



# Glossary<sup>1</sup>

**Assimilation:** the process of taking on the cultural traits and characteristics of another distinct group; absorption of a new or different culture into the main cultural body; to make like; to cause to resemble

**Bicultural:** the ability to understand and function effectively in two cultural environments. An individual who is bicultural is not necessarily culturally competent

**Bilingual:** the ability to effectively speak two languages

**Comparability of access or benefits:** meaningfully equal access and benefits across all populations served, including any adaptations necessary to achieve equality

**Cultural broker or Culturally-informed consultant:** a person serving in a non-clinical or non-professional capacity who is recognized by the client's cultural or linguistic community as one who has the knowledge of a particular culture or language and its definition of health, mental health, family dysfunction and who is used by service providers and organizations to assist in providing culturally and linguistically-appropriate service

**Culture:** (a) the integrated pattern of socially transmitted human behavior that includes thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions, and all other products of human work or thought, characteristic of a particular community or population; (b) culture defines the preferred ways for meeting needs

**Disparity:** inequality of outcome or condition between cultural groups or differences in outcomes or conditions between cultural groups that are not predictable based on the number of group members present in the general population

**Ethnic:** designating basic groups or division of human beings as distinguished by customs, a common language, a common history, a common religion, or other such characteristics

**Individual biases:** prejudices, beliefs, or actions that participate in or collude with structural or institutional racism

**Institutional biases:** the extent to which an agency's values, norms, policies and practices disadvantage specific populations in systemic ways

**Structural biases:** the complex ways in which historical oppression, culture, ideology, political economy, public policy and institutional practices interact to produce forms of racial sorting that reproduce and reinforce a hierarchy of color that privileges whiteness and marginalizes Blackness.

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<sup>1</sup> SOURCE: Child Welfare Practice in a Multicultural Environment