

# Culture is Everywhere

**CASEL Core Competencies:** Self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making

**State Health Standards:** Standard 4, Standard 5

**Learner/Participant Objectives:** Helping young people recognize ways cultural influences can help gain a deeper appreciation for their own culture and the cultures of those around them.

**Facilitator Tips:** Encourage participants to appreciate the uniqueness in each culture by reminding youth that although a particular tradition may be different than their own, it does not make it weird or strange.

**Key Terms:** Culture, clothing, food, traditions, ceremonies, spiritual practices, religious beliefs, language, family structure, communication styles, identity, empathy

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** Writing utensils, paper, string, hole punch, index cards/small squares of paper, crayons/markers

**Background:** Culture plays a large role in individual identities

**Resources:**

- [Top 10 Ways to Teach Culture \(busyteacher.org\)](http://busyteacher.org)
- [Cultural Awareness for Kids | PBS KIDS for Parents](http://pbskids.org/parents/cultural-awareness)
- [Teaching Teens to Respect Diversity \(today.com\)](http://today.com)

## Procedure

- Begin by explaining that culture is a shared set of practices and traditions that characterize a society or group of people. Culture can include clothing, food, traditions, rituals, ceremonies, spiritual practices and beliefs, language, family structure, and communication styles. Explain that culture can influence who we are by directly shaping our personalities and ways culture influences our lifestyles and decisions
- Have Participants brainstorm a few examples of culture and record their responses on a board or large paper. (ex: speaking English, speaking Spanish, wearing a blue and white school uniform, celebrating Ramadan, celebrating Hanukkah, celebrating Christmas, wearing your hair in braids, using American money, wearing flip flop, kinds of food you eat, going to church/temple/mosque, music your family listens to, foods your parents make, instruments you play, etc.)
- Challenge participants to go on a cultural scavenger hunt: they should look for examples of culture in their lives and all around. Ask Participants to write examples of their culture on index cards and draw a corresponding picture for each example. Challenge participants to find at least **six examples of culture** around them. Have

participants walk around and explore their surroundings (whether this be in the ROOTS space or outdoors/on a playground). Participants may walk alone, in pairs, or in groups.

**An example of six cards:**

- Speaking English represented by a drawing of the A, B, Cs
  - Using American money represented by a drawing of a dollar bill
  - Going to church on Sunday represented by a picture of a decorated pine tree
  - Having long hair represented by a drawing of a boy with long hair
  - Going to church on Sunday represented by a drawing of a cross
  - Eating a specific food represented by a drawing of that food
- When Participants have completed six cards, punch two holes on the top of each card and string all index cards together
  - Ask Participants to share what they found on their scavenger hunts and explain what each example of culture means and the role it plays in their lives
  - Hang the cultural scavenger hunt art projects in the room. Ask Participants to share something new they learned about a different culture around them