



Creating Culturally Responsive PTA

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Why Culturally Responsive PTA?

Culture impacts thinking,
behavior and support systems

Western/Eurocentric bias

Diversifying United States



Migration Stress



Distress causing or during migration (especially refugees and undocumented immigrants)

Separation from loved ones

Loss of familiarity, stability

Survival mindset

Transnational responsibilities

Assimilation Stress

Loss of identity

Good immigrant” stereotype/Model Minority

Perpetual foreigner stereotype

Racist/xenophobic exclusion, discrimination and violence



Undocumented Immigrants

Fear of deportation

Exploitability, victimization

High pressures of DACA recipients



Children of Immigrants

Early adopted familial responsibilities

Pressure to succeed in academics and career

Living between 2 or more cultures

- Conflicting messages at home vs. school
- Dual identities, code switching
- Parental conflict, less time with friends
- Learned survival mindset
- Inherited intergenerational trauma





Race-based Traumatic Stress

Mental harm caused by direct or indirect experiences of race-based discrimination and violence

- Individual racism, including microaggressions
- Vicarious trauma
- Systemic racism
- Historical trauma

Stigma: Fear, Silence, and

Survival mindset

Comparative suffering

Generational silence

Intergenerational trauma

Somatization of mental health symptoms

Disbelief and mistrust of mental health care



Service Utilization

Low Utilization

Immigrants are less likely to seek or access treatments or supports

Asian Americans and Latinx Americans are the least likely racial group to seek support

Second-generation immigrants are more likely to seek support than immigrant parents

Preferences

Prefer to receive support from family, friends, and religious leaders

Perceive services as last resort

- Seek general care provider first
- Delay seeking help until there is a crisis

Immigrants more likely to seek care and support from religious leaders or trusted family referrals

What does culturally responsive PTA look like?

Demonstrated understanding of immigrant experience

Connected with culture and values

Alleviated structural barriers



Connect with Culture and Values

Education

Hard Work

Personal
Responsibility

Resiliency

Self-
improvement

Familial
Support

Community
Improvement

Generational
Advancement

Immigrant narratives are filled with values and themes compatible with PTA

Seek to Understand Individual vs Cultural Values

Any values salient to individual, family, or community

What does the individual think or value?

What does the family/community think or value?

Harmony or dissonance?

Adapt messaging accordingly



Alleviate Structural Barriers



Arrange translation services

Prepare accessibility resources

Build community partnerships

Engage in Advocacy

Final Thoughts

Immigrants and children of immigrants are resilient

- Immigrant narratives are filled with values and themes that support positive mental health outcomes
- Appealing to these values is key to breaking cultural stigma surrounding mental health and connecting with immigrants

Educators, service providers, and other supporters can:

- Increase personal knowledge of immigrant mental health
- Connect with culture and values
- Alleviate structural barriers (especially by partnering with the community)

School Data

<https://data.nysed.gov>

