

Module II

Case Example #2: The Rivera Family; and Brent Solomon, CW Worker

Background Information on the Family:

The Rivera family includes the mother, 31 year old Yalinda, 5 year old Carlos, and 11 year Elena. They moved from Texas eight months ago to the rural county where they now live. Ms. Rivera said they moved to escape the violence against her and the children by the children's step father. Neighbors in their new community hot lined Yalinda because she was leaving Elena and Carlos alone at night while she worked as a dishwasher in a bar and grill and the children were seen in town at night begging for food. The family was referred for family preservation services where Brent Solomon was assigned as their CW worker.

When Brent met with Yalinda initially she was very reluctant to talk with him. She said the dishwashing job was the only one she'd been able to find because of her poor English—she's not required to have contact with the customers there. The family hasn't made any friends in their new community. Carlos and Elena are used to visiting Yalinda's close extended family in Texas, and she thinks that's why they've been going out at night although she spanked them and warned them to stop going out.

When Brent met with Carlos and Elena at school Carlos asked if Brent was a "hit man". Brent asked why Carlos thought he was a hit man and what that meant. Carlos said their step father in Texas told them he'd hire someone to kill the family if they ever left him. Carlos also said their step father hurt them all the time. Elena talked very little, and only if she was asked a question. Brent asked how they were adjusting to their new school; Elena said "ok", and Carlos said the kids make fun of him because of the way he talks. Elena's teacher, Ms. Evans, said she'd considered having a parent conference because Elena dresses provocatively in "tight skimpy" clothing and won't finish most of her class work. She thinks Elena's problems are cultural. Carlos' teacher mentioned that Carlos is a loner and isn't adjusting to his new school. He notices that Carlos isolates himself and won't talk to his classmates.

The CW Worker in This Case:

Brent is a 40 year old former insurance salesman who became a CW worker because it pays a steady income and he wants to help people. He grew up in a working class suburb on the East coast near a large metropolitan area. His family has been in this country for generations; he describes his background as a little of everything or Heinz 57. Brent believes anyone can move up from a poor (welfare) lifestyle or a working class background by doing well in school and staying out of trouble. For him it's simply been a matter of setting his goals and staying motivated.

Module II: Case Example #2:

Summary of an Initial Family Preservation Service Contact with Yalinda Rivera

Brent:	Yalinda Rivera:	Notes on the Case
<p>1. Reassured Yalinda he knew how it felt to be different; as a working class boy other kids made fun of his “hand me down” clothes and 7th Day Adventist rules about not participating in holidays.</p> <p>2. Encouraged her to stay out of violent relationships like the children’s step father, to make a safe home for her children.</p> <p>3. Said it’s a strength to find someone to trust-your priest- who listens and supports you. That had to be hard -especially with your in-laws not helping. But you saved money, sent your kids to your family when your husband was violent, and got out of town when you were able to.</p> <p>4. Asked client what her goals were for the parenting issues that got her referred to FP, and for other issues.</p> <p>5. Agreed to refer Elena for tutoring, both kids for a peer support program, and the family to Clothes Closet (winter clothes).</p>	<p>1. Said it’d been hard for her to learn English. And she didn’t know who to trust when she first moved to the area.</p> <p>2. Commented she hadn’t told her in-laws about her husband beating her and the kids. She was ashamed and knew they wouldn’t believe her. She talked to her priest, he didn’t take sides but he listened and said God would take care of her. He’s Mexican.</p> <p>3. I guess I could have left sooner but I did the best I could. We’re all alone here, I don’t know anyone. I went to the domestic violence center like you said, but no one spoke Spanish there and I don’t have transportation, so I didn’t go back.</p> <p>4. Said Elena and Carlos need help at school, they aren’t doing so good. They need winter clothes. Teachers don’t help.</p> <p>5. I don’t want people to think I’m not a good mother-and I want to be a better one. Mexican women love their children.</p>	

**A Cultural Engagement, Rapport Building, and Assessment Tool
For Initial Child Welfare Contacts with Culturally Diverse Families**

Section I: Engagement-Rapport Building Skills	Skill Steps	Examples of Cultural Skill Applications Involving Solution Focused Questions and Other Interventions
<p>Acknowledge cultural differences in significant areas</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize the client’s identified cultural value, tradition, or experience and acknowledge how it differs from the CW worker’s culture and experiences. 2. Explore how the client’s cultural background and experiences have affected his/her parenting or related areas. 3. Assess together how the worker-client cultural differences might affect the work: planning, setting of <u>cultural goals</u>, and implementing the plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You’ve said as the oldest child in your family (poor African American family) you were expected to help your grandmother keep house and discipline the younger children, and that she encouraged you to spank them. What was that like for you? That’s different from childhood in my Quaker family where physical punishment wasn’t used. I wasn’t expected to help discipline my sister. It has caused me not to use physical punishment with (my) children; but I have to work harder to understand that other people have other values and experiences. 2. How do you think your childhood experience in disciplining your younger sisters and brothers has affected how you parent your children? Your ideas about what methods work best with your children? Your opinion about the most important parenting skills in general? 3. Let’s talk about how our different cultural or family experiences in disciplining/raising children might affect our work together. How do you think those differences might affect our ideas about the required CW services I mentioned? Other areas or goals we can work on? The changes we each think need to be made in your discipline methods? How to accomplish those changes? Who else should be included in some of our meetings?

Section I: Engagement – Rapport Building Skills	Skill Steps	Examples of Cultural Skill Applications Involving Solution Focused Questions and Other Interventions
<p>Bridge important cultural similarities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge cultural differences in a significant area and use a <u>solution focused unique outcomes question</u> to highlight the difference as a cultural strength. 2. Clarify and summarize a potentially important cultural similarity between the client and CW worker 3. Ask the client for feedback on the cultural similarity and encourage her/him to identify it or a related <u>cultural area or goal</u> as a place to begin the work. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I noticed from the record you didn't learn English until you came here from Vietnam at age 20. I was born here so I don't know what its like to have to learn a new language as an adult. It must have been very hard for you to learn English and adjust to different customs as a newcomer. How did you manage to accomplish those things and raise your children in a new country at the same time? 2. When you talked about the small village you came from in Vietnam, you mentioned people didn't talk about their family's personal business or problems. It reminded me of the small rural town where I grew up in Iowa-there was a lot of shame about certain problems like family alcoholism and violence that no one talked about. The type of rural area we grew up in and this family tradition seem to be something the two of us have in common. 3. I wonder if you think this is a similarity and what it means to you? Maybe we can begin by identifying how growing up in a small village or town and the tradition of not sharing family information could help us work together. For example, you can tell me the area you feel more comfortable talking about regarding your family. Perhaps that could be a place for us to begin talking or planning.

Section I: Engagement-Rapport Building Skills	Skill Steps	Examples of Cultural Skill Applications Involving Solution Focused Questions and Other Interventions
<p>Use meaningful cultural validation statements</p>	<p>1. After listening to the client’s description of an experience that he or she doesn’t acknowledge as a strength, summarize how the client used a cultural strength or other resource to cope successfully with this culturally challenging past situation.</p> <p>2. Use a <u>solution focused affirming question</u> to help clients explain how they are using/could use another cultural resource to cope with a similar cultural challenge currently or in the future (<u>to set a new cultural goal</u>).</p>	<p>1. Let me try to sum up what you’ve said about your faith. Prayer and meditation have been a comfort to you during past difficult times, especially when you haven’t agreed with your church or Native American teachings about an issue. You’ve said prayer gave you hope that you and the children would escape from your husband’s violence, which you did, although tribal elders were telling you to stay. So prayer has made you stronger and more independent from your perspective. I agree you’ve used your spirituality and prayer as strength to help you survive and grow from a difficult time in your life.</p> <p>2. Now you’re going through a new transition to be reunited with your children in foster care. You’ve said there’s a potential conflict: the children are already asking when they can see their father and your in-laws, while you think this contact could restart your husband’s violence. What cultural or other supports can you use to help you manage this challenge like you did in the past? And how could your aunt be helpful to you specifically with this current issue?</p>