

First Five Keys to Culturally Sensitive Child Care

Key #1

Provide cultural consistency

Childcare should be in harmony with what goes on at home. Young children need to feel good about where they come from. The child experiences similar patterns of care, senses the connection between childcare and home and, as a result, feels secure.

Key #2

Work toward representative staffing

When the caregiver reflects the culture of the child, the parent and the caregiver are more likely to have a common vision of the person they want that child to become.

Key #3

Create small groups

All infants benefit when they receive care in a small group. With small groups, caregivers have a manageable number of cultures to relate to. As a result, many misunderstandings can be averted.

Key #4

Use the home language

Communication between a caregiver and a young child in the child's home language supports the child's identification with his or her family and culture. In addition to strengthening the connection between home and childcare, when caregivers use and understand the home language, an infant has an easier time getting his or her needs met.

Key #5

Make environment relevant

The environment and materials of a childcare program should reflect the children and their cultures. By seeing pictures of themselves, their families, and their communities, children are given the message that who they are and where they come from is valued.