

Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations

The ethnic, cultural, and linguistic makeup of this country has been changing steadily over the past few decades. Cultural diversity can result from many factors and influences including ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socioeconomic levels, regionalisms, age-based peer groups, educational background, and mental/physical disability. With cultural diversity comes linguistic diversity, including an increase in the number of people who are English Language Learners, as well as those who speak non-mainstream dialects of English. As professionals, we must be prepared to provide services that are responsive to this diversity to ensure our effectiveness. Regardless of our personal culture, practice setting, or caseload demographics, we must strive for culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery.