

Black/ African American Cultural Diversity Outreach and Support

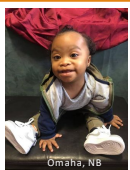
DSAIA 2021
JESSICA AVILA, LICSW
ROXANNE HOKE-
CHANDLER, MS

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Take-Aways

- 1
Learn about Black/
African American cultural
diversity and equity in
the US and facts specific
to Down syndrome
- 2
Learn cultural brokering
strategies to enhance
outreach and utilize local
and national resources to
engage and support
families
- 3
Find strategies to build
trust and collaboration
with local and national
organizations
- 4
Learn practical steps for
welcoming and
supporting more families
in your local Down
syndrome organization

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Omaha, NB



Coltibus, OH



Little Rock, AR

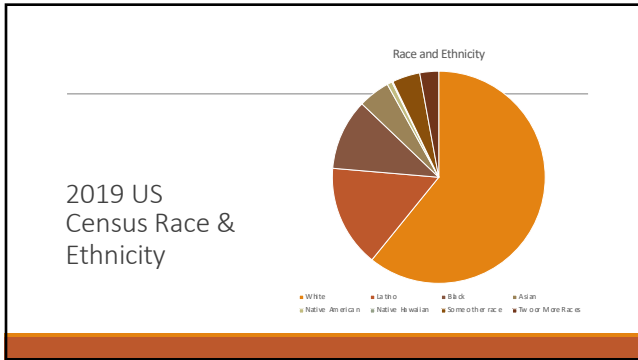


Chicago

Diversity & Equity...

Down syndrome continues to be the most common chromosomal disorder. Each year, about 6,000 babies are born with Down syndrome, which is about 1 in every 700 babies born. (cdc.gov, 2020)

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Diversity

Diversity is the collective mixture of differences and similarities among all individuals in an organization.


In race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies.

Understanding that each individual is unique; recognizing and honoring differences.


Understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity within each of us!!

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Equity



EQUITY is seeking to understand the barriers **and** provide individuals with what they need to advance in life.




Equity acknowledges that advantages and barriers exist, and that, *we all don't* all start from the same place.



Equity is the commitment to correct **and** address the imbalance.

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What are your experiences outreaching to and including Black/African American families in your local organization? Where are they?

Challenges?

Best Practices?


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Cultural Brokering

The act of bridging between or linking groups or persons of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of advocating, information and/or positive change

Identify volunteer cultural brokers

- Key individuals to serve as cultural liaisons
- Nurture those relationships
- Be curious



Laplace, LA

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**Ask...
What are the
Barriers?**

Language

Financial

Transportation


Cultural beliefs and expectations around Down syndrome

Cultural/ generational differences (one size does not fit all)

Understanding rights

Lack of trust

Literacy



Indianapolis, IN

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Strategies to Enhance Equity & Inclusion

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As a Down syndrome organization...

- Understand broad cultural views of disability and communication
- Multi-cultural events
 - Ask preferences and then plan events
- Cultivate relationships with key community members
- Advertise your DSO in multicultural media
- Be creative in finding ways to communicate with population groups that have limited English-speaking proficiency
- Find ways to culturally broker
 - Bilingual volunteers (First Call, Buddy Walk, Conference)
 - Outreach to local community organizations that support families from specific cultures

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Add Diversity to your Organization

- Social media, printed materials, website
- Board Members
- Committee Members
- Cultural Diversity Committee
- Parents First Call Volunteers



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Cultural Considerations

The views, perceptions, and approach to disability by an ethnic community or family varies depending on many factors!

- ✓ Socio-economic status
- ✓ Country of origin
- ✓ Living situation
 - (urban vs. rural, multiple generations in the home)
- ✓ One size does not fit all

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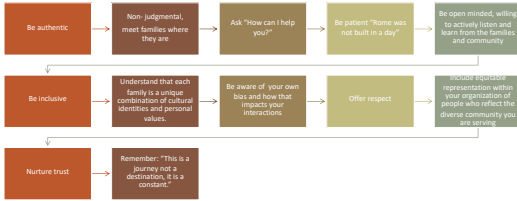
One size does not fit all!

Long time MDSC Diversity advocate and soon to be Board Member, Roxanne Hoke-Chandler and her daughter Faith.



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Practical steps to building, connecting, and supporting families



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Tips...



The strategies for outreach and connection with minority groups must be unique to each group and to each family



Never make assumptions –
Avoid stereotypes
Ask and listen



Events should be casual,
welcoming and accessible

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Talking with Families

- Be patient – everyone needs time to find their own personal way through unexpected events with the backdrops of culture, values, family dynamics and so much more
- Go slow and gain trust
- Be open and welcoming
- Reflect back to them to be sure of understanding
- Utilize cultural brokers

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MDSC Cultural Diversity, Equity, Outreach and Support

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Organizational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Elected (3) three Black/ African American women on Board
- Roxanne Hoke-Chandler

Diversity Task Force-Meets quarterly

Annual Group Leader Retreat

Hired Diversity Outreach Coordinators:

- o Jessica Avila, LICSW: Part-time Diversity Outreach - July 2020
- o Tatiana Salinas: Per-diem Spanish Outreach- January 2021

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Annual Support Group Leader Overnight Retreat



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Buddy Walk

- Connect with key leaders to get list of attendees and T-shirt sizes
- Provide complimentary round-trip bus from (Boston)
- Scholarships
- Coordinated meet and greet with key leaders from diverse support groups



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Buddy Walk

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Annual Conference – Diversity Breakfast



- Coordinate attendance with diverse group leaders
- Diversity breakfast
- Free round-trip bus (Boston)
- Scholarships offered
- Spanish translator

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Special Curated Events

- 21 Shades family support group
 - Engaging topic specific workshops and presentations to address concerns needs of families
 - AAC, Early Intervention, Benefits of Dept of Disabilities, topic specifics to family's current needs
 - 21 shades DASH group (coming soon)
 - Black/African American single moms support group (coming soon)
- Monthly events lead by BPOC, flyers with culturally diverse families of color
 - TIMBO
 - Hip Hop
 - Yoga
 - Multicultural Potluck
 - Cooking class
 - Events are free, family friendly, have food
- 1:1 outreach, support with Diversity Outreach Coordinator
- Donations (clothing, other items)



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Support Group
Mini-Grants

- Fathers Day BBQ
- Bowling events
- Knitting family event
- Special craft event
- Pot-lock dinner event
- Gift cards
- Pampers

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Inclusive Resources

A friend like Anian- Book series about a Black/African American little boy with Down syndrome

• <https://www.brownbaby321.org/>

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Expectant and New Parent Outreach/Support

Parents First Call Program

- Mentorship-creates lasting relationships
- Spanish and Portuguese
- Haitian Creole and Vietnamese coming

Hospitals (OB/GYNs, Genetics Counselors)

Community Health Centers

Down Syndrome Clinics

Early Intervention

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Women's Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs About Down Syndrome: A Qualitative Research Study by Levis et. al.

Many Hispanic and African American participants said they only knew or knew of Caucasian persons with DS and requested culturally diverse educational materials about DS.

"Looking at television you would think that there aren't any Black children (with DS). You'd think there would be an Asian child with it." - African American Woman with Young Child, Age 35-45, Washington, DC

"Come to think of it, I've seen very few nonwhite people with DS. I've not noticed Hispanic or Black or Asian. Mostly white." - Hispanic Woman Planning Pregnancy, Age 18-34, Newark, NJ. Knowledge is often shared in multiple languages, which is often the preferred mode delivery for Spanish speaking families.

"Sharing information is also important to consider because many Hispanic and African American participants said they only saw or knew of Caucasian persons with DS and requested culturally diverse educational materials about DS.

African American and Hispanic participants reported seeing mostly photographs of white children with DS and that information is most frequently presented in English.

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National Resources

- ✓ African American/ Black Families
 - www.facebook.com/groups/ParentsOfAfricanAmWithDs
- ✓ Black Families Down syndrome Network
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bfdn-dsdo/>

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Many thanks to...

- ✓ Roxanne Hoke-Chandler, Department of Public Health in Boston
- ✓ Sarah Cullen, MDSC
- ✓ DSAIA
- ✓ Families of the Black Families of Down syndrome Network (DSDN)
- ✓ All of you!

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*Start where you are,
use what you have,
do what you can!!!*







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Remember: This is a marathon NOT a sprint!!!



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