Foundational Intercultural Skills for Educators

• Diversity:
  o Ethnicity, Religion, Economics, Customs/Traditions, Institutions/Politics

Three-tiered Cultural Iceberg
• Visible culture: fewer misunderstandings
  o Art, food, music, language
• Spoken & Unspoken Rules: Violations result in negative feelings about violator
  o Courtesies, Use of time, manners, rules, gender roles
• Unconscious rules: Violations are taken personally
  o Touching, physical closeness, body contact, tone of voice, non-verbal communication

Cultural Awareness continuum and educational methods for each
• Non-aware of difference / Awareness of difference
  o Education should be safe, enjoyable, & non-threatening
  o Short duration of lessons
  o Use of cultural mediator
• Acknowledgement of difference / Validation
  o Education to include activities which build self-concept and strengthen one's cultural pride
  o Exploration of intercultural similarities and differences
• Understanding Cultural Differences
  o Study language
  o Cultural and political events
  o Reading and movies
  o Travel
  o Art, music, food
  o Seminars & workshops
  o Relationships
• Cultural adaptation
  o Use of cultural mediator/mentor to help identify necessary skills for success in new culture
  o Seek opportunities to learn and practice new skills
  o Reward yourself for new skills learned for a culture
• Intercultural competency
  o Exemplified by skill and success in new cultural environment
  o Development of appreciation for similarities & differences of new culture
  o Ability to easily shift from home culture to new culture
  o You become a cultural mediator for others learning the culture

Creating a safe and trusting relationship
• “The Circle of Courage” – Reclaiming Youth At-Risk
  o Provide the youth with the experience of belonging in a supportive community
• Allow them to assist in creation of rules for communication within a group
  o Assist youth in developing mastery over parts of their environment
  o Involve youth in determining their own future
  o Provide youth with opportunities to be caregivers for others
    ▪ Allow them to teach a mini-lesson on one of their passions
• Building the Family / School Relationship
  o Create a safe and welcoming environment
  o Establish trust
  o Identify and validate family strengths
  o Family’s role
    ▪ Advocate for your child
    ▪ Know what your child is learning at school
    ▪ Supervise school performance
    ▪ Know school rules and policies
    ▪ Use school and community resources
    ▪ Build a good relationship with your child’s teachers
    ▪ Participate in and volunteer for school activities
    ▪ Celebrate your child’s effort and successes