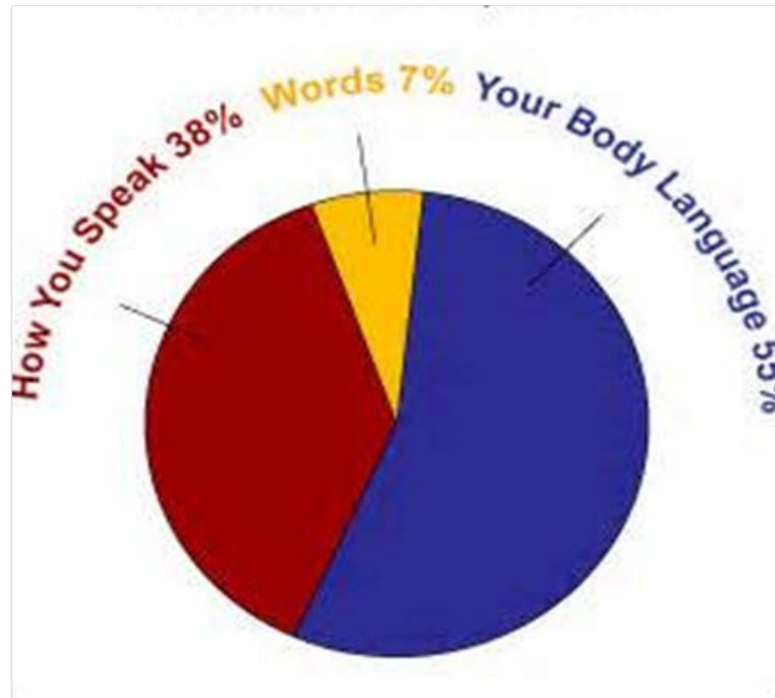


## Lab Module 1: Communications



# Communication Skills Lab 1: Foundations for Interviewing

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**Time:** 6 hours

**Lab Purpose:** This lab follows the presentation of Modules 1 and 2 (*The Child Welfare System* and *Florida's Child Welfare Practice Model*, respectively.) Transfer of learning is achieved when participants move from a conceptual understanding of the values intrinsic to the field of child welfare to actually demonstrating behaviors and basic interviewing techniques consistent with those values during structured learning activities.

Since the best outcomes for children can only be realized when there is a productive working relationship between parent and professional the steps to establish this relationship are covered in depth. This lab introduces the Engagement Continuum describing the full spectrum of interpersonal helping skills. Stages of interviews are discussed to help place the timing and use of more advanced skills (e.g., use of exploring, focusing or directing interviewing skills) in context to the overall information gathering process. In this first lab, participants will demonstrate rapport building through the use of physical attending behaviors.

**Credits:** Much of the material in Communication Skills Lab 1, 2 and 3 was adapted with permission from curricula developed by the Alabama Department of Human Resources, Alabama Child Welfare Training Curriculum (ACT, Module 1, Interpersonal Helping Skills, 2007). The phases of an interview are based on Lawrence Schulman's "Interactional Helping Skills Model." The motivational interviewing curriculum developed for child welfare professionals in the Northwest Region by Lakeview Learning Group, "Enhancing Motivation for Change" was adapted and incorporated where appropriate for beginning level interviewing skills.



### **Demonstrated Skills:**

Activities are intended to challenge child welfare professionals to demonstrate behaviorally specific interviewing skills (e.g., use of physical and psychological attending behaviors, use of silence, etc.) used to establish a working relationship with the family. It is absolutely essential that trainees understand that it takes the intentional demonstration of active listening by the worker to build sufficient rapport with the parent before more advanced interviewing techniques (use of reflections, use of reframing and exception finding questions, etc.) can be effectively used to obtain sufficient information on all the information domains.

- Participants will observe and identify distinguishing features of a professional helping relationship.
- Participants will describe the three core conditions for building professional helping relationships – respect, genuineness, and empathy.
- Participants will identify how cultural values influence an individual's perception of other people, events or situations.
- Participants will communicate empathy through use of attending behaviors during interpersonal interactions.
- Participants will learn how to observe and document behaviors related to communication.

*Display Slide 1.0.2*



*Review the agenda with the participants.*

### **Agenda:**

**Unit 1.1:** Foundational Concepts

**Unit 1.2:** How We Gain Trust

**Unit 1.3:** Interviewing Engagement Continuum

**Unit 1.4:** Physical and Psychological Attending Skills

**Activities:**

**Unit 1.1**

**Lab Activity 1:** Guided Imagery

**Lab Activity 2:** Listening to Families (Youth and Parents)

**Unit 1.2**

**Lab Activity 3:** Observing Two Interviews

**Lab Activity 4:** What is Empathy?

**Lab Activity 5:** Assessment of Critical Differences

**Lab Activity 6:** Using Interpreters

**Unit 1.3**

**Lab Activity 7:** Phases of Interview

**Unit 1.4**

**Lab Activity 8:** Active Listening Skills

**Lab Activity 9:** Physical Attending Skills: Demonstrating Empathy

## Unit 1.1: Foundational Concepts

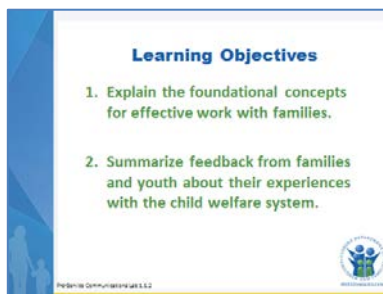
*Display Slide 1.1.1*



**Time:**

**Unit Overview:** The purpose of this unit is to help new child welfare professionals explore what values and perceptions they bring to their work with families and how these elements can significantly affect what they accomplish with families.

*Display Slide 1.1.2*



*Review learning objectives.*

**Learning Objectives:**

- Explain the foundational concepts for effective work with families.
- Summarize feedback from families and youth about their experiences with the child welfare system.



In Module 1 and 2, you learned about some of the major laws related to our work, and our child welfare practice model that is

intended to help us operationalize the legal constructs defined in those laws.



We are going to begin today with an activity involving a guided imagery, the purpose will be revealed afterward.



## Lab Activity 1: Guided Imagery

*Display Slide 1.1.3*



**Trainer Note:** If participants feel comfortable doing so, ask them to close their eyes and read the following scenario to them.

### Scenario:

“You got home from work last evening and were preparing dinner while your 4-year old was outside playing. You kept an eye on her through the window. You had to get something out of the refrigerator and took your eyes off her for just a moment. As you turned around, you heard screeching tires in the parking lot outside your house. Your heart stopped and you were sure that a car just hit her. You drop what you’re doing and run to the door. As you get outside, you see her bending over to pick up a ball in the parking lot and a car stopped inches from her.

As you run to her side, the driver of the car gets out and starts yelling at you. “What the hell are you doing? Why weren’t you watching your kid? I could have killed her? What kind of parent are you? I am calling DCF on you. You aren’t fit to be a parent!”

Initially you're angry with the driver. Then, you start to think to yourself that you really should have been watching your little girl more closely. You pick her up and cradle her in your arms. Your mind starts racing as you think about what might happen if DCF comes to your home. You've heard from others that they take kids and make it impossible to get them back.

It's now the following day. You hear a knock at the door. Your heart skips a beat. You open the door to see a strange man standing there. The man says, "Good morning. My name is Steve Jones and I'm a Child Protection Investigator from DCF. My agency received a call from someone who had some concerns regarding your child. When DCF receives these types of call, it's my job to look into the concerns and work with family to find ways to address the concerns if they exist. I'd like to talk with you about the information that was shared with us. It should take about forty-five minutes to one hour. Is it okay if I come in and speak with you?"

**Trainer Instructions:**

- *After putting themselves in this scene, ask participants, as a large group, to report the feelings and emotions that they may experience if they were in this situation.*
- *As feedback is offered, record the responses on a flip chart titled "Feelings and Emotions."*
- *Some suggested feelings might include:*
  - *Shock*
  - *Anger*
  - *Surprise*
  - *Curiosity/Suspicion*
  - *Fear*
  - *Defensiveness*
- *Keep the flip chart "Feelings and Emotions" posted for use during the exercise on stages of an interview at the end of this first lab day.*

## Activity STOP

*The purpose for the imagery was obviously to become aware of the emotions that they or anyone involved with the DCF may experience. Now that they have done so, it is important to think about the personal characteristics that they want the person knocking on their door to have for the interaction to be successful, to help alleviate some of the strong emotions felt.*



**What actions and behaviors would convince you that the person standing before you really had your best interest(s) at heart?**

*Allow for general discussion after posing the question. In particular, reframe responses provided in terms of being respected, being listened to and understanding how badly parent may feel about what happened (empathy).*

*Display Slide 1.1.4, (Lab PG: 3)*



Here are the foundational concepts that should guide your work as a child welfare professional. A little bit later we'll further explore how your behavior and actions indicate to the family that you have their best interests at heart.

*Display Slide 1.1.5*





First, as a helping system we believe that people can change. They do change. As child welfare professionals, we must be spokespersons of hope to families that change is possible, that we believe they can be successful.



**Think about a time in your life when you went through a major change. What enabled you to change?**

**Trainer Instructions:**

- *Ask participants to write their responses on paper.*
- *Allow the group one to two minutes to write down their answers. Ask the group for their responses.*
- *Write answers on a flip chart.*
- *If any of the following ideas are not mentioned by participants, then introduce the ideas:*
  - Supportive person
  - Motivated to be different
  - Encouragement
  - Identify and accept problem
  - New skills/knowledge
  - Consequences of not changing
  - Rewards



**Compare your reasons for change and think about how these reasons may be similar for the families with whom they will be working. How so?**

*Allow brief feedback.*



There is much research documenting that a person's success in treatment is directly related to the helping professional's belief in the person's likelihood to succeed. So your work begins with your thinking about a family.

The child welfare professional plays an important role in the process of change for families. Your philosophy of change and your belief that people can change is crucial to your success with families. Your philosophy of people's ability to change and why they change will,

either consciously or unconsciously, affect all your decisions in working with families.

Second, all individuals and families have strengths. You will become a master at recognizing family resilience and resourcefulness despite the most adverse conditions and experiences that families have experienced and might currently face.



### **What do you think is the benefit of recognizing a person's strengths?**

*Allow brief discussion and reinforce the following points:*

- It is validating
- It conveys to person a sense of worth
- Tells person that the “professional” does not see them as all bad
- Generates some hope, some optimism for both the professional and the family member



Third, the family is the expert on their family. You have not walked in their shoes, you do not know their life experiences and what brought them to their current situation.

The birth parents know their child better and in ways that we or other caregivers never will. Continue to acknowledge this reality in your ongoing work with the birth parents and seek out their expertise and support regarding their children's care and welfare.

You are probably going to hear from families stuff like “What do you know, you don't have kids,” or “you're too young to relate to my situation.”

Some of you are a parent, or maybe grew up in the same neighborhood of a family you will be working with. Even then, the family will still know more about their family than you do.

So we can begin to turn those negative comments around by saying “You’re concerned about my ability to understand you and your situation. I haven’t walked in your shoes, but I do appreciate that you are the expert on your family and I want to learn about your family from you.”

In approaching a family as the expert, they will be more willing to share with you what they know.

Fourth, the family should be empowered to generate solutions.  
Let’s break that down a bit.



### **What is the benefit of the family “generating the solutions?”**

*Allow brief discussion, elicit and reinforce the following points:*

- Family will own the decision
- Family will own the outcomes
- Will make choices that fit/match their family



All families do some things well, or they would have long ago disintegrated as a unit. In spite of the current situation, many children in the child welfare system have gotten some good parenting during some parts of their lives.



### **Who is responsible for the “empowering” of family?**

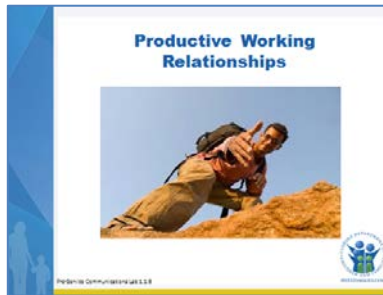
*Allow participants to identify investigators, case managers, child welfare professionals. Allow brief discussion and reinforce the following points:*

- Child welfare professional is the one who empowers by offering choices
- Child welfare professional should refrain from telling families what to do, giving advice, giving the answers



That brings us the fifth foundational concept, productive working relationships are imperative.

*Display Slide 1.1.6*



If you want to be in a position to empower families, that will only happen if you are able to build a productive working relationship.



**What word comes to mind when you see this slide?**

***Endorse:***

- *TRUST me!*
- *Offering a hand up*
- *Person really needs help to get out of a dangerous rut!*



Clearly, the most important tool you have in your work with parents and children is your ability to use yourself effectively. By using your engagement skills to develop a positive, productive relationship with the family - the relationship becomes the vehicle through which you help the parents and children achieve change. A professional helping relationship is different from other kinds of relationships. The helping relationship is *oriented toward the family's needs*, not toward the mutual needs of both parties. The relationship is *time-limited*; the child welfare professional and family will only be involved with each other for as long as it takes to resolve the problem that caused the parents and children to become involved with the agency. Each of the partners in the helping relationship is placed in a

*defined role*: the parents or children are the persons in need of assistance, and the child welfare worker is the “helper,” the person who is to help the parents and children receive the assistance they need. The relationship is *formed for a specific purpose*; for instance, to help a mother regain custody of her children, to provide services a family cannot obtain alone or to assess whether a couple can become adoptive parents.

The purpose of the relationship *defines the tasks* on which the child welfare worker and family will work together. In addition to resolving the problem with which the family needs assistance, the child welfare worker also has the goal of helping the parents and children in a way that respects each person's worth and dignity and increases the likelihood that each person will be able to resolve similar problems on his or her own in the future.

As a helper, you will see yourself in the role of an advocate. When we think of an effective advocate, we think of a person who: offers support and encouragement, has knowledge and expertise; provides effective and continuous feedback; gives directions; observes behaviors; discusses consequences to present behavior; and models desired performance. At different times within your work with families, you will tailor your skills to match the needs of the family.



### **What do you think might be some obstacles to establishing trust with families?**

*Endorse and make sure that all of the following points are made:*

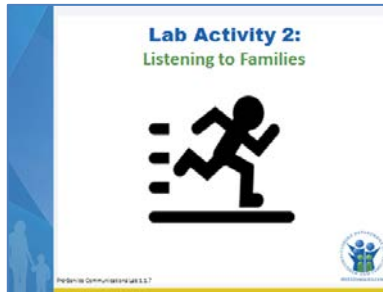
- Family will view child welfare professional as an outsider
- Will rally together to resist outside intervention
- Fear of government intervention based on their life experiences
- Might be in denial that a problem exists



These are normal family responses and reactions. They might reflect the way that your family would respond in a similar situation!

Throughout these labs, we will be learning specific skills to work with anger, resistance and hostility.

*Display Slide 1.1.7*

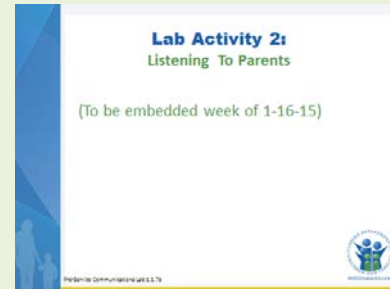
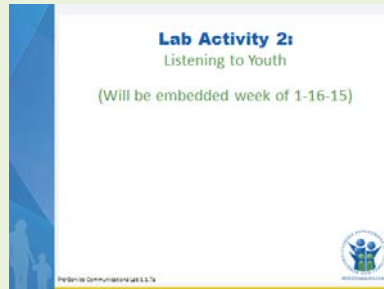


Our second activity is intended to show you how unbelievably resourceful and resilient people are and how their potential can be unrealized for years until the right persons, circumstances and treatment materialize to facilitate the changes needed for recovery and growth.



## Lab Activity 2: Listening to Parents and Children

Display Slides 1.1.8a and b



Trainer instructions for exercise:

- Have participants observe videos of parents sharing their stories of recovery success and youth sharing their stories of their experiences in foster care.
- Instruct participants to record their observations while watching the videos in response to the following two questions:
  - What were the strengths observed for each parent/youth?
  - What does the person's message tell you about the importance of the child welfare professionals thinking and behavior?
- After everyone is finished, divide up into small groups and discuss their observations. Each group should agree on two responses to each question.
- Debrief this exercise as a large group by having each small group report their findings.



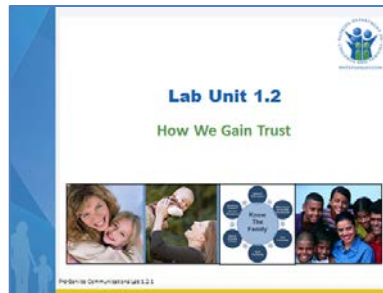
### Activity STOP



Now we are going to turn our attention to how you are going to build that productive, trust-based relationship with families. It will depend on your thinking, your feelings and your behavior.

## Unit 1.2: How We Gain Trust

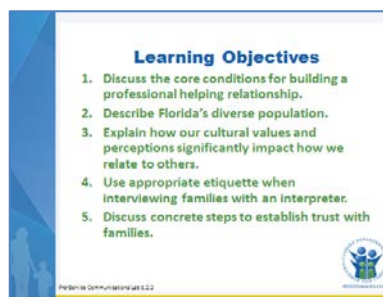
*Display Slide 1.2.1*



**Time:**

**Unit Overview:** The purpose of this unit is to help new child welfare professionals examine the basic elements for building trust—genuineness, respect and empathy. They will observe two different interviews and begin to identify the professional behaviors that made one interview more effective than the other. They will explore what personal values and they will bring to their work with families and how these elements can significantly affect what they accomplish with families if they are not self-aware.

*Display Slide 1.2.2*



### Learning Objectives

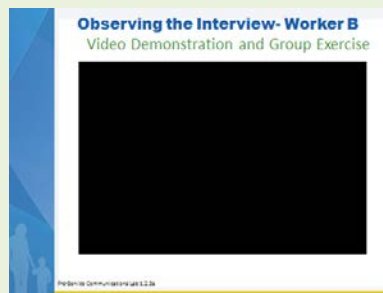
1. Discuss the core conditions for building a professional helping relationship.
2. Describe Florida's diverse population.
3. Explain how our cultural values and perceptions significantly impact how we relate to others.
4. Use appropriate etiquette when interviewing families with an interpreter.
5. Discuss concrete steps to establishing trust with families.

Display Slide 1.2.3



## Lab Activity 3: Observing Two Interviews

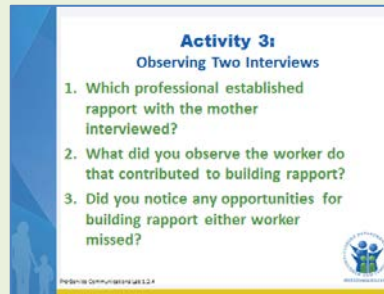
Display Slide 1.2.3 a and b



In this activity, we are going to be observing two different interviews.

Each of you will observe different child welfare professionals at work during your field days. Each of you will develop your own unique style. That said, there are some fundamentals to conducting **an effective** interview that must be present no matter what a person's unique style is.

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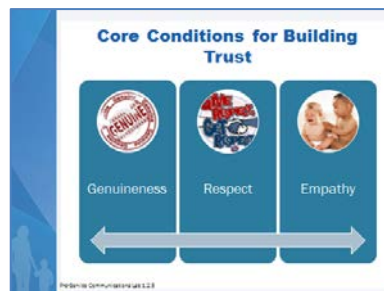
**Trainer Instructions:**

- Have participants observe videos of worker A and worker B interviews.
- Ask them to watch for the following:
  1. Which professional established rapport with the mother interviewed?
  2. What did you observe the worker do that contributed to rapport-building?
  3. Did you notice any opportunities for rapport building that either worker missed?
- Debrief as a group. Try to elicit and reframe observations in a way that begins to shape their recognition of the three core conditions of genuineness, respect and empathy. Reinforce behaviorally specific observations, especially any physical attending behaviors that were observed.



## Activity STOP

Display Slide 1.2.5, (Lab PG: 4)



These are the three core conditions for establishing trust. They are a combination of underlying values and behaviors that

demonstrate the value in action.

You will be learning specific interviewing skills that help to demonstrate these core conditions continuously in your work with families, from hotline calls through investigations to case management and case closure.



### **How do you know when someone is being genuine?**

*Elicit and discuss the following responses:*

- Person comes across as sincere, doesn't come across as phony
- Body language matches the words
- Voice tone matches the message



Genuineness is being you, being totally congruent with in what you say and do, being non-defensive and spontaneous.

Being genuine includes self-disclosures in a purposeful and brief manner. Any self-disclosure you make should only be for the benefit of the person you are interviewing, not your own personal benefit.

For example, sharing with a parent how challenging it can be to potty train a toddler to normalize their frustration.

Self-disclosures about your work and family life should be few and far between, and always only for the benefit of the listener. Interviews with families are not the time and place for your venting!



## What are the ways that you will be demonstrating respect?

### *Endorse:*

- Addressing adults with Mr./Ms. and last name
- Asking where to sit
- Recognizing strengths
- Showing commitment and follow-up as promised
- Being open-minded
- Being non-judgmental

Respect is believing that there is value and worth in each human being, and that there is potential as well.

There are two aspects of respect, your mindset —the way you think and your attitude toward someone and secondly, your ability to communicate respect through the effective use of interpersonal helping skills.

Demonstrating respect includes seemingly small acts such as:

- how you address a person
- seeking their permission to enter the home
- taking time whenever possible to interact as a human being (comment on something positive in their home)
- Attend to details related to follow-up such as arranging for emergency concrete supports when needed, returning phone calls, making referrals, scheduling meetings at convenient times and places for family
- Meeting with family as a whole to provide information
- Identify individual and family strengths and resources

Respect includes acknowledging the parental hierarchy and going through the parents as the experts on their children, in spite of what has happened in the family. We will learn more about this topic in the investigations specialty training.

Demonstrating respect includes larger acts such as enlisting the

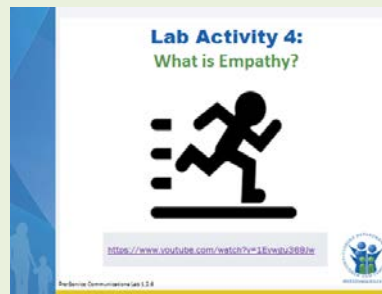
family's active help to develop a safety plan and ensuring that they co-construct their case plan.

If I respect you, I will seek to understand how your life experiences have contributed to the current family problems. I will seek to learn about your culture and how that impacts your daily family life and parenting.



## Lab Activity 4: What is Empathy?

Display Slide 1.2.6



### Trainer Instructions:

- Show participants a 3 minute YouTube video on empathy.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewvgu369Jw>
- Debrief, eliciting and reframing as needed the following points:
  - Conveying empathy is both verbal and non-verbal.
  - Conveying empathy does not mean that we agree with a person's behaviors. It is important to be clear when we convey empathy that we are not condoning any acts of child maltreatment or partner violence.
  - Being able to demonstrate these conditions requires a keen sense of self-awareness as to our own belief system, and an appreciation and acceptance of the unique culture of every family we will meet.
  - Empathy is a process in which you attempt to experience another person's world, and then communicate back to them your understanding of what the situation means to that person.



## Activity STOP

**Trainer Note:** Most of the following section is based on a 30 minute training developed by Rice University, “A Guide to Cross-Cultural Awareness and Communication” 2006, posted at: <http://cohesion.rice.edu/campuservices/crosscultural/index.cfm>

Display Slide 1.2.7



**How would you interpret this sign?**

*Allow discussion and answers. If there are multiple interpretations, this becomes an opportune teachable moment. Generally in the US, this sign means “okay.”*

Display Slide 1.2.8



*Review the answer.*



This is only one example of how cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings that can affect your daily interactions with people from culturally different backgrounds.

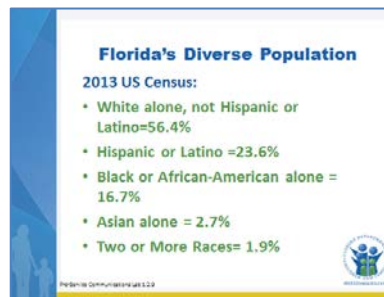
Imagine that you are the case manager, using this sign to convey to Mom that she is doing so well with her substance abuse

recovery, but what if the mom is from Brazil....



People from cultures different from your own may not interpret everything you say the way you meant it. And vice versa.

*Display Slide 1.2.9 (Lab PG: 5-6)*



**Lab PG: 5-6**, include further breakdown and eligibility categories for refugee populations in Florida.

**Trainer Note:**

The information on slide and in participant guide is from the US Census Bureau and the Refugee Services Program, Florida Department of Children and Families. Census data for specific Florida counties can be located at:

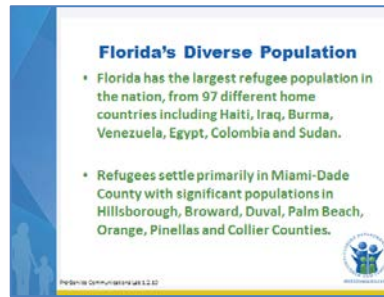
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12000.html>

Review content on slide, bringing in information on local communities if desired.



**Based on the 2013 US Census, Florida's population is**

- White alone, not Hispanic or Latino=56.4%
- Hispanic or Latino =23.6%
- Black or African American alone = 16.7%
- Asian alone = 2.7%
- Two or More Races= 1.9%

*Display Slide 1.2.10*

*Review slide bringing in information on local programs and resources. It is important to distinguish the definition of “refugee” which is being forced to flee their home country and “illegal immigrants.”*



Florida has largest refugee population in the nation, from 97 different home countries including Haiti, Iraq, Burma, Venezuela, Egypt, Columbia and Sudan.

Refugees settle primarily in Miami-Dade County with significant populations in Hillsborough, Broward, Duval, Palm Beach, Orange, Pinellas and Collier Counties.

*Display Slide 1.2.11, (Lab PG: 7)*

Here are two of the most common definitions of culture:

- "Culture is the shared set of assumptions, values, and beliefs of a group of people by which they organize their common life." *Gary Wederspahn*
- "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another." *Gewert Hofstede*

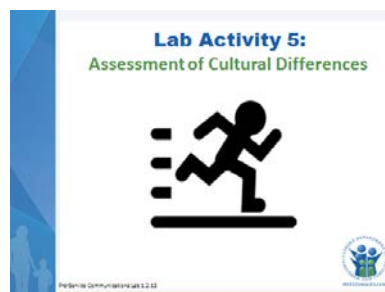
Display Slide 1.2.12, (**Lab PG: 7**)



Culture is often compared to an iceberg. Only about 10-20% of cultural differences can be observed-- way of dress, food, holidays, music, and language.

The family you grow up in affects your deepest attitudes and beliefs, giving you your sense as to what is good or right, what feels comfortable, what behavior is acceptable and what is not. The differences that are observable are those that are above the water line, the “surface culture.” The part below the water line is the “deep culture.”

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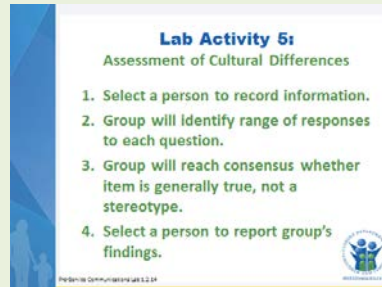


The next activity is a group exercise designed to assess cultural differences that we are aware of in our community.



## Lab Activity 5: Assessment of Cultural Differences

Display Slide 1.2.14, (Lab PG: 8-9)



**Trainer Note:** You will need to decide how to assign groups for this exercise.

### Trainer instructions for exercise:

- Establish ground rules: **This is not meant to be a debate about which cultural practices or beliefs are “right or wrong”!**
- The group can have a thoughtful conversation as to whether any of the responses suggested are a stereotype or are generally true. The group can decide if their consensus is “not certain.”
- Explain to the group the difference between parenting in general and approach to behavior management and discipline.
  - Each group should select a recorder.
  - Group will identify a range of responses to each question.
  - Group should try to reach consensus as to whether item is generally true.
  - Group should select a reporter.
  - Debrief this exercise one topic at a time, beginning with a different group each time. For each topic, allow other groups to add any topics that the first reporting group did not have. Here are the topics in the exercise:
    1. Hierarchy within the family
    2. Child rearing practices
    3. Child behavior management/discipline
    4. Seeking help from anyone outside the family
    5. Which of the beliefs below are most characteristic of different cultures?
      - There are no limits on what I can do or become, so long as I set my mind to it and make the necessary effort.
      - There are limits beyond which we cannot go and certain

*givens that cannot be changed and must be accepted. Life happens TO you*

6. *Any characteristics not covered in the above that any member of the group feels should be mentioned.*

- *Ask participants at the end:*



**Was this exercise comfortable or not?**

**Was it difficult for anyone to trust someone you don't know with more information than you usually share in a typical introduction?**

**Endorse:**

Reflect that it is normal to feel somewhat vulnerable, not knowing if/how the other person in the group was going to judge you.



**Activity STOP**

Display Slide 1.2.15, (**Lab PG: 10**)



Being culturally competent in our work with families means that we must expect that there are cultural differences and conduct our work in a respectful and responsive manner. It is more than knowledge; it is a state of mind and a way of practicing.

It is helpful for child welfare professionals to become accustomed to different cultures, especially those that you are most likely to be working with. For example, if the worker learns some of the customs of Mexican Americans, the worker will perhaps have the opportunity to act on that knowledge when working with a

Mexican American family. In such a situation, the family will probably see the worker as being aware of and therefore valuing their culture. Thus, the worker may influence them to feel more accepted and understood.

However, some people overemphasize that the way to be culturally sensitive is to have knowledge about a specific culture. There are so many different cultures in Florida that few of us could be well-versed in them all.

There is a universal language, however, which bridges cultures. That universal language is the core condition of respect, which we have been examining together. No matter who you encounter, if you make a genuine effort to demonstrate respect for that person, the person on some level will recognize your respectful attitude and will be more likely to work productively with you.

In fact, knowing how to act with respect is more important than having specific knowledge of a culture. You can have specific knowledge of a culture, but still alienate members of that culture if you treat them with disrespect. By contrast, members of another culture will be likely to overlook that you do not know about their culture if they feel that you respect them.

*Display Slide 1.2.16*



For each family encountered by the child welfare system, race and ethnicity are federally required data fields within the FSFN system. The methods for determining and documenting race and ethnicity and the definitions under federal guidelines are based on self-disclosure, as well as any supporting official documentation. If the two conflict, the determination should rely upon the personal statement of the individual regarding his or her race and ethnicity and that of their children.

FSFN provides the capacity to document multiple races for individuals. In referring to an individual, the intent is to convey that he or she personally identifies with more than one race.

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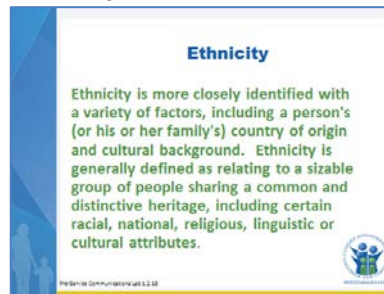


These are the race choices provided in FSFN, as defined by the federal Children's Bureau.

The selection of an individual's race may be based on how others define or self-definition; parents should identify the race of their child.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Middle East, or North Africa

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Ethnicity and race are not the same.

Ethnicity is more closely identified with a variety of factors including a person's (or his or her family's) country of origin and cultural background and is generally defined as relating to a sizable group of people sharing a common and distinctive heritage including certain racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural attributes.

While racial groups often have similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds, it must be remembered that they may also be very different. For example, an African American individual who grew up in Cuba or in a Cuban community in the United States may identify racially as African American, but ethnically and culturally as Cuban/Hispanic.

It is also important to remember that a person of any race born in the United States, but whose family origin or community is of a specific ethnicity and culture may continue to self-identify with that ethnicity and culture.

We have discussed the importance of demonstrating respect, and we have begun to consider the ways in which an individual's culture might filter the way that they see your well-intentioned behaviors. Let's think about language barriers.

*Display Slide 1.2.19**Definition on slide:*

Linguistic competence is "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, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, and individuals with disabilities.

*Display Slide 1.2.20*

The hotline will attempt to learn whether the alleged perpetrator, child victim and family members in an intake speaks English or another language, or if a person has any hearing impairments.

As a government agency, we are required to ensure that adequate interpreter services are available for our clients who need it.

We are going to watch a brief video as to rules of etiquette when using an interpreter.



## Lab Activity 4: Etiquette When Using Interpreters

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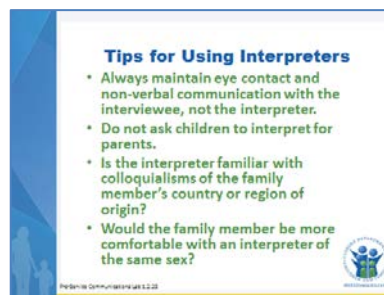
### Trainer Instructions:

- Show brief video made by NJ Legal Services  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVm27HLLiiQ>
- Lead a discussion as to what participants learned from the video.
- The next slide also summarizes key points made.



## Activity Stop

Display Slide 1.2.23 (Lab PG: 10)



To summarize the key points in the video,

- Always maintain eye contact and non-verbal communication with interviewee, not the interpreter.
- Do not ask children to interpret for parents.
- Is interpreter familiar with colloquialisms of the family member's country or region of origin?
- Would family member be more comfortable with an

interpreter of the same sex?

We have discussed many issues that will influence communication with families, our respective cultural belief systems, and any barriers to actual verbal communication.

We are now going to turn to the specific interviewing skills that will be your most important tools for the work you have signed up to do.

## Unit 1.3: Interviewing Engagement Continuum

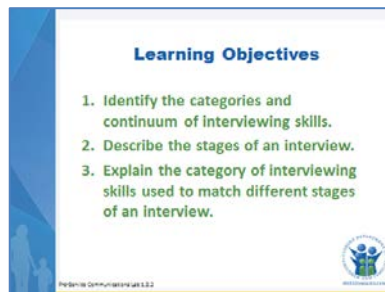
*Display Slide 1.3.1*



**Time:**

**Unit Overview:** The purpose of this unit is to introduce new child welfare professionals to the continuum of interviewing skills that they will be learning and how they parallel the phases of an interview. These skills are the manner in which the core conditions of respect and empathy will be demonstrated to the family. There is a heavy emphasis in this unit on the importance of communication skills as a way of truly “listening and hearing” what families are saying and feeling.

*Display Slide 1.3.2*



*Review learning objectives.*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify the categories of interviewing skills.
2. Describe the stages of an interview.
3. Explain the category of interviewing skills used to match different stages of an interview.

*Display Slide 1.3.3*

There are many skills you will use throughout your work with a family. Interviews are the means through which you and the family come to understand the circumstances that brought them to the attention of the agency and the ways you and the agency can be helpful to them.

The interview process is what you use to help them change and be active participants in the safety planning and case planning processes. Your ability to use skills that engage family members to enable them to actively join with you in the assessment and planning process will determine how effective you are in fulfilling the goals of safety, permanency and well-being.

Investigators will be with families a lot less time than case managers, however, as the first person in contact with the family the investigator's interactions will set the stage for what follows.

The investigator's interactions can help to open a family up to the need for change, or can contribute to the family being even more resistant and shutting down. This is not to imply that families are going to welcome us into their lives. We begin our work with families when they are often at a very low point in their lives. They are going to be angry, scared, and/or fearful about what is going to happen. You will be learning skills to deal with resistance and anger.

We are now going to discuss the phases of an interview.

*Display Slide 1.3.4*

These phases were conceptualized by Lawrence Shulman in his “Interactional Helping Skills Model.” Shulman applied these same phases also to all casework with a family over time, from the time the call is received at the hotline up to and including the point where the case is closed.

*Display Slide 1.3.5 (Lab PG: 11)*

The phases of an interview are associated with specific interviewing skills, referred to in this training as the “Engagement Skills Continuum.”

Please note that the engagement skills continuum begins at the left with listening skills. Listening skills are an essential first step in order to demonstrate to the family that we want to hear what they have to say, the expertise about their family. We will be learning about the engagement skills continuum in depth throughout these labs.

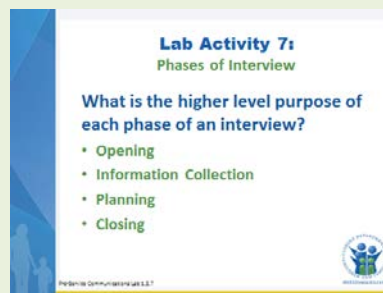
For now, I want you to think about the phases of **any** interview and what their purpose is.

Display Slide 1.3.6



## Lab Activity 7: Phases of Interview

Display Slide 1.3.7



### **Trainer instructions for exercise:**

- Divide participants into an even number of small groups (i.e. two, four or six).
- Distribute one sheet of flip chart paper to each group.
- Ask the groups to discuss what they believe is the purpose of each individual interview phase. They should base these discussions simply on the title of each phase.
- Stress that they are not being asked to list tasks that must be completed, rather they are being asked to identify a higher level purpose.
- Participants should discuss and record their responses on their sheets of flip chart paper and post them on the wall when completed. When each group has completed their assignment, process each group's work as a large group.

**Trainer Notes:**

The sheets of flip chart paper should remain posted through-out the first seven lab days to compare participants responses to information offered during the training. Participants will likely discover that they identified some of the skills in Shulman's model, however simply did not have a name for them. Some participants may be familiar with Shulman's model from college courses.

**Activity STOP**

Display Slide 1.3.8, (Lab PG: 12)

INTERVIEW PHASE	PURPOSE
1. OPENING PHASE	Establish Rapport 1. Schedule call 2. Provide personal expression Establish a Working Relationship 3. Explain purpose of call 4. Address immediate concerns (preventing interview from moving forward)
2. INFORMATION COLLECTION PHASE	Gather Information Secure Accuracy of Information
3. ELUCIDATE PHASE	Information Gating and Clarification Summarizing
4. CLOSING PHASE	Build Family Understanding Follow-up Information Requested Expression of Plurality Views Appreciation



Here are the interview phases and the purposes. As you can see, many of your assumptions were correct!

*Using the flip charts that participants developed; reinforce, reframe or add items for each phase of an interview. In addition, make sure to restate that although the purpose of each interview might be different, the stages are important to go through for each interview conducted.*

**Opening Phase:**

Establishing rapport includes introducing yourself and providing a personal expression. A personal expression is an “I” statement that sets a positive tone and to the extent possible:

- Offers a compliment about home or family member (picture on wall, flowers outside, child, etc.
- If appropriate, might express your appreciation for the accommodations made by person to meet at a time and place

Establishing a working relationship includes the purpose of the visit and addressing any immediate concerns that need to be addressed before the interview can move forward.

### Information Collection Phase

Gathers information that is the primary focus and purpose of the interview. May be a subsequent interview that is for purposes of further developing accuracy of information (to clarify any further information learned, clear up discrepancies).

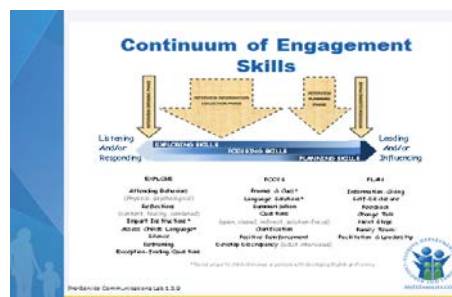
### Planning Phase

Information is provided by child welfare professional as to next steps, choices offered including pros and cons of different choices.

### Closing Phase

This is when we check and confirm family's understanding of information conveyed, next steps, and follow-up information requested by family or worker, and expectation of further visits.

*Display Slide 1.3.9 (Lab-PG: 12)*



Here you see the continuum of engagement skills and how it relates to the phases of an interview. When we are building rapport and gathering information, during the first two phases of an interview, we will be primarily using our listening skills, shown at the left end of the continuum.

Exploring skills will be used to learn from the family what we need to learn during these first two phases. Focusing skills will help us build agreement with the family as to the information we are learning, and will lead us into the planning stage of the interview. It

is only during the planning stage that we will offer specific direction, advice or family choices.

There are a few skills that are highlighted on the continuum that are specific to interviews with children. They are also useful to use with persons who have limited proficiency in speaking English.

*Display Slide 1.3.10*

Interview Phases & Skills	
Interview Phases	Associated Skills
1. Orientation Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish rapport and establish rapport</li> <li>1. Orientation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congruence of body language, voice tone, and facial expression</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Empathetic and appropriate</li> <li>• Establish self-discipline</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Rapport               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-discipline</li> <li>• Openness/interest</li> <li>• Empathetic response</li> <li>• Empathetic posture/stance</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Rapport               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathetic posture/stance, feelings, and emotional communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Information Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish rapport and establish rapport</li> <li>1. Use of Active Listening Skills</li> <li>2. Use of Empathy Skills</li> <li>3. Use of Rapport Skills</li> <li>4. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>5. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>6. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>7. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>8. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>9. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>10. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> </ul>
3. Interview Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish rapport and establish rapport</li> <li>1. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>2. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>3. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>4. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>5. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>6. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>7. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>8. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>9. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>10. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> </ul>
4. Conclusion Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish rapport and establish rapport</li> <li>1. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>2. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>3. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>4. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>5. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>6. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>7. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>8. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>9. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> <li>10. Use of Interviewing Skills</li> </ul>



The specific skills associated with each phase of an interview are in the handout in your participant guide. The last unit today, and all day tomorrow, we will be learning about many of these specific skills and practicing.

Even though the core conditions are shown as skills associated with phase 1 of an interview, the opening when we want to build rapport, these core conditions will be demonstrated across all phases of an interview and all interviewing skills.

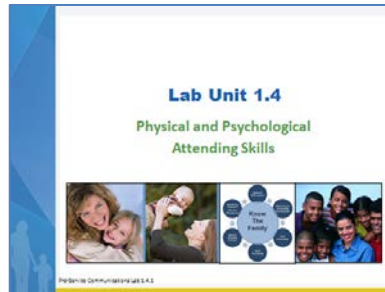
Let's turn to the last unit for today, and begin to practice skills referred to as "attending behaviors."

**Trainer Notes:**

This might be an opportune time to offer a personal expression as to your appreciation for the attending behaviors you have noticed the participants demonstrate during this first day of lab work. The more specific the behaviors observed, the better!

## Unit 1.4: Attending Behaviors

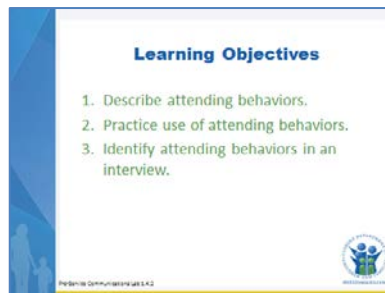
*Display Slide 1.4.1*



**Time:**

**Unit Overview:** The purpose of this unit is to introduce new child welfare professionals to the attending behaviors. They will practice the demonstration of empathy through physical attending behavior. They will be introduced to observing and recording feedback.

*Display Slide 1.4.2*



**Unit 1.4: Interviewing Engagement Skills**

1. Describe attending behaviors.
2. Practice use of attending behaviors.
3. Identify attending behaviors in an interview.



## Lab Activity 8: Active Listening Skills

Display Slide 1.4.3 & 1.4.4



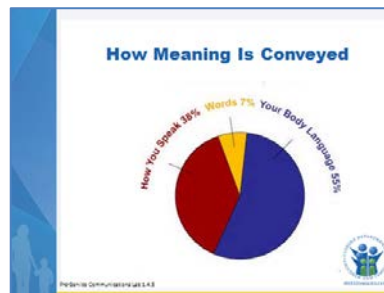
Trainer Instructions:

- Show brief YouTube clip made by Tom Peters.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwB7NAvKPeo>
- Lead a discussion as to what participants learned from the video.



## Activity STOP

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The meaning that anyone conveys, whether it is our families as they speak to us OR the meaning that we are trying to convey to our families, adds up like this:

- Your words account for about 7% of the message
- How you say the words accounts for about 38% of the message
- Your body language accounts for 55% of the message!

Body language is all of the “non-verbal” communication we make, both conscious and unconscious. It is how other people judge and “translate” what we are saying.



### Have you ever heard a great speech? What made it so?

#### **Endorse:**

- Words were moving
- **Delivery was great** (This is what we want to explore)
- Tone
- Facial expressions, hand movements

*Refer participants to **Lab PG: 14-19**.*



Studies have suggested that our words only account for 7% of the message. To be fair, these studies were usually conducted when the body language was not congruent with the words.

So take heart, when your body language is congruent with the spoken words, you are much more likely to be heard!

We refer to body language as “physical attending behaviors.”

These include:

- Gestures
- Eye contact
- Voice quality
- Facial Expressions
- Body Posture

You will want to be a keen observer of the physical attending behaviors of the individual and the family members when you are interviewing more than one at one time.

You will also want to be self-aware as to your own physical attending behaviors. It is most helpful to learn about our own physical attending behaviors by getting feedback from others who observe us. Since many of these behaviors are just instinctive, we

are not aware of them.

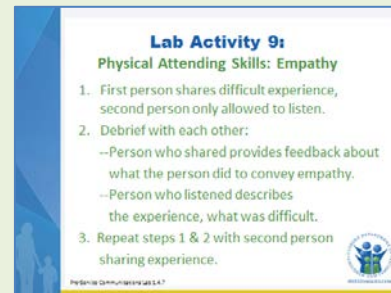
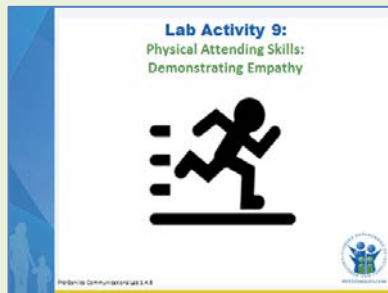
Throughout the labs, you will frequently be asked to observe specific skills of your peers, and provide feedback. The benefits of this are that you are:

- Practicing observation of behaviors
- Practicing giving feedback
- Practicing receiving feedback



## Lab Activity 9: Physical Attending Skills, Demonstrating Empathy

Display Slide 1.4.6 & 1.4.7



### Trainer Instructions

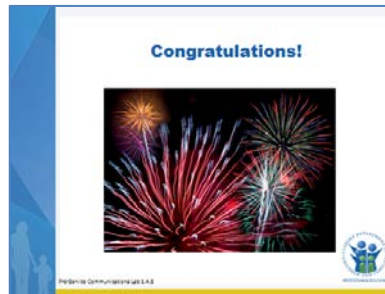
- Participants will conduct this exercise in pairs.
- You will ask each person to think of a difficult experience they had that they are willing to share with their partner. The trainer will need to prompt participants not to share a highly confidential or deeply personal experience; that said, all participants are expected to honor confidentiality and build trust among themselves. They have a long road of learning and working together ahead.
- Each person will take five minutes to share their experience.
- The partner who is listening may only demonstrate empathy through attending behaviors, **NO SPOKEN WORDS ALLOWED!**
- The trainer should serve as timekeeper, allowing 5 minute intervals for each partner to share, and debriefing with each other first after each person shares.
- The debriefing should occur as follows:
  - Person who shared provides feedback as to what the person did to convey empathy.
  - Person who listened describes their experience, what was difficult.

- *Trainer should lead an overall debriefing after all pairs have completed the exercise. Be sure to reinforce the following points:*
  - *The ability convey empathy without words*
  - *The difficulty of remaining silent!*



## Activity STOP

*Display Slide 1.4.8*



*Congratulate participants for completing first lab day, and again provide any personal affirmations about the excellent work you observed them doing.*