



Cultural competence refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to understand, appreciate, and effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. It involves recognizing and respecting the unique values, beliefs, customs, and practices of different communities.¹

Why is Cultural Competency Important for Serving Kids and Families in Georgia?

Georgia is becoming increasingly diverse.



As of 2022, almost **15%** of Georgia's residents spoke a language other than English at home.²



As of 2022, **more than 10%** of Georgia's population was foreign-born, which is an almost 40% increase from 1990.³



Over the last decade, Asian and Hispanic populations have increased by **53%** and **32%** respectively, while White individuals make up just barely over half of the population.

What does cultural competency look like?



Effective Communication

Understanding cultural nuances improves communication between service providers and families. Clear and culturally sensitive communication is essential for building trust and rapport.⁴



Tailored Services

Cultural competency allows for the customization of services to meet the unique needs of different communities. This is crucial for addressing disparities in healthcare, education, and social services.⁵



Community Engagement

Building cultural competency fosters meaningful engagement with communities. Collaborative efforts ensure that services are community-driven and aligned with the values and aspirations of the people being served.⁶

Recommendations for How to Foster Cultural Competency

Training and Education:

- Provide ongoing training to professionals to enhance their cultural competence and awareness
- Continue to intentionally encourage, recruit, and support diverse and rural students to pursue healthcare, behavioral health, education, and social service careers

Culturally Tailored Programs:

- Develop and implement programs that consider cultural factors, preferences, and values

Community Partnerships:

- Collaborate with community organizations to gain insights and actively involve the community in decision-making processes



References for Cultural Competence: Enhancing Services for Children and Families in Georgia

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