



Assessor Training

Post-Training
Skill-Building
Assignment #8

Cultural Issues in Adoption

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

FROM THE FIELD

“You’ve been changed from the inside out in foster care because you have been in so many homes and environments.”

Charles, foster child, in *Knowing Who You Are*, a DVD produced by Casey Family Programs (www.casey.org)

Completing this assignment will help you:

- Understand the influence of race and ethnicity on a child’s identity and self-esteem;
- Help the child maintain a stable, continuous sense of personal and cultural identity throughout the placement process;
- Help the family understand how issues of separation, attachment, and long-term adjustment may be influenced by race, ethnicity, or culture;
- Assist the family in developing strategies for preserving and maintaining a child’s racial and ethnic identity.

INSTRUCTIONS (USE THE ATTACHED WORKSHEET TO RECORD YOUR WORK)

1. View the DVD film, *Knowing Who You Are*. This film portrays the struggle for ethnic and racial identity experienced by many foster children who have been separated from their birth families.

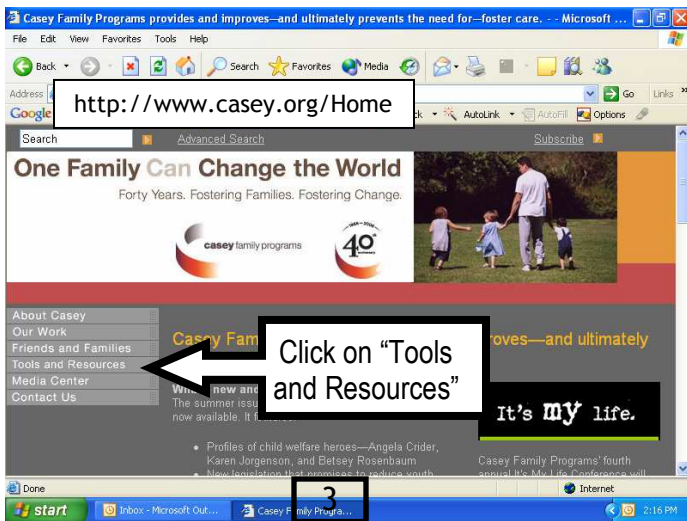
Note: This DVD film is available free through Casey Family Programs or it can be viewed through the Casey website at www.casey.org. On the left, click on “Tools and Resources”; scroll down to “Knowing Who You Are” and click; next, click on “Watch Video.” See handout on next page for more detailed instructions on accessing the video via the website.

2. Select one of the youth profiled in the DVD film and identify ways typical foster care issues such as self-esteem, rejection, and trust may be influenced by struggles with racial and ethnic identity. In what ways could you, as the youth’s caseworker, help the youth develop or maintain a strong sense of self?
3. Read the overview of proactive and protective messages found on page three.

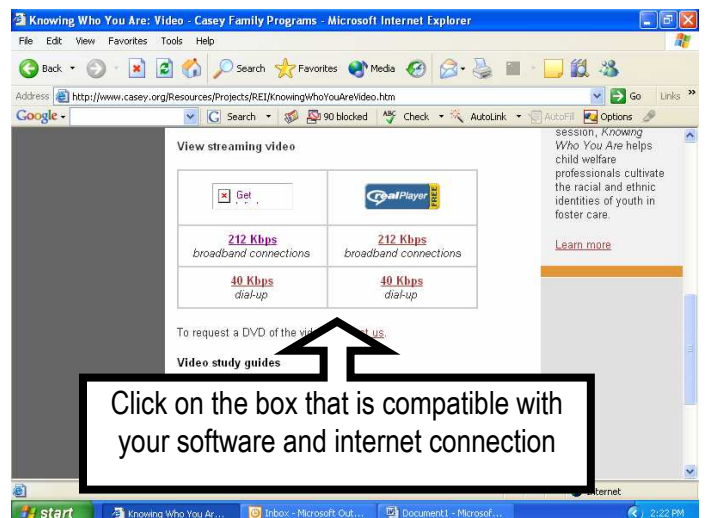
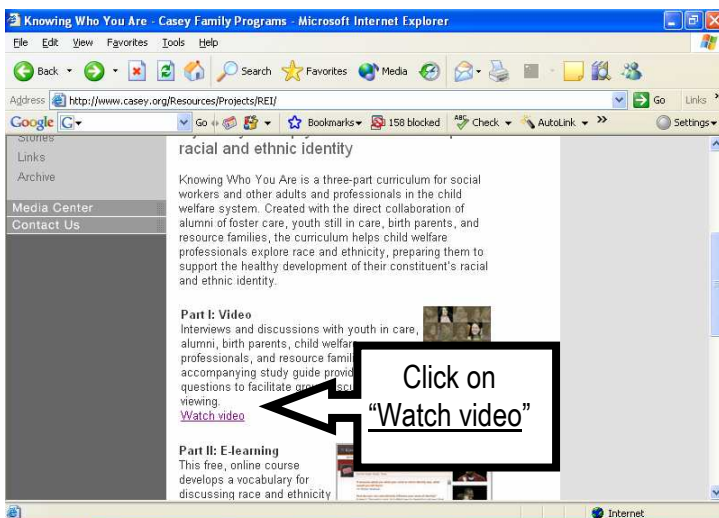
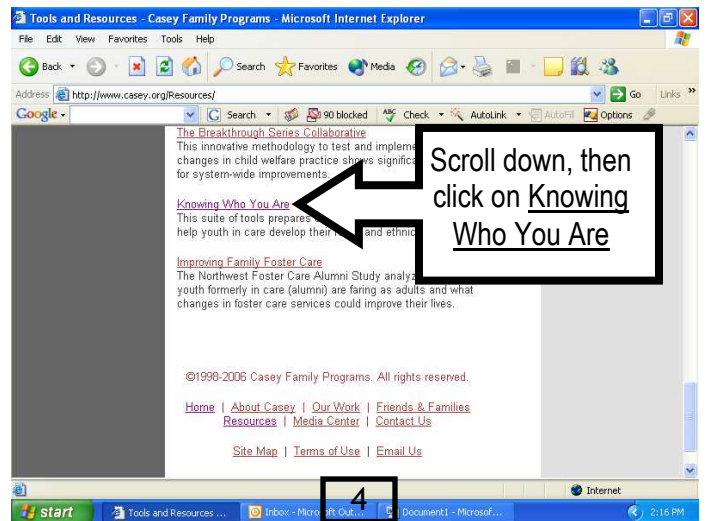
4. Select a youth on your caseload and identify three protective and three proactive phrases that would help this youth.
5. Review your work with your supervisor. Discuss other ways to assist the youth.
6. Provide feedback on the assignment by completing an online survey at:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=365843881460>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VIEWING THE VIDEO VIA THE WEBSITE

1



2



Messages to Help Youth with Issues of Discrimination

Casey Family Programs (www.casey.org) has developed an online course, *Knowing Who You Are**, as a companion to the *Knowing Who You Are* video. This curriculum introduces two types of messages that caseworkers and resource parents can use to help counterbalance the negative messages a youth receives through government policies, media stereotypes, societal values and beliefs, and institutional racism.

PROACTIVE MESSAGES

Proactive messages:

- Highlight cultural history
- Highlight individual talents
- Encourage success based on individual abilities and traditional cultural strengths

EXAMPLE OF PROACTIVE MESSAGE

The parents of a Native American girl took her to a Pow Wow and talked about how the purpose of the Pow Wow was to preserve the traditions of the tribe, to renew friendships, and to celebrate these through song and dance. They used this experience to highlight her cultural heritage and to help her feel proud of her cultural strengths.

PROTECTIVE MESSAGES

Protective messages help remind and prepare youth to face hostility and racism in the mainstream.

EXAMPLE OF PROTECTIVE MESSAGE

Japanese American parents took their children to watch the movie *Snow Falling on Cedars*. They used this experience to not only discuss the historical impact of racism on Japanese Americans, but to also alert their children to how stereotypes and biases, such as the myth of the 'model minority' still exist.

From Casey Family Program's online course, *Knowing Who You Are* (www.casey.org; section 2, activity 2)

*Consider taking this course to learn more about assisting youth in developing their racial identity.

Worksheet

CULTURAL ISSUES IN ADOPTION



Youth selected from DVD, *Knowing Who You Are*: _____

Ways in which typical foster care issues such as self-esteem, rejection, and trust may be influenced by racial or ethnic identity.

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-
-

Things I could do to help this youth develop and maintain a strong sense of self:

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-
-

Three *protective* and three *proactive* phrases that I could use to help a youth on my caseload:

Proactive Messages	Protective Messages

After reviewing my work with my supervisor, we have identified the following steps I could take to help the youth I serve develop a positive self image:

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-
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EVALUATION

OCWTP needs your feedback concerning this assignment. Please go to: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=365843881460> to complete a short online survey. Thank you for your help!