

Summary of Presentation by
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at Fairfax Futures' 4th Annual School Readiness Symposium
April 26, 2008, Fairfax, Virginia

Session Title: Promoting Resilience in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young Children

Overview: Strong relationships between a teacher and young child can provide the security children need to develop healthy social-emotional skills and ultimately a love of learning. These skills include: self-confidence, the willingness to try new things, persistence at challenging tasks, the ability to develop and maintain relationships, cooperation in group settings, and the ability to communicate their emotions.

Early development is best understood in the context of the interrelationships found between a child and his or her family, community, school, etc.; all of these are influenced by culture. The culture in which children are raised teaches them how to initiate interactions with others, communicate their needs, develop friendships and respond in behavioral norms that are expected by their family.

Knowledge of children's development and families' culture helps teachers to create meaningful experiences for each child in their class. It guides how professionals implement routines and activities that reflect families' beliefs and values. For example, understanding parents' goals for their children as they relate to school readiness and independent behavior should impact how curriculum is designed and practices delivered. High quality Early Childhood programs that are responsive to children's needs and support positive, nurturing relationships between teachers who understand culture, development and learning, build strength, competence and educational resiliency in young children and families.