DIVERSITY COMPETENCE IN PERMANENCY PLANNING

Highlighting Diversity in the Homestudy

1. Attitudes and beliefs regarding foster care and adoption issues
   - Some families have previous experience with foster care or adoption, including lived experience
   - Some families may be more “rules followers” than others
   - Some families may be more open to guidance while others may have a natural tendency to take a leadership role
   - Some family members have personal experiences that assist them in being empathetic to the child and the child’s family

2. Motivation to Foster or Adopt
   - Some families view fostering or adopting as part of their belief that it is a person’s responsibility to give back to the community and help those less fortunate
   - Some families see foster care and adoption as a way to expand and bring diversity to their family
   - Some families view fostering or adoption as part of their religious tenants

3. Personal and Emotional Maturity
   - Some families stress the importance of the individual, while others view the group as more important than the individual
   - Some families view wealth as a sign of maturity, while others see wealth as less important
   - Families that have experienced times of great need, may not see the value of delayed gratification
   - Some families support quitting a job or divorcing a partner as a sign of maturity/self-care while others see it as a sign of weakness or lack of effort

4. Stability and Quality of Interpersonal Relationships
   - Some families are open and accepting of a variety of relationships, others are more closed and value engaging in relationships on a limited basis
   - Some families assign roles and responsibilities according to gender, while others do not
   - Some families are very affectionate, while others are reserved in their displays of affection
5. Coping Skills and History of Stress Management
   - Some individuals pride themselves on being self-supporting and their stoicism and prefer to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps."
   - Some individuals do not readily share their problems with others but cope with stress internally.
   - Spiritual or religious support is for some families a common way of coping with stress and personal problems
   - For some individuals, family, close friends, and the church constitute an adequate support system
   - Some individuals do not believe in disclosing personal problems outside the immediate family and would not use professional helpers (such as counselors or therapists) as a stress management technique

6. Level of Openness in Family Relationships
   - Some families will not seek help from formal community agencies; rather, they maintain strong, informal networks of kin and friends
   - Some families use professional therapists or counselors, as they prefer not to share personal issues with those close to them to avoid embarrassment or to avoid burdening the ones they love with their personal problems
   - Some families view extended family members as vital to their family, others are more focused on the immediate family

7. Parenting Skills and Abilities
   - Some families expect older children to care for younger children, while another may view caregiving as strictly an adult responsibility
   - Some families believe children should be allowed to cry before being picked up, while others may respond to a child at the first sound of distress
   - Some families believe in strict discipline, while other families give more freedom to their children to explore and learn on their own

8. Ability to Empathize with Others
   - Because of limited exposure to diverse situations, some families may have difficulty understanding a perspective other than their own
   - Some family members may have had similar experiences which allow them to take that person's perspective
   - Some families may have rules that, if broken, cannot be forgiven no matter the circumstances
   - Some families form opinions of people quickly and do not change, while others are less slow to form opinions and more open to changing them as they earn new information
9. Understanding of Entitlement Issues
   - In some cultures, it may be commonplace for individuals to care for or raise someone else’s child.
   - Some families have rigid guidelines about what constitutes family, others may choose their family members.
   - Some individuals easily take on roles and tasks while others need time to adjust.

10. Ability and Willingness to Take a hands-on Parenting Approach
    - Some families see their parenting responsibilities to include volunteering at schools, coaching/leading clubs, while other families do not see that as a necessary part of parenting.
    - Some families’ primary concern is controlling the behavior of a child, others’ primary concern is giving the child freedom to explore and learn by experience.
    - Some families see adults in the family as owed respect and children wait on them; Others see the child as the center of the family and feel the adults should serve the children.

11. Ability to Make and Honor Commitments
    - Families may have many long-term relationships because their culture encourages the establishment and maintenance of lengthy relationships.
    - Some families may not have had the opportunity to establish long-term relationships due to frequent moves necessitated by circumstances, such as being in the military or pursuing job opportunities.
    - Some families believe commitment is important over personal happiness; Others feel a person should end relationships/jobs/commitments that no longer make them happy.

12. Religious Affiliation and/or Spiritual Beliefs
    - Some families feel a religious affiliation is important, other families may find spirituality without religion.
    - Some families believe that part of their religious responsibility is to share their religion with others, other families feel religion/spirituality is a personal thing.
    - Some families may have had experience in which they have been rejected by a religious organization and so may see religion in an unfavorable light.