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# Understanding the Influence of Culture on Caregiving Practices

## INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the article, “Understanding the Influence of Culture on Caregiving Practices...From the Inside Out,” from *Zero to Three*. The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

## Goals

- ◆ Reflect on your values, beliefs, and assumptions about promoting toddlers’ self-care skills.
- ◆ Discuss the importance of self-knowledge and knowledge of culturally informed teaching in supporting toddlers’ self-care skills.
- ◆ Develop a plan to partner with families to support children’s self-care skills through culturally informed practices.

## Activity

- ◆ Read the article.
- ◆ Use the questions below to guide your reflection and action plan to partner with families in supporting children’s self-care skills.
- ◆ Implement your plan and adjust as needed to support toddlers’ self-care routines through culturally informed practices.

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**“Everyone brings specific values, beliefs, and assumptions about child rearing and child development to their work with infants and toddlers.”**

**Janice Im, Rebecca Parlakian, and Sylvia Sánchez**

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ◆ What caught your attention from the article? What made that fact, excerpt, or example meaningful to you?
- ◆ Educators and families bring specific values, beliefs, and assumptions about child-rearing and child development with infants and toddlers. This article acknowledges that conflicts can arise from differing opinions, but it is critical to recognize and understand another person's point of view.
  - How do your personal beliefs and values influence your views on everyday self-care activities such as washing hands, dressing, and feeding toddlers?
  - How are your beliefs in self-care routines the same as or different from your colleagues?
  - What steps have you taken in developing a shared solution when supporting toddlers' self-care skills?
- ◆ Self-knowledge is defined here as, "a thorough understanding of one's own cultural roots and group affiliations." Reflect on the cultural beliefs, values, attitudes, and practices of families in your care and how they may differ from yours.
  - What are families sharing with you about their child-rearing practices? Are there any similarities in the self-care routines you teach in your learning environment?
  - What steps may be taken to support or better understand the child-rearing practices of families in your care?
- ◆ The article states that, as we get to know different children, families, and cultures, we may find our caregiving practices challenged in various ways. Reflect on the families in your care. Consider their cultural beliefs about developing children's self-care skills.
  - What can you do to embrace the differences in cultural norms that you observe in your learning environment? If you're already doing this, share the ways in which you welcome all to celebrate each other's differences.
  - What specific steps can you take to support toddlers' self-care skills while embracing cultural differences?
  - Develop a plan to partner with families to support toddlers' self-care skills at home and in your learning environment through culturally informed practices.
    - Consider having discussions with families to learn about their cultures. Ask questions and listen intently so that you can better support their children's self-care skills. Be open to the approaches that are suggested and try to include these practices as part of your teaching.
    - Think about the daily self-care routines of the children in your care. How can you encourage families to follow similar routines at home that embrace each child's culture?
    - What practices can you put in place to consistently share information about each child's self-care skills. Examples of this could include a book, log, or chart that can be shared weekly.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about cultural competence and approaches to self-care routines for toddlers.

- ◆ **Source:** NAEYC
- ◆ **Article:** Culturally Appropriate Positive Guidance with Young Children
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2017/culturally-appropriate-positive-guidance>
- ◆ **Description:** Our cultural backgrounds influence our perspective on many aspects of teaching and learning. This article focuses on how culture can impact the opportunities children have to learn about routines and behaviors.
  
- ◆ **Source:** CNN
- ◆ **Healthy Article:** How the World Potty Trains
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/31/health/potty-training-parenting-without-borders-explainer>
- ◆ **Description:** Many cultures support children’s self-care skills in different ways and at different times throughout children’s lives. This article explores the various ways and ages children toilet train across cultures around the world.
  
- ◆ **Source:** The University of Tennessee, Early Learning Center
- ◆ **Research Article:** Engaging and Supporting Diverse Families in Infant/Toddler Care Settings
- ◆ **Link:** <https://elc.utk.edu/2019/03/15/engaging-and-supporting-diverse-families-in-infant-toddler-care-settings/>
- ◆ **Description:** This article highlights how practicing cultural competence with families is relevant in infant/toddler settings. There are also sites of intersection of many differences in caregiving approaches, especially in regard to daily care routines.