

**Table 3 - 2 CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO HEALTH CARE OF CHILDREN**

| Cultural Group                        | Health Beliefs   | Health Practices   | Family Relationships  | Communication   | Comments   |
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| <p><b>Asian-Americans Chinese</b></p> | <p>A healthy body viewed as gifts from parents and ancestors and must be cared for.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal of therapy is to restore balance of yin and yang.</li> <li>• Acupuncturist applies needles to appropriate meridians identified in terms of yin and yang.</li> <li>• Acupuncture and tai chi replacing acupuncture in some areas.</li> <li>• Mexibustion is application of heat to skin over specific meridians. Wide use of medicinal herbs procured and applied in prescribed ways.</li> <li>• Folk healers are herbalist, spiritual healer, temple healer, fortune healer.</li> <li>• Meal may or may not be planned to balance hot and cold.</li> <li>• Milk intolerance relatively common.</li> <li>• Use of condiments (e.g. monosodium glutamate and soy sauce) may create difficulty with some diet regimes (e.g. low salt diets.)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended family pattern common.</li> <li>• Strong concept of loyalty of young to old.</li> <li>• Respect for elders taught at early age.</li> <li>• Acceptance without questioning or talking back.</li> <li>• Children's behavior a reflection on family and individual honor and "face" important.</li> <li>• Self-reliance and self-restrain highly valued; self-expression repressed.</li> <li>• Male valued more highly than females; women submissive to men in family.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open expression of emotions unacceptable.</li> <li>• Often smile when do not comprehend.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not react well to painful diagnostic workup; are especially upset by drawing of blood.</li> <li>• Deep respect for their bodies and believe it best to die with bodies intact; therefore may refuse surgery.</li> <li>• Believe in reincarnation.</li> <li>• Older members fear hospital; often believe hospital is place to go to die.</li> <li>• Children sometimes breast for up to four or five years.</li> </ul>          |
| <p><b>Japanese</b></p>                | <p>Three major belief systems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shinto religious influence.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Humans inherently good.</li> <li>b. Evil Caused by outside spirits.</li> <li>c. Illness caused by contact with polluting agents (e.g. blood,</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe evil removed by purification.</li> <li>• Energy restore by means of acupuncture along affected meridians.</li> <li>• Kampo medicine – use of nature herbs.</li> <li>• Believe in removal of</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close intergenerational relationships.</li> <li>• Family provides anchor.</li> <li>• Family tends to keep problems to self.</li> <li>• Value self-control</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issei – born in Japan; usually speak Japanese only.</li> <li>• Nisei, Sansei, and Yonsei have few language difficulties.</li> <li>• New immigrants able to read and write English</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generational categories:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Issie – 1<sup>st</sup> generation to live in US.</li> <li>○ Nisei – 2<sup>nd</sup> generation</li> <li>○ Sansei – 3<sup>rd</sup> generation</li> <li>○ Yonsei – 4<sup>th</sup> generation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Issie and Nissei – tolerant and permissive childrearing until 5 or 6, then emphasis on emotional reserve and control.</li> </ul> |

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|                   | <p>corpses, skin diseases).</p> <p>2. Chinese and Korean influence.</p> <p>a. Health achieved though harmony and balance between self and society.</p> <p>b. Disease caused by disharmony and society and not caring for body.</p> <p>3. Portuguese influence:</p> <p>a. Upholds germ theory of disease.</p>   | <p>diseased parts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trend is to use both Western and Oriental healing methods.</li> <li>• Care for disabled viewed as family's responsibility.</li> <li>• Take pride in child's good health.</li> <li>• Seek preventative care, medical care for illness.</li> <li>• May avoid some food combinations (e.g. milk and cherries, watermelon and crab) and believe pickled plums to have special properties.</li> </ul>   | <p>and self-sufficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept of haji (shame) imposes strong control; unacceptable behavior of children reflect on family.</li> <li>• Many adopt practice of contemporary middle class.</li> <li>• Concern for child's missing school may result in sending to school before fully recovered from illness.</li> </ul>   | <p>better than able to speak or understand it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make significant use of nonverbal communication with subtle gesture and facial expression.</li> <li>• Tend to suppress emotions.</li> <li>• Will often wait silently.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleanliness highly valued.</li> <li>• Time considered valuable and used wisely.</li> <li>• Tendency to practice emotional control may make assessment of pain more difficult.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Vietnamese</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good health considered balance between yin (cold) and yang (hot).</li> <li>• Believe person's life has been predisposed toward certain phenomena by cosmic forces.</li> <li>• Health believed to be result of harmony with existing universal order; harmony attained by pleasing good spirits and avoiding evil ones.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family uses all means possible before using outside agencies for health care.</li> <li>• Fortune tellers determine event that caused disturbance.</li> <li>• Use astrologer to calculate cyclical changes and forces.</li> <li>• Regard health as family responsibility; outside aid sought when resources run out.</li> <li>• Certain illnesses considered only temporary (such as pustules, open wounds).</li> <li>• Seek generalists' health healers.</li> <li>• May use special diets to prevent illness and promote health.</li> <li>• Lactose intolerance prevalent.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family is revered institution.</li> <li>• Multigenerational families.</li> <li>• Family is chief social network.</li> <li>• Children highly valued.</li> <li>• Individual needs and interests are subordinate to those of family group.</li> <li>• Father is main decision maker.</li> <li>• Women taught submission to men.</li> <li>• Parents expect respect and obedience from children.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many immigrants are not proficient in speaking and understanding English.</li> <li>• May hesitate to ask questions.</li> <li>• Questioning authority is sign of disrespect; asking questions considered impolite.</li> <li>• Use indirectness rather than forthrightness in expressing disagreement.</li> <li>• May avoid eye contact with health professionals as a sign of respect.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider status more important than money.</li> <li>• Children taught emotional control.</li> <li>• Time concept more relaxed – consider punctuality less significant than other values (e.g. propriety).</li> <li>• Place high value on social harmony.</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>Filipinos</b></p>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe God’s will and supernatural forces govern universe.</li> <li>• Illness, accidents, and other misfortunes are God’s punishment for violations of His will.</li> <li>• Widely accept “hot” and “cold” balance and imbalance as cause of health and illness.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some use amulets as shield from witchcraft or as good luck pieces.</li> <li>• Catholics substitute religious medals and other items.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family is highly valued, with strong family ties.</li> <li>• Multigenerational family structure common, often with collateral members as well.</li> <li>• Personal interests are subordinated to family interests and needs.</li> <li>• Members avoid any behavior that would bring shame on the family.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigrants and older persons may not be able to speak or understand English.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to have a fatalist outlook on life.</li> <li>• Believe time and providence will solve all.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>American Blacks</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness classified at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural – affected by forces of nature without adequate protection (e.g. cold air, pollution, food and water).</li> <li>• Unnatural – evil influences (e.g. witchcraft, voodoo-hoodoo, hex, fix, rootwork); symptoms often associated with eating.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Believe serious illness sent by God as punishment (e.g. parents punished by illness or death of child).</li> <li>• Believe serious illness can be avoided.</li> <li>• May resist health care because illness is “will of God”.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-care and folk medicine very prevalent.</li> <li>• Folk therapies usually religious in origin.</li> <li>• Attempt home remedies first; poorer people do not seek help until illness serious.</li> <li>• Usually seek help from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Old Lady” – woman in community with a common knowledge of herbs consulted regarding pediatric care.</li> <li>○ Spiritualists – has received gift from God for healing incurable diseases or solving personal problems; strongly based in Christianity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong kingship bonds in extended family; members come to aid of others in crisis.</li> <li>• Less likely to view illness as a burden.</li> <li>• Augmented families common (unrelated persons living in same household).</li> <li>• Place strong emphasis on work and ambition.</li> <li>• Sex-role sharing among parents.</li> <li>• Elderly members respected.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alert to any evidence of discrimination.</li> <li>• Place importance on nonverbal behavior.</li> <li>• Many use nonstandard English or “Black English”.</li> <li>• Use “testing” behaviors to assess personnel in healthcare situations before seeking active care.</li> <li>• Best to use simple, direct, but caring approach.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of caution and distrust of majority group.</li> <li>• Social anxiety related to tradition of humiliation, oppression, and loss of dignity.</li> <li>• Will elect to retain dignity rather than seek care of values are compromised.</li> <li>• Strong sense of peoplehood.</li> <li>• High incidence of poverty.</li> <li>• Black minister a strong influence in black community.</li> <li>• Visits by family minister are sought, expected and valued in helping to cope with illness and suffering.</li> </ul> |

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|  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priest (Voodoo Priest/priestess) – most powerful healer.</li> <li>○ Root Doctor – meets need for herbs, oil, candles, and ointments.</li> <li>● Prayer is common means for prevention and treatment.</li> </ul>   |  |   |   |
| <b>Haitians</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Illness has supernatural or natural origin.</li> <li>● Supernatural illnesses are caused by angry voodoo spirits, enemies, or the dead, especially deceased ancestors.</li> <li>● Natural illnesses are based on conceptions of natural causation; irregularities of blood volume, flow, purity, viscosity, color and/or temperature (hot/cold).</li> <li>● Gas (gez).</li> <li>● Movement and consistency of mother’s milk.</li> <li>● Hot/cold imbalance in the body.</li> <li>● Bone displacement.</li> <li>● Movement of diseases.</li> <li>● Health is maintained by good dietary and hygienic habits.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health is a personal responsibility.</li> <li>● Food has properties of “hot/cold” and “light/heavy” and must be in harmony with one’s life cycle and bodily status.</li> <li>● Natural illnesses are treated by home remedies first.</li> <li>● Supernatural illness treated by healers, voodoo priest (houngan) or priestess (mambo), mid-wife (fam saj), and herbalist or leaf doctor (dokte fey).</li> <li>● Amulets and prayer used to protect against illness due to curses or willed by evil people.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintenance of family reputation is paramount.</li> <li>● Lineal authority supreme; children in subordinate position in family hierarchy.</li> <li>● Children valued for parental social security in old age and expected to contribute to family welfare at an early age.</li> <li>● Children viewed as “gifts from God” and treated with indulgence and affection.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recent immigrants and older persons may speak only Haitian Creole.</li> <li>● May prefer family/friends to act as translators and confidants.</li> <li>● Often smile and nod in agreement when do not understand.</li> <li>● Quiet and gentle communication style and lack of assertiveness lead health care providers to falsely believe they comprehend health teaching and are compliant.</li> <li>● Will not ask questions if health care provider is busy or rushed.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will use biomedical and ethnomedical (folk) systems simultaneously.</li> <li>● Resistant to dietary and work restrictions.</li> <li>● Adherence to prescribed treatments directly related to perceived severity of illness.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Hispanic Americans<br/>Mexican Americans<br/>Latinos,</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health beliefs as strong religious association.</li> <li>● Believe in body imbalance as a cause of illness, especially imbalance</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek help from curandero or curandera, especially in rural areas.</li> <li>● Curandero(a) receives his/her position by birth,</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Traditionally men considered breadwinners and key decision makers in matters outside the</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● May use nonstandard English.</li> <li>● Most bilingual, many only speak Spanish.</li> <li>● May have a strong</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High degree of modesty – often a deterrent to seeking medical care and open discussion of sex.</li> <li>● Youngsters often reluctant to share communal showers in school.</li> </ul>   |

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| <p><b>Chicanos Raza-Latinos</b></p> | <p>between caliente (hot) and frio (cold) or “wet” and “dry”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some maintain good health is a result of “good luck” – a reward for good behavior.</li> <li>• Illness prevented by performing properly, eating proper foods, and working proper amount of time; accomplished through prayer, wearing religious medals or amulets, and sleeping with relics at home.</li> <li>• Illness is a punishment from God for wrongdoing, forces of nature and the supernatural.</li> </ul> | <p>apprenticeship, or “calling” via a dream or vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatments involve use to herbs, rituals, and religious artifacts.</li> <li>• Practice for severe illness-make promises, visit shrines: offer medals and candles, offer prayers.</li> <li>• Adhere to “hot” and “cold” food prescriptions and prohibitions for prevention and treatment of illness.</li> </ul> | <p>home; women considered homemakers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Males considered big and strong (macho).</li> <li>• Strong kinship; extended families include compadres (godparents) established by ritual kinship.</li> <li>• Children valued highly and desired, taken everywhere with family.</li> <li>• Many homes contain shrines with status and pictures of saints.</li> <li>• Elderly treated with respect.</li> </ul> | <p>preference for native language and revert to it in time of stress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May shake hands of engage in introductory embrace.</li> <li>• Interpret prolonged eye contact as disrespectful.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaxed concept of time – may be late for appointments.</li> <li>• More concerned with present than with future and therefore may focus on immediate solutions rather than long-term goals.</li> <li>• Magicoreligious practice common.</li> <li>• May view hospital as place to go to die.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Puerto Ricans</b></p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscribed to the “hot-cold” theory of causation of illness.</li> <li>• Believe some illness caused by evil spirits and forces.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrequent use of health care systems.</li> <li>• Seek folk healers-use of herbs, rituals.</li> <li>• Consults spiritualist medium for mental disorders.</li> <li>• Santeria is system and practitioners are called santeros.</li> <li>• Treatments classified as “hot” or “cold”.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family usually large and home centered – the core of existence.</li> <li>• Father has complete authority in family – family provider and decision maker.</li> <li>• Wife and children subordinate to father.</li> <li>• Children valued – seen as a gift from God.</li> <li>• Children taught to obey and respect parents; corporal punishment to ensure obedience.</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May use nonstandard English</li> <li>• Spanish speaking or bilingual.</li> <li>• Strong sense of family privacy – may view questions regarding family as impudent.</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaxed sense of time.</li> <li>• Pay little attention to exact time of day.</li> <li>• Suspicious and fearful of hospital.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Cuban Americans</b></p>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention and good nutrition are related to good health.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diligent users of the medical model, in part because of aggressive</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong family ties with mother and father kinships.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most are bilingual (English/Spanish) except for segments of the</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In less than 30 years Cubans have been able to obtain a high standard of living then other Hispanic groups in US.</li> </ul>   |

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|   |  | <p>public health practices on the island before and after the revolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eclectic health-seeking practices, including preventive measures, extensive use of the medical model, and, in some instances folk medicine of both religious and nonreligious origins; home remedies; in many instances seek assistance of santeros (Afro-Cuban healers) and spiritualists to complement medical treatment.</li> <li>• Nutrition is important; parents show over concern with eating habits of their children and spend a considerable part of the budget on food; traditional Cuban diet is rich in meat and starch; consumption of fresh vegetables added in the US.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children supported and assisted by parents long after becoming adults.</li> <li>• Elderly cared for at home.</li> </ul>                        | <p>senior population.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have been able to retain many of their former social institutions: bilingual and private social institutions: bilingual and private schools, clinics, social clubs, the family as an extended network of support, etc.</li> <li>• Many do not feel discriminated against nor harbor feelings of inferiority with respect to Anglo-Americans or “main-stream” population.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Native American (Numerous Tribes)</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe health is a state of harmony with nature and universe</li> <li>• Respect of bodies through proper management.</li> <li>• All disorders believed to have aspects of supernatural.</li> <li>• Violation of a restriction or prohibition thought to cause illness.</li> <li>• Fear of witchcraft.</li> <li>• Many carry objects believed to guard against</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicine persons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Altruistic persons who must use powers in purely positive ways.</li> <li>○ Persons capable of both good and evil perform negative acts against enemies.</li> <li>○ Diviner-diagnosticians – diagnosis but do not have power or</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended family structure – usually includes relatives from both sides of family.</li> <li>• Elder members assume leadership roles.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most continue to speak their Indian language, as well as English.</li> <li>• Nonverbal communication.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time orientation present.</li> <li>• Respect for age.</li> <li>• Going to hospital associated with illness or disease; therefore may not seek prenatal care, since pregnancy viewed as natural process.</li> <li>• Tend to take time to form an opinion of professional.</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>witchcraft.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theology and medicine strongly interwoven.</li> </ul> | <p>skill to implement medical treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specialist use herbs and curative but non sacred medical procedures.</li> <li>○ Medicine persons use herbs and ritual.</li> <li>○ Singers curse by the power of their song obtained from supernatural beings: effect curses by lying on of hands.</li> </ul> |  |  |  |
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### KEY POINTS

- A culture is composed of individuals with a set of values, beliefs, practices and information that is learned, integrative, social and satisfying.
- Nurses have a responsibility to understand the influence of culture, race and ethnicity on the development of social and emotional relationships, childrearing practices and attitudes toward health.
- Socialization is the process by which children acquire the beliefs, values and behaviors considered desirable or appropriate by the culture.
- A child's self-concept evolves from ideas about his or her social roles.
- Guilt and shame are two behaviors commonly conditioned in children to control social behavior.
- Important sub-cultural influence on children include ethnicity, social class, poverty, affluence, occupation, religion, schools, peers and bi-culture.
- Membership in a minority group presents special challenges for children, although changes in societal attitudes are slowly taking place.
- Cultural shock refers to a person's feeling of helplessness and disorientation while trying to adapt to a different cultural group and its practices, values and beliefs.
- A child's physical characteristics and susceptibility to health problems are strongly related to ethnic and cultural variations of hereditary and socioeconomic forces.
- Cultural beliefs related to the course of illness and maintenance of health may focus on natural forces, supernatural forces or imbalance of forces.
- In planning and implementing patient care, nurses need to strive to adapt ethnic practices to the family's health needs rather than attempt to change long-standing beliefs.
- No cultural group is homogeneous, and every racial and ethnic group contains great diversity.