Strategies for Engaging Black Youth

Robert S. Wright, MSW, RSW
Executive Director
Child and Youth Strategy

September 24, 2009
Nova Scotia Association of Black Social Workers
Linking Borders Conference
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Introduction

- Robert is:
  - A social worker with experience in several fields: education, child welfare, cultural competence, mental health, forensics administration
  - In addition to "day jobs" has maintained a private practice for the past 20 years
  - Co-author of Prevention and treatment of addictions among North American Persons of African descent: Another look at the disease model (unpublished manuscript)
  - Was an instructor in Africentric cohort of the M.Ed in lifelong learning at MSVU

The Need for Specific Strategies

- Education inequities for Black youth
- Black families over represented among the poor
- Black youth over represented as perpetrators and victims of crime
- Black youth under represented among users of voluntary helping systems

Black Engagement in NS

- 1965-67 Destruction of Africville
- 1965 Dept of Ed establishes Black fund
- 1968 Black United Front established
- 1969 Black Educators Association established
- 1989-94 Black Learners Advisory Committee
- 1996 Task Force on Gov. Services
- 2005 Cultural Competence Guidelines in Health

Black Youth Engagement

- Cultural Awareness Youth Groups
- Nia Centre Africentric Drug Prevention
- Student Support Workers in schools
- Life Lessons for Black Youth (DOJ)
- Camp Kujichagulia and similar programmes
- Imhotep's Legacy Academy

Principles of Successful Engagement

- Must have competent, preferably culturally similar facilitators/leaders

- Must use culturally relevant methodologies

- Must be informed by and teach socio-political realities

- Must promote youth to active engagement in community and civic affairs

- Must support positive racial identity development

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE   DEVELOPED BY EDWIN J. NICHOLS, PH.D.

ETHNIC GROUPS / ETHNIC WORLDVIEW	AXIOLOGY	EPISTEMOLOGY			LOGIC	PROCESS
		APPLIED	PEDAGOGY	METHODOLOGY		
EUROPEAN / EURO-AMERICAN	**Member-Object** The highest value lies in the object or the acquisition of the object	**One knows through** **Counting and Measuring**	**Parts to Whole**	**Linear and Sequential** -Assembly line-	**Dichotomous** *Either/Or* -Newtonian theory-	All sets are repeatable and reproducible -Technology-
AFRICAN / AFRICAN AMERICAN / LATINO/A / ARAB	**Member-Member** The highest value lies in the relationships between persons	**One knows through** **Symbolic Imagery and Rhythm (function)** -Gladwell Blink-	**Whole Holistic Thinking** -The BIG picture-	**Critical Path analysis** -Cut to the chase-	**Diunital** *Union of opposites* **Difrasismo** -Aztec thought- **The In Between** *Ibn 'Arabi* -Quantum theory-	All sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks -Black church-
ASIAN / ASIAN AMERICAN / POLYNESIAN	**Member-Group** The highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group	**One knows through** **Transcendental Striving** -Tree the forest-	**Whole and parts are seen simultaneously** -To read a Chinese word-	**Cyclical and Repetitive** -Stroke order in writing a Chinese word-	**Nyaya** -The objective world is conceived independent of thought and mind- -Chaos theory-	All sets are independently interrelated in the harmony of the universe -Keiretsu-
NATIVE AMERICAN	**Member-Great Spirit** The highest value lies in oneness with the Great Spirit	**One knows through Reflection and Spiritual Receptivity** -Purification rites-	**Whole is seen in cyclic movement** -Seasons- -Medicine Wheel-	**Environmentally experiential reflection** -Rites of Passage-	**Great Mystery** -A set of 4 and a set of 3 form the whole- -Super string theory-	All sets are interrelated through the elements, plant, animal, and spiritual networks -White Buffalo-

Stage	Age	Critical Issue	Process for Resolution	Significant relationship(s) & resources
Pre-school	0-5	comfort with visible racial differences	Adequate and enlightened physical care	primary physical caregiver(s)
Early school	5-9	understanding of personal equality & competence	Facilitated success in social and academic pursuits	extended family members/school personnel/recreation facilitators
Early adolescence	11-14	ability to appropriately negotiate racial social dynamics	Knowledge of history & politics of race	same race role models culturally specific & anti-racists education
Later adolescence	15-18	comfort with personal choices in context of race	Knowledge of family values - race, sex, reproduction & relationships	peer group, same race role models, community censors & informal agents

Racial Identity Development, Wright (2003)

The Challenge of Engagement

Evidenced in Obama's failure to tell students the truth

- Obama's speech preceded by State criticism
- "Presidential ethic" adverse to criticizing America
- Emphasized student responsibility OVER system responsibility
- Reinforced American "bootstrap" mythology

Engagement as Activism

- Excerpt from: Kohl, H. (1994). I won't learn from you! Confronting student resistance. In Rethinking our Classrooms: teaching for equity and justice.

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