

Learning through Their Lens: Collaborating with Families from Diverse Backgrounds

Kimberly A. Hile, Ph.D. kimberly.hile@uah.edu

DEC Recommended Practices:

F3. Practitioners are responsive to the family's concerns, priorities, and changing life circumstances.

F5. Practitioners support family functioning, promote family confidence and competence, and strengthen family-child relationships by acting in ways that recognize and build on family strengths and capacities.

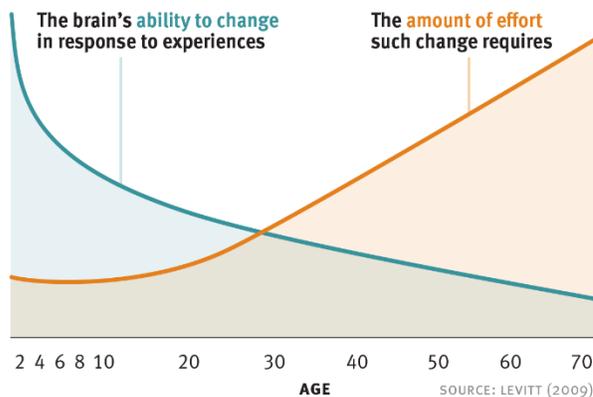
F6. Practitioners engage the family in opportunities that support and strengthen parenting knowledge and skills and parenting competence and confidence in ways that are flexible, individualized, and tailored to the family's preferences.

Diverse Family Experiences:

- Adoptive Families
- Addiction in the Family
- Caregivers with Chronic Illness/Disabilities
- Families Facing Income Instability
- Homeless Families
- Families Involved with DCFS
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Incarcerated Family Member
- LGBTQ+ Families
- Migrant Families
- Military Families
- Teen Parents



How might diverse family experiences impact family functioning and child development?



How might our perceptions of diverse family experiences impact our ability to develop an effective, meaningful relationship with all families?

What is bias?

Bias—Having a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people

Implicit Bias—Having attitudes towards people or associating stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge

What Stereotypes Have You Heard?



Strategies to Support ALL Families:

Videotaping Visits:

- Allows us to see interactions through a different lens
- Allows us to revisit situations that may be challenging
- Provides opportunities for feedback
- Allows us to look for subtle, unconscious biases playing out in body language, tone, etc.

Using Photo-Elicitation:

- Utilizes photographs to support or enhance interviews
- Provides opportunities to examine families' experiences that are not readily observable such as feelings, thoughts, or intentions
- Assists with establishing trust and rapport, supports in-depth responses, shifts "power" from the interviewer to the family, and empowers families to share difficult experiences

Self-Reflection—Create a S.T.I.R.:

- **Stop** & acknowledge!
 - What are my thoughts or feelings?
- **Take** a breath & wonder without self-judgement!
 - What assumptions may be driving my thoughts?
- **Investigate** for evidence!
 - What information do I have to support my thoughts?
 - What information do I have that does NOT support my thoughts?
- **Revise** my conclusion!
 - What are my new thoughts or feelings about this situation?