



# Diversity and Cultural Inclusion in Prevention

## Guide and Group-Assessment Tool

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New England (HHS Region 1)

**PTTC**

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
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# Language Matters

The New England PTTC recognizes and honors that language changes regularly. Language around cultural diversity, equity, inclusion, and competence changes, too. This tool uses language that reflects the Strategic Prevention Framework Guide around these subjects to promote clarity and connection between the two documents.

To decide the best language and terms for your organization to use on the subject of cultural humility, consult your community and listen to their requests, needs, and choices. Not every set of terms will work for every person, but we know that words have power, and language matters. The best way to practice this philosophy is to do research, be respectful and open to learning, and to make changes when necessary change is brought to your attention.

Keep in mind, the words that make the most sense today may be different in the future because language changes. Respect and center the voices around you of the people who you serve and you'll be able to navigate the language of inclusion work within prevention.

**The use of affirming language inspires hope.**

**LANGUAGE MATTERS.**

**Words have power.**

**PEOPLE FIRST.**

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

# Why Cultural Competence?

Why does prevention need to center diversity and cultural inclusion?

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Prevention specialists make a **commitment to serving the community**. To serve a community fully and equitably, the prevention specialist must recognize that not all parts of the community receive prevention messaging and programming the same way, and that in order to reach all the diverse parts of your population, you must make intentional efforts to identify, understand, and speak to the full variety of people who you serve.

This commitment to diversity is reflected in many of the core philosophies and models of prevention work. **The Prevention Think Tank Code of Ethical Conduct** points to diversity and cultural inclusion explicitly in three of the seven critical competencies.

## **Principle 1: Non Discrimination**

"...Prevention professionals should broaden their understanding and acceptance of cultural and individual differences and, in so doing, render services and provide information sensitive to those differences."

## **Principle 2: Competence**

"...Competence includes a synthesis of education and experience combined with an understanding of the cultures within which prevention application occurs. The maintenance of competence requires continual learning and professional improvement throughout one's career."

## **Principle 4: Nature of Services**

"...Practices shall do no harm to service recipients. Services provided by prevention professionals shall be respectful and non-exploitive.

a. Services should be provided in a way that preserves and supports the strengths and protective factors inherent in each culture and individual."

# SPF and Cultural Competence

What does SAMHSA say about the importance of Cultural Competence?

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## Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF):

One of the overarching, cross cutting principles in the Strategic prevention Framework is Cultural Competence. Cultural competence is a cross cutting principle because in order to provide service to an entire population through the SPF model, culture and health disparities must be taken into account at each step in the process.

SAMHSA has identified the following cultural competence principles for prevention planners:

- Include the target population in all aspects of prevention planning
- Use a population-based definition of community (i.e., let the community define itself)
- Stress the importance of relevant, culturally appropriate prevention approaches
- Employ culturally competent evaluators
- Promote cultural competence among program staff, reflecting the communities they serve



# SPF MAP

Use the SPF Model to evaluate your organization, group, community or coalition's diversity and cultural inclusion efforts

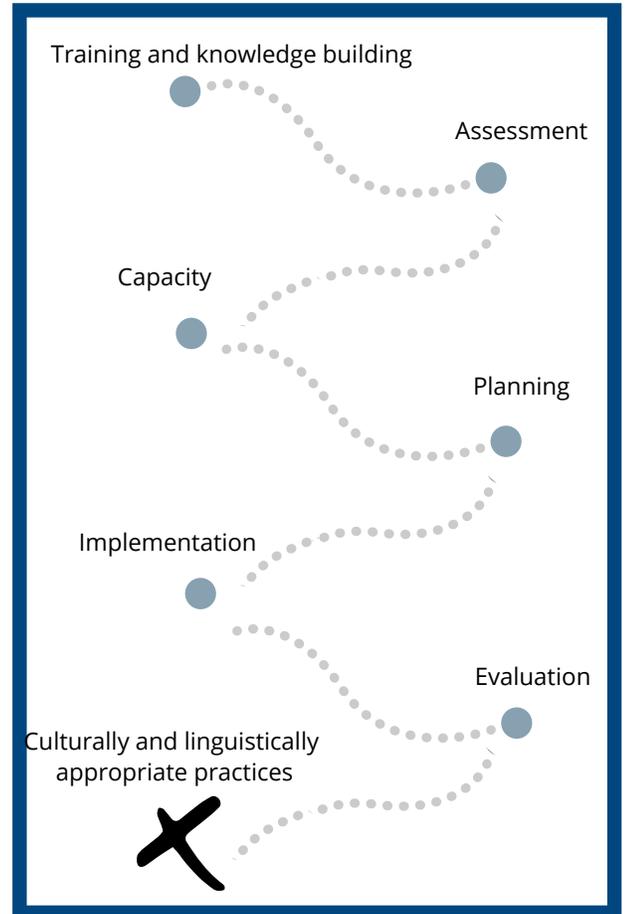
## Overarching Principles: Sustainability

Though this tool focuses on information about Cultural Competence, Sustainability is the other overarching, cross cutting principle of the SPF model. We must always consider sustainability alongside the five steps (assessment, capacity, planning, implementation, evaluation) and cultural competence in our work, so the following pages have reminders about sustainability and it's relationship to cultural competence to consider as you think about your organization's work.

The map on the right is to help you and your stakeholders visualize how the SPF model can be used as the roadmap between a training on diversity, equity, and inclusion and putting that training to practice as culturally and linguistically appropriate practices. A larger version of this map is available at the end of this tool.

In this tool, you can see how you can use each step to inform your practices. Feel free to use this map with stakeholders, coalition, or community members to explain the process and how you'll use this tool. At the end of this guide, there is a survey which you can use with your organization, coalition, or group to assess your

strengths and areas of growth. The New England PTTC will create a report from this data which you can share with your team to assess what areas you may want to focus your work around diversity and inclusion. You may return to this tool when you have determined which areas you want to work on for thoughts on what you might do to improve.



**EXAMPLE:** Healthy Androscoggin, in Central Maine, was part of a Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant held by Lewiston and Auburn Public Schools, taking the lead on coordinating the youth substance use prevention component of the grant. One of the evidence-based prevention programs identified was the Families in Action program, developed by Active Parenting. HA's implementation of the program included working with members from the L/A Somali community, and the program developer, to create a culturally and linguistically appropriate version of the program.

# Training and Knowledge Building

## Foundational Knowledge & Where to Find it

### Sustainability:

The more you know about cultures within your community, the better you can serve each individual population.

Cultures change overtime, as do communities, so coming back to training and knowledge building will help you stay current with your community as it changes, which will help to serve them better overtime.

One way to improve the knowledge transfer in a community is through a coalition structure, where sectors of the community can share their knowledge of different parts of the community informally and formally.

Before you begin to use this tool to evaluate your organization's diversity and cultural competence, staff and stakeholders should consider training and knowledge building activities that will support your ability to make assessments. This should include learning on basic language and concepts so everyone on the team has a shared understanding of the language and terms being used, as well as an understanding of the greater framework of society your community lies in. Having foundational knowledge will be helpful in moving forward with the work of cultural inclusion, so you don't spend as much of your valuable time together trying to navigate through the basic concepts. **This tool is most valuable to you after you have done foundational terms and concepts training.**

You can find training and knowledge building activities through the [Prevention Technology Transfer Center](#) website, by contacting cultural centers in your community, online through self paced classes, or through organizations dedicated to diversity and inclusion. The best training would be one that is flexible to allow you to consider the unique diversity in your community, as well as one that considers prevention science. There are many trainings on diversity available, so selecting one that is more specific to the field of prevention will let you focus in on what diversity and inclusion mean to your work.

**Example:** Healthy Androscoggin has been involved in many public health initiatives in collaboration with New Mainers, including individuals and families resettled from Somalia. Staff involved in these projects received training on working with these populations, including an understanding of the history of conflicts and other aspects that have contributed to the trauma experienced by many in the community.

# Assessment

Looking at data, populations, and social determinants of health within your community

## Sustainability:

Consider data that is longterm and provides changes overtime, and data that is likely to be a good source of data in the future.

Consider institutions and organizations that are respected and long standing within diverse populations with which you can form connections and partnerships that can be lasting.

Consider training members of diverse populations to provide the prevention programs and messaging in their preferred language or cultural style.

Consider applying for financial resources with diverse community partners.

Data is a necessary part of our work as prevention specialists. **How can you obtain data about diverse populations in your service area?** Contact your State's Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW), your local youth centers, go to your state government's website, consult your local schools and religious centers. Be sure to consider diversity of

all types: age, ethnicity, culture religious, gender, language, geographic, financial, access to education, family history, ACES, and more. Once you have an idea of the diversity you have in your community, ask:

- What substance misuse problems and related harmful behaviors are occurring in these populations that may be unique to this population? How do you know?
- How often are these substance misuse problems and related harmful behaviors occurring within these unique populations? Which ones are happening the most?
- Where are these substance misuse problems and related harmful behaviors occurring for these populations?
- Who among the identified population is experiencing more of these substance misuse problems and related harmful behaviors? The identified population isn't homogenous, so avoid the pitfall of assigning a risk of behavior to an entire population.

Sharing assessment findings with the diverse populations in your service area may mean **shifting your messaging to suit the audience**. Do you have populations with first languages other than English? Consider publishing your assessments in their first language. Do you have populations without easy access to the internet? Consider holding live meetings or bringing your findings to community events like town hall meetings or community dinners. According to the SPF Model Guide, "One size does not fit all. Be prepared to tailor assessment materials by featuring those data that are most meaningful to each audience."

**Example:** A comprehensive assessment was conducted for the Lewiston/Auburn Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant. The assessment included a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. This included learning the prevention needs of the "New Mainer" community. Through focus groups and listening sessions it was identified that a parenting program was needed across populations, including for New Mainer families.



# Capacity

Evaluate policies, procedures,  
human and financial resources,

Capacity is broken down into three parts: Engage community stakeholders, develop and strengthen a prevention team, and raise community awareness.

## Sustainability:

Find the champions within the populations you wish to serve. Giving these champions prevention tools and information will help carry forward that messaging.

Building strong, intentional partnerships with institutions that historically serve the populations you identify will help fortify the prevention work against budget changes and adjustments.

Consider hiring and training individuals from an identified population to teach programming. These instructors will have the knowledge and cultural competency to adapt and deliver the evidence based programs to their community most effectively.

Ensure that your community stakeholders know about the different behavioral health challenges that diverse populations in your community face. While **different populations face different challenges**, be deliberate in your team building that you aren't "othering" a population you want to serve, but recognizing them as a valued part of the whole community.

Build the **knowledge and resources** of your prevention team to best see and support the diverse populations you serve.

**Engage members of the population you have identified that you want to serve.** As the saying goes, "nothing about us without us." Be sure your entire team understands this is a priority. As the SPF Model Guide says, "Even the most well informed group won't be productive unless it functions well. To help the team work together effectively, discuss how you will share leadership, make decisions, divide tasks, resolve conflicts, and communicate with one another as well as with the broader community."

### Consider the Six Elements of Effective Coalitions.

Be sure you are sharing leadership with people in the population you are serving, and letting their lived experience guide your decision making process. Consider your organizations **policies and procedures**. Do you have a priority of cultural competence, diversity and inclusion written into your long term plans, employee handbooks, MOU's, charters? Do you include a diversity and equity statement in your onboarding of new staff, on your website and social media? Do you have policies to hire staff that reflect the population you serve? Do you have transparent fiscal procedures to ensure fair and equal payment of staff and contractors? Do you have a policy of zero tolerance for offensive or violent language? Do you have a reconciliation or grievance process for employees to report offensive or violent language? Consider including these policy and procedure adjustments.

**Example:** Healthy Androscoggin engaged the New Mainer community from the beginning. Four leaders from the Somali community joined the Families in Action train-the-trainer event and collectively we realized it made most sense to train facilitators from the Somali community to deliver the program to families in the Somali community. These same four individuals were hired to be Families in Action facilitators.



# Planning

Moving forward in diversity and inclusion intentionally

An important thing to remember in planning to serve the diverse population is to center the population you want to serve. This seems simple, but it takes intentionality. Planning involves prioritizing risk and protective factors, selecting interventions, and developing a comprehensive plan that aligns with your logic model.

Diverse populations have **diverse risk and protective factors**. Consider health disparities; some populations have higher risks than others, and perhaps don't have the same access to resources. How will your messaging, programs, and practices reflect the health disparities specific to your community and the diverse populations within it. Make the health disparities of diverse populations you want to serve a priority in your planning methods.

## **Select interventions that are designed with your target population in mind.**

If the evidence base of a program shows it is effective with a population similar to your target population, it is a good program to move forward with. If you have exhausted your search for a program that centers your target population, consider how you can modify an existing program to be more culturally competent while remaining in fidelity to the evidence base. The SPF Model Guide says, "Evidence based programs and practices can only make a difference if they're a good match for both the substance misuse problem and the underlying risk and/or protective factors that drive changes in that problem."

When developing your comprehensive plan to implement your chosen programs and practices, be sure to include your partners from the identified populations. **Elicit feedback** from your partners about the programs you are considering, and **then implement that feedback**.

Your short term and long term goals should reflect the changes you and your partners wish to see within the target population at the same time they **value the population's strengths**.

**Example:** Our New Mainer Families in Action facilitators helped us map out everything we needed to do to successfully adapt the Families in Action program to be appropriate for the intended audience. The program didn't just need linguistic translation, it needed cultural translation, to help convey some of the content matter such as alcohol use and early sexual activity. These adaptations were critical to generate buy-in and openness to participation for Somali families.

## **Sustainability:**

Consider the cost of programs you wish to implement. Is there a program that fits your budget, serves your intended population, and has a strong evidence base?

Substance misuse priorities change. Populations change. Flexibility must be a part of the plan so that your strategies can adapt with your community when necessary.

Choosing the best fit program or practice will increase their sustainability. The better the fit with the community, the more naturally it will continue to work.

# Implementation

What are you doing right now, and how are you moving the needle?

When delivering programs, you should seek to balance fidelity with adaptations, retain core components, establish implementation supports, and monitor.

When adapting a program to support a specific population, seek the guidance of someone who can appropriately help you fit the program to the population while maintain fidelity, such as a program creator or your partners within the population. Consider adding to the program rather than

taking things away - such as **adding culturally relevant information, lived experience from a partner or community member, or translated materials**, while retaining core components. If you were able to select a program designed for your target population, any adaptations you need to make should be minor.

Having a **clear action plan** and **supporting the implementors** of the program are two ways to ensure a successful implementation. Good experiences with a prevention program make implementors more likely to work with prevention programs again, as well as helps them adapt to any necessary changes, so addressing their needs and concerns as soon as possible is vital.

Be sure you have the continued support of your partners within the population throughout the implementation by **keeping communication lines open and regular**. Part of implementation is monitoring, and close monitoring will allow you to navigate challenges that develop along the way.

Keep in mind, different people may choose to **engage with your programing, practices, and messaging in different ways**. To be culturally competent means understanding that there are no one size fits all approaches. Seek to understand why people choose to interact with your program in a variety of ways, and how to best support them on an individual basis.

**Example:** The New Mainer Families in Action facilitators were crucial in the implementation of the program. Not only did they facilitate the classes and help adapt the program, they helped promote the program in the New Mainer community and assisted with picking a venue, date, and time that would maximize participation. Our coalition supported the facilitators with regular check in meetings and study sessions to stay fresh with the materials.

## Sustainability

Celebrate small wins along the way - a community is more likely to continue the work when they can see the ways it's working.

Be sure to address the concerns of your partners and the people implementing programs as soon as they come up to ensure the lasting success of the program.

Be sure that the programs and practices you use are linguistically appropriate.

Consider the reading level of those in your community, as well as their preferred language.



# Evaluation

Models for evaluating, sunk cost fallacy, and measuring community change

## Sustainability

Consider if you are allocating an equitable amount of resources to evaluation of programs that are directed at diverse populations.

Sharing findings is an important way to build support within the community at large and the target populations for further programming.

Increase evaluation response rates by making all evaluation materials linguistically appropriate- be sure they are written in plain language, and take steps to be sure everyone taking an evaluation is able to understand what is being asked.

Evaluation is broken into four parts: conducting process evaluations, conducting outcome evaluations, recommending improvements and making mid-course corrections, and sharing and reporting evaluation results.

Be sure to evaluate different programs and practices on their own. If most of your program is working but one practice isn't, you want to adjust the parts that aren't working rather than changing the entire strategy.

Be sure to **track any adaptations** that were made to support your targeted population within your evaluations.

Be sure to include the targeted populations in your evaluation as well as in your reporting. You want your partners in the target population to see the changes your combined work is making.

By involving diverse stakeholders, prevention planners can:

- Demonstrate **respect** for the many individuals and groups connected to prevention efforts.
- Obtain the help and support needed to conduct a thorough evaluation.
- Enhance understanding of the evaluation process among those involved in data collection and analysis.
- Ensure the cultural relevance and appropriateness of the evaluation design, tools, and findings.
- Increase the credibility of prevention programming as well as the evaluation process and findings.
- Increase the likelihood that evaluation findings will be disseminated and used.
- **Garner support** for any efforts to expand and/or sustain programs and practices that have been shown to be effective.

**Example:** New Mainer Families in Action facilitators translated all pre and post tests and implemented these evaluation tools in the classes. Debrief meetings were held with the facilitators to discuss lessons learned and any adjustments necessary for the next offering.



# Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practices

## Ideals and the moving target

### Sustainability

"Culturally competent prevention is the only type of prevention worth doing—and sustaining." - SPF Model Guide

The concept of culturally and linguistically appropriate practices will **always be changing**. The SPF model shows that you must return to the beginning regularly to begin the process again to stay relevant with your community's needs and the national conversation. This means you need to continue to get training and education on matters of cultural competence, as well.

Keeping up with linguistically appropriate practices means making sure you are communicating with your community. This means all program materials, social media, evaluation, and community outreach are clear and can be understood by the community, and staying current with the community as they change and grow.

Cultural competence is one of the SPF's two guiding, cross-cutting principles, which means that at every step of the model, cultural competence needs to be **centered**. Linguistically appropriate practices are one part of cultural competence. By centering **cultural competence**, you **can increase the likelihood of success** of programs by ensuring all members in your community feel seen, heard, and respected, and that they feel comfortable with and benefit from the programs and practices you implement to support them.

Remember, culture changes. Your community will change. Keeping flexibility and an openness to learning more from the populations you wish to serve will keep the relationship between your organization and the community healthy and productive.

Example: Healthy Androscoggin involved New Mainer leaders in every step of the development of the offering of the Families in Action program to New Mainer families. From the beginning, we knew this would lead to the best possible outcome in terms of offering a program that was true to the science but also being culturally relevant and competent. Additionally, we felt it was the ethical and responsible step to take, to hire individuals from the community to deliver to the community.



# Self-Assessment

Where does your organization fall on the scale

The self-assessment is based on the SPF model as outlined above and in the SPF Model Guide provided by SAMHSA. You can find the guide, cited throughout, here:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190620-samhsa-strategic-prevention-framework-guide.pdf>

**To use this tool, you'll need an organization number**, which the New England PTTC will provide you with. You'll give this number to anyone who you want to participate, and they will put the number on the form where it is requested. Once everyone who you wish to take the self-assessment has completed it, let us know and **we will send you your organization specific data in a report** which will highlight where your strengths are, and where you might consider focusing your change efforts. This report is stylized for your use, and may be helpful in talking to a variety of stakeholders.

There are many ways to use the survey. You may use it just among staff to determine how those most familiar with the work see it in terms of culturally and linguistically appropriate practices. You may also use this with your coalition and other stakeholders in your service area to get as much feedback as possible.

According to the SPF Model Guide, the SPF process is, "reliant on and encourages a team approach. **Each step of the SPF requires—and greatly benefits from—the participation of diverse community partners.** The individuals and institutions involved in prevention efforts may change as the initiative evolves, but the need for prevention partners will remain constant."

**Once you have your organization number,  
use the link below to access the self-assessment:**

<https://forms.gle/mzxqatLXokuBapw57>

## Sustainability

Consider taking the self assessment several times over a period of time to assess the sustainability of your strengths and the progress of areas you seek to improve.

## Other Resources

More support on culturally and linguistically appropriate practices in prevention

The National CLAS Standards are a set of 15 action steps intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities by providing a blueprint for individuals and health and health care organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

**<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards>:**

### Sustainability

Looking at a variety of resources and opinions on culturally competent behaviors, policies, and actions can help you find the best fit for your community.

Starting with a good fit will help sustain the efforts overtime.

# SPF MAP

Use the SPF Model to evaluate and improve your organization, group, community or coalition's diversity and cultural inclusion. This is an ongoing process.

Training and Knowledge Building

