

Cultural Diversity in Counseling

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Learning Objectives

- ☐ Review historical and social aspects of cultural diversity.
- ☐ Review diversity and how it applies to counseling professionals.
- ☐ Explore issues in the delivery of counseling services to minority populations.
- ☐ Review methods to assess personal and organizational cultural competency.
- ☐ Recommendations for improving cultural diversity.



General Consensus

- ❑ Cultural Diversity is a difficult subject – all perspectives will be respected.
- ❑ Participants are encouraged to step back from personal views of cultural diversity and to consider global views.
- ❑ Our experiences, backgrounds, and world views shape how we interact with others. Please share yours!





Cultural Diversity



We tend to have a natural affinity and attraction to people who share many of our own dimensions of diversity. Likewise, we tend to feel less comfortable around people who have less in common with us.

- ❑ All professionals, regardless of education, training, and good intent have biases. Professionals must challenge those biases.



Cultural Diversity



Racial, ethnic and cultural disparities exist in all aspects of society, but nowhere are they more clearly documented than between African Americans and Caucasians. Racial variances in quality of life factors are not new.

How can helping professionals use demographic information to assist clients?



Cultural Diversity



- ❑ Dealing with diversity can be overwhelming, and is not a short-term venture. It is an inside job that's about each person coming to terms with his or her attitudes, beliefs, and experiences about others, and gaining comfort with our differences.

What is Diversity?

- ☐ Racial/Ethnic Composition
- ☐ Disability
- ☐ Cultural Background
- ☐ Age
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Political Affiliation
- ☐ Technological





Cultural Diversity



- ❑ Why do counselors and other helping professionals need to be familiar with historical and social aspects of cultural diversity?



Historical Aspects of Slavery



- 1619 The first African American Slaves arrive in Virginia
- 1820 The MO Compromise bans slavery North of the Southern boundary of Missouri
- 1849 Harriet Tubman - celebrated leader of the Underground Railroad
- 1857 The Dred Scott case finds slaves are not citizens congress cannot ban slavery
- 1861 Civil War begins
- 1863 President Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation
- 1865 The Civil War ends
- 1865 Black Codes are passed by Southern States restricting rights of freed slaves
- 1909 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is founded
- 1947 Jackie Robinson is signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers
- 1954 Brown V. Board of Ed. declares racial segregation in schools is unconstitutional
- 1963 Martin Luther King Jr. delivers "I have a Dream" speech



Historical Aspects of Slavery



- 1964 President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act banning segregation
- 1965 Malcolm X is assassinated
- 1965 Voting Rights Act passed- making it easier for Southern Black's to vote
- 1968 Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated
- 1972 Tuskegee Syphilis experiment ends
- 1978 Regents of the University of California V. Bakke upholds Affirmative Action
- 1992 Rodney King Race Riots
- 2006 Parents V. Seattle and Meredith V. Jefferson- Affirmative Action takes a hit
- 2008 Barack Obama becomes the first minority President



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE



It is particularly important for professionals working in health, addictions, and behavioral health fields to become familiar with terminology relevant to cross-cultural counseling.

☐ Lack of knowledge or misuse of terms may be interpreted by clients as evidence of cultural insensitivity.

☐ Race

☐ Ethnicity

☐ Culture



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Race – Is it a Valid Construct?



- ❑ According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Words*, the term *race* first appeared in the English language more than 300 years ago.

- ❑ From its inception, *race* has been one of the most misappropriated terms in the American vernacular (Rose, 1964). There are two general ways of defining race.
 - 1) The Biological Definition of Race
 - 2) The Social Definition of Race



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE



Race – Is it a Valid Construct?

Biological Definition of Race - To the biologist, a race, or subspecies, is an inbreeding, geographically isolated population that differs in distinguishable physical traits from other members of the species” (Zuckerman, 1990, p. 1297).

- ☐ The most commonly accepted categorization of race divides all humans into three races: Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid.

- ☐ **Physical differences, or *phenotypes*, involve:**
 - ☐ Skin pigmentation
 - ☐ Facial features
 - ☐ Color, distribution, and texture of hair



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Race – Is it a Valid Construct?



If we look beyond the superficial characteristics used to categorize racial types we will find more similarities than differences among groups and more differences within racial groups than among them (Littlefield, Lieberman, & Reynolds, 1982).

- ❑ Most scientist had rejected the concept of race by the early 1960s, pointing out that all humans belong to a single genus and species, *Homo sapiens*.
- ❑ There is no biological explanation for why some physical features, such as skin color, have been selected to determine race whereas others, such as eye color, have not.
- ❑ The paradoxical nature of racial categorization is particularly evident with respect to African Americans. The reality is that many African Americans have one or more White ancestors in their family tree. An individual is commonly identified as Black if he or she has *any* African American ancestry.
- ❑ Similarly, an individual is judged to be an American Indian if at least one grandparent is American Indian.



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Race – Is it a Valid Construct?



The method of classifying race in the United States according to ancestry is referred to as *hypodescent*.

- ❑ Hypodescent specifies that racial categories can be arranged in a hierarchy from desirable to undesirable and that children are always assigned the same race as that of the parent of the less desirable race (Fish, 2002b, p. 118).
- ❑ “One curious result of [hypodescent] is that a white woman can give birth to a black child, but a black woman cannot give birth to a white child” (Fish, 2002b, p. 118).

Why do we as a society have to label the race of a person?

What does this have to do with Counselors and other Helping Professionals?



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Social Definition of Race



Social Definition of Race - Cox (1948) defined *race* from a social perspective as “any people who are distinguished or consider themselves distinguished, in social relations with other peoples, by their physical characteristics”.

---- Even though the term *race* lacks a scientific basis we continue to use the term because it serves one purpose or another for those who use it.

Reasons society continues to use the term:

- ☐ Provides a convenient way of maintaining and perpetuating superiority.
- ☐ Provides a convenient way of categorizing people, a way of organizing the world and reducing complexity.
- ☐ Provides a vehicle for self- and group identity and empowerment.



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Ethnicity



There are several definitions of Ethnicity:

- ❑ “A group of individuals who interact, maintain themselves, have some social structure and system of governing norms and values, are biological and cultural descendants of a cultural group, and identify as members of the group” (Bernal,1990).
- ❑ “Ethnicity refers to differences of language, religion, color, ancestry, and/or culture to which social meanings are attributed and around which identity and group formation occurs” Nagel (1995).
- ❑ “A large group whose members internalize and share a heritage of, and a commitment to, unique social characteristics, cultural symbols, and behavior patterns that are not fully understood by outsiders” (Barresi,1990)



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE

Culture



“A set of shared beliefs, values, behavioral norms, and practices that characterize a particular group of people who share a common identity and the symbolic meanings of a common language” (LeVay, 2002).

For many decades, the study of *culture* was exclusive to cultural anthropologists. Recently, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, historians, economists, political scientists, linguists, and other academics have begun to focus on *Culture*.

- ❑ The term *culture* is used with increasing frequency by social scientists, it is frequently used in the everyday language of the general public as well. People commonly associate specific food, language, music, art, and rituals with particular cultures.



DEFINING TERMS: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CULTURE



Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

- ❑ Culture is not the purview of an elite group. Every society shares and transmits values and behaviors to its members, all social groups have a culture.
- ❑ *Race* and *Ethnicity* are not interchangeable terms. *Race* refers to (assumed) biological differences, whereas *Ethnicity* refers to regional and cultural differences.

Any Questions About Race, Ethnicity, and Culture?

How does Race, Ethnicity, and Culture impact our clients?

Should counselors adapt their interactions to conform to the clients Race, Ethnicity, or Culture?



Minority- What Does it Mean?



- The term *minority* has been widely used in the United States since the 1950s with reference to racial and ethnic groups and more recently with respect to non-ethnic groups.
- Minorities are groups who “because of physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment” (Wirth, 1945).
- The concept of minorities being groups that are singled out for differential and unequal treatment allows us to expand the list of minorities beyond ethnic groups who are a numerical minority in the society.
 - Blacks in South Africa (actually more #’s)
 - Women in the United States (actually more #’s)
 - Religious groups
 - Children and older adults to the extent they are oppressed by the social system in which they live, also can be identified as minorities.



Societal Recognition of Minorities



- ❑ Physical—for example, visible manifestations of disability;
- ❑ Blemishes of character—for example, conditions that are viewed as voluntary deviant choices such as political dissidents, alternate sexual orientations, criminals, some categories of mental illness, such as addictions; and
- ❑ Tribal—for example, racial, ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups.

(A. G. Dworkin, R. J. Dworkin, Kinloch, & Larson)



Societal Recognition of Minorities



- ☐ Pope (1995) theorized that even those individuals who attempt to “pass” as members of the dominant society experience oppression in the form of lower self-esteem, feelings of inferiority, and internalization of negative self-concepts
- ☐ Gay men or lesbians who hide their sexual orientation
- ☐ People of color who are not visibly identifiable and deny their ethnic heritage
- ☐ Older people who forswear their age

The recognition or perception of membership in a minority group need not be public for a member of that group to experience effects of oppression.

How does this manifest for our clients?



Phenomenon of Victim Blaming

- ❑ Not only are minority groups singled out for stigmatization and discrimination, they are placed in double jeopardy by a society that blames them for the social conditions they experience as a result of discrimination.
- ❑ This phenomenon, known as *victim-blaming*, “is the tendency when examining a social problem to attribute that problem to the characteristics of the people who are its victims” (Levin & Levin, 1980, p. 36).
 - ❑ The argument that a child's seductive behavior is the cause of child sexual abuse (Muller, Caldwell, & Hunter, 1995).
 - ❑ The breakdown of the traditional two-parent family cited as a reason for a myriad of problems experienced by African Americans.
 - ❑ The argument that the battered spouse must have provoked the abuse.



What Does Victim-Blaming have to do with Counseling?



The ultimate personal consequence of victim-blaming occurs when victims come to see themselves as those who blame them do.

- ☐ Lower self-esteem, even self-hatred, are outcomes more likely to emerge for those who are already marginalized and devalued in society.
- ☐ One's adoption of negative images from others can be viewed as a form of auto-oppression which has within it the seeds of self-destruction.

(Dressel, Carter, & Balachandran, 1995, p. 118)

What client behaviors and feelings manifest as a result?



Cultural Diversity



- ❑ There are many theories and models that guide multi-cultural counseling. Most were developed in the 1960s & 1970s.
- ❑ With the growing interest in multicultural counseling has come professional pressure for the development of multicultural counseling theory.
- ❑ The demand for theory to guide practitioner, educator, and research behavior is perfectly understandable; mental health practitioners and psychologists have been schooled in the importance of theory in understanding human behavior.



Cultural Diversity - Theories



Helms's Interactional Model

- Rather than demanding that the client adapt to the mental health practitioner's culture, critics argue that the practitioner should adjust to and work within the client's culture. In particular, they have suggested that practitioners need to engage in viable alternatives to the conventional counseling roles (Atkinson et al., 1993).
 - 1) Advocate
 - 2) Change Agent
 - 3) Consultant
 - 4) Advisor
 - 5) Facilitator of Support Systems
 - 6) Facilitator of Cultural Healing Methods



Cultural Diversity - Theories



Three-Dimensional Model for Counseling Racial/Ethnic Minority Clients

- The Helms's Black/White Interaction model (Helms 1990, 1995) was one of the first models of cross-cultural counseling to appear in the professional counseling literature.
- Although a full discussion of Helm's Black/White Interaction model is beyond the scope of this presentation, a key concept is that the relationship between the counselor and the client's stage of racial identity development
- "A *progressive* relationship is one in which the counselor's stage of racial consciousness is at least one stage more advanced than the client's; a *regressive* relationship is one in which the client's stage of development is at least one stage more advanced than the counselor's" (Helms, 1990, p. 141).



Cultural Diversity - Theories



White Privilege Theory

This theory conceptualizes racial inequalities that focuses as much on the advantages that White people accrue from society as on the disadvantages that people of color experience.

- ❑ Most such theories focus on the American social condition, since inequality between Whites and non-Whites is a long-standing feature of these academic areas.
- ❑ White privilege differs from conditions of overt racism, in which a dominant group actively seeks to oppress or suppress other racial groups for its own advantage.
- ❑ Theories of White privilege suggest that Whites view their social, cultural, and economic experiences as a norm that everyone should experience, rather than as an advantaged position that must be maintained at the expense of others.
- ❑ In essence, theories of White privilege only discuss the failure of non-White groups to achieve *normal* social status, effectively turning differences into an issue that does not involve racism.



Diversification of the United States



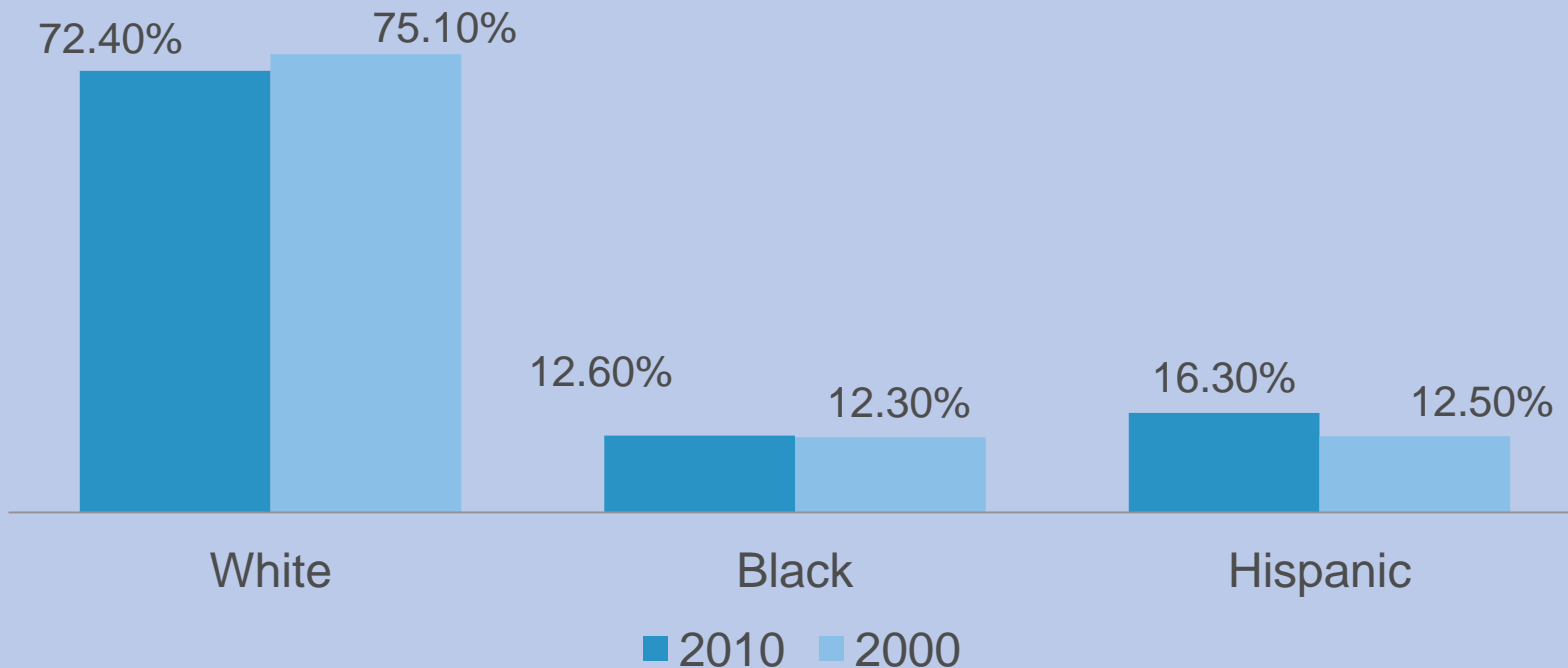
- ❑ The United States is comprised of a highly diverse population, perhaps more so than at any time in our nation's history. For this reason it is essential that helping professionals are responsive to the needs, values, and beliefs of the many groups who currently reside in the United States.
- ❑ Many terms have been used to describe the United States population changes.
- ➡ **GREENING OF AMERICA-** refers to the impact younger populations have on the United States.
- ➡ **GRAYING OF AMERICA-** refers to the impact older populations have on the United States.
- ➡ **BROWNING OF AMERICA-** refers to the impact minority populations have on the United States.



Diversification of the United States

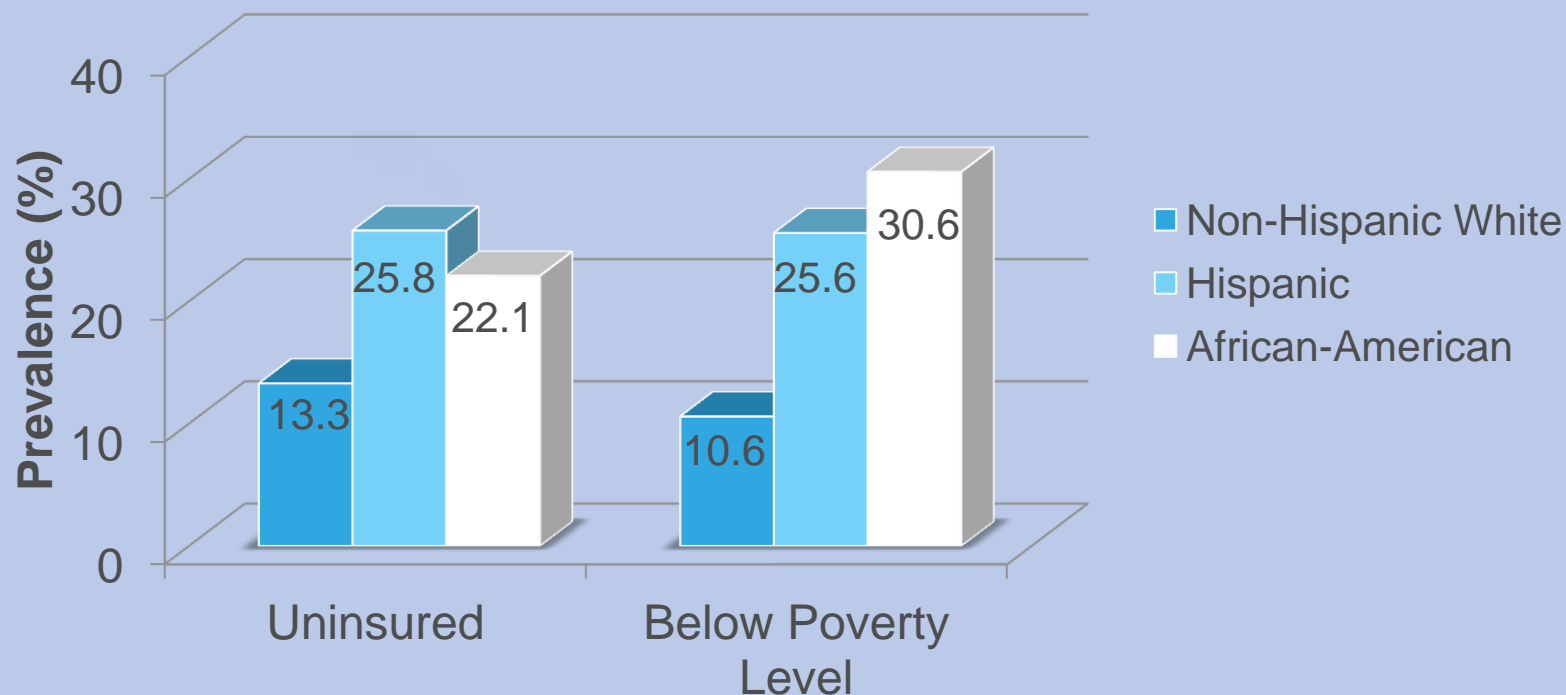


In some states, ethnic diversification is occurring even more rapidly than it is for the nation as a whole. This diversification trend will have a significant impact on a number of U.S. institutions.



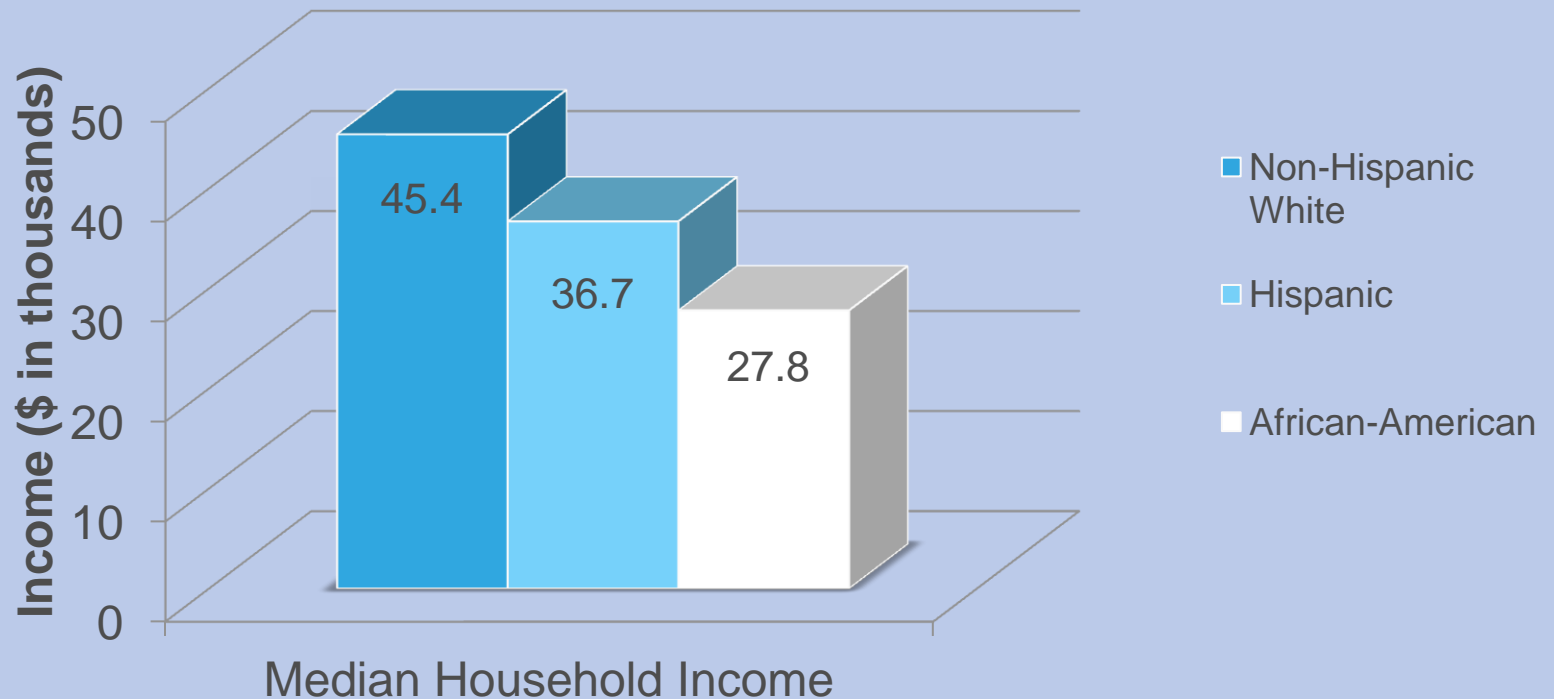
Overview of Missouri Population

Uninsured and Impoverished in Missouri by Race/Ethnicity



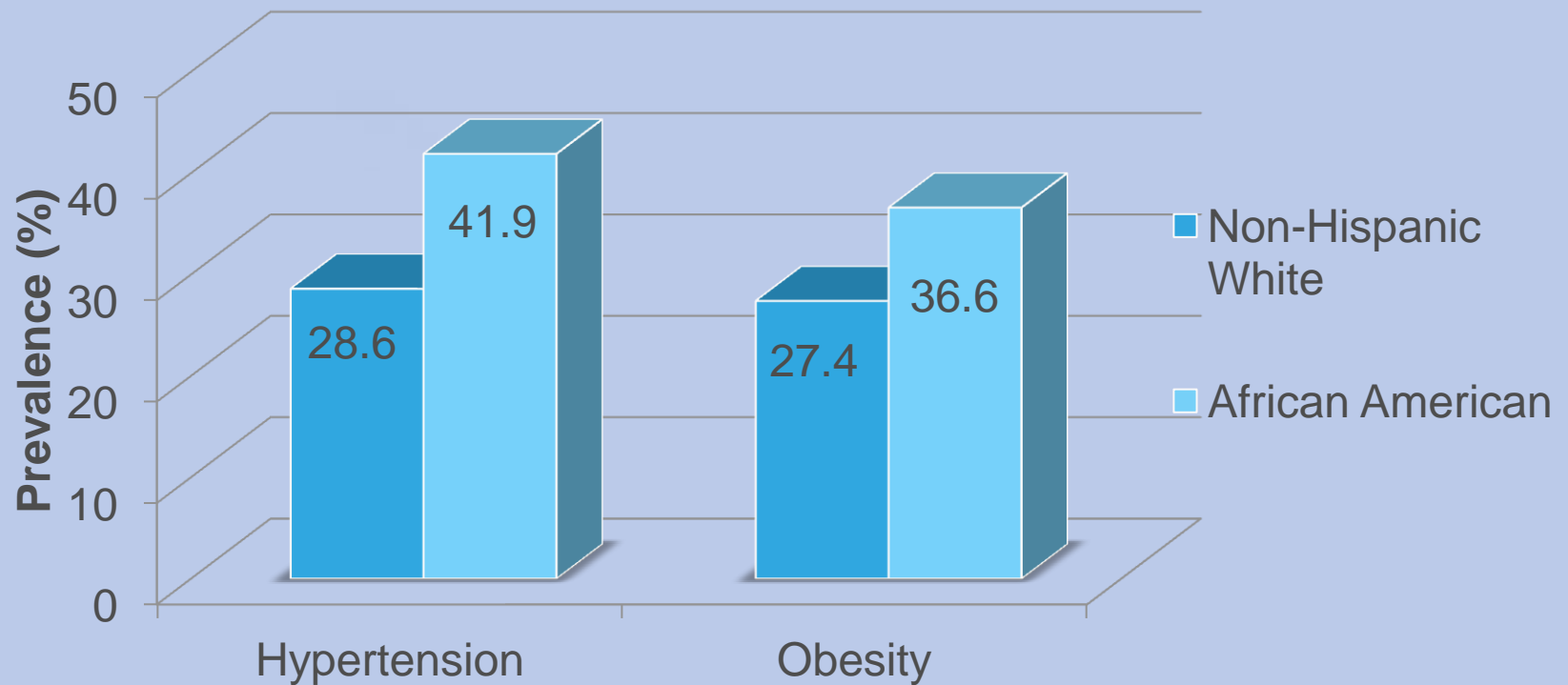
Overview of Missouri Population

Median Household Income in Missouri by Race/Ethnicity



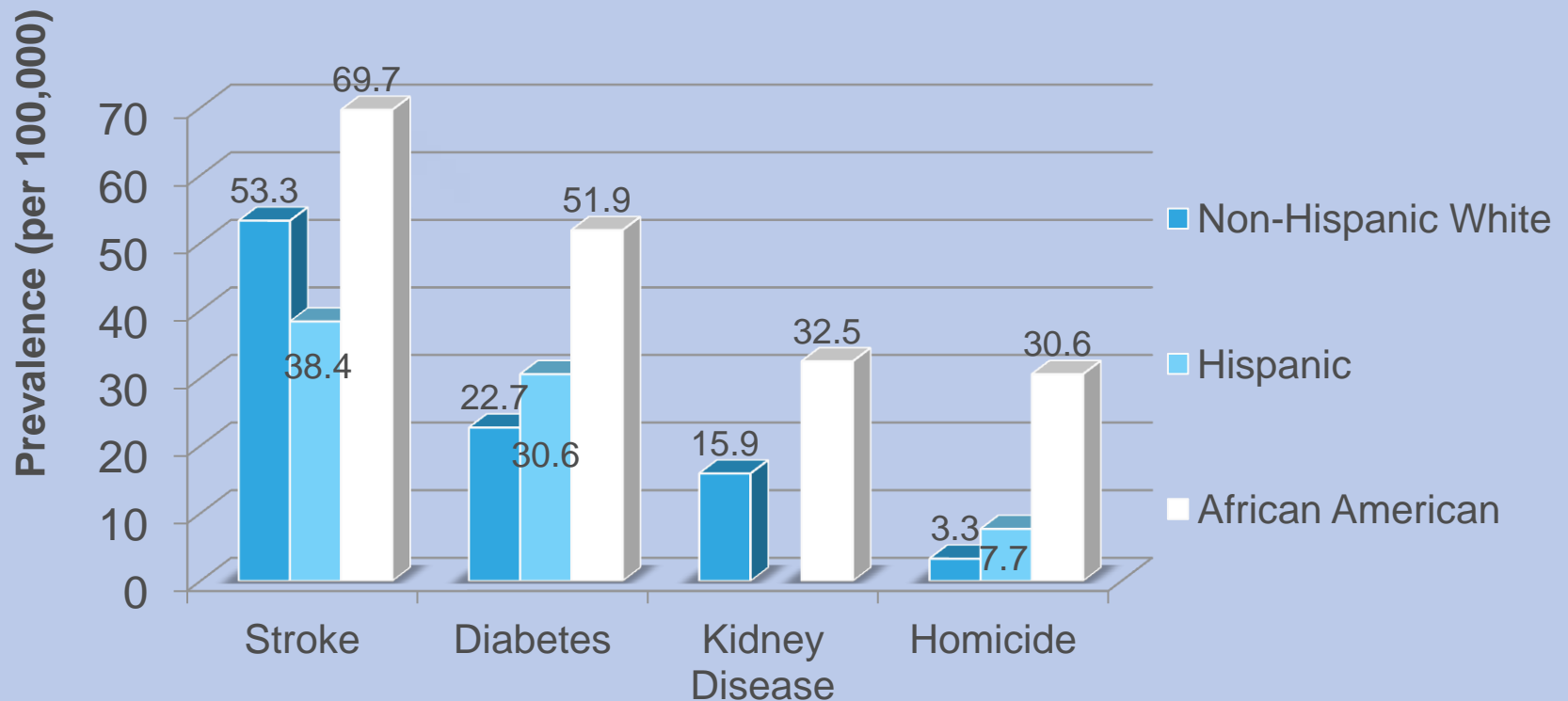
Overview of Missouri Population

Disparities in Hypertension and Obesity in Missouri by Race



Current Health Status of Missourians

Death Rates in Missouri by Race/Ethnicity

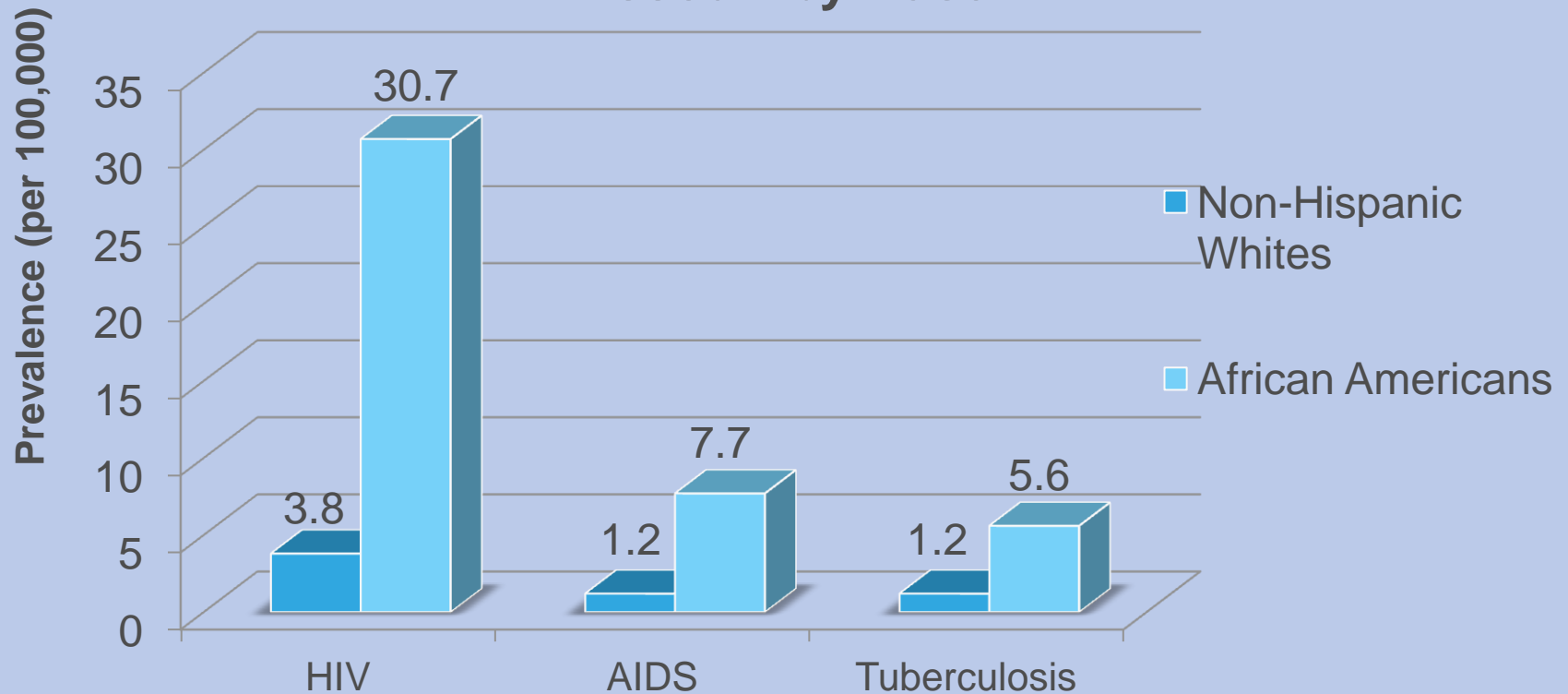


"Minority Health Disparities in Missouri: 2009 Hispanic Data Book." [Missouri Foundation for Health](#).

"Minority Health Disparities in Missouri: 2009 African American Data Book." [Missouri Foundation for Health](#).

Current Health Status of Missourians

Health Inequities in Communicable Diseases in Missouri by Race





Overview of Missouri Population



- ☐ Why Do Helping Professionals Need to Understand Population Demographics?
 - ☐ **Class structure**
 - ☐ **Education**
 - ☐ **Poverty**
 - ☐ **Health Status**
 - ☐ **Incarceration**
 - ☐ **Any Others?**

- ☐ African Americans are disproportionately represented in most adverse statistics.



Addressing Bias in Counseling



- The standard client has changed.....clients used to primarily be comprised of White middle class individuals.
 - **Addictions professionals work with a diverse population, representing many:**
 - Cultures
 - Ethnicities
 - Religions
 - Income levels
 - Varied sexual orientations



Addressing Bias in Counseling



- How do professionals interact with a client when there is an internal ethical conflict?
 - **Once a counselor has determined a potential client bias what should be done?**
 - Self reflection
 - Caseload transfer
 - Supervision consultation
- What if you notice another staff displays a bias towards certain clients?

Diversification of the United States

- Minorities already out number Whites in many school systems around the country, and the percentage of students who are minorities will continue to increase for the foreseeable future.
- Minorities will make up a growing percentage of the labor force and, out of necessity, will fill more and more jobs from which they have been excluded in the past.
- As the numbers of ethnic minorities in the workforce increase, their purchasing power will grow significantly and in turn will influence what goods the nation produces and how these goods are marketed.
- The media and politics in California, New York, Florida, Texas, and many other states are already heavily influenced by minority constituencies, a trend that is likely to become more widespread in the future.





Diversification of the United States



The 2010 U.S. Census Reports:

- ☐ Females comprise 50.8 % of the population
- ☐ People under the age of 18 comprise 24% of the population
- ☐ People over the age of 65 comprise 13% of the population
- ☐ Caucasians comprise 72.4% of the population, down from 75.1% in 2000
- ☐ 1 in 5 Americans has a disability (hearing, vision, mental health).
- ☐ African Americans comprise 12.6% of the population, up from 12.3%
- ☐ Hispanic's comprise 16.3% of the population, up from 12.5% in 2000
- ☐ 1 in 5 families speak a language other than English at home, in the 2000 and 2010 census the language was Spanish, in the 1990 census the most common language other than English was Russian

Just for Fun

As we consider Cultural Diversity we cannot forget the Global Market.

Chevrolet Made Mistakes that Cost.....

When Chevrolet first tried to sell the Chevy Nova in Spanish speaking countries there were problems. The word "No Va" means *"It does not go"* in Spanish. Needless to say, the Nova never sold well in Spanish speaking countries.

PEPSI did not consider language or Ancestral Respect.....

When Pepsi started marketing its products in China they did not consider how the slogan translated. The Chinese translation of the slogan, "Pepsi brings you back to life" meant, *"Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."*





Cultural Diversity



❑ How can professionals assess personal and organizational cultural competency?

Assessing Personal Diversity

Am I Diverse?

- ☐ Who am I?
- ☐ What about my family?
- ☐ Who are my associates?
- ☐ Who do I associate with?
- ☐ Am I reluctant to befriend people that are different from me?



Assessing Personal Diversity

Do I Think Diverse?

- ☐ What am I comfortable with?
- ☐ Am I willing to go outside the box?
- ☐ Can I change myself?
- ☐ Can I go beyond tolerance?



Assessing Personal Diversity

What Do I Assume?

- ☐ The US is a place of equal opportunity for all individuals.
- ☐ Americans don't have a culture.
- ☐ If it is different, it is wrong or deficient.
- ☐ One should not talk about cultural diversity.
- ☐ One should not admit to being biased or prejudiced.



Hogan-Garcia (2003)



Cultural Diversity



- ☐ **Recommendations for Improving Cultural Diversity.**
- ☐ Do you have any suggestions?



Recommendations



- ❑ In working with clients, keep in mind the critical role respect has in many cultures.
- ❑ Don't assume a title of address; ask the client what he or she prefers (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., family or given name).
- ❑ Even if you are knowledgeable about the client's culture, do not assume that you are therefore knowledgeable about the client's personal experience of her or his culture and identity.

Hays (2001)



Recommendations



- ❑ Use of self-disclosure in a way that allows clients to assess your ability to help them.
- ❑ Stay aware of the different meanings of physical gestures, eye contact, silence and other forms of nonverbal communication.
- ❑ Be aware of differences in preferences for physical space, including your own; if possible, use easily movable furniture to allow for different preferences.

Hays (2001)



Recommendations



- ❑ Do not touch the assistive device (walker, wheelchair, prosthetic, etc.) of a person who has a disability without asking.
- ❑ Consider what your office location, accessibility, and furnishings communicate about your awareness of people of different ages; people who have disabilities; religious or spiritually oriented people; people of various ethnicities; people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual, etc.

Hays (2001)



Recommendations



- ☐ Think about the meanings and intentions in your use of humor as carefully as you think about any other communication with clients.
- ☐ Ask the client about the meaning of his or her use of a particular term.
- ☐ Make sure the art, magazines, and any other displayed items in waiting rooms, offices, intake areas, etc. represent the cultures you serve.



Does Cultural Diversity Matter?



- ❑ With desire to be culturally proficient, appropriate training, and awareness of societal views counselors can establish the necessary conditions to establish a productive helping relationship with clients who come from cultural backgrounds different from their own.
- ❑ *Ethnic and cultural similarity between the counselor and client is correlated with counseling success.* However, other attributes also contribute to a productive counseling relationship and may help overcome barriers that can result from ethnic or cultural differences.
 - ❑ Shared attitudes and values
 - ❑ Awareness of one's values, attitudes, and biases
 - ❑ Knowledge of the client's culture
 - ❑ Use of appropriate counselor roles



Questions for Reflection...

Group Exercise



- ☐ **Discuss what you learned about yourself in the course of this presentation.**
- ☐ **Name 2 ways you can use what you learned in your daily life.**



Remember...



- ❑ Continually use critical thinking skills to think about your own assumptions in relation to clients' communication styles, including verbal and nonverbal communication.

Hays (2001)

Thank You!

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