



Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities

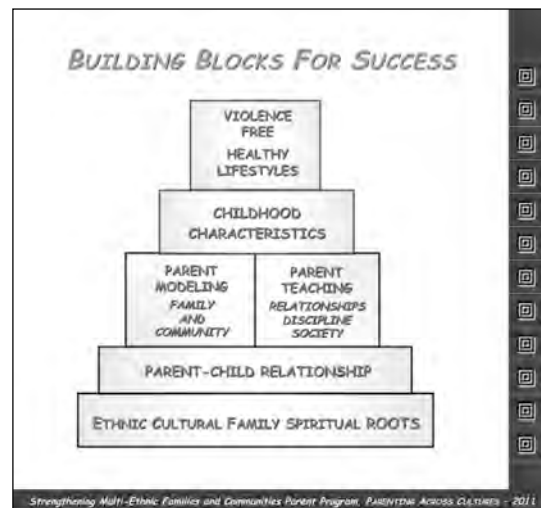
PROGRAM FOUNDATION

The Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities Program is a strength-based prevention-intervention program for parents with children between 3 and 18 years of age. The curriculum is structured into an Orientation Session and twelve weekly 3-hour sessions. Information and activities are presented in five component areas: Cultural-Spiritual, Enhancing Relationships, Positive Discipline, Rites of Passage, and Community Involvement.

The Building Blocks for Success is the schematic that ties all program component information together. Each topic area is tied into the Childhood Characteristics: Self-Esteem, Self-Discipline, Social Competence, and a Value System that motivates us to want to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

Parent Modeling and Teaching is emphasized though out the curriculum. Establishing a positive parent-child relationship is presented as the foundation to modeling and teaching, the effectiveness of positive discipline methods, and their ability to teach right from wrong and social competency skills.

The importance of ethnic - cultural - family - spiritual roots is emphasized from the very beginning as the driving force behind our attitudes, beliefs and behavior. Presenting information within a cultural framework encourages parents to explore the impact of their experiences and values on their current child-rearing practices, and what and how they communicate with their children.



Information on different discipline methods is presented within The **Process of Discipline** framework. The Program's message, *keep the value - change the process*, provides a non-threatening environment that encourages parents to try new methods to teach traditional values. Parents are further supported in their efforts to change, as they are continuously reminded that there is *no one best way* and *each parent must decide what is right for them and their children*.

The program uses a **Facilitative-Discussion Format** to *raise parent level of consciousness*. When parents are in a safe and supportive environment, and learn the negative and positive consequences of different parenting strategies, they will struggle within themselves to change. The effectiveness of this method is based on the belief that *true learning comes from within*, and that parents will take responsibility for making the best choices they can. Curriculum information is presented and related back to the Building Blocks For Success, Childhood Characteristics, The Parent-Child Relationship, and the parent's ability to Model and Teach.

Although parents come to the program looking for information on how they can work with their children, the Program's overall focus is on enhancing **parent** sense of competence, and is based on the belief that *when parents feel better about themselves as parents, they will do better*. The program helps parents to identify areas of need, and encourages and assists them in getting those needs met by providing two Community Speaker sessions, and activities to enhance parent access and utilization of community services.

The program's validation of the effects of poverty, social-historical trauma, racism, societal pressures, and community norms not only validates the experiences and concerns of many of the participants, but it also serves to highlight the fact that *good parenting goes beyond the four walls of our home*." As parents celebrate who they are, by sharing their traditions, customs and values, they learn *we are more alike than we are different*, and that *we must all come together* to make the community (the world) a safe place for all our children to grow up in.

