

Multicultural Network Telephone Conference Summary

August 19, 2004

Alliance Region 6

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Present: Ausencia Crisanto, Exceptional Parents Unlimited; Charity Welch, Western Regional Resource Center; Judy Wiley, National Native American Families Together; Donna Waghorn, NICHCY, Ellie Barron, Matrix, Alliance Multicultural TA.

Hola,

It's August. We had only a handful of people for our telephone conference call today. But even with the small group, we touched on important and timely topics, and the time went quickly.

Ausencia opened the meeting with a mini report from her center and reported that the Hmong program is busily getting ready for a conference in the near future, and is anticipating the arrival of new families. They have had trainings on ADD, the Bridges Program, and Transition for young adults.

Donna described the Product Review Board which serves as a screening component for articles and trainings submitted for OSEP approval which serves the dual purpose of checking for duplication and overabundance of materials on a given topic area. There are various other programs, including a wide range of materials in Spanish.

Judy Wiley talked about the NNAFT project also focused on materials and developing a central information center which will assist in collecting trainings and informational materials, essentially with the same intention of the Product Review Board. A workgroup of all Native American trainers will review what materials have been developed and essentially develop a Resource Notebook. The intention is to develop a training and information product for the Native American community by PTI's and CPRC's, that will be vetted, which will also avoid duplication, overabundance in a topic area, while insuring that as wide an area of topics are covered.

Charity's involvement with the OSEP Communities of Practice Workgroup on Disproportionality focused our discussion on over/under representation of minority children in Special Education, and explored what factors contribute to the problem of overrepresentation: Lack of understanding on the part of school administrators; parents' lack of understanding of their role and students' learning styles were areas discussed. The article "Addressing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Student Overrepresentation in Special Education: Guidelines for Parents" was quoted: "3) Connect with Parents need to meet and become familiar with their child's teachers and administrators..." Although a clear guideline, in some respects, this challenge flies in the face of cultural values, causing conflict for the parents. It was decided that we should continue the discussion and that we will do so on the next conference call.

Donna mentioned an excellent video produced by the I am Your Child Foundation which will in all likelihood be available by our next telephone conference call. The video informs parents in Spanish on what to do and what to expect in the special education process.

We hope you have had a wonderful summer. Our Next Conference call: October 21, 2004 1 p.m. PST, 1 (800) 369-1540, code 751140#. See you then.

