

Cultural Competency Plan 2023-2024

Focus Behavioral Health Services LLC

What is Cultural Competency?

Cultural competency is an ever-evolving definition of diversity that includes but is not limited to age, Cognitive ability, or limitations, Country of origin, Degree of acculturation, Educational level attained, Environment and surroundings, Family and household compositions, Gender identity, Generation, Health practice, including the use of traditional healer techniques such as Reiki and acupuncture, Linguistic characteristics, including language(s) spoken, written, or signed; dialects or regional variants; literacy levels; and other related communication needs, Military affiliation, Occupational groups, Perceptions of family and community, Perceptions of health and well-being and related practices, Perceptions/beliefs regarding diet and nutrition, Physical ability or limitations, Political beliefs, Racial and ethnic groups, Religious and spiritual characteristics, including beliefs, practices and support systems related to how an individual finds and defines meaning in his/her life., Residence (i.e., urban, rural, or suburban), Sex, Sexual orientation, Socioeconomic status

How can one be culturally competent?

One must possess the ability to understand and respect values, attitudes, beliefs, and mores that differ across cultures and to consider and respond appropriately to these differences in planning, implementing, and evaluating health education and promotion programs and interventions.

Cultural competence requires that organizations:

- Have a defined set of values and principles and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.
- Have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve.
- Incorporate the above in all aspects of policy-making, administration, practice, and service delivery and systematically involve members, key stakeholders, and communities.

Cultural sensitivity: The importance of cultural sensitivity in providing effective care for diverse populations (position paper). AAFP. (2019, December 12). <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/cultural-proficiency-position-paper.html>

Our Policy Statement:

Culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior, which includes but is not limited to – thought, communication, languages, beliefs, values, practices, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships, and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious, social or political group; the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.

Focus Behavioral Health Services, LLC recognizes that Cultural competence is a key principle that must be integrated within all aspects of systems of care. The agency will attempt to respond effectively to the needs of all stakeholders, employees, the community, children, youth, and families from culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

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Our Goals

1. Focus shall employ a workforce that is diverse to serve various ethnic and cultural groups effectively.
2. Provide a safe, non-judgmental forum for personnel, stakeholders, clients, and their guardians to honestly explore cultural considerations – their own and those of the children, youth, families, and communities we serve.
3. Assist in improving employee's understanding and sensitivity to cultural diversity within the agency and with youth and families served by providing cultural competency training, open forums, and providing information as needed.
4. Improve communication to and from stakeholders, employees, community, youth, and families served for whom cultural/linguistic and developmentally hindered issues are present.
5. Respond to current and projected demographic changes in the community by gathering data from Census, State plans, MCO Cultural Diversity Plans.
6. Train staff and provide continuing education on the care of LGBTQ clients.

Breakdown of Goals

Goal 1- Focus shall employ a workforce that is diverse to serve various ethnic and cultural groups effectively

- FOCUS Behavioral does not discriminate with regard to race, gender, religion, or ethnic background when hiring employees.
- All employees must abide by policies and procedures developed pertaining to cultural diversity, ethnic intimidation, anti-racism, anti-stigma, and discrimination.
- The agency shall hire talented employees at all levels of service.
- Recruitment will always be with all ethnicities and cultural backgrounds.
- The agency ensures that bilingual/trilingual employees are hired or contracted as needed for areas that have direct contact with youth and families served to meet their identified needs.
- Having a "zero tolerance" for staff who might share certain prejudices and/or stereotypes in their working environment

Goal 2- Provide a safe, non-judgmental forum for personnel, stakeholders, clients, and their guardians to honestly explore cultural considerations – their own and those of the children, youth, families, and communities we serve.

- This can be achieved via surveys, in person forums, or online suggestions via the website. This can also be achieved by filing suggestions with the quality improvement department.
- Provide educational opportunities in order to help personnel, stakeholders, clients, and their guardians in understanding cultural diversity and competency.
- Build meaningful partnerships with families and youth at the service delivery and policy levels;
- Have families and youth served assist the agency in identifying barriers within our program around cultural competency
- Get feedback from families and youth to develop strategies to address identified barriers.

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Goal 3- Assist in improving employee's understanding and sensitivity to cultural diversity within the agency and with youth and families served by providing cultural competency training, open forums, and providing information as needed.

- Staff will be trained at the time of new employee orientation and ongoing regarding the agency's cultural diversity plan.
- The agency provides training for staff to improve understanding, sensitivity, and competency to the culturally diverse population in which they serve.
- We shall educate all managers, supervisors, employees, and owners through training on the diversity of the communities served by this organization and the importance of valuing and managing our diversity. The agency shall have zero tolerance for discrimination of any type.

Goal 4- Improve communication to and from stakeholders, employees, community, youth, and families for whom cultural/linguistic and developmentally hindered issues are present.

- Focus will use contracted interpreters within the agency
- Contracting with outside individuals who have proficiency in serving different cultural groups
- Contracting or outsourcing interpreting services through well-established agencies
- Printed Materials in other languages, easy to read, low literacy picture and symbol formats
- Materials provided in alternative formats (e.g. audiotape, and enlarged print)
- Using Storyboards - with picture cards for clients that are unable to read or comprehend the cognitive behavioral program model
- Using the Head, Heart, Hands Program Model Posters in explaining program expectations
- Printed Materials in other languages, easy to read, low literacy picture and symbol formats

Goal 5- Respond to current and projected demographic changes in the community by gathering data from Census, State plans, MCO Cultural Diversity Plans.

- To meet legislative, regulatory, and accreditation mandates and milestones.
- The agency will annually identify other disparities pertaining to culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, and race- ie. Hearing loss, illiterate, or speaking a language other than what the agency provides
- FOCUS Behavioral Health Services, LLC strives to make non-traditional agency hours available in order to accommodate the youth and families served.
- The agency provides sliding scale/fee reductions in order to accommodate affordable costs for youth and families served.

Goal 6- Train staff and provide continuing education on the care of LGBTQ clients.

- Providing advertisements that show acceptance of the LGBTQ community throughout our agency.
- Educate staff on maintaining an open mind and how to avoid judgment regarding sexual orientation and practices.
- On intake forms, include the term partner in addition to the spouse for the guardians, including different gender options as well.

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- Educate staff and providers to be comfortable in discussing sexual orientation, gender orientation, and sexual practices.
- Include members of the LGBTQ community as part of our staff and train staff to refer to patients by their name and chosen descriptive pronouns (Mr., Ms., Mrs., etc.) (The exception is that in the OS group homes, the clients must be referred to by their born genders per treatment protocol).

Organizational Composition and Climate:

Focus shall employ a workforce that is reflective of the community in which we serve. Every effort shall be made for staff selections to be reflective of the community at large. Focus Behavioral Health Services shall make every effort to ensure that Cultural competence is evident throughout all aspects of the agency. Focus shall annually study the demographics within our community to determine primary age, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, etc. Staying aligned with the community demography will also be reflected within our workforce/community. The workforce will be reflective of the community we serve.

Focus shall have zero tolerance for any cultural diversity discrimination. All employees shall be treated equally. It is the established policy of Focus Behavioral Health Services, LLC to provide equal employment opportunities to all qualified persons and to administer all aspects and conditions of employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, severe/morbid obesity, medical condition, military or veteran status, genetic information, marital status, ethnicity, alienage or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. We take allegations of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and retaliation very seriously and will promptly conduct an investigation when warranted.

Community:

FOCUS Behavioral Health Services, LLC attempts to develop and utilize relationships with outside/non-traditional community organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for youth and families served. The agency also uses these relationships to build and facilitate acceptance of the behavioral healthcare system.

From January 1st to December 31st, 2023, Focus Behavioral Health Services, LLC served approximately 529 clients and their families. Ages ranged from age 3 to 19. The census in services representative of this number is as follows:

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Census and Ages Served by Service Area

Service	Age Range	Clients Served 2021	Clients Served 2022	Clients Served 2023
Residential Level III	12 to 18	13	21	29
Child/Adolescent DTX	5 to 18	82	113	136
Outpatient	3 to 19	435	433	364
Total Census		530	567	529

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Race and Ethnicity of Clients Served

Race	Census 2021	% of Clients Served	Census 2022	% of Clients Served	Census 2023	% of Clients Served
African American	45	20.5%	21	0.1%	42	12.1%
Asian	2	0.01%	0	0%	2	0.01%
Caucasian	123	56.2%	189	81.5%	261	75.5%
Hispanic	40	18.3%	20	0.9%	37	10.7%
Other	9	0.04%	2	0.01%	5	.01%

Race and Ethnicity of Work Force

Race	Census 2021	% of Staff	Census 2022	% of Staff	Census 2023	% of Staff
African American	30	22.1%	23	16.1%	22	16.8%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Caucasian	103	75.7%	116	81.1%	104	79.4%
Hispanic	1	0.01%	2	0.01%	1	0.01%
Other	2	0.02%	2	0.01%	4	0.03%

Racial Diversity based on United States Census Bureau, 2023 estimate

Race	Burke County	Caldwell County	Watauga County	North Carolina
African American or Black	6.5%	5.4%	2.1%	22.2%
American Indian & Alaskan Native	1.0%	0.7%	0.4%	1.6%
Asian-Pacific Islander	3.8%	0.9%	1.3%	3.6%
Caucasian, not Hispanic	80.8%	85.7%	90.9%	61.5%
Hispanic	7.0%	6.5%	4.1%	10.5%
Two or More Races	2.0%	2.0%	1.7%	2.6%

The race and ethnicity percentages of clients served in the surrounding counties are commensurate with the United States Census Bureau, 2023 National Estimate. The agency strives to serve all clients and be sensitive to various cultural values and beliefs. Our workforce is also comparable with the surrounding counties' ethnic populations as well as the client populations served.

Economy, Education, Crime, and Other Significant Health Indicators

Economy

Service Area Economy rates by county

Statistic	Burke	Caldwell	Watauga	North Carolina
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Population in poverty	12.6%	16.2%	21.0%	12.8%
Percent of Uninsured	14.6%	13.8%	12.6%	11.1%
Total Unemployment	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%	3.8% (198K)
Per Capita Income	\$30,633	\$29,125	\$30,807	\$37,641
Persons Under the age of 18	17.8%	19.5%	11.8%	21.4%
Median Household Income	\$53,732	\$52,362	\$50,034	\$66,186
Households with Internet	79.7%	83.2%	89.1%	87.0%
Total Health Care and Social Assistance Receipts	\$644,937	\$271,542	\$1,073,305	\$72,732,275

Education

County	Burke	Caldwell	Watauga	NC State
Crime in Schools per 1000 student	7.323%	14.080%	4.857%	7.512%
Bachelor's Degree	19.8%	17.2%	44.5%	33.9%
High School Dropout Rates	2.59%	3.31%	2.14%	2.25%
Graduation Rates	88%	84%	91%	86.5%

Crime and Violence

The State Board of Education has defined 16 criminal acts that are to be included in its annual report. Nine of the 16 are considered dangerous and violent. The acts of crime and violence include:

- Homicide
- Assault resulting in serious bodily injury
- Assault involving the use of a weapon
- Rape
- Sexual offense
- Sexual assault
- Kidnapping
- Robbery with a dangerous weapon
- Taking indecent liberties with a minor
- Assault on school personnel
- Bomb threat
- Burning of a school building
- Possession of alcoholic beverage
- Possession of a firearm or powerful explosive
- Possession of a weapon

Counties	Reportable Crimes	Reportable Crime Rate (per 1000 students)
Burke County Schools	82	7.323
Caldwell County Schools	148	14.080
Watauga County Schools	22	4.857

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Focus Population Payer Source

Payer Sources	% of Billing 2021	% of Billing 2022	% of Billing 2023
Medicaid	56%	67%	77%
Private Insurance	43%	33%	21%
Private Pay/Self Pay	1%	0%	2%

Sexual Orientation, gender identity, and gender expression

The LGBTQ community covers about 4% of North Carolina's adult population.

The total LGBTQ community from age 13+ is 382,000 in North Carolina

The LGBTQ community is about 5% of the workforce, approximately 238,000 people.

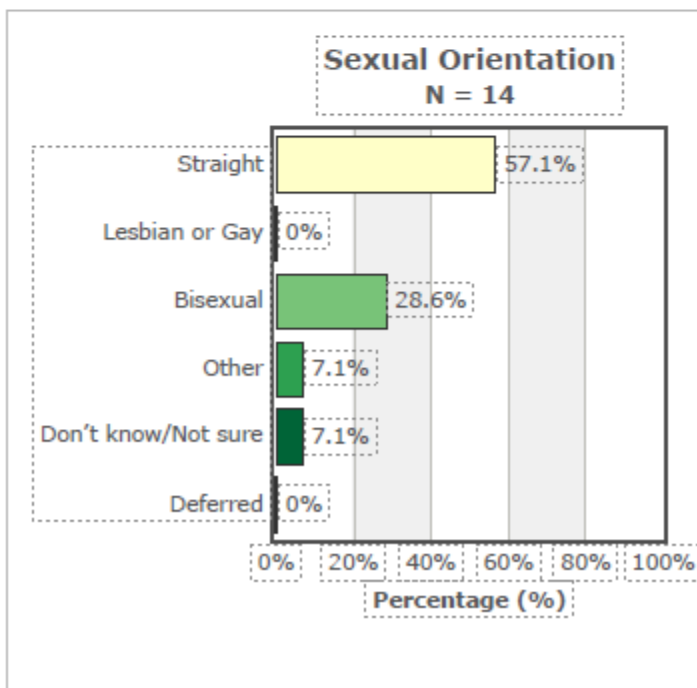
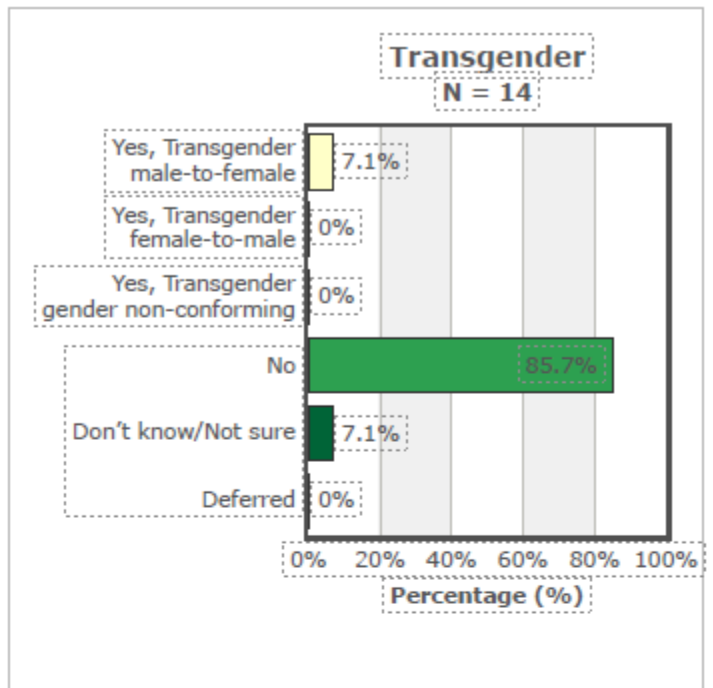
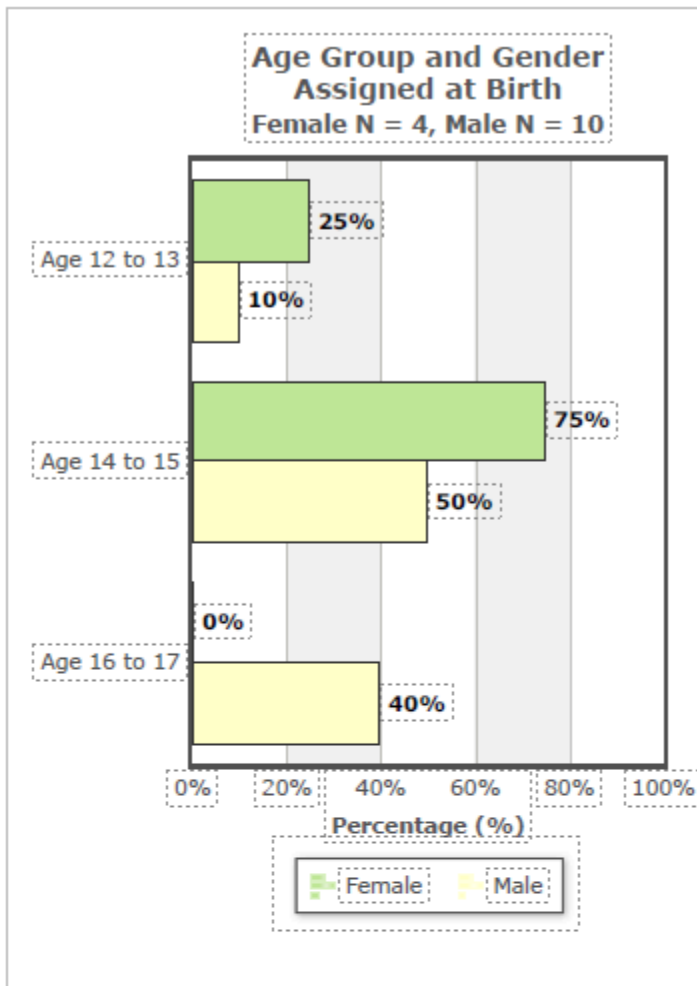
Gender	percent
Male	39%
Female	61%

Race	Percentage of population
White	58%
Black or African American	22%
Latino/ Hispanic	11%
more than one race	6%
All other races	3%

Data and statistics found on [LGBTQ Data & Demographics](#)

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Focus Behavioral Health Services LLC

Quality Improvement Director

NC Clinical Director

Agency President

