



Elder Abuse and Cultural Competency:

**Developing Culturally and Linguistically
Appropriate Services for Elder Abuse
Survivors in Diverse Communities**

Presented by: The ElderSAFE Center

August 2019

Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance and need for cultural / linguistic competency and responsiveness in the field of elder abuse
- Learn about the ElderSAFE model and the steps the program has taken to serve its diverse community
- Explore ways to overcome common barriers when working to increase cultural competency
- Recognize the role of building community partnerships in achieving best outcomes

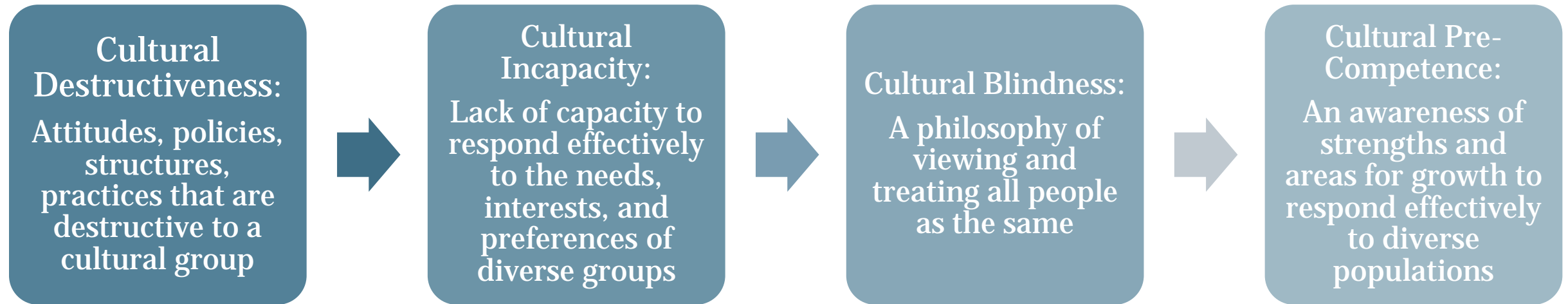
Cultural Competency:

“the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures” (SAMHSA)

Consider:

- Language
- Religion
- Ethnicity / Race
- Country of Origin
- Sexual orientation
- Immigration status

The Cross Framework of Cultural Competence



Cultural Competence

An acceptance and respect for cultural differences, demonstrated through...

- Mission statement, policies, procedures, and data collection reflecting the value of cultural / linguistic competence
- Community participation in planning, delivery, and evaluation
- Recruitment, hiring, and maintenance of a diverse and culturally / linguistically competent workforce
- Fiscal support, professional development, and incentives for the improvement of cultural / linguistic competence among staff
- Individual and organizational self-assessment of competence
- Meaningful community engagement

Increasing Diversity among Older Adults

- 23% of older adults are racial / ethnic minorities (ACL, 2019)
- Over 21% of people speak a language other than English at home (Ingraham, 2018)
- About 15% of older adults are immigrants (Farrell, 2016)
- 6% of older adults identify as LGBTQ (APA)

A lack of culturally and linguistically relevant services is a huge barrier for elder abuse victims reporting and reaching safety.

The ElderSAFE Model



Charles E. Smith
LIFE COMMUNITIES

Client Services

- Language-accessible helpline
 - Monday – Friday: 9am – 5pm
- Temporary, safe shelter



Client Eligibility

- 60 years of age or older
- A victim of one or more of the following types of abuse (physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect) or is at risk for experiencing abuse
- Referred by an agency or program
- Willing to be placed in temporary shelter
- Agree to not contact abuser during shelter stay

Accepts referrals from Maryland, Washington DC and Northern Virginia

Please note:

****ElderSAFE will accept clients without insurance**

****Self neglect and homeless cases are not accepted**

Shelter Services

- Medical
- Psychological
- Physical, occupational and/or speech therapy
- Spiritual support
- Social Services (**safe discharge**)
- Legal referrals
- Specialized trauma therapy
- Holistic therapy program



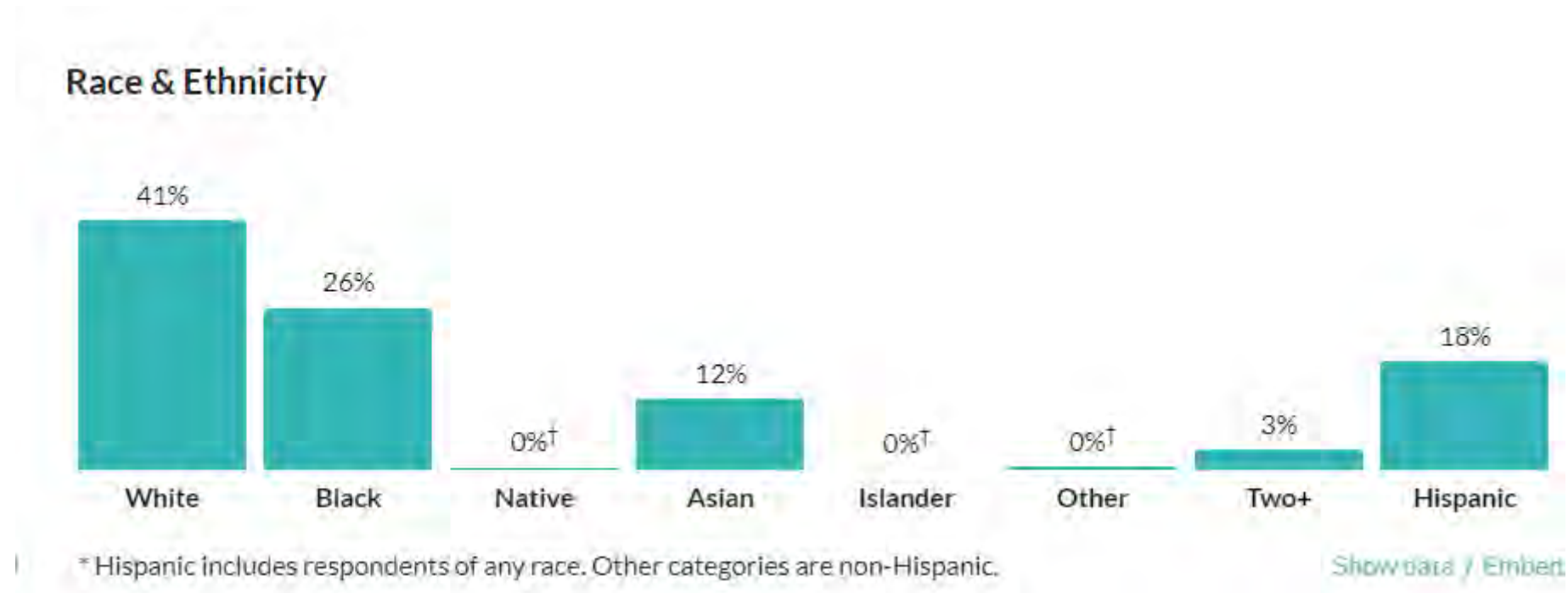
Community Education

- Mandatory Reporters
- Hospitals and Medical Offices
- Senior Centers
- Faith Based Organizations
- First Responders
- Home Health Agencies
- Social Services Agencies
- Government Agencies
- Financial Institutions
- Cultural programs



Our Community – DC- Maryland- Northern Virginia

Population: 5,042,681



Our Community

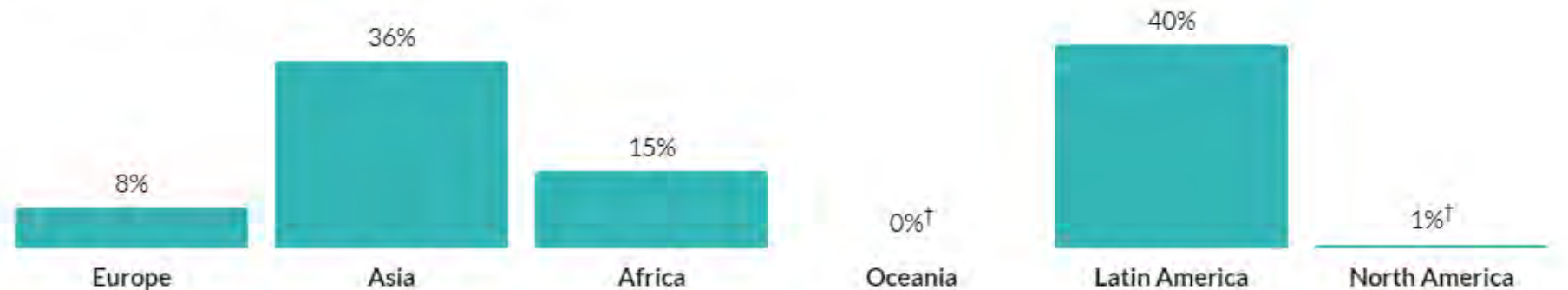
Place of birth

26.3%

Foreign-born population

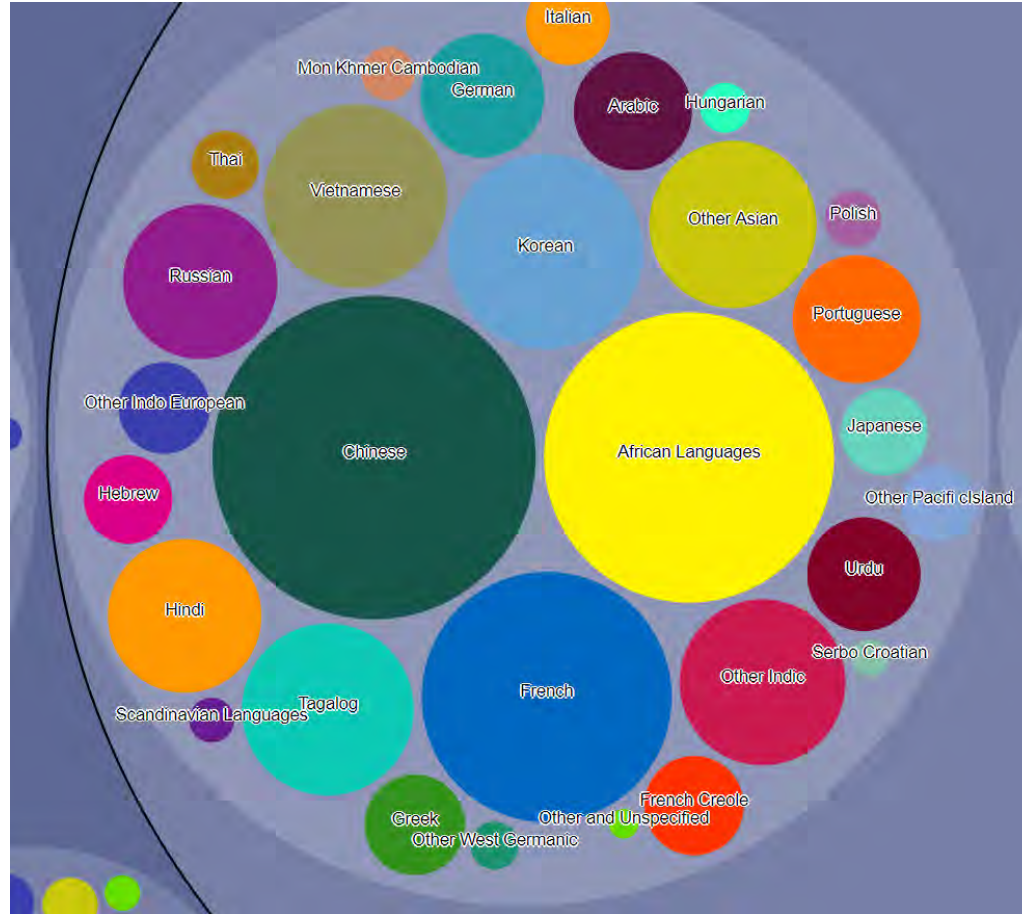
nearly double the rate in United States: 13.7%

Place of birth for foreign-born population



[Show data](#) / [Embed](#)

Languages Spoken in Montgomery County



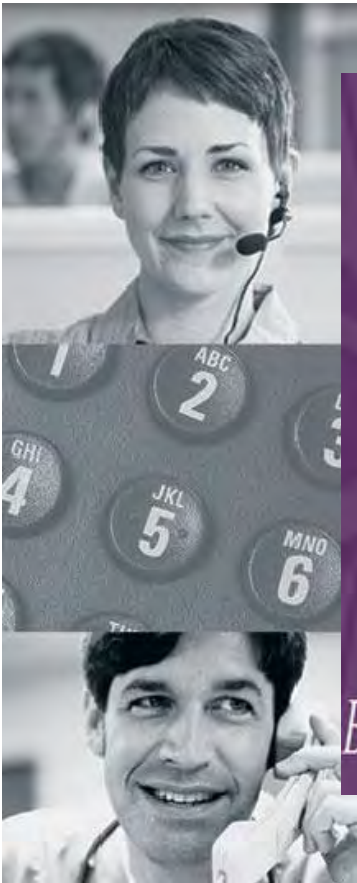
Barriers to Cultural Competency

- Lack of resources
- Lack of funding
- Lack of time
- Lack of information
- Bias
- Few bilingual professionals and interpreters

Barriers Within Marginalized Communities

- Fear in reporting
- Questioning of 'outsiders'
- Language isolation
- Cultural views of abuse
- Few resources in their communities

ElderSAFE's Cultural Competency Work



Language Services Through Community Partnerships

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence / Voiance

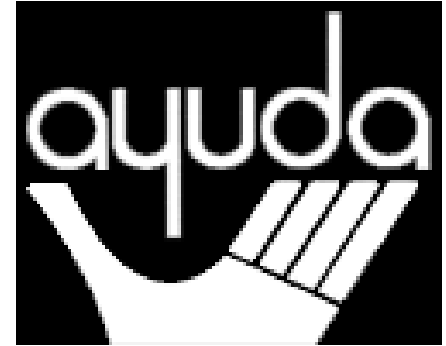
- Language line

Local Translation Company

- In-kind donation of translation services

Ayuda / The Maryland Victim Services Interpreter Bank

- Live interpreters
- Translations



Translating Materials

- What are the most common languages in your service area?
- Considerations:
 - Translation services can be an in-kind donation
 - Partner with fluent staff
 - Seek feedback from native speakers

Reaching and Serving Marginalized Survivors

The Story of Priya

- 68 years old
- Physically and verbally abused by son-in-law
- Bengali speaking
- Muslim religion
- Extremely vulnerable due to medical needs, language barrier and limited support

Priya attended an ElderSAFE *Live Interpreted Training*



Priya Received *Translated Materials*

- Amharic
- Hindi
- Bengali
- Korean
- Vietnamese
- Mandarin
- French
- Russian
- Spanish



Priya Called the *Language Accessible Helpline*

Benefits

- Bridging linguistic gaps
- Increasing shelter accessibility
- Reducing costs of getting an in-person interpreter
- Clients more likely to reach out for services



Priya Completed an *Intake Form*

First Name _____ MI. _____ Last Name _____

Preferred Name _____

Gender identity _____

Sexual orientation _____

Preferred pronoun _____

Does the victim speak/understand English? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, primary language _____

Spiritual Preference _____

Priya *Spiritual Needs* Are Met in Shelter

- CESLC founded in the Jewish faith, serves all faith
- Clinical pastoral education program open to all faith
- Faith Leaders Education
- Celebrations on campus



The Importance of Faith

- 89% of the Silent Generation (68-88 years) are faith affiliated
- 83% of Baby Boomers (52 – 68 years) are faith affiliated
- 50% of older adults attend religious services weekly
- Many turn to faith for comfort and guidance after trauma



Connecting Priya to Culturally Competent Resources



PRO BONO
COUNSELING PROJECT

Developing Community Partnerships

- Specific targeted outreach
- Tapping into community / government initiatives
- Inviting cultural groups to our community coalition
- Cross-learning



Recommendations

- Assess your organization's cultural competence
- Identify service gaps
- Network and build partnerships
- Meet clients where they are
- Continually grow and learn



Thank You

References

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