

# NQSW Cultural Competence in Working with Children and Young People Webinar



**Rahul Chacko & Sally Reading**

Senior Social Worker / Learning and Development Officers



# Group Agreement

- Confidentiality
- Respect
- Self-care
- Don't talk at the same time as others
- Please unmute yourself if you want to ask a question



# **Welcome to Cultural Competence in Working with Children and Young People event**

- This is an interactive session and you will be asked to participate and contribute to activities and discussions
- We will guide you through the exercises and there will be opportunities to ask questions and share ideas
- We will have a break half way through the session

# Learning Objectives

If you apply what you have learned on the course, you will be able to:

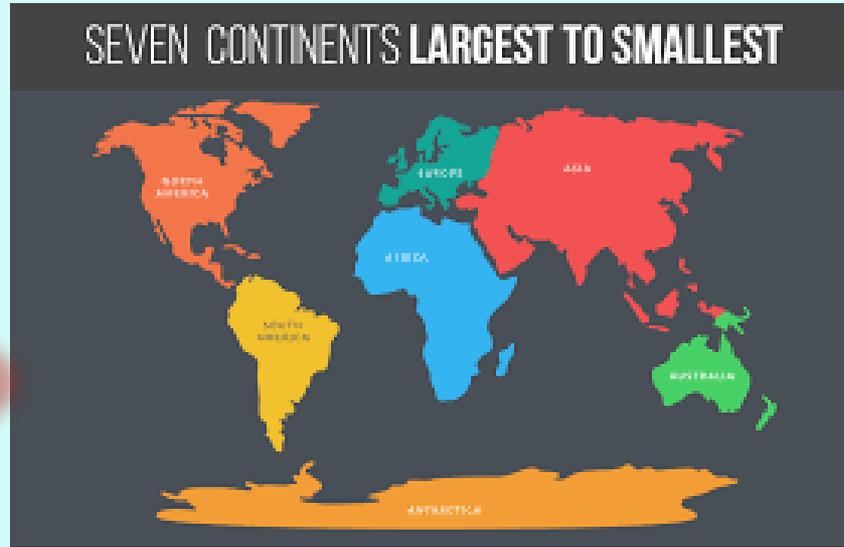
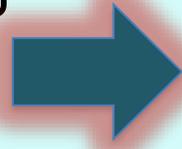
- Describe the dynamic connotations of the concepts of “culture”, “identity” and “cultural competence”
- Recognise and assess the impact of cultural insensitivity and discrimination on children and families
- Identify the impact of personal, internal or external factors on the “construction” of the identity of service users and seek their voice
- Apply tools and strategies for enhancing cultural awareness, humility and respect to a variety of practice situations
- Integrate cultural sensitivity into written work and recordings

# Course content

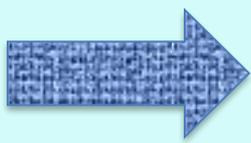
- This webinar can't cover every aspect of culture and diversity; there may inevitably be things you feel have not been covered.
- Rather, this course will help us explore the *processes* involved in how we think about and help people “construct” a sense of identity
- The focus of the webinar is to think about your practice in relation to culture and diversity and working with children and families as well as wider communities

# Introductions

Your name?  
What  
continent  
are you  
from?



This is Asia (So what do we mean by "Asian")





This is Africa  
( So what does  
"African" mean?)

# The legal foundation for attention to culture in practice

- In 1989, for the first time in the history of child care law, the Children Act required local authority social services departments to take into consideration a child's racial, cultural, religious and linguistic background when making decisions about them (Section 22(5)(c))
- This requirement was re-emphasised by the Adoption and Children Act 2002: in placing the child for adoption, the adoption agency must give due consideration to the child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background

# Protected characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

Note that the list excludes residency, immigration status, financial status, physical characteristics! Others? Discuss



# Whiteboards

- Text box 
- Pen 
- Highlighter 
- Eraser 
- Stamp 

**Let's test it out.....**



# Whiteboard- What is culture?

Please consider the concept of “culture”, with particular attention to the following questions:

- What are the factors that contribute to people’s cultural identity/ norms and their practice of it?
- What does culture mean for a child? How does this affect the child’s lived experience?

# Is culture homogenous?



# Some definitions of culture

- The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.
- A set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterizes a group of individuals or an institution or organization.

(Jeremy Goldbach, University of Southern California School of Social Work)

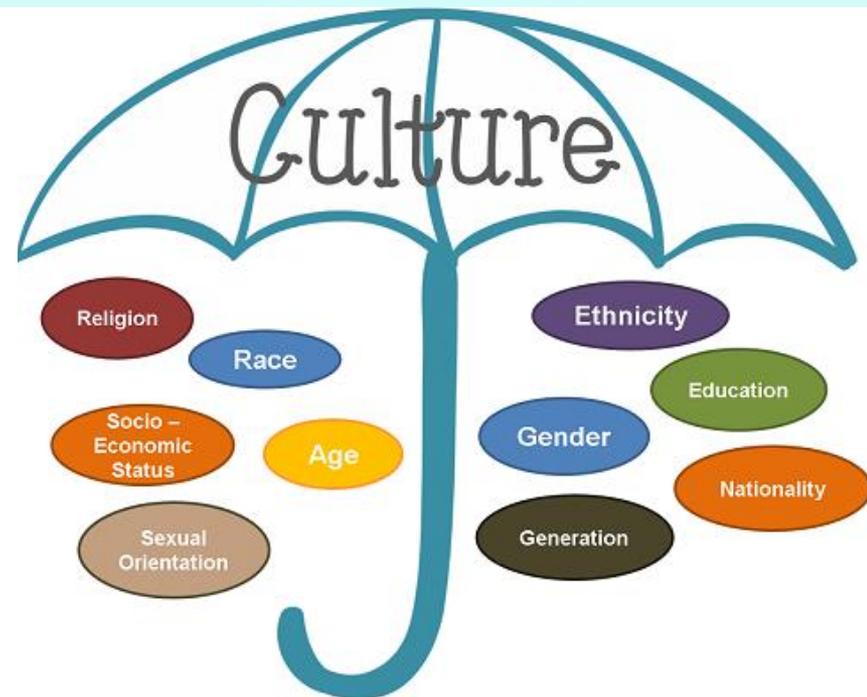
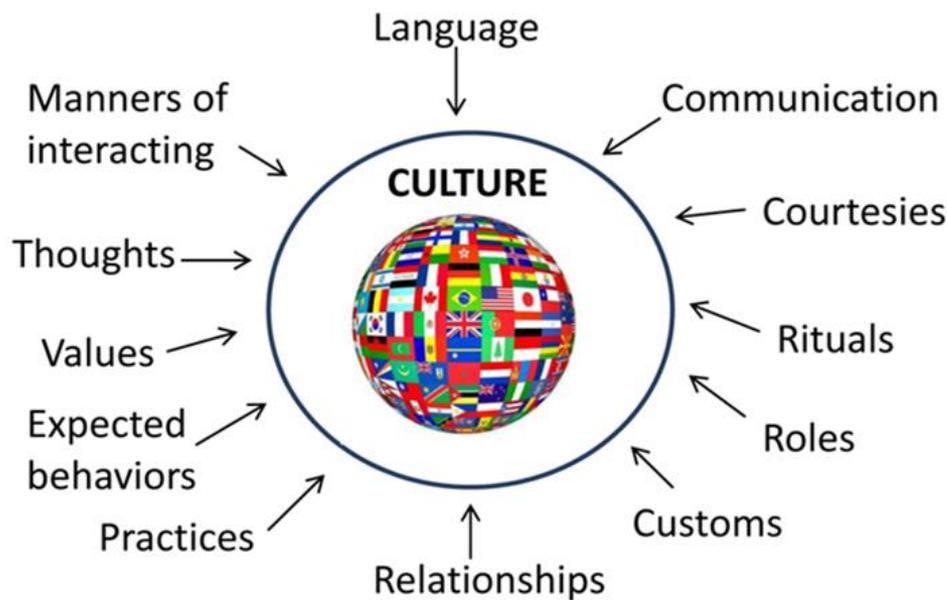
# Some more definitions of culture

- Cultures are complex systems of shared beliefs, values, norms and expectations [which shape] social structures, practices, traditions, and individuals' psychology (including emotions) and social behaviour.

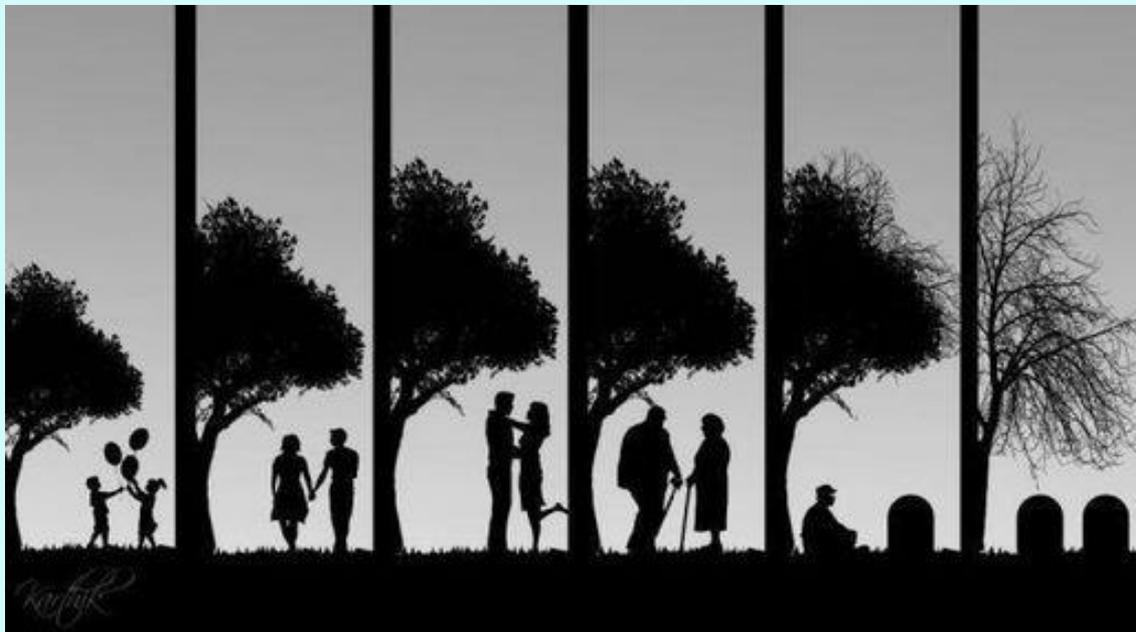
Rodriguez Mosquera et al, 2004

- One of the earliest definitions (Edward Tyler, 1871):  
“Culture....is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, morals, law, custom and any other capability and habits acquired by man as a member of society”  
(cited in Helman, 1994, p.9).

- The “way of life” within culture has also been determined and shaped by values, ideas, perceptions and meanings which have evolved over time, and which constitute our knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live
- Can be linked with place and time



- Our attitudes and behaviour within social relationships, family life, birth, child rearing, adolescence, marriage, growing old, disability, and death are also strongly influenced by our cultures; they are influenced differently in different cultures



# Culture as an Iceberg

20% Visible

Language and non-verbal communication

Rituals and symbols

80% Invisible

Communication styles

Listening styles

Beliefs about formality

Beliefs about hierarchy

Beliefs about silence

Values

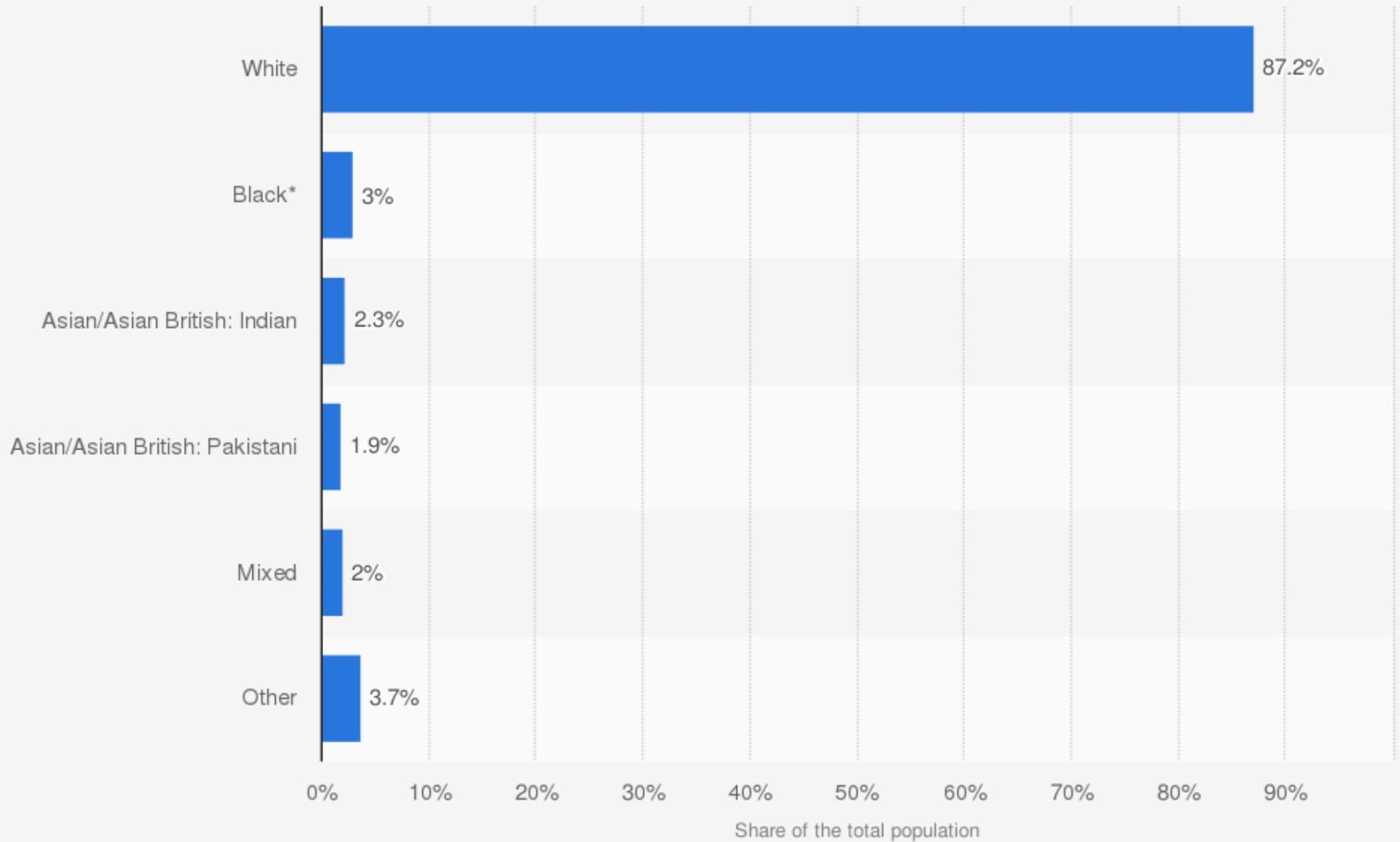
Basic truths



# Context

- In 2018, people born outside the UK made up an estimated 14% of the UK's population, or 9.3 million people. An estimated 39% of migrants came from EU countries
- Poland, India and Pakistan are the top three countries of birth for the foreign-born, accounting respectively for 9%, 9% and 6% of the total, followed by Romania, Ireland and Germany
- Source: <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/> University of Oxford Migration Observatory

# Ethnicity in the United Kingdom as of 2011



# Cultural Identity

- Cultural identity is the sense of belonging and sameness which we experience through living, sharing and in expressing a particular culture
- That sense of sameness and belonging may vary significantly
- For example, sharing the same religion may generate the greatest sense of cultural belonging and sameness for one individual, whilst sharing the same attitudes to child rearing may generate the greatest sense of cultural sameness and belonging for another



# Exercise- Constructing my own identity

- Write out your full name on the front of the paper. Below this write the top three identities you feel closest to. Also anything particularly important to you about your name

## Prompts:

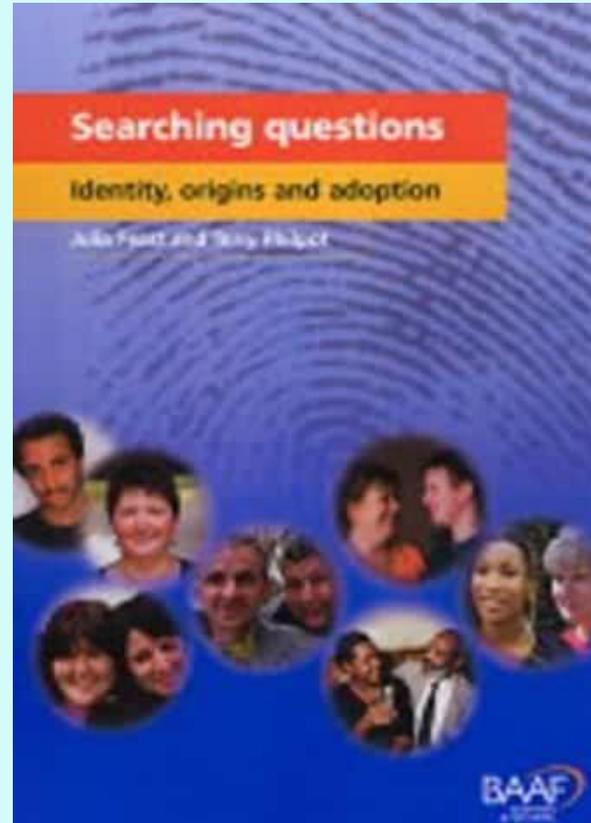
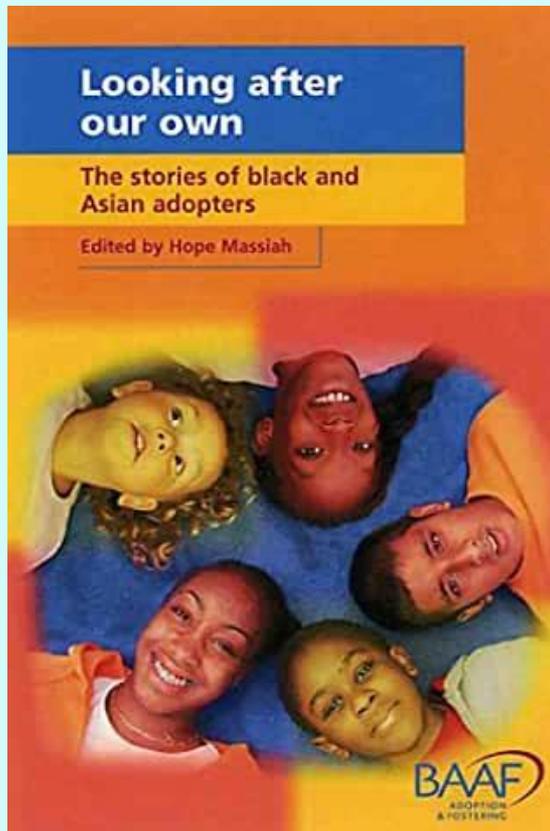
- What matters to you about your identity?
- Be specific about aspects of your cultural identity which matter to you, rather than general terms like “British”, “spiritual” or “from Horsham”

# A definition of Cultural competence

- There is no fixed definition
- However, a good way to broadly understand is as follows:  
**Cultural competence is a set of cultural behaviours and attitudes integrated into the practice methods of a system, agency or its professionals, that enables them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations**

(Cross et al, 1989)

# Cultural experiences of children in care



[Placing BAME Children for Adoption](#)



# In practice with children



- A child's concept of culture may also be partly or entirely due to aesthetic or digital subculture: Eg. Music, art, literature, sport, apps or online community, etc. I might define myself as a goth, a metalhead, a punk, a Belieber, Ariana Grande or an Arsenal fan, over and above my ethnic, religious or familial identity. This may not be how my family is perceived
- Remember ethnic terms like "White British", "African", etc., while necessary for records, do nothing to describe the child's **identity** and make no effort to find out what is **important to them**

# Group discussion

## The Construction of Cultural Identity

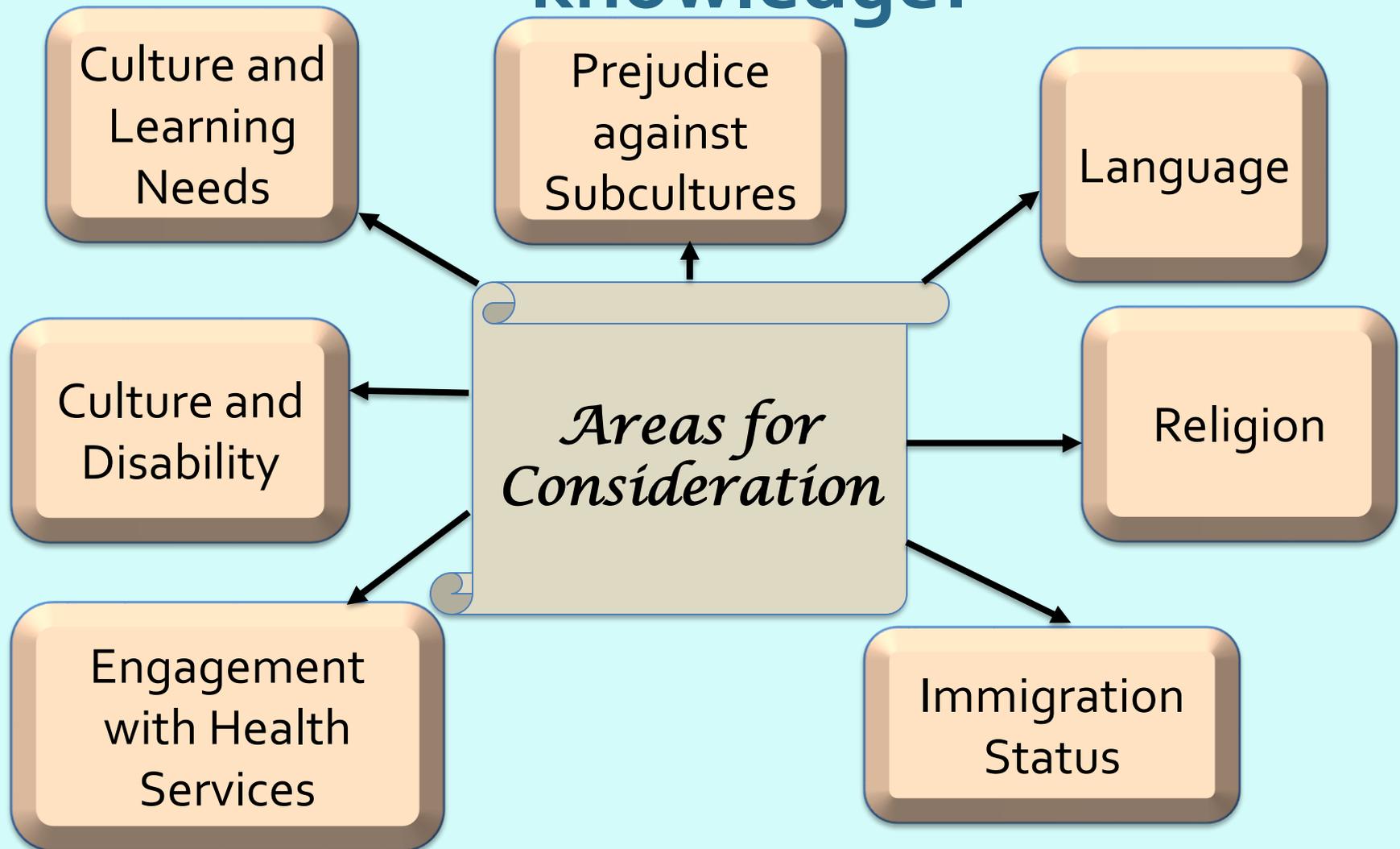
- How do we construct the service user's identity? What information do we use? What helps and hinders us?
- Think about the entire process of working with the family, from referral to end





**Break**

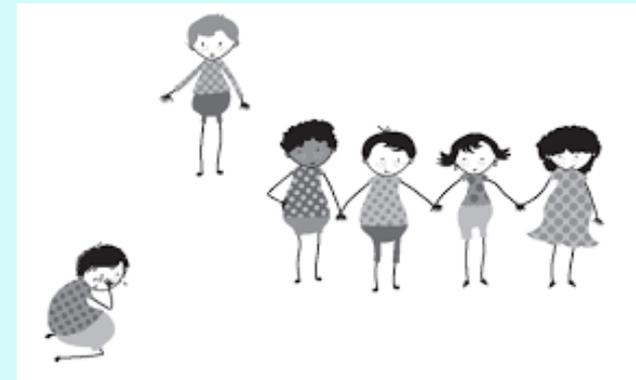
# In what areas might workers be unintentionally insensitive/lack knowledge?





# Exercise - Effects of discrimination

- How might discrimination affect our work with families, even unintentionally?
- What is the impact of discrimination on children and young people?



# Research shows.....

- Safeguarding Black girls from sexual abuse
- Placing BME children for adoption
- Disproportionate deaths from Covid among BAME communities and BAME staff
- Foreign born people including children at greater risk of poverty than UK born

# Domestic Abuse

- Additional barriers to escaping Domestic Abuse
- Be aware of the new law on controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate relationships
- Be aware of the concession available to victims of DV whose immigration status may be compromised

# Ethnicity and Poverty

- Research evidence over the last four decades has repeatedly documented the disadvantaged position of some minority ethnic groups in a range of areas, including employment, health, housing, education and social services
- Many families from minority ethnic communities are living in 'severe and persistent' poverty. The impact of unemployment and low incomes on family life is extreme
- See [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) for research and information on poverty and trends and statistics, particularly poverty and ethnicity, and other related information on website

# “I am” Poem- for use with children/families

- Write a poem called “Who I Am”
- The only rule is that each line should begin with the words “I Am”. Be creative- use flipchart, colours, etc.
- You can, if you wish, include statements about where you are from regionally, ethnically, religiously, and so on; memories from different points in your life; interests and hobbies; mottos or credos; favourite phrases; family traditions and customs; and whatever else defines who you are. Source:

<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/poetry.html>

# "I am"



- I am Church, father, faith, family and fun dates with my wife
- I am Kerala, Goa, Mumbai, Bangalore, Mount Abu, Miami, Liverpool, Ireland, Cheshire and West Sussex
- I am The Beatles, Bob Dylan, the music of the 1960s and Mark Knopfler
- I am six surgeries in 1 year, picking up the broken pieces and swiftly adapting to a new life
- I am the National Trust, cliffs, and countryside, tea and cake after a long walk
- I am social work, child protection, training, and my wonderful colleagues
- I am zoos, aquariums, endangered species, Gerald Durrell, Farley Mowat, James Herriot and the preservation of animals and of our world
- I am Folklore, Folk music, the Guitar, the Organ, Theology, Tintin and Asterix
- I am professional accountability, ethical working, diversity, best practice, respect, reflection and challenge, and relationships with colleagues





# "I AM"



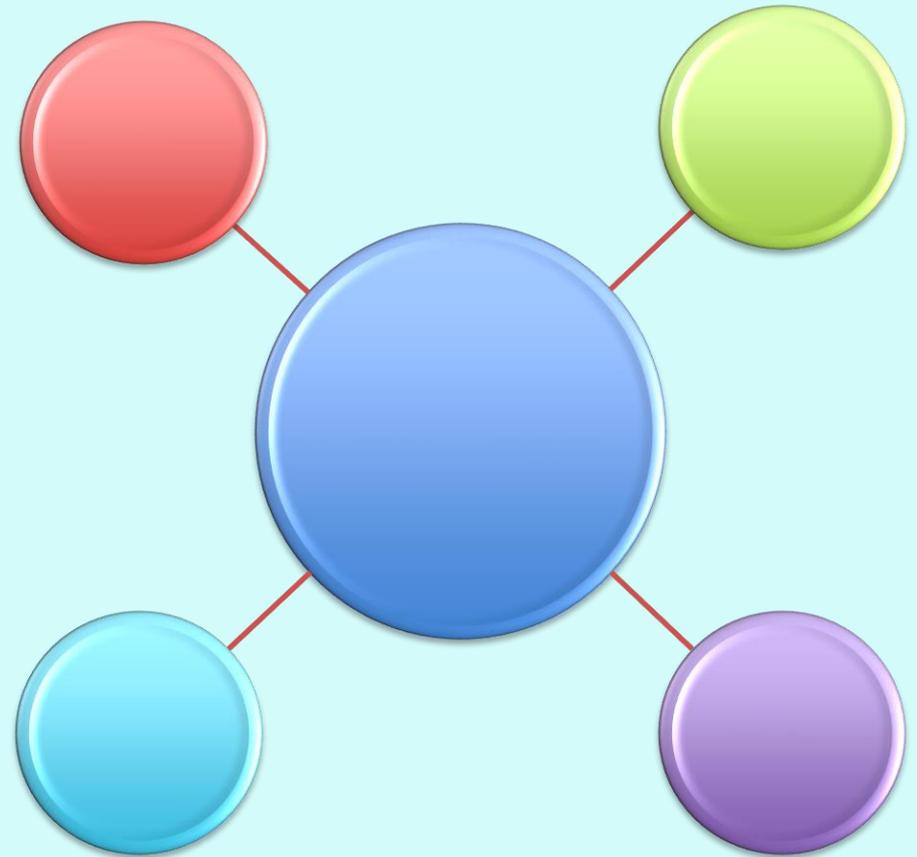
- I am a double **rainbow** on a grey day
- I am Scoonie, Glasgow, North London, Liverpool, North Wales, Durham, Chessington, Cornwall, Hove and West Sussex
- I am kicking up **leaves** in the Autumn sunshine
- I am show business, theatre, razzle dazzle, pizazz, creativity and choreography
- I am an old movie on a wet afternoon
- I am improving the lives of children and working therapeutically
- I am Rachmaninoff, Joni Mitchell, Prokofiev, Sondheim, Finzi
- I am History, Biographies, Mrs. Gaskell, Willkie Collins, Anthony Trollope
- I am a knickerbocker Glory with a **cherry** on top!
- I am the **sunshine** on my face and the wind in my hair
- I am singing in the car and dancing round the kitchen like nobody's there
- I am time with valued colleagues and friends
- I am gardening; roses, peonies and jasmine; time to reflect in my own space



# What makes me me?

Place your name in the centre circle of this structure. Write an important aspect of your identity in each of the satellite circles - an identifier or descriptor that you feel is important in defining you. This can include anything: Asian, female, mother, athlete, educator, Taoist, scientist, Mancunian, or any descriptor with which you identify.

Source: <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/circlesofself.html>



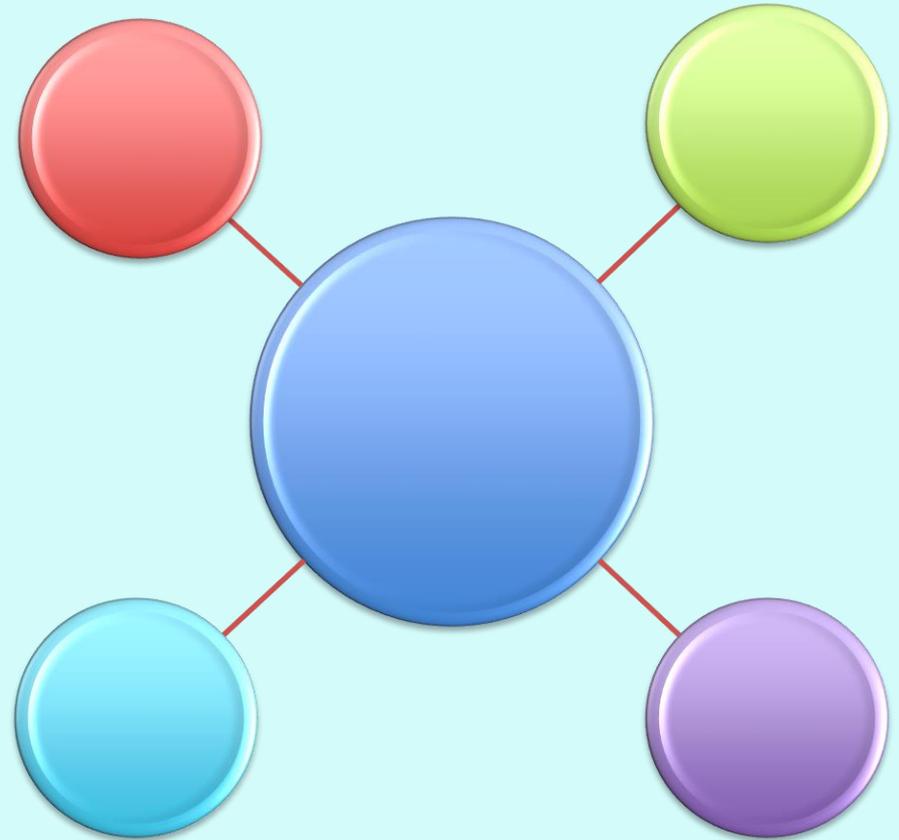
# What makes me me?

1. Share a story about a time you were especially proud to identify with one of the descriptors you used above.
2. Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your identifiers or descriptors.
3. Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are. Fill in the following sentence:

I am (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_ but I am NOT (a/an)\_\_\_\_\_.

Wording may change slightly: E.g. I am a social worker, but I DO have a social life.

Source: <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/circlesofself.html>



# Cross-Cultural Checklist Exercise



# Cultural connection conversation starters

- Refer to handout

# Case study - Discussion

- Mary is aged 34, she is currently 6 months pregnant and has no other children. She is originally from the Gambia, having lived in the UK for around 3 years as far as can be ascertained, she entered on a visitor's visa which was valid for six months and has now expired. She says the baby's father lives in London, but refuses to provide any details for him and says she has only met him once. She has no intention for him to be involved with the baby and does not know anything about his background, but she says that he is involved in drug dealing. Due to her immigration status, Mary is not eligible for free NHS treatment and is being billed for all her maternity care. Mary has no friends but states she does attend a church in Worthing. When you meet Mary, she presents as very low in mood, flat and not demonstrating much interest in anything. She has been self-neglecting and is also very reluctant to attend ante-natal appointments as she does not want the NHS to bill her. She is living in a hostel and there are no preparations in place for the baby. The consultant is worried that Mary might start to self-harm.

# Other related areas for further training and study

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour-Based Violence
- Male Circumcision
- Children from abroad
- Trafficked or Exploited children
- Forced Marriage
- Racial and Religious Harassment
- Working with the Traveller community

See LSCB, online and WSCC training, consult [Pan-Sussex Procedures](#) and seek guidance/use supervision

# “Forget cultural competence, ask for an autobiography” (Hollinsworth, 2013)

- Learning from the client instead of knowing about the client
- Seeking understanding offers much more than acquiring knowledge about the other, given the diversity, fluidity and hybridity of individuals and families
- Respectful and trusting relationships are fundamental to effective social work especially when worker and client are dissimilar in social, cultural and political location

Hollinsworth, D. (2013) Forget Cultural Competence; Ask for an Autobiography, *Social Work Education*, 32:8, 1048-1060

Dean, R. (2001) 'The myth of cross-cultural competence', *Families in Society*, vol. 82, no. 6, pp.623-630.

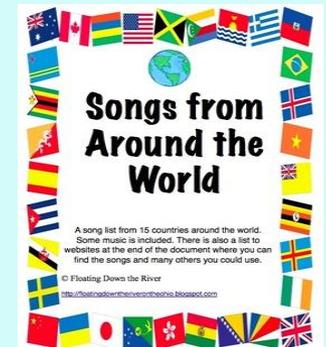
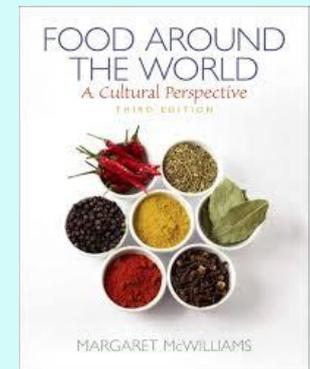
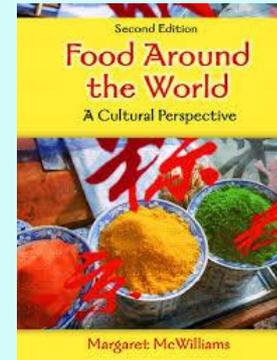


# What does cultural competence not include?

- An inability or reluctance to challenge risky, abusive or illegal behaviour
- Keeping the child as the focus of our assessment and not allowing it to become secondary to parental beliefs or demands
- Downplaying the seriousness of risk
- A fear of being branded “racist” or other “ist” or “phobic” for challenging concerning behaviour; e.g. [Rotherham Inquiry](#)
- Being culturally competent does not mean all having the same views; it’s about respecting similarities and difference and being aware of the impact in our work

# In practice

- Knowledge of community resources
- Food
- Music
- Language/ethnic groups at Children and Family Centres
- Asking about support systems
- Direct work
- Partnership work
- Challenge colleagues and organisational culture, stereotypes, ways of working, lack of knowledge, etc.
- Appropriateness of foster placements



# Examples of community resources

- <http://hallan.co.uk/>
- <https://www.somayaskitchen.co.uk/>
- Taj the Grocer Crawley and Brighton
- Polski Sklep
- Information on country embassy/consulate websites
- Specific groups, activities, etc. at Children and Family Centres
- Many ethnic stores have information about community events, etc.

# Examples of faith-based leadership/resource organisations

- [Hindu Council UK](#)
- [Churches Child Protection Advisory Service](#)
- [Churches Together in England](#)
- [UK Inter-Faith Network](#)
- [Sikh council UK](#)
- [The Jewish Leadership Council](#)
- [Muslim Council of Britain](#)
- [Evangelical Alliance](#)
- [Network of Buddhist Organisations](#)
- [Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales](#)

**Top tip:** Many of these organisational websites have contacts/information about safeguarding, support for refugees/asylum seekers/other language speakers, faith or non-faith/community events, locations of facilities or places of worship, visits, and other resources! Most are open to everyone and not just people of the faith!

# Online further reading

- [West Sussex Inter-Cultural Communication Guide](#)
- [Crawley Specific Faith Belief Culture Guide](#)
- [National Fire Chiefs Faith and Diversity in our Communities guide](#)
- [Institute for Race Relations](#)
- [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

Marcus Rashford



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

# Further resources

- [Cultural Competence: Lessons from Research](#)
- [Anti-Racist Social Work Guidance](#)
- [Black Lives Matter: social work must respond with action – not platitudes](#)



# In conclusion

- Balance “cultural competence” with “cultural humility”
- Ask for an autobiography
- Stay child focused, when struggling with resistance focus on the impact on the child, the evidence of this, and the associated risks, use SOS questioning
- Good practice of any kind is not a one-off event and cannot be taught, it is a process
- Use the numerous resources available, as well as supervision and case discussions



**Thank you for your participation. Keep safe. All the best!**

