

**Growing Culturally Welcoming and Validating Programs
Session One -- Laying the Foundation (September 10, 2008)
Session Transcript**



LEARNNS

Growing Culturally Welcoming
and Validating Programs
Session 1: Laying the Foundation

LEARNNS Webinar
Wednesday, September 10, 2008
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LEARNNS is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service to provide training and technical assistance to projects focused on mentoring, literacy, education, and out-of-school time.

Erich Stiefvater, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: Welcome to Growing Culturally Welcoming and Validating Programs. This is the first of a series of three webinars. Today's session is titled "Laying the Foundation." We're glad that you can join us today and we look forward to spending time with you.



LEARNNS

Hello from Seattle, WA and Portland, OR!



Ginlin Woo



Erich Stiefvater

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

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LEARNNS is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service to provide training and technical assistance to projects focused on mentoring, literacy, education, and out-of-school time.

We're webcasting to you today from the West Coast from the LEARNNS Project. The LEARNNS Project is the Corporation for National and Community Service's training and technical assistance provider for youth-serving Programs. My name is Erich and you've probably gotten emails or phone calls from me. I'll be the WebEx host for the session and I'll introduce myself a

little bit and then I'll let our main presenter, Ginlin Woo, introduce herself. Then we'll cover a couple of housekeeping items and then dive in.

So, as for myself, I'm a former VISTA and recruiter for the Corporation for National and Community Service. After I served in those two capacities, I worked as a trainer and education consultant before returning to the northwest to join the LEARNS team. I now help develop and deliver face-to-face and online training sessions for programs working in tutoring, mentoring, out-of-school time, and other youth-oriented service. Gin, would you like to introduce yourself?

Ginning Woo, consultant: Thank you, Erich. Hello, everyone, welcome, good morning. My name is Ginlin Woo and please call me Gin. I'm talking to you from Seattle, Washington from my bedroom, which has the best soundproofing. In terms of who I am, part of my life has really been about VISTA service. I served starting in '68, and have been an active alum for now 40 years. My training is in education and for almost nine years I helped oversee the diversity training for the Corporation for National Community Service.

As a person, I grew up kind of an odd soul. And I have always cared that the classrooms that I've been in, the programs that I've been in, that we are doing our best to respect and honor all the cultures of the students and young people and families represented in whatever context. So I'm really happy to be joining you with this conversion.

Erich Stiefvater: Thank you, Gin. We have a couple of activities in a second for us to get to you know all of you a little bit better.

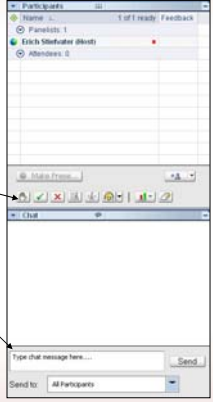
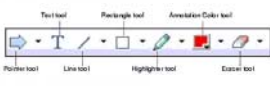
But just in looking at our registration information, we see that we've got a good mix of people from all across the country working in different types of organizations. Most of you are in, or work with, a program that provides some sort of service to children or youth. We refer to all young people collectively as youth, so when you hear us say "youth", we're also talking about young children as well.

We know we have a few people that may be working with adults or different populations or may not be doing tutoring or mentoring and that's fine. Just so you know, most of our content is designed for programs that are working with youth, but we think a lot of what we'll talk about is applicable to different types of populations and different types of programs.

In terms of affiliation with the Corporation, looks like we have a good representation of VISTAs. It's always nice to see VISTAs on these webinars, being a former VISTA myself. And looks like we have some folks from state education agencies, as well as folks from different types of organizations. So welcome to all of you, and glad you could be with us.

Housekeeping

- Please mute phone (“Mute”, “Mic”, or *6)
- Ask questions by:
 - “Raising hand”
 - Sending chat to host
- Annotation tools

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Let me just cover a couple of housekeeping items. As you see on slide three, the first thing we're asking is if you could mute your phone by pressing “mute” or “mic” if you have it on a console. If not, you can always use *6 on your phone. [multiple beeps as participants mute phones]. Some people are muting their phones there . . .

We had a registration list with 50 people. I’m seeing that we have only 19 people in WebEx right now. I’m guessing there are probably some people on the phone that are not in WebEx. So if we stay a small group like this, we might dispense with the muting and might just have a more open conversation.

But at least to start, until we know about how many people we're actually going to have, we'd like to have you ask questions and make comments or offer up ideas using a couple of the tools in WebEx. So you'll see first of all, and I’m just going to point to it here on the slide, you should see a button that looks like a hand. And that’s the Raised Hand icon that’s going to appear over here on the right somewhere on your screen in the participant list [points to Raise Hand icon on screen]. So if you click that, that tells us that you have a question.

If you could, just quickly click on that Raised Hand icon. [Participants practice clicking the Raise Hand icon]. Thank you. Okay. Folks have got that down pretty good. If you could click that button again to lower your hands . . . thank you.

Another way that you can give us feedback or ask us a question is to use the Chat panel that will appear on the right-hand side of your screen somewhere. Some of these panels appear and then disappear, depending on what’s open, so you may need to - and I’ll point it out here on the slide - you may need to click a button that looks like a down arrow or it may be facing to the right, just to open and close our panels. [Shows how to open and close WebEx panels.]

So let me point out one more WebEx feature, the Annotation Tools, which you will actually see at the top of your screen or at the top of your WebEx screen, which looks like a series of tools you might find in Microsoft Word. [Points to Annotation Toolbar at top of WebEx panel].

There's a pointer tool, a text tool, a rectangle tool, etc. So we have a few activities built into this presentation where we'd like you to use those Annotation tools, including one on the next slide. And for those of you that are on the phone but are not in WebEx, we apologize that WebEx is not behaving for you, and we'll tell you what we're doing as we go through the activities. And we'll also invite you to just speak up and share your thoughts as well.

The slide features a title "Let's Practice!" at the top. Below it is a table with two columns. The left column contains a list of greetings: "Glad you're here!", "Aloha", "Howdy", "Welcome", "¡Bienvenidos!", "Foon Ying", "Bienvenue", and "Wilkommen". The right column is empty. At the bottom left, the word "LEARNS" is displayed in a dark red box, and a small number "4" is in the bottom right corner.

Glad you're here!	
Aloha	
Howdy	
Welcome	
¡Bienvenidos!	
Foon Ying	
Bienvenue	
Wilkommen	

But speaking of the Annotation Tools, on slide four we have a little activity to get us thinking about growing culturally welcoming and validating programs. So we'd like to know how you say "hello" or how you greet people in your culture.

So what I'd like to invite you to do is use the Text tool; that's the button at the top of your WebEx screen that looks like the letter "T." So if you click the button that looks like the letter "T" and then click on the right hand side of the table, you should be able to click to insert the cursor and then type in how you greet people for your culture. You may need to click somewhere else on the screen just to set your text. [Participants start typing in greetings.]

And if you're on the phone, what we're doing is we're having folks on slide four type in the way they say "hello" or the way they greet people on the right hand side of the slide.

[Erich and Gin talk with participants about the greetings they posted.]

Okay, so it looks like most of you have the hang of that tool, so we'll go ahead and move on. And thanks for participating in that little warm-up activity. We'd like to use or demonstrate or practice with one more WebEx tool and then we'll set Gin loose with the main content of the webinar. This will also help us get to know you a little bit better.

I'm going to open a poll which should appear on the right hand side of your screen somewhere. And this is just asking how long you've been working with youth, whether it's in your current position or in previous positions or previous lives that you've lived. [Opens WebEx poll asking how long participants have been working with youth].

For folks on the phone, we're just asking people in WebEx to indicate how long they've been working with youth. So the choices are less than a year, one to three years, four to six years, seven to ten years and then ten or more years. Make sure after making a choice that you click the Submit button.

[Participants take the poll.]

Good. Okay. It looks like everyone that's in WebEx provided an answer. Thank you. So let me publish the results so we can see who we have with us. [Closes poll and publishes results]. It looks like we have a good mix of people with different levels or different amounts of time working with youth, including a good contingent of some veterans, people who have been working for ten or more years with youth.

And I should say, and I'm sure Gin will echo this as well, for those of you who have been doing this for a while - and actually for everyone throughout this presentation - we'd love to have you share your ideas and your experience as well. We have information we'd like to share with you, but we're always learning from you as well and from people we meet and talk with. So we encourage everyone to share what you have. And it looks like we're going to be a small enough group to where we can be really interactive and really get some feedback.

Any other observations on these results or on the "saying hello" activity you want to comment on, Gin, before we get started?

Gin: Yes I do. Thanks, Erich. I want to say that we've designed a couple of activities and we're playing with this webinar format to try to see how engaging we can keep it. Just even the simple activity of asking people how they greet and extend a welcome to each other in their communities and their families can be built into, I think, a whole unit. And many of you probably have already done that, but it's a great way to engage parents and have students in a very natural way share culture and history. I just wanted to let you know that every activity that we'll be modeling is something that could be extended and used to build really great conversations.

I want to echo Erich's point about having this be much more of a conversation that we build together. We can record and summarize your comments and thoughts using the Chat panel. I'm a facilitator, really, and this has been a little challenging for me to think about talking to you over the phone as opposed to being with you. So as much as possible we'll try to make it a "we" conversation.

And if, after this session, you have a lot to say about this or the other two sessions, please use the feedback survey we'll send out after this session to give us information. We can also cut and paste comments and Chats into a document that everybody who participates on this can receive.

I think we're ready, Erich.

Erich: Okay.

A presentation slide titled "Series Roadmap" with a dark red header and footer. The main content area is white with a light red gradient at the bottom. It lists three sessions: Session 1 (Today): Laying the Foundation, Session 2 (September 23): Assessing the Climate and Soil, and Session 3 (September 30): Working with Staff and Volunteers. The footer contains the word "LEARNS" in white on a dark red background and a small number "5" in a white box on the right.

Series Roadmap

- Session 1 (Today): Laying the Foundation
- Session 2 (September 23): Assessing the Climate and Soil
- Session 3 (September 30): Working with Staff and Volunteers

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Gin: So you'll notice on slide five, we clarified that this really is a series and it will be in three parts.

In thinking about the work, creating welcoming and validating programs is not really something that you can just check off your list. It's something we make a commitment to for the long haul. And I think the fact that we have an opportunity to do a series really reinforces the whole idea of it being something that happens over time and it's something that we need to grow.

And thinking about what would be useful, I tried to think about supporting a vision of the work. And so today is really about the big picture and about laying the foundation and understanding clearly why it's important to do some of the thinking that has gone into what do we do when we do the work.

Next, in two weeks we'll be taking up the second conversation, called "Assessing the Climate and the Soil." And that will be more about clarifying where are you right now and how do other people in your community feel about where you are, and how can you build off of that. So the next session, which will be September 23rd, is all about creating an accurate baseline and growing from where you're starting.

For the last session, I know that many of us really rely on our people to help build the capacity to do this work. And so we'll focus on how we engage staff in training and in awareness-building activities to help us achieve a culturally validating and welcoming program.

But today's conversation is laying the foundation and it is more about the big picture. Erich, I think we can go onto the next slide. Are there any questions? And I would encourage you to use the Chat feature if you have other expectations than what we have proposed.

Erich: Thanks, Gin. As Gin said, you can type a question or a comment in the Chat panel and send to all participants, or if you could raise your hand and we'll call on you. Was there anyone on the phone that's not in WebEx that has a question or a comment before we proceed? [No responses.]

The slide features a dark red header with the title 'Today's Goals' in white. Below the title is a list of four bullet points. At the bottom, there is a dark red footer with the word 'LEARN'S' in white, followed by a small white square containing the number '6'.

Today's Goals

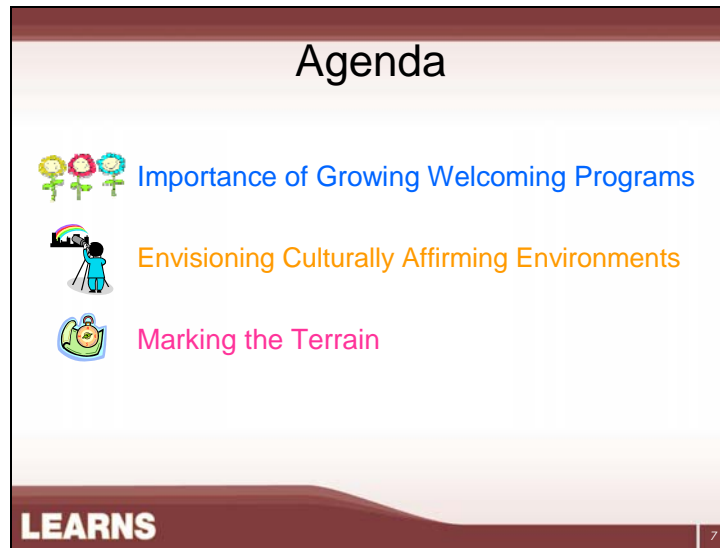
- Understand the importance of establishing culturally welcoming and validating programs
- Identify opportunities for cultural validation and affirmation
- Learn different strategies to create a culturally inclusive program
- Others?

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Gin: Great. So in terms of today's goals, in keeping with the theme of laying a solid foundation, one is really looking at the question of why is growing a culturally validating and welcoming program important to do. Why bother? Why do this work?

I have identified a bunch of reasons and I hope you'll add to that list of reasons. We'll also look at a program in terms of what are the different opportunities the program presents and our infrastructure presents in terms of doing the work. I don't think it's relegated to one kind of activity but really a systems approach so that, in fact, when people join us they really get the message. They get it and they feel that they are welcome and that we want to and encourage honoring of the different cultural traditions. Also, we'll learn about different strategies on how to create culturally inclusive programs.

Over the three-part series we'll also try to provide you with resources or work that other people have done that will give you ideas that you can build off of. So the strategies will be about ideas, but also about samples. I think that's it for today's goals.



And in the next slide, slide seven, we'll take the goals and move them into an agenda. They kind of fall neatly into sort of three chunks for our conversation. One is taking up the conversation about why it's important. We're also going to do an exercise where I'm going to do kind of a shared visioning process, where we get in touch with what does it look like, what does it sound like, what does it feel like to be in the midst of an affirming environment. The last section will be on marking the terrain. So there's a lot of work to do.

Erich, do you hear a beep?

Erich: Yeah, I think we have someone that has put us on hold or some other phone issue. So I'd just like to remind folks to please mute your phone, if you haven't already. We'll let you know when we'd like to open up the phone lines to have comments.

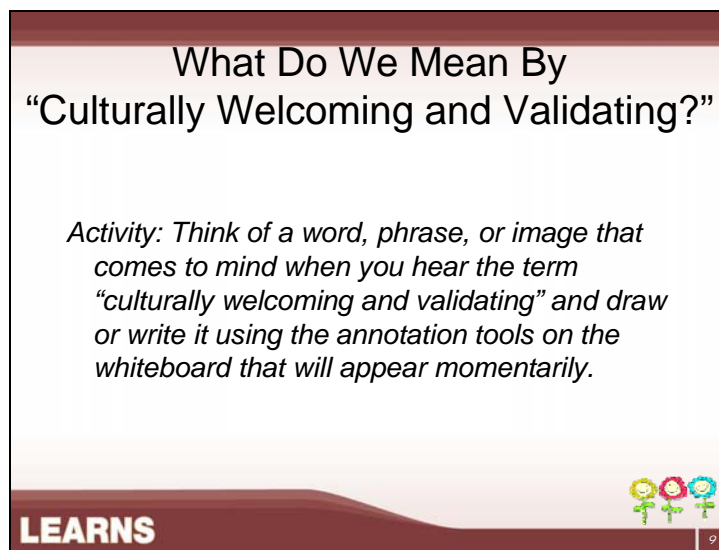
[After beeps continue, Erich puts conference on presentation mode so only he and Gin can speak.]

Gin: Thanks, everyone. Bear with us. We'll make sure that you'll get something valuable out of this.



So if we turn to the next slide, slide eight, you know I mentioned that the foundation really should be about understanding why it's so important grow a culturally welcoming and validating program.

Actually, I want to hold off on raising the question about why and do some defining of terminology first. So Erich, if you'd advance to the next slide, we're going to invite folks to join us in this.



So when you think about culturally welcoming and validating programs, think about the words or phrases or images that come to your mind. And in a moment Erich is going to put up a whiteboard. You'll use your Annotation Tool to share with us what you're thinking. Erich, I think you can bring up the board.

[Erich opens a WebEx whiteboard.]

Erich: Okay, so if folks could use your Annotation Tools again. You can either draw a picture or use the Text tool and type something in on the screen, something that represents what a culturally welcoming and validating program looks like to you. And for folks on the phone, we just opened up a screen and people are typing in words and drawing pictures that represent what that phrase means for them.

[Participants draw and type. Responses include a heart, a sun, a peace symbol, and the words “accepting”, “unbiased”, “open-minded”, “reaching out”.]

Any particular entries catching your eye, Gin?

Gin: Yeah. You know, many of your images also resonate with what I was thinking about. Our clients want to have a safe space. I also think about the freedom to be who you are and be welcomed in that.

I grew up in Seattle and I’m a Chinese-American female. My family lived in poverty. English was my second language and I lived in a family where my parents told me every day how great I was and how proud I should be of my heritage and everything.


Unfortunately, my school experiences and my early youth experiences did little to validate me culturally. And even though I grew up in a family where people told me to be proud, I didn't rely feel safe to be who I am in the classroom in the schools and my after-school activities.

Also the question about diversity. I want to clarify right up front that when we talk about culturally welcoming and validating programs, we're not just talking about ethnic culture. We certainly include that, but racial and ethnic identity is one part of our cultural memberships. And we're talking about spirituality and ableness and gender and sexual orientation and immigration status. So I want to just put that up front that when we talk about truly culturally welcoming and validating programs, it's about embracing the cultural diversity that exists in our families and in our communities and figuring out ways to do that better and better.

So thank you for sharing. In a longer workshop we could also build this into an activity, but this is sort of moving us now into the question of why is it important to do.

Rationale

- Builds from the strengths and assets of young people's families and communities
- Acknowledges central role cultural identity plays in self-esteem and youth success
- Encourages youth and families to show up and participate
- Fosters a community of cultural allies
- Demonstrates and models respect
- Others?

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So I tried to think about, of the 50 reasons I can think of for growing culturally welcoming and validating programs, what might be six key ones. And we came up with this list and I'm going to encourage you to use the Chat feature to add your reflection to this conversation.

For most people on this call this may be preaching to the choir. You're on the call because you care about this, you believe in this. And our work is to bring other people that we work with and the community into this conversation and into this commitment. So I find that some reasons touch some people and other reasons touch other people.

So I provided you six here on this slide and I want to walk through those. And then as I'm talking, if you would please add yours. And those of you that are on the phone only, we'll give you an opportunity to share ideas.

The first one that I have up there is about really building off the strengths and assets of families. Whether we acknowledge it or not, people are bringing their cultural identities into our programs and classrooms. And it's my point of view that it's a strength and an asset.

Unfortunately, a lot of our young people don't live in worlds where that is viewed as such. And so I think a really important reason why we need to blaze the trail, lead the way, pioneer in this area is that if we are about affirming communities and building off of strengths, cultural identity and cultural membership is clearly a first place to do that. I think it's important because it is who people are. And we need to step up and do it because too little in their world is doing that.

A second reason is that the research has told us all along that self-esteem has everything to do with school success, with success as an adult, with how we feel about ourselves. The research on prejudice reduction indicates that those of us that are comfortable in our own skins, comfortable with who we are, proud of who we are, are much more able to be open to difference and to others. So another good reason is that it's an important foundation. If people have pride for themselves and their own heritages and who they are, they will live differently in the world.

I also think that a lot of us give lip service to the idea that we want youth and families to really participate as partners and join with us. And I don't know how that happens if you truly aren't extending welcome and respect to who they are.

Also, our communities are really in great need of some leadership around developing a community of cultural allies. And I think in your programs, especially those of you that are working with young people, you have an opportunity to foster a new way of living in communities. And I think that if students get a sense of what it feels like to respect and be respected and give respect, they're much better able to go out back to their homes and their communities to live that. So that's another important reason.

And the last reason is around modeling respect and providing people the actual experience of what that looks like and what it doesn't look like. And you can create safe spaces for everyone in your community and you can be active in that effort.

So those are some of my reasons and I want to give a moment to anyone else who would like to offer something else that's around why is it important to do this work.

Erich: Thanks, Gin. So for those of you that are in WebEx, if you'd like to add anything to this list, if you could type it in the Chat box and send it to all participants. You may need to select All Participants from that drop-down menu. For those of you that are on the phone, I'm going to go ahead and take the teleconference out of presentation mode. And you may have your own phone muted as well, so you might need to also un-mute that. But we'd like to hear from you as well.

[Takes teleconference out of presentation mode.]

Any thoughts you want to share, or questions?

Nicky Martin, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: Actually, I was just noticing that sending it to all All Participants might not work.

Erich: Thanks, Nicky. So if you could choose instead Host and Presenter, that way myself and Gin should be able to see it.

So Gin, I don't know if you can see it, but Nicky shared that another rationale is that growing a culturally welcoming program creates and strengthen partnerships across the community.

Gin: Thanks, Nicky.

Erich: Anyone on the phone have additional rationales or ideas around why this is a valuable thing to do, to think about? No? Okay, well hearing or seeing none, shall we move ahead, Gin?

Gin: Yeah, and I just want to say that I think in my original take on this, I came up with 25 reasons, so I think that afterwards I'll put that all in a resource we'll send out. What I can tell you is that as you try to rally your team around this conversation, certain things will stick out to them. And I think for a lot of us, the commitment comes from a lot of our own personal experiences so

the phrasing may not catch them. So I think that a list of more reasons why we need to do the work would be helpful. So I'm going to put a resource together so that you can stimulate conversions in your own teams.

Okay, so our first job was really to do that, to kind of base this conversation in all the good reasons of why to do the work. My second phase of this webinar was trying to envision culturally affirming environments. So if you would advance to the next slide, slide 11, we'll begin that work.

Erich: Sure, and I just wanted to mention – and I apologize for having the Chat feature not set up the way it should be – but before we move in, Gin, I just wanted to mention that Christine Shaffer wrote a chat saying that growing a culturally welcoming program allows people to learn more about the world, especially those from rural areas and small towns where there sometimes aren't diverse populations.

Gin: Thank you. Okay, so now onto slide 11.



The reason why I went in this direction for the webinar is I believe that if you have had the good fortune to experience culturally affirming environments, you're already in a better position than some of us to replicate and create these kinds of programs. But even if we didn't benefit or experience that for ourselves, I believe that envisioning it together can help us go a long way.

So I thought, well, we need to do kind of a shared visioning process so that we can bring into closer view of what this looks like. I mean, if I'm going to try to make [a culturally welcoming environment] happen, what would it not only look like, but what would it sound like, what would it feel like, what maybe even would it smell like or taste like? As I think about designing programs, especially for children, I know that what we do is we learn via all of our senses. So unfortunately, sometimes we're in programs where someone may be up there telling us that we're welcome and that who we are culturally is really appreciated and we'll be spending time sharing and doing all that, and that might be one person's take on it. But all the other messages I'm getting from the physical environment, from other kinds of meetings that are happening in the

program context, don't tell me that same message. And so it begins to really water down my understanding that you're really, really wanting to welcome me and to embrace who I am.

So I'm going to ask us to do a 360° view of what culturally affirming environments look like. So I've asked Erich to prepare slide number 12.

If You Were in a Culturally Welcoming and Validating Program, What Would You . . .

Hear?	See?
Feel?	Taste?

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You notice we've created another white board situation here. And I would ask you to reflect on when you think about culturally welcoming and validating programs, what does it look like? What does it sound like? You know, what does it feel like and even what does it taste like? You notice that someone has already put up “kind voices”.

Erich: Yeah, it looks like people have figured this out very quickly. Let's use the Text tool for this exercise. So look for the button that looks like the letter “T”, click it, and then type something that you think represents what you see or hear or feel or taste in a culturally welcoming program.

Gin: And Erich, is there any way we can have more space? Is that what it is?

Erich: Yeah, we don't have quite as much screen real estate as we did with a couple of the other activities. For folks that are just on the phone, people are on slide 12 typing in words or phrases that represents what they would expect to hear or see or feel or taste if there're present or visiting a culturally welcoming program.

Gin: Erich, do you want to review what's coming up for the folks that are only auditory here?

Erich: Sure, I'll give a sample of just a couple from each in terms of what people might experience. For hearing, people have suggested “kind voices”; “people greeting you”; “for Spanish press one”. For seeing, we have a couple mentions of “open arms” and “diverse faces”; “smiles”; and “different skin colors”. For feel, a couple of people have suggested “warm” or “warmth”, “welcomed” and “expected”. And then for taste, someone suggested “ice cream” – I thought that was fun – but also all kinds of different things, like “multicultural foods at events”

and “different foods to share” and “child-friendly”. Although I guess “child-friendly” might fit more under “see”, but works here as well.

Gin: Part of this webinar opportunity is that we're trying to create some tools also to support you in facilitating conversations about this. So if you received the packet, not only were you able to open up the slides, but also a couple of the handouts that we included and resource materials. I have one that is called Elements of a Culturally Validating Environment that goes through this. Erich, are you able to bring it up?

Erich: Sure. [Displays handout “Elements of a Culturally Validating Environment”.]

Gin: There we go. So here, we're not going to have a chance and we don't have enough time to go through each of them. But I want to start with the “hearing” list and share with you some of the things that came to mind for me. And many of them are the same things that you put up as well.

First, the idea that it's not just about words, it's also about music. And I think that people read enthusiasm, not just words, but the kind of positive enthusiasm you have for all the cultural heritages and memberships of the communities. So I tried to put that in this list, and I hope you find it a useful resource.

I also feel that that third one on the list is really important; that we challenge misinformation and stereotyping and name-calling and omissions. That it's not just about what we're saying, but what we're not saying or what other people are saying. And sometimes name-calling is just sort of left without comment. And I think that if we're trying to create culturally validating environments, we need to call it out. We need to create guidelines and create an ethic about how we are together when we're together.

So I just tried to grab a lot of the things that I think about when I think about the work and put it in that list. And we can add ones that you have onto it. But you could also use this as an opportunity to do training off of this.

I think the idea of a person's first language is important. And also just around language, as cultures evolve and as communities evolve, people take on different language. And our language and the use of terms will change because the community is changing and asking us to be respectful of where they are in their evolution. So are those conversations about what you might hear; I think they are really important.

Erich, can we go to the “see” section?

Erich: Sorry, what?

Gin: Does the second page come up too?

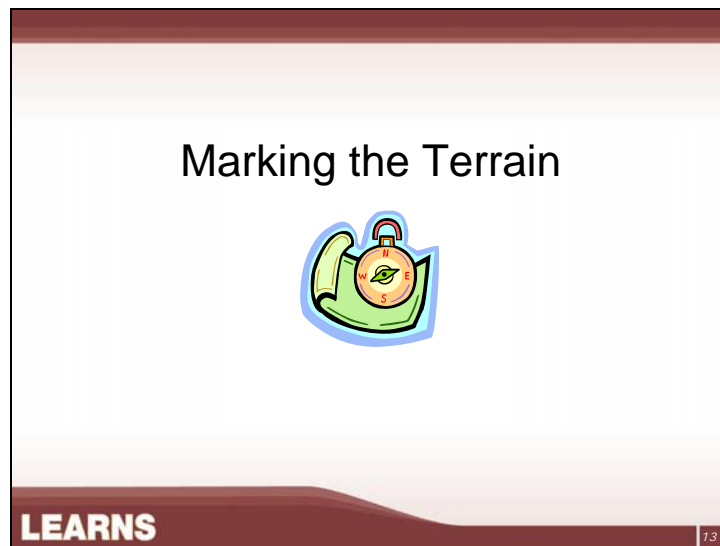
Erich: Yes it does. [Displays second page of handout.] And for those of you that are in WebEx, what we have on the screen is a handout which everyone will receive by e-mail afterwards. And

so for those of you that are just on the phone we apologize. But Gin is reading a document she is going to share with you that includes some of her thoughts on the activity we just did with the hear, see, feel, and taste. So we're now on page two of the document, which talks about "seeing". Sorry, Gin, go ahead.

Gin: Thanks for that clarification, Erich. I'll get this down.

So even under the "seeing" section, I love the ideas of the warmth and the embrace and the diversity that sits in the room. And I also think that we can bring to our spaces symbolism and artwork and other things that reflect the different cultures of the community and issues that reflect it. So even something as simple as creating a bulletin board where the community is invited to advertise what's going on is a good way of validating the community and making the program an extension of the community. And any time that you have another idea, please go ahead and use that Chat feature, and Erich is able to monitor it. But I think you get that the drift of this activity is to really get sort of a 360° view on what does growing culturally and welcoming validating programs look like. I think sometimes we rely on training to get that message across to our staff and volunteers. And sometimes I think it's just around a meal we can have a simple conversation. And the more people dream it, the more people envision it, that can help them then go ahead and take the initiative to start making that happen in the classroom or program.

I think as I'm watching our time I've got to move along, but I just think that it's really hard to replicate something you've never experienced or never imagined. So it's a useful activity to spend time talking and having a thorough conversation about how it might really be as an experience. Erich, thanks for putting that handout up. And we'll keep going onto Marking the Terrain.




So in terms of marking the terrain, what I want to say is that all the efforts that you're already putting forth to extend welcome and to validate the students and their families is important. And it kind of doesn't even matter where we begin, it matters that we begin and we begin doing the work. And then we commit to building off of that.

So what I know is that, just from experience, that we approach it differently, given our sensibilities about what the work is. And on slide 14, the next one, I tried to identify some of the key parts of the puzzle: what’s the work and if we’re really going to do this, how does it happen?

The Parts of the Puzzle

Physical environment	Internal operations and management
Imaging – language, print portfolio, community buzz	Staffing
Mission, vision, strategic planning	Resource development – staff, volunteers, capacity building, investments
Activity and events calendars and schedules	Leadership and governance
Program delivery and impact	Strategic relationships, partnerships, outreach, and engagement

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And so I tried to tag for you at least ten areas of the work to clarify as we begin. And what I know is that some of us do what we do with staff very well and that some of the other areas need to be shored up. Or we're really good at creating a mission statement and a philosophy statement, but we haven't really tweaked our physical environment. The work requires, really, a systems approach and a more comprehensive approach. And also it might be what your participants are experiencing in the program. And it might be the curriculum – the intentional and the unintentional curriculum.

But it’s also that everything else is sending them messages. So it may be that sitting in the programming it looks pretty good but as we reflect on the staffing it’s not quite sending the same message about all cultures and communities being welcome here or as we look at leadership. But there have been people across the world that have been doing the work and providing us examples. I wanted to share with you one example of a mission and vision.

Erich, can you bring in that other handout? [Handout “A Covenant for Honoring Children” displayed.]

So you'll get a copy of this after the webinar, but what it is is many of you know the lyricist and musician Raffi. He heads up the Troubadour Foundation in Canada. And I came across this a couple of years back. And this is his covenant for honoring children. But if you read it, I think it’s really beautiful. And it’s an example of an organization, of a program, that has spent some considerable time thinking about its mission and its messaging and trying to clarify what its founding principles are and what its beliefs are around children. And I think that if you're in a program where you haven't spent much time working on your mission or your vision around embracing the cultures of your community and the diversity in the community, I think it’s time well-spent to craft a position statement because I think a lot of people need to understand the “why” behind what you’re doing.

And I wanted to provide you just this one example so that you would have this. And if those of you out there have a mission statement or a philosophy statement you think is really good, we would appreciate you sharing that so that the rest of us on the call could benefit from it. I think we don't need to start from square one. There are lots of good examples out there. And if you take that and start reflecting on the question, "So what do I want to say and what do we want to put forth so people, my staff, my community, my board are clear on what our commitment is to cultural validation, appreciating, honoring?", it's there for everybody to see. So I just wanted to include that sample. Thanks Erich.

Erich: And did you want to show the checklist we put together as well?


Gin: Yes, go ahead. Why don't you help me talk a little bit about that.

Erich: [Displays handout "Organization Self-Assessment Tool".] Sure, we're just taking the elements of organizational capacity or features that we saw on the previous slide and put those in a document that will, we hope, allow you within your programs to think about the ways in which your program is culturally welcoming or not, or has some work it needs to do to achieve it. So if you're just on the phone, what it is is a one-page Word document set up as a checklist that displays the elements of slide 14 on a sheet and then offers some space for you and your colleagues or management to work together to think about ways you can make your program welcoming. Or to acknowledge ways that you already are culturally welcoming, but think about ways that you could make it even more so in different facets of your program.

Gin: Thanks, Erich. Looking at our time – and we wanted to do a couple more things – one is we want to thank everyone who participated in this but also spend a little bit of time on questions.

Guiding Principles of Inclusion

- Better when well-integrated across the organization
- Helpful to understand common mistreatment, misinformation, and stereotypes
- Create opportunities for the community to inform, partner, and enrich
- Culture is more than ethnicity and race

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Erich put up the slide, and thanks for reminding me. Hand-in-hand with the whole conversation about what's the check off list is, what are the steps we need to take to build a comprehensive system that supports welcoming students and families culturally?

For some of us, we relate to the step-by-step process. What I do know is that all of that is really founded in a set of principles, not just a checklist, but there are some principles that guide the work. And I'd like to facilitate us developing a solid set of guiding principles and I've offered up four of them. And for facilitating in an inclusive environment or inclusive programming, these are some of the things that came to my mind. One is that it needs to be well-integrated across the organization, not just across the curriculum but across the organization. That if we are going to be really solid in our advocacy that we not only need to understand what the holidays, the heroes, and the celebrations of a culture are, but we also need to understand historically the mistreatment, the misinformation, the stereotyping of a community to be a true ally.

The other is to create the opportunities to have the community or the family be a resource. That it's not about us just simply hosting these conversations or facilitating them but creating real partnerships with the community so that the classroom or the program becomes an extension of the community. And inviting authentic voices from the community so that it's one thing to bring in one guest speaker, but it's another to have an ongoing relationship with a community so that students have a rich understanding of the diversity that lives within a community.

And again, the restating of the point that culture is definitely ethnicity and race but it is also much more. And how students show up and how they identify themselves and how they relate with their different memberships is much broader than ethnicity and race. So yes, it's a step-by-step process, yes it would be a comprehensive. But then underneath all of that is just a set of guiding principles again applied across everything we do.

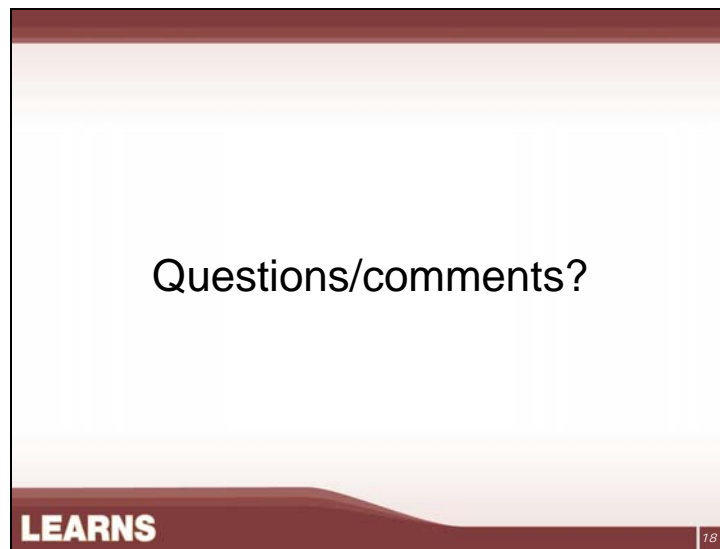
So I'm going to move to slide 17, and then we'll take questions and comments.

The slide features a dark red header with the text "Thank you!" in white. Below the header is a white rectangular area containing a list of phrases: "It wouldn't have been the same without you!", "Mahalo", "Domo Arrigato", "Merci", "¡Gracias!", and "Danke". To the right of this list is a large, empty white rectangular area, likely intended for a whiteboard or additional text. At the bottom left of the slide, the word "LEARNS" is written in white on a dark red background. At the bottom right, the number "77" is visible in a small white box.

We wanted on this slide to both thank you and try again to do some multicultural ways of saying thank you. So that is a white board on the right side and if you'd like, you can use your text annotation tools to add to our list of ways to say thank you.

Erich: Thanks, Gin, and I think we can go ahead and also start taking questions and comments, which I believe we were planning to do at this point. So I'm going to take the phone out of

presentation mode and at this point, we'll have an open floor and you can use the WebEx Raise Hand or Chat tool if you want, or you can just un-mute your own phone and offer something up as well.



Okay, so does anyone have questions or comments or anything else people would like to share? Like reflections, or maybe experiences from the work of trying to make your program more inclusive and make it more culturally validating? Or even the challenges you've had in doing this, or things that have helped?

Is there a particularly poignant example from your own experience, Gin, that you'd like to share, or some lessons learned? I'm kind of putting you on the spot a little bit. Or maybe how you helped a client implement a culturally welcoming environment?

Gin: Yeah, from reading the names on the webinar participant list, there are actually a couple of people I think I've met before and that's really great to see. I have for the last 14 years in my home state spent quite a bit of time working with one of our tribal communities. The work that I was asked to do was around creating alternatives for lives affected by substance abuse. It was parent group that invited me in. They're in recovery. It took us a while and I feel like now we finally have a program that really is a natural fit for who the families in the community are.

One of the programs that we developed is a program called CEDAR. And the name comes directly from something that's really important to the culture and tradition of a fallen people. And so CEDAR stands for Culture Education Drug-Free Action and Responsibility. And young people and elders came together and designed the program. And they built all of our programming around those chunks. It took me a while to understand what would symbolically, as well as programmatically, really fit in. And some of the exciting things we've done with students at our leadership camp is not only teach them things like canoeing but also have them talk about traditional leaders. There's just a lot of different things that I think you get better and better at it. The program really fits well with who they are and what they needed.

Erich, I wanted to make sure that we showcase our resources, too, if people don't have questions.

Erich: Sure, and we've gotten a couple of Chat messages coming in. One that I think only I got from Robin Neely and then one that you might see from Jennifer Frigolette. And actually, I'd like to invite both Robin and Jennifer, if you don't mind, is to go ahead and for the rest of the folks maybe restate what you had typed in your Chat messages. But while we let you un-mute your phones, let's go to slide 19, which provides a list of selected resources. So any of you would like to describe in detail a bit more, Gin?

Selected Resources	
LEARNS (800) 361-7890 http://nationalserviceresources.org/learns/learns	Multicultural Pavilion www.edchange.org/multicultural
National Mentoring Center (800) 547-6339 x-135 www.nwrel.org/mentoring	Educators for Social Responsibility www.esrnational.org
Resource Center http://nationalserviceresources.org	Teaching for Change www.teachingforchange.org

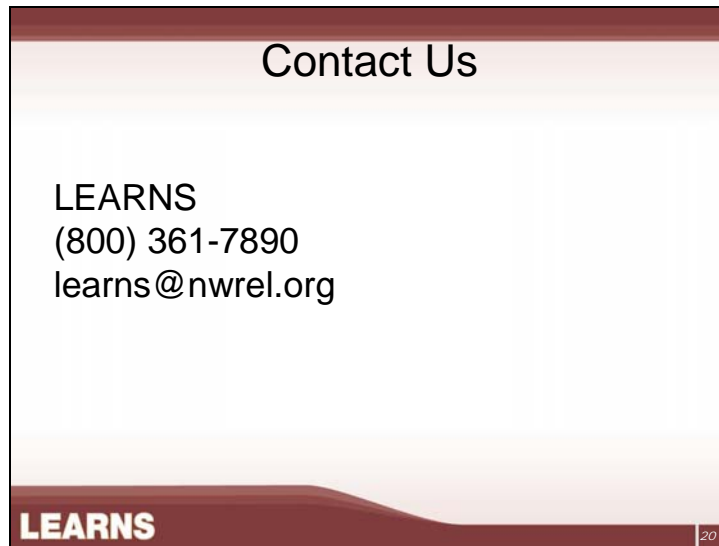
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Gin: Lots of great Web resources, and I know many of you might have already been going to Teaching for Change and lots of the publications. When I thought of this series, I thought especially of the work by Enid Lee in *Beyond Heroes and Holidays*. I just think that it has lots of good stuff. There are a lot of really great things coming out of Oregon as well, but there are practitioners who are out there who are willing to share ideas and be the clearinghouse for lots of great ideas.

So you'll see some of the work of Paul Gorcey and other people just sharing ideas they've used. A lot of folks who are teachers have moved over to oversee mentoring programs or youth programs or other kinds of programs. But we identified three of them on the right and also from NWREL itself. We have quite a few resources that you might be familiar with or not. And I really encourage you to visit all six of those Websites.

Erich: And actually you provided a nice, longer, and more comprehensive list of resources, Gin. And we just had a little bit of space on the slide to put them here, but we'll be emailing out to everyone a copy of the full list of resources.

And now it looks like we've reached the official end-time for the webinar. Gin and myself are happy to stick around as long as people would like to chat or talk or ask questions. So I encourage you to stay on the line with us but we understand that people may need to go, and it looks like unfortunately Robin might have needed to leave. I apologize for that, so consider this the official end of our presentation. The very last slide, slide 20, provides the contact information for us here at LEARNS.



Feel free to give us a call or send an e-mail at any time. As we said at the beginning, we're funded to provide assistance to programs such as your own that are doing work with youth. And so certainly we have resources we can offer and we'd love to hear from you and hear about the good work you're doing and see if there are ways that we could help.

So as your last official act, as we end our session and you close out of WebEx, you should be sent to an evaluation survey automatically. But if not, I'll be sending out by email a link to the survey, along with some additional resources. Please do take a few moments to complete that survey. As Gin said earlier, we're doing two more webinars in the series and we want to make sure that they're on-target and helpful to you and your colleagues. But with that, thanks again for joining us and for the good work that you do for our youth and for our communities.

But if you have time to stick around, we'd love to keep talking for more questions.

Jennifer Frigolette: Well, my question was, I work with the volunteers who work with the literacy programs for kids and adults. And our volunteers generally come from a different background than the children or the adults that they're tutoring. And we're having a cultural diversity training in October. But a lot of times, the people who attend the trainings to talk about cultural diversity are already aware that it's something that we need to work on. So how do we get people that don't necessarily think they need to come to cultural diversity training to come and learn and share?

Gin: Right, now so your training, is it required for them to work with the youth they're assigned?

Jennifer: No, it's just an optional training.

Gin: Have you thought about making it a requirement, Jennifer?

Jennifer: That's not logistically possible.

Gin: Oh, okay. What I have found is that when I had people who were maybe tentative about attending a training, is providing them incentives or including them in the agenda. So asking them (in kind of a sneaky way) to get them in the room or also ask them what's keeping them from coming to the training. Sometimes it's fear. And if I can ferret that out and address the fear that's another way.

But I try to provide incentives. I've been successful with providing kind of a fun incentive that say, everybody who attends a training and gets there on time is entered into a raffle. And we've got something that some local businesses have given us. But sometimes you just have to get them into the room. And once they're in the room, we can keep them engaged and we can keep them feeling safe. I think people who don't attend it, we need to express to them how critical the training is to prepare them to work well with their students. I would also encourage you to use some volunteers to give testimony to some of the things they've applied in terms of their learning working with culturally different students or young people.

So those are the things I can think of: providing incentives, explaining how important it is, getting their peers to pitch to them, and creating opportunities for them to contribute during the agenda so it's just not about them receiving but they're going to be helping something happen. Those are things that come to my mind. And then really, if you can't do it programmatically, having other people express just how important it is, especially when you're preparing to be the helpmate of someone who's culturally different, you know why that's important and what a difference it makes when you have more information about how to truly help them. Is that helpful?

Jennifer: Yeah, it is. Thank you.

Gin: Sure.

Erich: Okay we've gotten some comments and feedback that have come in on Chat, so thanks for all of you that provided those. Is Robin still with us, or did you have to leave already, Robin?

[Pause.]

Okay, looks like we've missed Robin. Anyone else like to share anything or have a question?

[Pause.]

And if you think of something afterwards or something comes up later on, certainly feel free to give us a call or e-mail here at LEARNS. And if we have something available on hand, we can pass it along. Or if you have a question for Gin I can pass that along as well. So, not seeing or hearing any additional questions, I think maybe we'll go ahead and wind down. Thanks, everyone.

[Erich, Gin, and participants say goodbye and sign off.]