

Participants say:

"Excellent presenters – very articulate and adult-learner oriented."

"Clear examples of strategy implementation and good resources."

"I appreciated the recognition that students have a lot to offer."

ReachOut at upcoming conferences:

[The Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back 2005 Conference](#)

[Grantwriting: Tools of the Trade PSGA Fall Conference](#)

[Multiculturalism Conference NASPA Student Affairs Multicultural Institute](#)

[Securing Brighter Futures CWLA 2006 National Conference](#)

ReachOut offers training and consulting to promote the delivery of culturally-relevant and respectful services by organizations that support diverse, low-income populations.

Past clients include:

Environmental Science Center

Highline School District

Family Partnerships Project: Seattle Public Schools

Puget Sound Educational Service District (Fife)

Ruth Dykeman Children's Center

Reaching Out

Promoting Respect, Relevance, and Results

Welcome to the third edition of *Reaching Out*, a periodic e-newsletter with practical ideas and thoughts for you and your organization regarding issues of cultural competency and parent and community involvement.

Check it Out

ReachOut's been busy! We've developed additional cultural competency curriculum, including *Cross-Cultural Communication* – a new workplace application module. Check out our website, at www.reachout.us, for more information regarding training.

Striving for Cultural Competency

How are we doing on 'exercising' cultural competency skills? Remember, becoming culturally competent requires a personal commitment to developing this skill, and for organizations it involves creating an environment that promotes and supports growth. Try this strategy for your next workout!

SUPPORTED: Find resources to lend support to these efforts. Motivation to exercise is usually a lot higher when we have support, especially with other people holding us accountable. If you've ever been a part of a team, you know that group encouragement and morale play an important role in continued engagement, not to mention success. It is crucial to find resources, people, and activities to help support our ongoing effort to develop our cultural competency skills.

Personal Suggestion: Find someone (co-worker, friend, family member, group) to provide accountability. You could join a book club or attend author events (check out local bookstores – Seattlelites can go to www.elliottbaybook.com), get involved in a cultural, educational, or political group (visit www.meetup.com), or take a continuing education class (check out your local community colleges and universities, many of them even offer online courses). Alternatively, create your own group around your interests.

Organizational Suggestion: Align with organizational partners that support efforts to promote cultural competency. Make sure the people you serve are seen and treated like equal partners. Seek out program partners that bring different perspectives and skills to the students, families, and communities you work with. Recruit board members that bring diverse perspectives to your governing body. Be purposeful in patronizing businesses that support and promote cultural competency.

Past clients continued:

*Non-Profit Staff
Development Coalition*

Passages Northwest

Past conferences include:

[Family Policy Council
Summit \(WA State\)](#)

[SW WA Early Childhood
Tapestry Conference](#)

[11th Annual Northwest
Conference for
Parenting Educators](#)

[OSPI's 2005 Conference](#)

[NASW 2005 Conference](#)

[6th Gathering of Social
Enterprise Alliance](#)

[Oregon Dept of Education
Conference 2005](#)

[CWLA 2005 Western
Region Training
Conference](#)

[School of the 21st Century
National Conference at
Yale University](#)

[Washington Food Coalition
2005 Annual Conference](#)

The numbers:

ReachOut has trained over 800 people in the past 12 months.

On a scale from 1 to 5, participants on average rate the usefulness of ReachOut trainings as 4.56.

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Increasing Parent and Community Involvement

One of the first, and most essential, steps to increasing involvement is building real relationships with parents and community members. Remember that old adage: *it's all about the relationships!* ReachOut has outlined *6 Essential Strategies for Enhancing Relationships & Engagement*. Here is one of the strategies and some specific suggestions for implementation.

Develop alternative methods for involvement. Be open to losing 'the agenda' and offering fun, social activities that will bring people in the door or get us out in the community. These types of activities provide opportunities for valuable relationship building and allow community members to build supportive connections with one another. Providing alternatives to more traditional activities, such as meetings, information sessions, or focus groups, allows us to meet and engage people that we might not otherwise see. Recently, one of the New Futures community centers decided to start traditional Mexican dance classes, a brilliant suggestion from a community member. The class generated an enormous amount of interest from community members and staff; it was an incredible opportunity to connect with residents who had not previously attended other activities. The success of this class led to a Mexican Mother's Day celebration that attracted over 300 people, where dancers demonstrated their talents.

Suggestions: Hold ethnic specific events, offer language classes such as Spanish to residents and staff, invite community members/youth to share their talents, or host an event. Community members (children, youth, families, and parents) have a lot of great strengths and interests that they may be eager to share. Tapping into these gifts to establish alternative activities may increase the relevance and appeal of the event at the community level. Remember to consider the time and energy people contribute and try to adequately compensate or thank them.

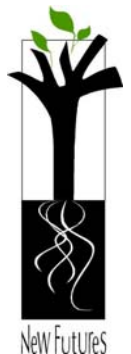
How can ReachOut help you and your organization promote cultural competency and increase parent and community involvement in your work?

Could your organization use a bit of support and motivation in the areas of cultural competency or parent and community involvement? Contact ReachOut and ask how we could customize a training to fit your needs.

Check out our website, www.reachout.us, to read past editions of *Reaching Out*.

ReachOut is the social enterprise of [New Futures](#), an award-winning, nationally acclaimed site-based provider of services and programs to low-income children, families, and neighborhoods. For more than a decade, New Futures has operated in low-income apartment complexes just south of Seattle, partnering with residents to develop programs that utilize their strengths and respond to their stated needs.

ReachOut welcomes any questions, thoughts, and comments.



New Futures