

## Module Four

# IMPACT ON KIDS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

### Module Description

The fundamental purpose of this session is to examine the link between disproportionate minority contact in the school-to-court process and the young people that it may affect. This module will address impacts on students, now and in the future, and the reality of effects of incarceration, detention, or juvenile court records. Attention in this module will be given to how practices and policies might alleviate these realities.

### Module 4 Competencies

- » Participants understand short-term and long-term impacts of a juvenile record on the individual.
- » Participants understand the relationships and dynamics of a youth in the school-to-court system with the youth's parents, family, and community.
- » Participants understand organizational and systemic strategies to mitigate short- and long-term impacts on a juvenile or her/his juvenile record.

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# MODULE 4

## IMPACT ON KIDS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

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**One Hour**

### Supplies for Module 4

- Laptop Computer
- LCD Projector
- Screen
- External Speakers
- Module 4 PowerPoint presentation
- Easel pad with markers and tape
- Handouts:
  - “What is WITH These Kids?”
  - Cultural Iceberg
  - DIE Activity
  - Four images for DIE Activity

Always remind participants at the beginning of a session and throughout the module that any generalizations made are based on aggregate data and may not necessarily represent individual diversities within the participant.

- I. **Why should you even worry about disproportionate minority contact in the school-to-court referral process? Those youth are troublemakers, right? Why be concerned that these youth are being removed from classrooms and some even arrested and detained?**

Allow participants to come up with their own examples of short and long-term impacts. Write these up on an easel pad.

- A. In Module 2 the relationship between educational attainment and earnings was shown to be stronger than demographic factors including race, age, and gender and earnings.
  - 1. So we know that education is critical to future success.
  - 2. One important goal of your work is helping youth succeed both short-term and long-term.
  
- B. Sometimes the requirements of the systems or process blur that focus on the goals for a kid's success. What are some other short and long-term impacts of school removal and youth involvement in the judicial system? (In addition to the serious educational impact on future success.)
  - 1. In the short term, youth get angry. Their family gets angry. Communities get angry. In the long term, communities distrust institutions and are reluctant to have confidence in and trust positive reforms.
  - 2. In the short term, youth are labeled and can come to identify with that label. Authority figures and organizations acknowledge these labels, too, unintentionally and intentionally.

3. Court fines can lead to wage garnishment, creating financial instability.
4. As adults, adjudicated youth do not “fit” into larger society.
5. Living-wage jobs are hard to find. That can lead to illegal work and a higher chance of future incarceration.
6. A criminal record serves as a barrier to full employment.
7. Incarceration is hard on families; it perpetuates the lack of positive male role models in a community and separates women from their families and communities.
8. With lower educational attainment and social capital, there is a significant lack of minority men and women in positions of power and leadership.

**II. Given the potential for such significant impacts and the additional challenges faced by minority adolescents, it is critical to ensure that equitable policies and practices are applied in every instance so that youth are removed, arrested, and referred only when necessary by law or when they pose a danger to others.**

Write priorities on the easel pad as they are identified by participants.

Let participants raise their priorities first. If they do not bring up the priorities listed at right, prompt by asking questions.

- A. From your discussions in Modules 2 and 3, what are some of the priorities for developing and implementing more equitable policies and practices?
1. Ensuring objective assessment of incidents and cultural and gender-based understanding to better recognize the origins of behavior.
  2. Providing more consistent and improved front-line training to prepare teachers, school resource officers, administrators, police officers, and juvenile court officers with culturally appropriate response strategies.
  3. Improving community engagement practices to bring community members into advisory roles. This includes developing more active engagement of parents, community leaders, and other interested parties.
  4. Establishing additional supportive diversion programs.
  5. Utilizing the right data to identify and pinpoint bias and inequities in the system.
  6. Utilizing data in assessment, planning, program development, and evaluation throughout the school-to-court process.



Cue video:  
Sam  
Hargadine



Handout:  
“What is  
WITH  
These  
Kids?”

B. As community experts across the state will tell you, they are all aware of and are working on improving the rates of disproportionate minority contact. Listen to what is being said about those efforts by Policy Chief Sam Hargadine of Iowa City.

1. These are your peers speaking about disproportionality and possible strategies to decrease the higher proportion of minorities, especially black males, in removals, arrests, and referrals.
2. What are your thoughts about their perspectives and programs?

### III. Let’s talk now about objective evaluation of incidents and behaviors by looking at the handout titled *What is WITH These Kids?*

- A. After we’ve talked about possible strategies to decrease disproportionate minority contact, why should we now focus on objective evaluation of behaviors?
1. We’re going to use the terms “incident” and “behavior” interchangeably today. However, some behaviors that may be observed outside of the actual incident may garner the most attention.
  2. There is always a reason for observable behaviors and we want you to be better equipped to identify those reasons.
  3. You can then ensure appropriate response to incidents and better support the student and family.



If you choose to expand this module, more in-depth information and additional activities related to *What is WITH These Kids?* are included in the Supplemental Activities.

B. You can see below the “formula” for observable behavior. School, law enforcement, and the JCS can reasonably be expected to effectively deal with two components of the formula: *specific observable behaviors* and *life skill deficiencies*, but less so, if at all, with life crises or events.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{LIFE SKILLS} \\ + \\ \text{LIFE CRISIS OR EVENT} \\ = \\ \text{OBSERVABLE BEHAVIOR} \end{array}$$

1. It is important to focus on *observable behaviors*.
  - a. This means the responsible adult should be able to prove that the identified behaviors are based in *fact*, rather than supposition or inference.
  - b. Sometimes it is difficult, especially when you're in the middle of a situation, NOT to project subjective interpretations or motivations, which typically cannot be confirmed, onto the behaviors.
2. Implementing strategies to improve observable behaviors may not be sufficient in *some cases* to bring about *long term* changes.
  - a. The team needs to identify and assess the behaviors.
  - b. The team may find ways to also identify underlying life skill deficiencies that may contribute to the observed behaviors.
  - c. Developing additional strategies based on the life skill deficiencies may increase the chances of *lasting* behavior change.
3. We will do an activity to build this skill in just a bit. First, are there any clarifying questions about this?



Pass out  
The Cultural  
Iceberg and  
show the  
slide

If participants have  
trouble coming up  
with ideas, offer one  
of the examples at  
right!

- C. Culture is an important component to identifying the root causes of observable behavior.
1. Look at the “cultural iceberg” provided as a handout. The observable portion is the 10% of the iceberg that sticks above the water that we can see.
  2. You can see that in the 90% “below the surface,” core values and attitudes are invisible, but manifest in observable behavior. Culture is a very important factor in determining causes of behaviors and should be considered alongside other factors we will talk about, such as health, safety, and just plain adolescence.
  3. Can you think of an example of how an underlying core value and/or attitude would be outwardly expressed in a behavior or practice?
    - a. Example: Dress and core values (what is acceptable within a community, and how females and males experience their culture differently).
    - b. Example: Congregation and attitudes towards communal socializing (African Americans have a long history of congregation and socializing within extended families).
- D. Let’s do a few exercises to develop our skills of objective behavior observation.
1. Some ethnographers use Kohl’s three-stage process of *Describe*, *Interpret*, and *Evaluate* (DIE) to ensure the quality of information when engaging in behavior observation.

Emphasize the order's importance in observing.

1 – Describe

2 – Interpret

3 – Evaluate

This can be related directly to the discussion of assumptions and bias in Module 1.

- a. The order of this process is crucial.
    - i. Changing the sequencing will eliminate the value of your observation.
    - ii. It will produce uninformed and biased data.
  - b. We should use the same ordered process with students and the situations we find ourselves responding to.
  - c. Otherwise, we will be “jumping to conclusions.”
2. Now let's use the worksheet handed out for this activity.



Provide the activity handout and one image to each table so they all have different images. Give each table a total of 10 minutes for the small group to complete the three steps: describe, interpret, and evaluate.

3. Each table will receive an image. First, DESCRIBE what you see.
  - a. Describe all of the observable details about this person/place/thing/idea/event/behavior.
  - b. Describe everything that is unfamiliar.
  - c. Describe everything that is familiar.
4. Now, INTERPRET what you see. This is where you explain what you THINK you are seeing. It's an explanation of what you have just described.
  - a. What could the person be doing?
  - b. What could the item be used for?
  - c. Consider all possible interpretations.
  - d. This is likely to be influenced by your own culture.
5. Finally, EVALUATE your feelings and opinions of the image after you've described and interpreted it.
  - a. Take your description and interpretations and ask yourself which interpretation is most rational.
  - b. Upon evaluation of all possible interpretations, are you thinking outside your cultural "box"? Are you considering the action or item within a broader cultural context?

Have each table report out, going through each step in the DIE process. Be sure to project the image each table used as they report out. After each table reports, ask the full group to respond.



Cue video:  
Jim France

6. Let's share what our tables discussed. The image is shown for all on the screen.
  - a. Please describe your image.
  - b. Now how did you interpret it?
  - c. What is your evaluation?
  - d. Did you have differing opinions within the group?
  - e. What might explain your differences in opinion?

**IV. Talk about how you will use this method in your work with youth and with your agency.**

**V. Finally, we can listen to Jim France of Sioux City talk about these issues.**









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# D.I.E. METHOD

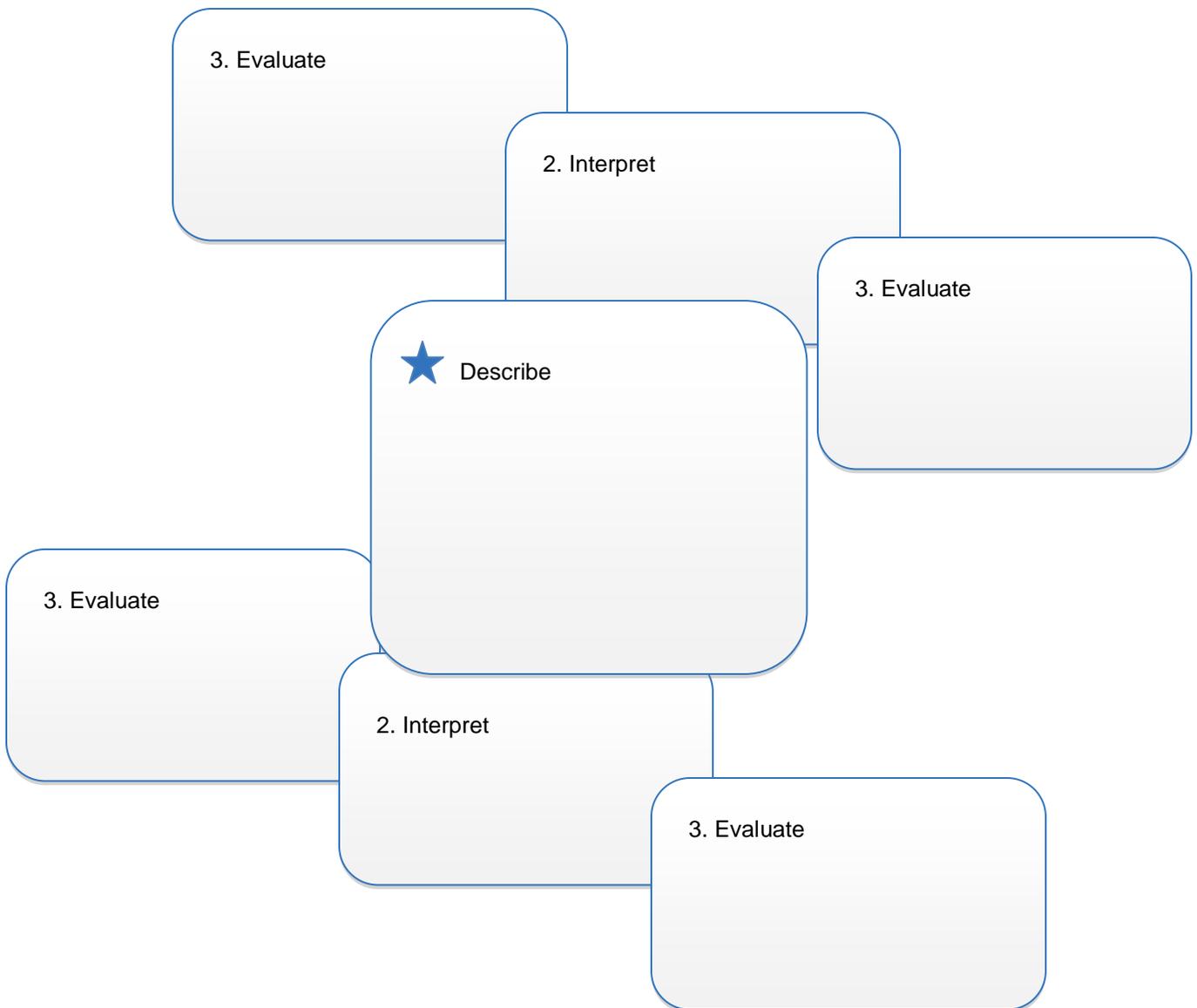
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When we encounter something new or foreign, we must refrain from evaluating it until we understand the context. Use the D.I.E method to practice describing and interpreting incidents before evaluating them.

## INSTRUCTIONS

In your group, observe your photograph and:

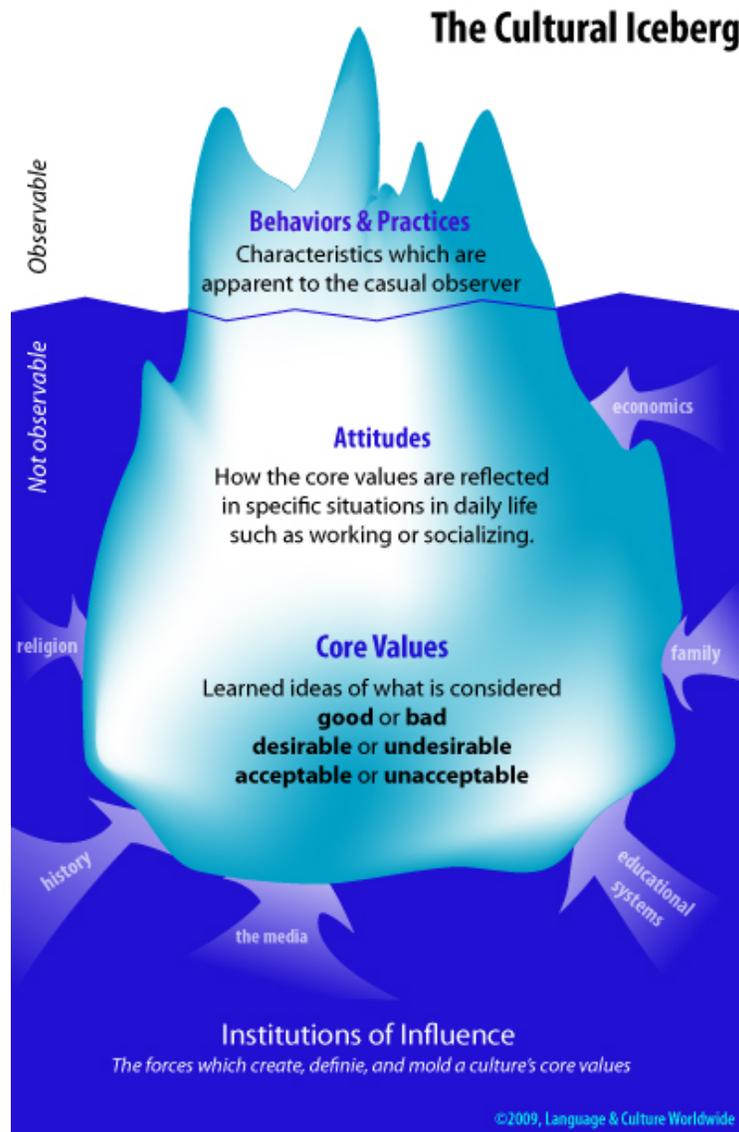
1. **Describe** the facts.
2. **Interpret** the situation based on the context.
3. **Evaluate**, offering opinions about the situation.



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# THE CULTURAL ICEBERG

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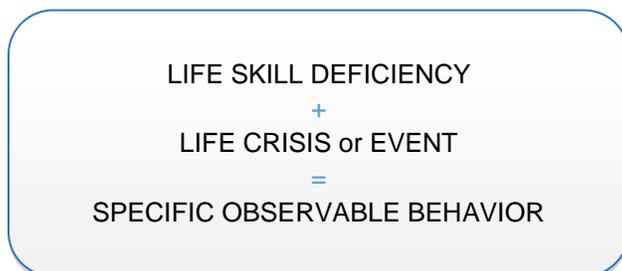


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# WHAT IS *WITH* THESE KIDS?

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There is always a reason for observable behaviors. This is a guide to provide context for manifestations of emotion, health, and other challenges facing students with the goal of addressing individual student needs with consideration of their culture.



School, public safety, and the courts (responsible stakeholders) can reasonably be expected to effectively deal with two components of the above formula: specific observable behaviors and life skill deficiencies, but less so, if at all, with life crises or events.

## 1. Objectivity in Addressing the Behavior

The thorough objective identification of *observable behaviors is necessary* for equitable implementation of policies. It is important to focus on observable behaviors, rather than attempt to project subjective interpretations or motivations, which typically cannot be confirmed. In other words, the responsible adult should be able to prove that the identified behaviors are based in *fact*, rather than supposition or inference. The *observed behaviors* that prompted or justified the original referral must first be addressed. For additional skill-building in this area, complete the D.I.E. (Describe, Interpret, Evaluate) activity.

## 2. Life Skill Deficiencies are Common, Sometimes Natural

It is reasonable to assume that all students have some sort of *life skill deficiency*. For most students, these deficiencies reflect the essence of childhood and adolescence, but do not result in patterns of academic, behavior, or health problems.

The implementation of strategies to improve observable behaviors may not be sufficient in *some cases* to bring about *long-term changes*. The identification and in-depth assessment of these behaviors provides the team with opportunities to also determine underlying life skill deficiencies that may contribute to the observed behaviors, and develop additional strategies that will increase the chances of lasting change.

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# MODULE 4 SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY

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## I. What is it like to be an “other” among the dominant culture?

- A. In order to accurately observe behaviors in an objective manner, we must be aware of our own cultural frame of reference.
1. For many of us in the dominate culture, this may be hard.
  2. The concept of white privilege is an important one because it highlights what we are able to take for granted every day.
  3. The concept of white privilege must also be layered with that of male privilege in order to clarify varied experiences of females and males.
  4. When talking about white privilege or the privilege of those visibly a part of the dominant culture, we must invert the examples and consider the circumstances of those without the privilege.
- B. Let’s talk about white privilege and reflect on our feelings and on how this can be interpreted for minority youth.
1. This can help explain why minority adolescents have additional challenges beyond cross-cultural issues of this age group, including puberty, expectations of maturity, peer groups, etc.
  2. I’m going to give you a few examples from a lengthy list compiled by Peggy McIntosh in her paper “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming To See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies.”
  3. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
  4. When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
  5. I can swear or dress in second hand clothes without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
  6. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
  7. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the “person in charge”, I will be facing a person of my race.
  8. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
  9. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
  10. My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.
- C. Do you think this accurately describes what it means to be white in the United States?
- D. When considering the experiences of minority youth, how might these characteristics of white privilege impact them? How might adolescence intensify these impacts?
- E. Is this an adequate explanation for some behaviors of some minority youth?
- F. Now what about families and minority communities. How does white privilege impact the families you engage with?

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# MODULE 4 SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY

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## II. What are other factors that contribute to certain behaviors?

- A. Pretend you have a toothache. A really bad one. So bad you can't even think. You just want to stay home. You can't talk or eat.
  - 1. How might your coworkers view your behavior if you went to work with a bad toothache?
  - 2. How would you react if someone was pressuring you to get a project done while your tooth was hurting so badly?
- B. Now let's pretend we are all really, really hungry. The lunch you get today is the only meal you will get all day, and it's a Friday so you know you won't eat all weekend.
  - 1. What kind of behavior would someone observe from us?
  - 2. How would you feel this afternoon if you just happened to miss lunch today? How might you behave?
- C. Now let's pretend you didn't get enough sleep last night because your partner, spouse, or children were loud all night.
  - 1. How would you feel today?
  - 2. What if someone was getting angry with you? How would you react?

## III. Let's look at the handout "What is With These Kids?"

- A. This is the document that goes into more detail about life skill deficiencies and how health can impact behaviors in school.
  - 1. First let's look at life skill deficiencies. Take a few moments to look over the list on pages 1 and 2. What are some that jump out at you? Do you have any examples of how you've seen students exhibit this behavior?
  - 2. Now let's look at how health issues can impact behavior. Page 4 lists a few examples of health issues that may impact behavior. Have you experienced any of these issues with the students you serve?
- B. Think back to the DIE method of observation. How might you use this information when using that method?