Behavioral Health is Essential To Health

Prevention Works

Treatment is Effective

People Recover
Applying Cultural Awareness to Disaster Behavioral Health

August 24, 2011
Presented by Lori McGee, Monica Indart, Kermit Crawford, and Almarie Ford
Welcome to the Webinar

Lori A. McGee, M.A.
Training and Curriculum Manager
SAMHSA DTAC
About SAMHSA DTAC

Established by SAMHSA, DTAC supports SAMHSA’s efforts to prepare States, Territories, and Tribes to deliver an effective behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) response to disasters.
SAMHSA DTAC Services Include...

- **Consultation and trainings** on DBH topics including disaster preparedness and response, acute interventions, promising practices, and special populations

- **Dedicated training and technical assistance** for DBH response grants such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP)

- **Identification and promotion of promising practices** in disaster preparedness and planning, as well as integration of DBH into the emergency management and public health fields
The Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series, or DBHIS, which contains themed resources and toolkits on these topics:

- DBH preparedness and response
- Specific disasters
- Specific populations
SAMHSA DTAC E-Communications

- SAMHSA DTAC Bulletin, a monthly newsletter of resources and events. To subscribe, email DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov.
- The Dialogue, a quarterly journal of articles written by DBH professionals in the field. To subscribe, visit http://www.samhsa.gov, enter your email address in the “Mailing List” box on the right, and select the box for “SAMHSA’s Disaster Technical Assistance newsletter, The Dialogue.”
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• Email: DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov
• Website: http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac

Dr. Amy Mack, Project Director
SAMHSA DTAC
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The goal of this webinar is to provide information, recommendations, and tools that can be used to assess and strengthen cultural awareness practices in DBH services.

- Guiding Principles of Cultural Awareness (Dr. Monica Indart)
- Challenges and Interventions (Dr. Kermit Crawford)
- Field Experiences and Lessons Learned (Ms. Almarie Ford)
Webinar Learning Objectives

• To provide guiding principles and recommendations for applying cultural awareness to DBH
• To provide cultural awareness best practices specific to DBH preparedness and response
• To provide tools that can be used to assess and strengthen cultural awareness practices for DBH services
Guiding Principles for Cultural Awareness

Monica Indart, Psy.D.
Assistant Professor
Rutgers University
Culture and Competence: Rethinking What’s in a Name?

• Can we be “culturally competent”?  
• Culture and competence  
• Difference and diversity  
• Similar terms, different experiences  
  – Cultural responsiveness  
  – Cultural sensitivity  
  – Cultural awareness – emerging preferred term for conveying a universally helpful attitude of compassionate curiosity
Cultural Encounters in Disasters

Culture of Survivors

Emergent Disaster Culture (Transitory)

Culture of Responders
Cultural Encounters in Disasters

Culture of Survivors

Culture of Responders

Emergent Disaster Culture (Transitory)
Culture as a Bridge: Understanding Human Experience

• Human experience is based upon two pillars of influence:
  – Biological (what we are born with)
  – Learned (what we acquire)

• Culture is the bridge between these influences, defining how we understand the world.
Culture as a Foundation: Crisis Responsiveness

• **Responsiveness** as the core of crisis and disaster response
• Responsiveness implies . . .
  – Awareness of difference and diversity
  – Awareness of what is experienced as well as what is expressed
  – Awareness of individual needs
  – Awareness of competencies required to meet these needs
Culture as a Foundation: Crisis Responsiveness

• Culture responsiveness allows us to better understand what is *expressed* and listen for what is *experienced* so that we can provide what is *needed*. 
Non-competent Care: The Cost of Cultural Non-Awareness

- Cultural awareness is more than a principle of care: it *defines* good care.
- What happens when we are *not* culturally aware?
  - Disconnection
  - Disillusionment
  - Distress
  - Dysfunction

Experienced by both disaster survivors and disaster responders
What Is Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)?

• Integration of the *best available research* with *clinical expertise* in the context of *patient characteristics, CULTURE and preferences* (APA, 2006)

• Purpose to promote effective practice and enhance public health
  - Development of best practice guidelines

• Focus on outcomes
The Practice of EBP

Client Values and Preferences

Clinical Expertise

Research Evidence
Healing Comes in Many Forms – These Forms Are Rooted in Rich Cultural Traditions . . .
Culture Awareness:
Revised Rules for the Road (continued)

• Recognize the importance of culture and diversity.
• Maintain a current profile of the cultural composition of the community.
• Recruit disaster workers who are representative of the community or service area.
Culture Awareness:
Revised Rules for the Road (continued)

- Embrace the fact that culture is not just a “buzz word.”
- Get out of your office and get to know the people you serve.
- Develop meaningful relationships with people who may be different from you and your management team.
Culture Awareness:
Revised Rules for the Road (continued)

- Provide ongoing cultural competence training to disaster mental health staff.
- Ensure that services are accessible, appropriate, and equitable.
- Recognize the role of help-seeking behaviors, customs and traditions, and natural support networks.
• Think outside the box and create activities that allow for a flow of multicultural exchange, focusing on *fostering awareness*. 

• Understand how fairness and justice are critical principles that affect recovery from disasters.

• Promote mutual aid, learning, and reciprocity among communities you serve, and between you and those communities.
Culture Awareness:
Revised Rules for the Road (continued)

• Involve as “cultural brokers” community leaders and organizations representing diverse cultural groups.
• Ensure that services and information are culturally and linguistically competent.
• Assess and evaluate the program’s level of cultural competence.
• Develop **real relationships** with leaders from all communities served.

• Collaborate with cultural community leaders on planning, delivering, evaluating, and disseminating services.

• **Repeat**: Collaborate with cultural community leaders on all aspects of planning, delivering, evaluating and disseminating services.
“In a place of knowledge, we are all citizens of the world.”

-Azar Nafisi
Questions for Dr. Indart?
Challenges and Interventions

Kermit Crawford, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Center for Multicultural Mental Health
Boston University Medical Campus
When You Are in Deep Stuff, Look Straight Ahead, Keep Your Mouth Shut and Say Nothing.

Fox Hunt
The *Totality* Problem
Competence

“A state or quality of being adequate or well qualified”

Freedictionary.com
“The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought”
Culture + Competence

• A state or quality of being adequate or well qualified to provide effective services across the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought
The *Numbers* Problem
The Big 8 of Diversity

1. Race/Ethnicity
2. Culture
3. Gender
4. Sexual Orientation
5. Social/Economic Classification
6. Age
7. Disability
8. Religion
Permutations for “Big 8”

\[ 8 \times 7 \times 6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = \]

40,320 ways the BIG 8 can be combined
The *Idealization* Problem
Cultural Competence
Now why am I here again?#@!??
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- Physiological Needs
- Safety Needs
- Belongingness & Love Needs
- Esteem Needs
- Need to Know & Understand
- Aesthetic Needs
- Self-Actualization
- Transcendence

MASLOW'S Hierarchy of Needs
Phases of Disaster
Collective Reactions

- Emotional Highs
- Emotional Lows
- Pre-Disaster
  - Warning
  - Threat
- Impact
- Heroic
- Honeymoon
  - Community Cohesion
- Disillusionment
  - Inventory
  - Trigger Events
- Reconstruction
  - A New Beginning
  - Setback
  - Working Through Grief
  - Coming to Terms
  - Anniversary Reactions

Up to 1 Year - After Anniversary

Adapted from CMHS, 2002.
Psychological First Aid

- Safety and security
- Emotional stability
- Information
- Reconnecting to natural helping systems
Skills for Psychological Recovery

- Gathering information and prioritizing assistance
- Building problem-solving skills
- Promoting positive activities
- Managing reactions
- Promoting helpful thinking
- Rebuilding healthy social connections
Recommendations for Enhanced Effectiveness

Perhaps . . .

An inter-cultural and intra-cultural perspective in DBH response
Suggested Considerations

• Think about what you . . .
  - Want to do
  - Are doing and the results
  - Consider “doing nothing”
Inter- and Intra-cultural Perspectives

Understanding "self," resistance, and biases

Understanding of the "other," the dynamics of interactions, the context and dynamics of building a relationship
Inter- and Intra-cultural Perspectives (continued)

- **Awareness** (Openness to becoming aware; always one more question to be asked)
- **Knowledge** (Knowing own biases and preferences; dynamics of difference; dynamics of recovery; influence of contextual variables; content knowledge base)
Content Capabilities

- Skills (Building ability-based skills and knowledge are fundamental to good DBHR practice.)
  - Authenticity
  - Self-awareness and self-reflection
  - Active listening
  - Attentiveness
  - Sensitivity
  - Positive engagement
  - Responsiveness
  - Warmth
  - Caring
  - Positive regard
Principles of Inter- and Intra-cultural Perspectives

• Values – justice, equity, beneficence . . .
• Humility – we don’t know what we don’t know we don’t know
• Respect – attitude of gratitude and acceptance
• Commitment – seeking out ways to optimize and integrate cross-cultural experience and knowledge to help; *curiosity*
Do one brave thing today... then run like hell!
Questions for Dr. Crawford?
Field Experiences and Lessons Learned

Almarie Ford, M.S.W., LCSW
Mental Health Program Director
Louisiana Office of Behavioral Health/System of Care Section
Use of Cultural Awareness Values and Principles in Efforts

- Disaster workers collaborate and network with survivors’ communities to engage them in self-determination by:
  - Helping to develop community capacity
  - Matching the disaster workforce to the cultural makeup of the environment to help achieve local support and engage survivors
  - Providing assertive outreach to community centers to help address early needs of survivors and help them accept their transition community
  - Informing transition communities of the cultures of survivors residing in them and of their needs
Specific Culturally Aware Projects and Events for Survivors

• Specific support groups primarily for survivors
  - Stress management groups
  - Two that were named (coffee break and juice groups)
  - Group crisis counseling
  - Public education groups

• Community events used to reach some survivors
  - Community fairs
  - Festivals
  - Other community celebrations
  - Interventions (boost and protect naturally occurring social supports; build social skills and mutual support)
Disaster Workers Engagement With Individual Survivors

• Implementation of cultural and linguistically competent individualized services to help people cope with:
  - Living arrangements with relatives or in extremely rural areas in trailers, etc.
  - Lack of public transportation in rural areas to go to grocery or drug stores or to local organizations to access resources
  - Lack of some food and spices in grocery stores in transition communities that are staples in the survivors’ diets
  - Lack of support systems because of separation from relatives and friends
  - Youth school adjustment issues
Key Lessons Learned

• Issues of the community: Disaster workers use cultural awareness to educate and empower survivors to help emotional recovery
  – Awareness of the need to shift areas of emphasis based on culture as survivors’ needs change during each phase of recovery
  – Establishment of culturally appropriate social networks and partnerships for survivors as well as interventions and referrals in transition communities (include culturally appropriate mental health and substance abuse services – faith healers, etc.)
  – Recognition of ordinary citizens’ acts of kindness (unsung heroes) with whom various survivor communities identify
• Issues of involved agencies
  - Priority outreach to provide special programming for staff who are survivors
  - Need for staff with specialized training around the issues faced by priority populations as well as general staff training and development regarding responsiveness to phases of recovery
  - Coordination and collaboration with all other agencies
  - Reemergence and stabilization of the public and private sector infrastructure with the assistance of outside experts and consultants
  - Need to build ongoing preparedness in recovery planning, implementation and evaluation
Key Lessons Learned (continued)

• Issues of Disaster Workers
  - Survivors working with survivors who have their own stress related to their losses must be more culturally aware of emotional, financial, and other needs of the population receiving services
  - Disaster program administrators/managers need cultural awareness of the disaster survivors who are workers and their extreme vulnerability to emotional problems and compassion fatigue
• Families, individuals, and those with special needs
  – Help urban residents adjust to long-term placement in rural areas
  – Use strategies that are culturally accepted by minority communities
  – Help survivors close old non-viable options by providing new ones
Questions for Ms. Ford?
Questions for the Other Speakers?
Contact SAMHSA DTAC

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Ms. Almarie Ford
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Thank You