

# Pathways to Quality

## Cultural Adaptations



### ► Project Description



Part of the Pathway to Quality intervention strategy was to target providers that serve low-income and ethnically-diverse families. As Think Small began to implement these interventions, we recognized when adaptations needed to be made for each culture and language. Making these changes was not an initial goal of the interventions, but it quickly became evident that if they were to be successful, adaptations must be made. Below are the major adaptations that were made and the successes and challenges we experienced.

### ► Results

#### **MEFS Tool**

In order to measure the child level effectiveness of the interventions, a small study was created and The Minnesota Executive Functioning Tool (MEFS) was used as a pre and post assessment. However, many of the families spoke Somali as a first language and the MEFS tool was only available in English and Spanish. Therefore, we worked with Reflection Sciences, the developers of the MEFS tool, to translate into Somali. These translations will be theirs and are now available to anyone who uses this tool.

#### **ParentPowered Texts**

When implementing the Think Small texting program statewide – we wanted it to be available to everyone. It came to us in English and Spanish and we worked with ParentPowered to translate the text into Somali. Currently, we are testing the Somali translation to see if it meets the needs of Somali families in Minnesota. This is now an offering for anyone accessing ParentPowered Texts.

#### **LENA Start**

Think Small worked with LENA Start to hold the first Hmong LENA group. We worked with them to determine how to use the LENA DLP device (recorder) with those who speak Hmong. These learnings can now be used for other languages as well.

#### **Business Leadership Cohort**

We are working with First Children's Finance (FCF) to teach a Somali trainer to lead the Business Leadership Course. We began by adjusting the Business Leadership Cohort for English Language Learner providers by giving them a little extra one-on-one time, but recognize there are not only linguistic, but cultural adaptations that need to happen for Somali providers. With the help of FCF, we plan to offer the first Somali taught Business Leadership Cohort in 2018.

#### **Parent Aware Coaching**

Internally we adjusted our staff model to accommodate the increase in Somali providers interested in Parent Aware and other Pathway to Quality interventions.



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## 2. How well did we do it?

Providers, children, parents and families were accepting of the opportunities offered. Services were translated into other languages; there was marketing and community engagements around MEFS, and ParentPowered Texting. Think Small provided business services to providers to run their business more smoothly, and lastly worked with a group of Hmong providers on the LENA start program.

## 3. Is anyone better off? Why?

There are two major beneficiaries to these cultural adaptations: the families and providers we serve, and the child care system in Minnesota. Providers and families will now be able to access each of these interventions in their own language allowing our field to become more culturally responsive. In addition, as pressure to adapt culturally continues to press on the child care system in Minnesota, everyone in the system benefits.

### ► Challenges/Opportunities

One of the major challenges we had with the translation of interventions, is trying to determine which languages to translate. For instance, we learned that the Hmong language has very few characters that make translating early childhood specific information challenging. In addition, many Hmong families are bilingual and prefer information in English. If they need information in Hmong, they would prefer to have a live interpreter translate English documents because it may be more accurate.

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### ► Next Steps

Think Small acknowledges that at first these cultural adaptations were performed as a normal course of action in the way we provide services at Think Small. However, we are working on formalizing how we look at cultural adaptations. We will think creatively about how we can continue to influence leaders and providers in the early childhood field to more broadly adopt a practice of adapting our work and programming to be reflective of different cultures and languages.

