

Cultural & Linguistic Competence (CLC) Benefits ALL NH Youth

Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) is a core value of the Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative and the System of Care.

Preparing New Hampshire for a **prosperous future** begins with recognizing that we will need to rely on the talents and contributions of all residents in our state. We need to start with making sure our children and youth get what they need today to become the adults who will **strengthen our communities and build our economy**. Our children are growing up in the digital age; they are part of a culturally and linguistically diverse social network. It is our responsibility to ensure we are preparing them to function effectively in a global economy.

That means removing barriers in our system that block opportunity for some of our young people. For example, disparities exist in youth suicide attempts, substance use, and access to behavioral health services. We take seriously our role as stewards of the next generation, thus we have to **open**, not close, **pathways to opportunity** that ensure their life long success.

A roadmap to open these pathways exists. The Culturally Effective Organizations Framework is the roadmap that enables, cultivates, and supports the delivery of high-quality services for all people. [Please see the original issue brief (<https://iasp.brandeis.edu/pdfs/2015/CE.pdf>) and online toolkit (<http://www.mchc-nh.org/center-of-excellence-for-culturally-effective-care/>).]

Within the behavioral health world, Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) has been prioritized as essential for all organizations (see sidebar). Health, education, and human and social service organizations can work to promote CLC in order to address our growing diversity, persistent disparities, and to advance health and behavioral health equity.

A Framework for a Culturally Effective Organization:



If you are looking for more information or have questions regarding Cultural & Linguistic Competence (CLC), consider joining the NH Health & Equity Partnership's Culturally Effective Organizations Work Group, or the Behavioral Health Equity Work Group. Contact Amy Parece-Grogan at the Office of Health Equity for more information: Amy.Parece-Grogan@dhhs.nh.gov

Definitions:

Cultural competence refers to a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, organization or group to enable the individuals within these settings to interact effectively (Cross, et. al, 1989). The word "culture" is used because it implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of a demographic group (e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, sex, socioeconomic class, nationality). The word "competence" is used because it implies the capacity to function effectively within cross-cultural situations (Jackson, Francis, 2010).

Linguistic competence specifically refers to the capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively, and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences including persons of limited English proficiency (LEP), those who have low literacy skills or are illiterate, and individuals with disabilities (Goode & Jones, 2009).