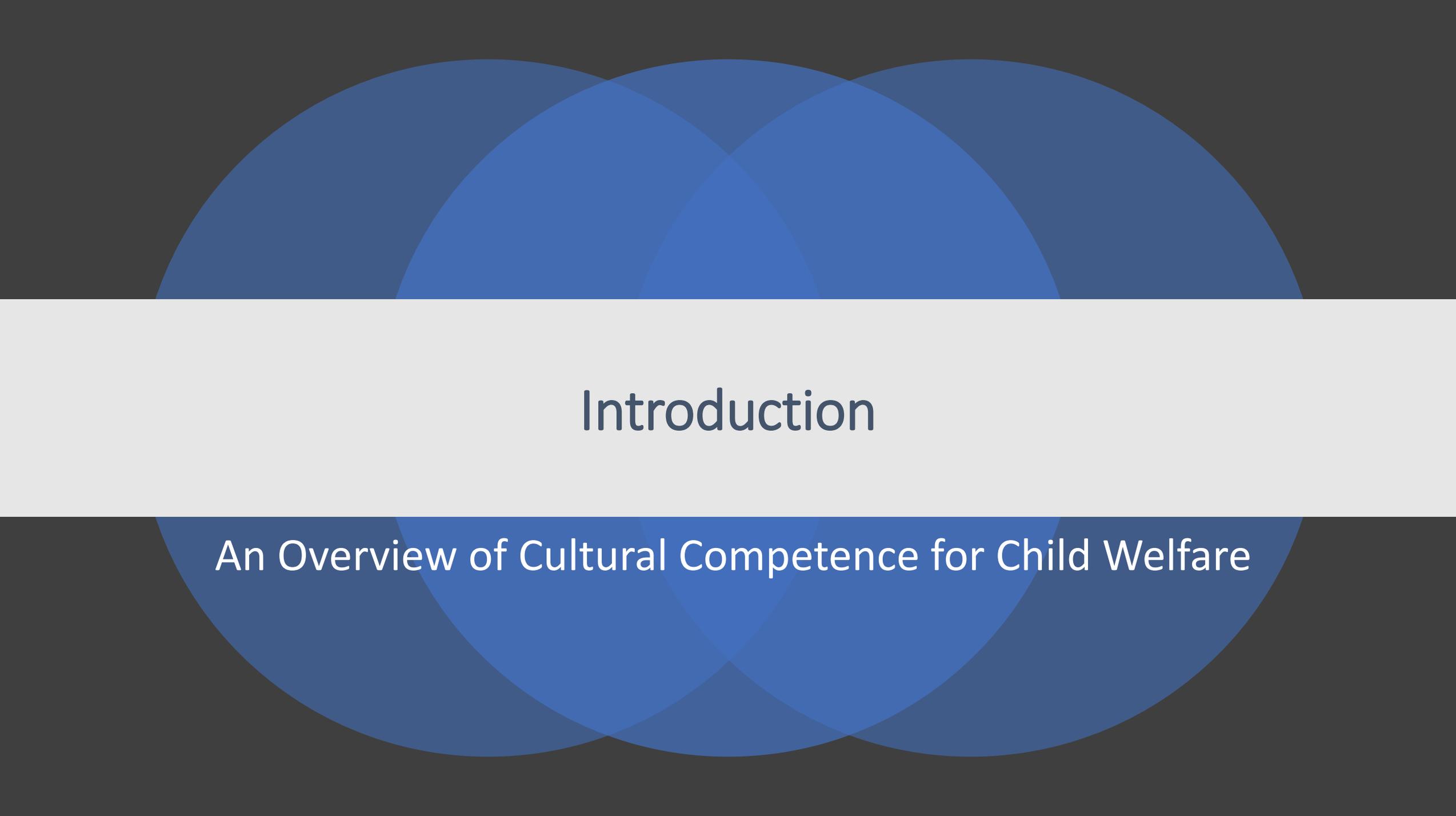


Deborah Burrus
State Adoption Director



Introduction

An Overview of Cultural Competence for Child Welfare

Disparities

- ❑ Research has shown that children of color, when compared to white children are more likely to be:
 - ❑ Removed from care and custody of their birth parents and placed in foster care.
 - ❑ Once in foster care, they:
 - ✓ Remain longer
 - ✓ Have difficulty reuniting with their families
 - ✓ Receive fewer services
 - ✓ Have less contact with child welfare workers

Culture

How do you
define Culture?



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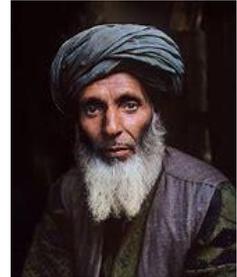
CULTURE

Culture is the learned and shared knowledge that specific groups use to generate their behavior and interpret their experiences of the world. It includes but is not limited to:

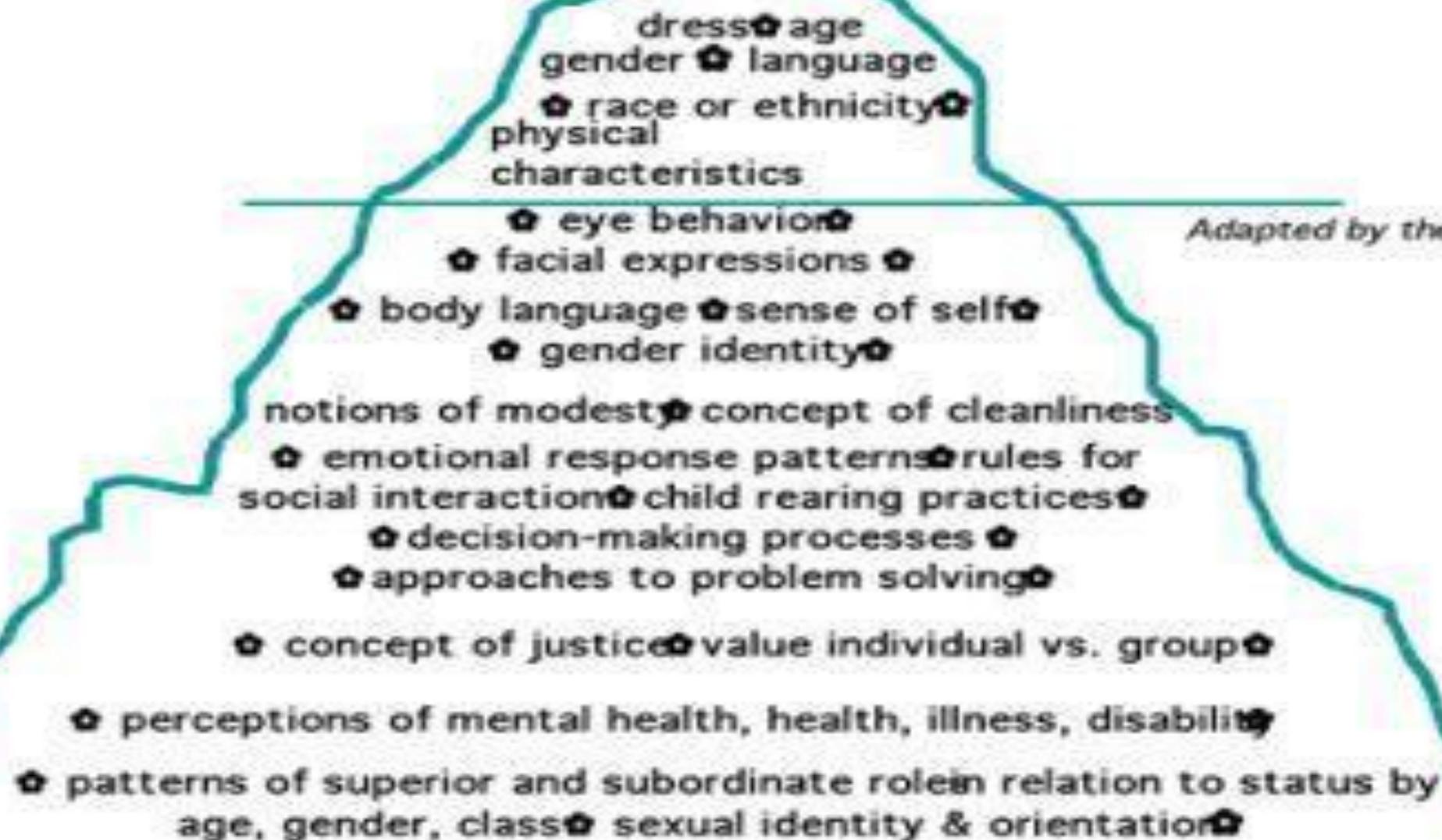
Communication, rituals, courtesies, beliefs, languages, expected behaviors, relationships, values, customs, manners of interacting, roles, practices, sexual orientation....

Culture...

- ❖ Is applicable to all peoples
- ❖ Is value-laden & rooted in belief systems
- ❖ Is active & dynamic
- ❖ Is multilayered & multidimensional
- ❖ Exists at conscious & unconscious levels
- ❖ Is often viewed as thick, thin, or compartmentalized
- ❖ Provides group member identity
- ❖ Structures perceptions & shapes behaviors (e.g. relationship to the natural world or traditional homelands)
- ❖ Varies in expression both among and between individual group members
- ❖ Permeates every aspect of life



An Iceberg Concept of Culture



Adapted by the NCCC



Cultural Competence

The process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Why is Cultural Competence Important for Social Workers?

Respect for diversity is a fundamental value of the social work profession.

CASW Code of Ethics (2005): “The social work profession is dedicated to the welfare and self-realization of people....and the achievement of social justice for all.

The profession has a particular interest in the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and/or living in poverty

Why is Cultural Competence Important for Social Workers?

Social workers have an ethical responsibility to ensure they demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity in their practice while enhancing competence to work with people from diverse cultures

Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work

ISSUES WITH A LACK OF BEING CULTURALLY COMPETENT

Families of color are investigated more frequently

Children of color are often found to be victims of maltreatment

Children of color experience a higher percentage of removals

Longer length of time in the system

Lack in services families receive

Adoption rates are lower

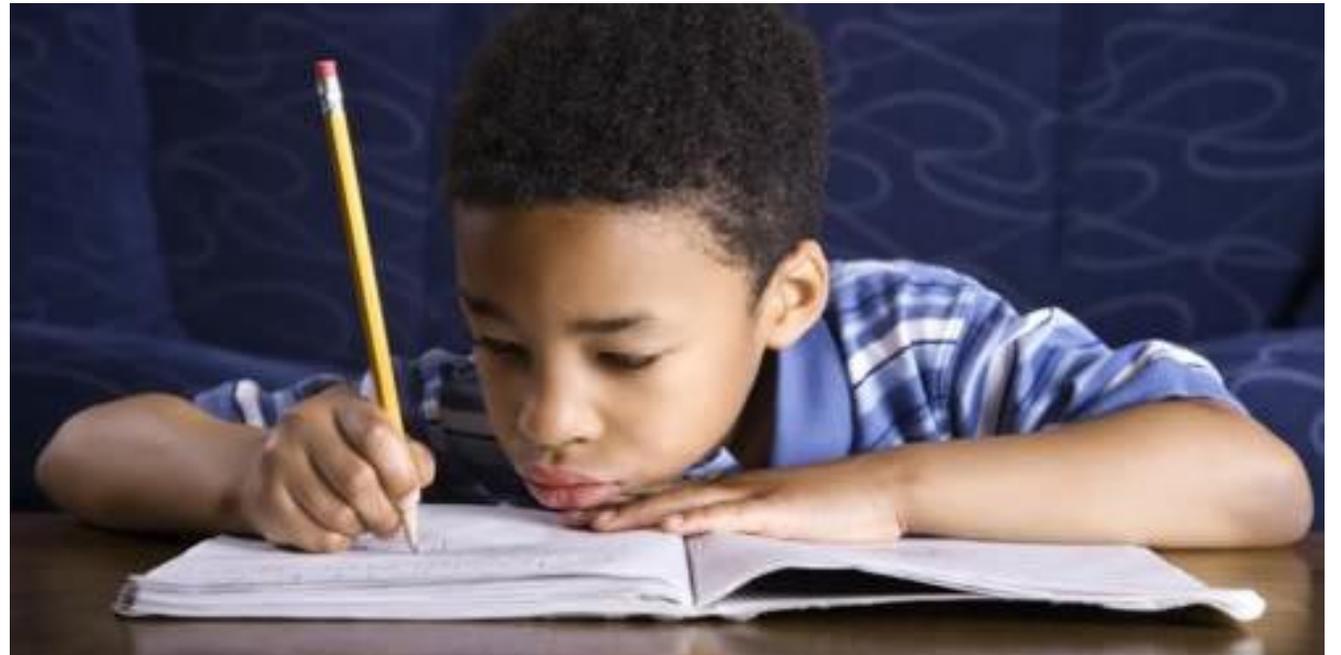
Disproportionality

Disparities

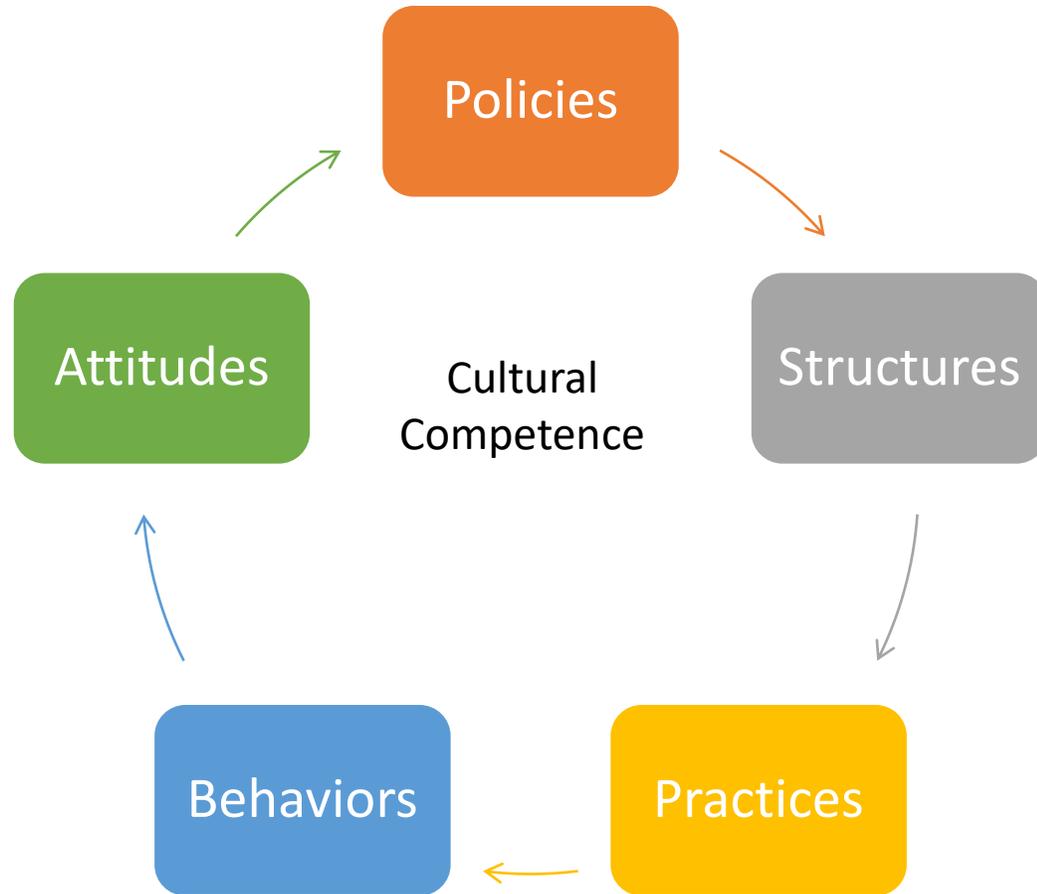
(Cohen, 2003)

2004 Education Study

A 2004 study in the school system shows that racial biases that discriminate can occur on such a deep, subconscious level that one can harbor aversive racist feelings towards someone of the same race.



Cultural Competence Conceptual Framework



Cultural competence requires that organizations have a clearly defined, congruent set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, structures, and practices that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.

Characteristics of Culturally and Linguistically Competent Organizations and Systems



Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

VISION

Safe children. Strengthened families.
Stronger Georgia.

MISSION

We prioritize the safety of Georgia's children in the decisions we make and the actions we take. We partner with families on their path to independence and build stronger communities with caring, effective and responsive service.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- As the Division of Family and Children Services we...
- Commit to the safety of our children in the decisions we make and the actions we take.
- Empower, strengthen and support families on their path to independence.
- Embrace a servant's heart with compassion.
- Provide caring, responsive and effective service.
- Listen and respond to our constituents, communities and each other.
- Collaborate with our communities to create systems of support.
- Develop a professional and efficient workforce that never stops learning and growing.



Is it a matter of
cultural
competence?

- Contributing factors for disproportionality:
 - institutional racism
 - Implicit bias
 - prejudice toward people of color
 - poverty
 - lack of resources for Black families,
 - over reporting of minority parents for child abuse and neglect
 - social workers' definition of abusive behavior
 - child welfare workers' lack of experience with other cultures

(Roberts, 2002; Chibnall et al., 2003).

How can we begin to address today?

