

Participants say:

"Trainers were excellent at getting us to think in new directions and perspectives"

"I like that we were led into our own understanding and not given an understanding"

"I loved how you customized the training"

ReachOut at Spring Conferences:

[SW Washington Early Childhood Tapestry Conference](#)

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

[OSPI's 2005 Conference](#)

[NASW 2005 Conference](#)

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

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

School's Out WA

Family Policy Council Summit (WA State)

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Reaching Out

Promoting Respect, Relevance, and Results

ReachOut welcomes you to the first 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.

"Exercising" Our Cultural Competency Skills

The most important aspect of ReachOut's approach to cultural competency is the recognition that it is a personal skill, which requires continual support and nurturing. Think of it like exercising and getting in shape. It is an ongoing process that usually requires a lot of motivation and more than one trip to the gym. Becoming culturally competent requires a personal commitment to developing this skill, and for organizations it involves creating an environment that promotes and supports this. Here is a bit of support and a few personal and organizational suggestions from a "personal trainer." A few ideas to consider as we exercise our cultural competency skills:

Intentional. Lack of time is a factor for all of us, especially with increasingly busy work and personal schedules. A commitment to increasing our cultural competency skills requires being very intentional about our "workout" plan.

Personal Suggestion: Commit to reading [Colors NW Magazine](#) every month. It is a magazine that is dedicated to "Celebrating our Similarities and Understanding our Differences," and it can be found free at various locations around King County, or you can pay to subscribe. It is full of great articles, book reviews, profiles of ethnic restaurants, and events around town.

Organizational Suggestion: Create a designated time, even if it is just 5 or 10 minutes, at every staff meeting to talk about what your organization has done or will be doing to foster/support cultural competency among staff.

Enjoyable. There are a lot of things we can do that increase our cultural awareness and are also fun, fun, fun.

Personal Suggestions: Read *The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee: Observations on Not Fitting in*, by Paisley Rekdal. This is a book of engaging essays in which the author reflects on her biracial identity. Go see *Hotel Rwanda*, a movie about an extraordinary man that helps thousands of refugees during a time of unspeakable atrocities in Rwanda. It is in theaters now and has also been nominated for a number of Oscars. Explore your community. There are always a number of festivals/shows/exhibits happening in every area.

Organizational Suggestion: Start a weekly/monthly organizational e-newsletter or bulletin board that offers ideas, such as books, movies, and local events, aimed at "Expanding Our Worldview." Ask staff to contribute their recommendations.

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.

Stay Tuned: The next edition of *Reaching Out* is going to offer some practical examples and ideas for increased parent and community involvement.

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.

