

clergy they want to include during their loved one's illness. It also influences how they discuss serious topics with their children—for example, their own health conditions; the significance of illness, suffering, pain, death, and dying; and the rituals and traditions associated with important life events, such as birth and death (Weiner, McConnell, Latella, et al, 2013).

Cultural Definitions

Culture characterizes a particular group with its values, beliefs, norms, patterns, and practices that are learned, shared, and transmitted from one generation to another (Leininger, 2002). Culture is not the same as race or ethnicity. *Race* is a socially constructed term with roots in anthropology, distinguishing variety in humans by physical traits. *Ethnicity* is the affiliation of a set of persons who share a unique cultural, social, and linguistic heritage. *Gender* is an individual's self-identification as man or woman, and *sex* is the biologic designation of male or female. *Social class* is a complex social construction that usually incorporates levels of education in the family, occupation, income, and access to resources. Culture is a complex whole in which each part is interrelated. It is an umbrella term that holds together many interrelated yet unique aspects of humanity, including beliefs, tradition, lifeways, and heritage. It is much more than a country of origin or a demographic designation, such as African-American or Caucasian. Meeting the needs of children and families from a variety of backgrounds requires fluidity in understanding the many layers of influence within a family and understanding that a child and family must be understood contextually.

Cultures and co-cultures contribute to the uniqueness of child members in such a subtle way and at such an early age that children grow up believing their beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices are the “correct” or “normal” ones. A set of values learned in childhood may characterize children's attitudes and behaviors for life, influencing long-range goals and short-range impulses. Thus every ongoing society socializes each succeeding generation to its cultural heritage.

Components of Cultural Humility