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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Tanya M. Coakley entitled "Assessing Cultural Receptivity in Fostering: Scale Development and Validation." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Social Work.

John G. Orme, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Terri Combs-Orme, Cheryl Buehler, Halima Bensmail

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Anne Mayhew  
Vice Chancellor and Dean of  
Graduate Studies

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

ASSESSING CULTURAL RECEPTIVITY IN FOSTERING:  
SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION

A Dissertation Presented for  
The Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Tanya M. Coakley  
August, 2004

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my mother and number one fan, Marie Autrice Millner Williams, who instilled in me an appreciation of the important things in life such as, commitment to family, helping others, achieving and enjoying life's goals, and faith in God. Her legacy lives on forever. This also is dedicated to the memory of my father, Emmett Ardie Williams, whose love and wishes for his children came to light. I thank my husband, Shawn Coakley and daughter, Shantel Marie Coakley for their love, support, and sacrifices during my pursuit of a dream. I also appreciate the support, love, and prayers from my family and friends.

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## ABSTRACT

A shortage of foster parents of diverse cultures coupled with the problem of an overrepresentation of children of minority cultures in the child welfare system has resulted in a dire need to place children in families that do not share their cultures (i.e., transcultural placements). Children in foster and adoptive placements suffer the loss of their birth families and are at risk for losing knowledge about their past generations (Deberry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; Thoburn, Norford, & Rashid, 2000). Children in transcultural placements are further at risk for consequent loss of their cultural heritages. Therefore, it is imperative for transcultural foster parents to promote positively and enhance children's cultural identities and help them remain connected with their cultures. It also is crucial for minority children to learn survival skills to live in a society that can be intolerant, indifferent, or hostile towards cultural diversity (McRoy, 1994; Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991).

This dissertation examines how prospective foster parents are prepared to understand the necessary cultural activities involved in transcultural parenting. It also addresses the importance of assessing their openness to and capability of providing culturally appropriate fostering. Additionally, this study is significant because it is believed that cultural receptivity is related to other foster parent characteristics that are considered to be indicators of overall quality fostering. Finally, this dissertation presents the procedures used to develop and evaluate the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS), an instrument developed by the present author to measure foster parents' openness towards participating in activities that promote children's cultural development.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Significance of the Problem

Three-fourths of the 556,000 children in foster care live with foster families (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2002). Even with the rise in the use of kinship homes, agencies place approximately two-thirds of children in non-kinship foster families (DHHS, 2002).

A shortage of foster parents of diverse cultures coupled with an overrepresentation of children of minority cultures in the child welfare system (see Tables 1 and 2)<sup>1</sup> has resulted in a dire need to place children in families that do not share their cultures (i.e., transcultural placements). It is unreasonable to expect prospective foster parents to be competent to parent children from any and all cultural backgrounds. However, it is important that prospective foster parents accept and appreciate different cultures and be willing to support and enhance children's cultural identities, and learn about specific cultures of children whom they are interested in fostering. I refer to this concept as *cultural receptivity*.

Cultural receptivity involves people's openness to participate in activities that support foster children's relationships with adults and children who share their cultures, find resources where the children can go to get their cultural needs met, learn about parenting strategies of the children's culture, and learn from others who have successfully parented children of different cultures.

Assessing the cultural receptivity of prospective foster parents is important for a number of reasons. An understanding of foster parent applicants' cultural receptivity in fostering allows social workers to tailor cultural training and support efforts according to the applicants' needs. The foster parent assessment process grants opportunities where

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<sup>1</sup> All tables are located in Appendix M.

social workers can deliver information about the central elements of transcultural parenting. It assists in ascertaining whether foster care applicants are willing to commit to the necessary modes of acquiring knowledge and actively participating in specific activities necessary to promote healthy cultural outcomes for children.

Assessing the willingness to foster specific types of children affords prospective foster parents opportunities to self-evaluate and make informed decisions about the appropriateness of fostering for them (Cox, Orme, & Rhodes, 2002). Additionally, social workers should be better able to match prospective foster parents with foster children based on their willingness to parent effectively children of different cultural backgrounds.

Matching pertains to planning strategies that seek to place children with the most appropriate foster parents. This process entails meeting the needs of the children as well as the foster parents (Valdez & McNamara, 1994). Foster care agencies use several techniques to determine placement needs. Personal interviews, questionnaires, and other assessment tools are used to gather information about both the foster parents and children. Decisions about matching are based on personal characteristics, parenting style, psychosocial functioning, and social and physical environments. This multidimensional approach to matching is employed to aid in the process of identifying foster parents' capabilities and willingness to parent children with various characteristics, such as gender, age, race, or presenting behaviors (Cox et al., 2002; McRoy, 1994).

Corresponding to matching, assessing foster parents has implications for outcomes for foster parents and children. Knowledge about foster parents' satisfaction with fostering and their intentions to continue fostering are aspects of fostering that can be discovered through careful assessment. Social workers can understand what factors contribute to culturally receptive applicants' commitment to fostering and develop strategies to recruit others with the same qualities.

Foster parent assessment it is important for a variety of children's outcomes as well, such as adjustment, self-esteem, academic achievement, and peer and adult relationships (McRoy et al., 1984; Vonk, 2001). Assessing foster parent applicants allows social workers to establish a base-line of their openness and monitor their progress after children are placed transculturally. Based on their progress, social workers can recommend various cultural training, support, and services that are necessary to stimulate children's cultural development.

Despite the fact that receptivity to children's cultures seems to be a useful concept for foster care, the literature includes no conceptual or empirical references to the issue. Also, to my knowledge, no measure of cultural receptivity has existed heretofore with which to conduct such research or to assess prospective foster parents.

### *Organization*

After defining culture, this dissertation discusses the varying philosophical perspectives regarding the decision to place children in transcultural homes. The discussion of viewpoints on transcultural placements sheds light on the issue of whether foster parents are capable to parent or are prepared adequately in their decisions to foster culturally different children. Next is an examination of the importance of discussing and assessing culture and how this is achieved in child welfare agencies during the assessment and training process for prospective foster parents. Literature is reviewed on cultural competence in human services, the necessary domains to parent effectively children of different cultures, and outcomes for children in transcultural placement settings. This dissertation concludes with a study on *cultural receptivity in fostering*, its findings and implications for social work policy and practice.

### *Culture Defined*

Researchers define *culture* in various ways, sometimes interchanging the term with *diversity* and *multiculturalism*. For instance, in the context of cultural competence, culture connotes "those elements of a people's history, tradition, values, and social organization that become implicitly or explicitly meaningful to the participants...in cross-cultural encounters" (McPhatter, 1997, p. 4). Additionally, it accounts for one's "worldview, behavior, and cognition that are present in interpersonal interactions" (McPhatter, 1997, p. 4). Similarly, culture is defined as "the customs, habits, skills, technology, arts, values, ideology, science, and religious and political behavior of a group of people" (Barker, 1991, p. 55).

In this dissertation, the term *culture* is used to encompass the way of life for groups who share the same race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, spirituality, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics that influence perceptions, attitudes, and behavior as they exist in society (Lynch & Hanson, 1998; McPhatter, 1997; Mitchell, 1999; O'Hagan, 2001).

*Transcultural parenting* broadly refers to a parent-child relationship wherein parents and children are of different cultures (Simon & Alstein, 1996). According to Vonk (2001), transcultural parenting entails parents' abilities to convert their attitudes, knowledge, and skills into practices that adequately meet children's cultural needs (p. 248). Culturally appropriate fostering suggests the necessity of ensuring children's successful cultural development and adjustment in culturally different environments (Jackson & Wasserman, 1997). This topic is discussed in more detail later in this dissertation.



## Historical Perspective

### *Child Welfare Act of 1980*

The Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Pub. L. No. 96-272) was passed to address permanency planning efforts for foster children. The growing and unmanageable caseloads of social workers resulted in children's remaining in the foster care system for long periods (Curtis, 1996). It was hoped that the increased efforts of permanency planning would decrease the number of children in long-term foster care. However, the number of children in care continued to increase (Dillon, 1994).

Foster care placements increased by 69% between 1982 and 1992, when numbers reached a staggering 442,000 (Child Welfare League of America [CWLA], 1995a.). In 1993, the need continued for increased foster care placements due to an increase in child abuse and neglect reports (Curtis, Dale, & Kendal, 1999).

Consequently, foster care placement numbers rose to 460,000 (CWLA, 1995a.). While the demand for foster care families was increasing, the supply of available foster families was decreasing (CWLA, 1995a.; Martin, 2000). For instance, Curtis et al. (1999) report that from 1980 to 1995 the number of children in foster care increased by nearly 60% from 302,000 to approximately 483,000. Moreover, the Child Welfare League of America (1995) reports that between 1985 and 1990 the number of foster families declined from 147,000 to approximately 100,000. This trend sustained the disparity between the availability of foster homes and children in need (CWLA, 1995a.; Martin, 2000).

The shortage of foster and adoptive families of color and foster and adoptive families from urban regions of the country was especially pronounced. At the same time, children of minority backgrounds were disproportionately represented in the foster care system (CWLA, 1995a.). In 1998, of the total number of foster children with plans of

reunification or adoption, 56% were African-American, 9% were Hispanic, 1% were Native American, and 1% were Asian (DHHS, 1999).

#### *Multiethnic Placement Act and Interethnic Adoption Provision*

In 1994, the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), Pub. L. No. 104-88 was passed to address the lack of recruitment of African-American adoptive parents, as adoption was believed to be the solution to securing permanence for children of minority cultures (Brooks, Barth, Bussiere, & Patterson, 1999). MEPA (1994) states that culture will not be considered in the screening or approval of parents for placement of children of different cultures. For instance, it would be unlawful for an agency, public or private, that receives federal funding, to reject a European-American applicant's request to adopt an African-American child on the basis of race (MEPA, 1994; National Adoption Information Clearinghouse [NAIC] 2001). However, at the biological parent's request, and in the best interest of the child, the child must be placed in a same-culture family (MEPA).

MEPA was thought to be a remedy for the disproportionate numbers of African-American children in long-term care (Brooks et al., 1999). As this proved not to be the case, the Interethnic Adoption Provision (IEAP) (Pub. L. No. 104-188) was passed in 1996 (Brooks et al., 1999). IEAP (1996) states that a lack of availability of same-culture adoptive families is not an acceptable excuse to delay or deny children's opportunities for permanence (IEAP). IEAP uses language that clarifies that child placement decisions will not be based solely on culture and that discrimination will not be tolerated against applicants who do not share the child's culture (NAIC).

#### *Attitudes towards Transcultural Placements*

Organizations that influence child welfare policy have opinions that have evolved over the years regarding whether or not it is in children's best interests to be placed with families of different cultures. Organizations that influence child welfare policy, such as

the National Association of Black Social Workers and the Child Welfare League of America are in favor of same-race and same-culture placements. Proponents of transracial placements are typically those who have had experience in parenting or those who want to parent children of different cultures (Curtis, 1996).

*National Association of Black Social Workers.* The National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) opposes transracial adoptions except in those cases where it is used as a last resort (Curtis, 1996; Hollingsworth, 1999; Hollingsworth, 2000; NABSW, 1994; Simon & Alstein, 1996). NABSW asserts that African-American children should be placed in African-American homes. They purport that responsible parenting of African-American children requires an awareness and appreciation of the children's cultures. Moreover, parents must be willing to instill pride in their heritage and educate them about how an historically racist society inevitably affects their lives. NABSW proposed that there should be an increased effort to recruit African-American families to foster and adopt African-American children (NABSW, 1994).

Originally, NABSW stated that transracial adoptions were essentially "cultural genocide" (Curtis, 1996, p.157; NABSW, 1972) because children of color, in particular African-American children, were being placed with families who were unprepared and unequipped to parent them effectively (Brooks et al., 1999; Curtis, 1996; CWLA, 1995a.; NABSW, 1972). This position of the NABSW and other supporters of same-race placements was believed to be a contributing factor to the growing numbers of African-American children who remained in long-term foster care and were not adopted in the 1970's and early 1980's (Hollingsworth, 1998; Neal & Stumph, 1993).

*Child Welfare League of America.* The Child Welfare League of America holds the position that in the case of adoption, the child welfare agency should honor the biological parents' wishes to have their children placed with families of the same cultures

(CWLA, 2000). However, the CWLA supports the mandate that children's opportunities for permanence should not be delayed or denied due to the agency's inability to select adoptive parents who share the children's cultures (CWLA, 2000). The position taken is that the applicants' cultures should not be considered in the adoption approval process. The CWLA adds that adoptive families should respect the children's cultures and be knowledgeable and sensitive to cultural resources to support the children's cultural needs (CWLA, 2000). Social workers who make adoption decisions face the dilemma of both respecting the wishes of the birth parents and not obstructing permanence. A solution is not offered by the CWLA regarding what to do if these two principles conflict.

*Proponents of transracial placements.* After an evident halt in transracial adoptions of African-American children, the momentum of transracial adoptions resumed. This increase in transracial adoptions during the mid-1980's is attributed to numerous lawsuits based on allegations of discrimination initiated by non-African-American applicants who wanted to adopt transracially (Hollingsworth, 1999; Hollingsworth, 2000; McRoy, Oglesby, & Grape, 1997). Many prospective foster parents reported that their motivation to adopt was influenced by religious and altruistic reasons. Also, they reported that they received inaccurate information that transcultural placements were needed because there were not enough same-culture foster homes available for the children in need (Hollingsworth, 1998).

Hayes (1993) asserts that "minority children placed for adoptions have neither the right nor need to develop a distinct ethnic identity or awareness of cultural heritage" (p.304). In response to the NABSW's earlier comments on transracial adoptions, it was stated that unlike the situation of Native Americans, transracial adoptions of African-American children occurred too infrequently to be considered cultural genocide (Hayes).

Therefore, the protection that the NABSW and other same-race supporters sought was unjustified.

The purpose of this dissertation is not to endorse or criticize either position for or against transcultural placements. Rather, because it is a reality that children continue to be placed with different-culture parents, this dissertation addresses how assessing foster parent applicants' level of cultural receptivity affects their decision and preparedness to foster culturally different children. Also, it addresses how such an assessment affects their understanding of what parenting children from a different culture entails. It is hoped that assessing cultural receptivity in fostering will lead to improved transcultural fostering strategies.

#### Foster Parent Training and Assessment Process

The following is a discussion on what is being done currently in the foster parent assessment and training process to ensure fostering competence. This section of the dissertation addresses how this process incorporates as well as excludes important features in fostering that are relevant to parenting children of different cultures.

Currently, most State child welfare agencies prescribe some form of a preservice training module in order to prepare foster parent applicants for child placement (Rhodes, Coakley, & Orme, 2002). The type and length of training vary among agencies within the state and local levels. Preservice training sessions serve the additional purposes of screening and assessing prospective foster parents.

Social workers are able to observe applicants' behaviors while interacting with them during assessment and training activities. During this time, applicants are assessed on their child welfare knowledge, effective foster parenting skills, and values (see Illinois Department of Children and Family Services [IDCFS]; Jackson & Wasserman, *Parents as Tender Healers [PATH]*, 1997); Parent Resources for

Information, Development, and Education [PRIDE], 1993; Pasztor & Child Welfare Institute & Center for Foster and Residential Care [CWICFRC], Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting [MAPP Program Guidebook], 1990).

#### *Purpose of Preservice Training Modules*

The purpose of preservice training is to select and prepare applicants for the challenging experiences in fostering (Baum, Crase, & Crase, 2001; IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997; Pasztor & CWICFRC, 1990). In some states, kinship foster care applicants go through the training as well (IDCFS). Subsequent training periods also are used to conduct in-service training to improve continually parenting strategies for those who are currently fostering (IDCFS).

An additional purpose of training is to provide applicants an ongoing self-evaluation process so that they can determine whether or not fostering is appropriate for them. They are able to make their decisions based on information they receive about the real needs and expectations of children (Baum et al., 2001; Martin, 2000; Pasztor, 1985) and their own capacity.

#### *Methods of Training*

Agencies can elect to use any of the three standard guides (see IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997; Pasztor & CWICFRC, 1990) for the selection and preparation of prospective foster parents. They also might elect to use training guides produced by their particular agencies (Rhodes et al., 2002). Some agencies use a combination of standard and agency-developed guides to conduct training (Rhodes et al., 2002).

Social workers facilitate foster parent training in groups of approximately 25 applicants. The training objectives usually are completed in nine weekly, 3-hour structured sessions (IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997; Pasztor & CWICFRC,

1990). There are several primary areas of training for prospective foster parents. The following covers these key areas of fostering.

### *Fostering Competence*

There are several areas in which foster parents need to be assessed in order to determine whether they can be effective foster parents (see, for instance, IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997). Culturally effective fostering is not addressed adequately in the current training and assessment modules.

Training usually entails informing applicants about typical foster children's backgrounds of abuse and neglect and how that influences their behavior and development. Foster parent applicants learn about attachment and separation and loss issues. Applicants are educated on the importance of preserving children's family identities, which involves maintaining contacts among the children, their families and their community, as well as talking positively about the children's family histories. Also, this process allows foster parents to gain an understanding of how they will contribute to the development of children's self-identities.

The issue of culture usually is not discussed in relation to self-identity, but is addressed in a separate training session (IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997). Some training modules do not include any information about children's various cultures. The brief extent to which culture is addressed in these training modules is through inquiries about specific characteristics of children that applicants prefer to parent, such as age, gender, and race (for instance, Pasztor & CWICFRC, 1990).

### *Culturally Appropriate Fostering*

A few pertinent aspects of culture are discussed in the foster parent training manuals regarding the risks of diminishing foster children's cultural identities and issues surrounding rejection by people from both the children's cultures and the foster families'

cultures (for instance, Jackson & Wasserman, 1997). Applicants are expected to evaluate their lives and communities and make decisions about dealing with cultural issues and adapting to accommodate children from other cultures (IDCFS, 1993; Jackson & Wasserman, 1997). Training regarding culture addresses applicants' levels of ability and commitment to seek and secure adequate resources, promote children's cultures, and accept the children as family members (Jackson & Wasserman). Additional information about rules that govern transcultural placements (i.e., MEPA, 1994 and IEPA, 1996) are covered in just one of the training modules reviewed (Jackson & Wasserman).

In general, the parenting competence literature holds that parents, regardless of their cultures, should demonstrate warmth, acceptance, and sensitivity to children's basic needs, social direction, and normal expectations for the children's developmental levels (Teti & Candelaria, 2002, p.172). Cultural receptivity suggests an augmentation of those basic parenting competencies with parenting strategies that are appropriate for raising children of minority cultures. There are unique child-rearing matters that are specific to various minority cultural groups whose children are represented in the child welfare system. Additionally, there are within-group differences among cultural minorities that require different approaches to competent service delivery (Mitchell, 1999).

The practice of providing foster care services to children of minority cultures and their families must be approached in a culturally sensitive manner (Dillon, 1994). Human services practice must operate from a knowledge base of reality and address ideas, values, and lifestyles in the community. Curtis (1996) recommends mandatory training for foster parents' self-awareness and developing positive racial identities for children. There is a need to incorporate transcultural parenting into foster parent training to ensure the well-being, safety, and permanence of foster children of all cultures. Dillon



(1994) asserts that human services workers require skills for dealing with transcultural as well as same-culture placement differences. For members of minority cultural groups, there are issues that have unique and differential influences on parenting (see Table 3). In addition to tasks that all parents must perform, special tasks are needed for parenting children of minority cultures.

Being culturally different from the majority in a society causes one to experience that society differently (Zuniga, 1991). Historically, in the U.S., racism and oppression have affected minorities in many ways (Zinn, 1995). People of diverse backgrounds have experienced social injustices and economic inequalities in various aspects of their lives. Therefore, it is imperative for parents of children of minority cultures to teach their children survival skills to cope with racism and oppression (Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991). These issues are addressed further as the literature is reviewed.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Literature Search

The transcultural fostering issues addressed in the preceding chapter lead to the idea that social workers should be able to match prospective foster parents with foster children based on their willingness to parent effectively children of different cultural backgrounds. Thus, assessing foster parents has implications for transcultural fostering. The present author, therefore, began to consider such concepts as *transcultural*, *transracial*, *fostering competence*, and *culturally appropriate fostering*.

An electronic search was conducted of Social Work Abstracts (1977-2002), PsycInfo (1967-2002), PsycARTICLES (1988-present), and Proquest to locate journal references on children and family issues (e.g., transracial adoptions). Search words included the following terms, individually and in various combinations: *culture*, *cultural*, *multicultural*, *diversity*, *transracial*, *transcultural*, *foster care*, *fostering*, *adoption*, *parents*, *parenting*, *receptivity* and *competence*.

The combined search resulted in 46 references. Only 23 references were located that related specifically to transcultural and transracial parenting (see Table 4). The entire search yielded two references in the social services literature that focused on Hispanics (see Bausch & Serpe, 1997; Montalvo, Lassater, & Valdez, 1982), one on Native Americans (Weaver, 1998) one on religion (Schatz & Horejsi, 1996), and one on sexual orientation (Mallon, 1997). Research addressing other non-racial aspects of culture is limited. In the following literature review, therefore, the focus is on references pertaining to professional and familial relationships in the context of race and culture.

It is difficult to assess whether to highlight the limitations of particular studies before discussing them in detail. Therefore, the present author chose to give a brief synopsis of various methodological problems to alert the reader to the problems that

exist with particular references so that he or she can form an impression about the references based on the limitations. Table 5 shows the methodology used by the researchers whose studies are discussed to provide the reader a better picture of those studies. The review begins with an examination of outcomes for children in transcultural placements, followed by a discussion on cultural competence, cultural receptivity, cultural assessment tools, and a summary of methodological issues and implications for cultural receptivity research.

#### *Determining Relevant Children's Outcomes*

The appropriateness and effectiveness of transcultural fostering depends in part on the proper assessment of applicants' openness and ability to parent children of minority cultures as well as the adequacy of training for transcultural parenting. However, due to scarce and conflicting empirical research on transcultural placements, little is known about outcomes for the children and families involved. Ongoing studies that do not properly address the influence of culture on children's outcomes also do not contribute to knowledge that guides appropriate and effective transcultural services for children and families.

Additionally, methodological flaws further challenge the contributions of transcultural fostering research. Some researchers measure effectiveness using methods that raise concern about the validity of the findings (see Table 5 for all research methods). For instance, conclusions have been reached about transracial adoption successes based on the reports of positive racial identities in samples of preadolescent children (Grow & Shapiro, 1974; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983). However, assessment of positive racial identity in children would seem appropriate *during* the adolescent years when the child has had time to develop and experience the behaviors of interest (Cross,

Strauss, & Phagen-Smith, 1999; Deberry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; Frasch & Brooks, 2003).

Additionally, researchers groundlessly make inferences about successes based on various interviewing strategies such as adoptive parents' reports of children's self-concept about their races. Such methods might not properly reflect a true account of the children's outcomes. Additionally, they draw conclusions based on their use of unstandardized instruments with unknown reliability and validity (see Table 5), which undermines the prospective researcher's confidence in the data. An in-depth discussion on the importance of standardized assessments is discussed in Chapter 6.

Aside from limitations in methods, other problems permeate earlier research findings. Researchers do not agree on which outcomes, whether individual or multidimensional, are important to examine for children's well-being. This makes it difficult to compare the results of studies and reach conclusions about the appropriateness of transcultural placements (see Table 6). As with transracial adoption research, there is a lack of consensus to use racial identity and development theories as a framework for transcultural fostering (Frasch & Brooks, 2003). Instead of building on research to establish a theory that provides insight into the dynamics of transcultural placements, researchers focus on other outcomes that do not lend useful information for children's development or the dynamics of the transcultural families.

For instance, researchers focus on IQ and self-esteem without linking these outcomes to normative development for children in transcultural placements (Frasch & Brooks, 2003). Curtis (1996) reports on earlier studies (see Hayes, 1993; Howard, 1984) with contrary views that racial and ethnic identities are not as critical as other indicators of successful life (e.g., Intelligence Quotient [IQ]). Other research emphasizes IQ as an important outcome to measure (such as Moore 1986; Scarr & Weinberg, 1983). Scarr

and Weinberg (1983) found that African-American children who were adopted transracially had higher IQ scores than children adopted into same-race homes.

Moreover, researchers focus on several outcomes to determine the effects of transcultural placements on children's well-being. Many studies examine psychosocial functioning that involves measuring children's behaviors and other adjustment indicators to determine well-being. A predominance of the research on transcultural parenting successes is based primarily on psychosocial outcomes and on aspects of the foster children's social adjustments, such as academic achievements, relationship with parents and peers, without consideration of the importance of culture on children's development. These types of studies found that transcultural placements had no adverse affects on children and that transracial adoptees faired just as well as same-race adoptees (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Sharma, McGue, & Benson, 1996; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Silverman, 1993; Simon & Alstein, 1996; Vroegh, 1997). According to several studies, approximately 75% to 90% of African-American children who have been placed transracially have had successful adjustment outcomes (Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Grow & Shapiro, 1974; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Silverman, 1993; Vroegh, 1997). However, based on other empirical studies, researchers concur that successful transcultural placements are contingent upon an environment with same-culture role models (McRoy et al., 1984; Thoburn, Norford, & Rashid, 2000).

Therefore, when looking at successes for children of minority cultures, it is equally important to study the benefits of having positive cultural identities and participation in their cultures (Crumbley, 1999; Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991). This entails examining children's understanding of self and heritage and their connectedness to their communities. The next sections demonstrate the significance of culture and further

discuss how ignoring the relevance of culture creates profound difficulties in children's psychosocial functioning.

*Cultural development.* Measuring relevant cultural outcomes for children in transcultural placements has implications for social work practice. Child welfare agencies need to ensure that transcultural foster parents are willing to commit to providing culturally appropriate parenting strategies that promote their healthy cultural development.

In this section the importance of cultural development in transcultural parenting is emphasized in terms of the need of cultural identity, customs, constructing a foundation of the relationship between the children and foster parents, and in terms of instilling cultural pride and self-esteem. As is indicated in the following paragraphs, all of these are necessary ingredients to successful foster parenting.

Child development is culturally constructed (Super & Harkness, 1986). Children's development is based on their physical and social environments, cultural customs of raising children, and parents' psychology, all leading to the children's learning of social, behavioral, and cognitive "rules of culture" (Super & Harkness, 1986, p. 545).

Super and Harkness (1986) provide the best available attempt at constructing a foundation on the relationship between child development and culture. Notably, this is one of the earliest research studies that focuses on culture and childhood development. They assert that there are structured environments in which children are raised comprising cultural intricacies such as customs, values, beliefs, interpersonal relationships and physical surroundings. The way in which these cultural factors interact determines how culture affects children's development. They subscribe to the developmental niche perspective to explain human development in general. The developmental niche asserts that there are certain environmental subsystems that

contribute to development. The subsystems pertain to those physical and social settings, traditional customs and practices of child care and child-rearing, psychology of the caretakers and caretaker and community beliefs about culture (Super & Harkness, 2002, p. 270). Super and Harkness (2002) purport that the environment is set up in such a way that the most important ideals of the culture influence human development.

Studies that address culture share a common theme, contending that culturally-based parenting strategies affect children's psychosocial development (McRoy et al., 1984; Super & Harkness, 1986). Particularly, these studies focus on the effects of child-rearing on children's social interactions and relationships with others (McRoy et al., 1984; Simon & Alstein, 2002).

Children develop values, attitudes, and self-concept within their families (Deberry et al., 1996; Hollingsworth, 1999). Interaction that comes from the extended family, school, church, or community members is also essential in the development of social, interpersonal, and behavioral areas. According to Crumley (1999), children's development must be achieved by being exposed to their own cultural environment with people who share their cultures.

African-American children, in particular, are at risk for poor cultural identity development (Alstein & Simon, 1977, p. 50; Erikson, 1968). According to Erikson's (1968) theory of ego identity development, identity development is critical during the adolescent stage. He further asserts that racial identity development is an important stage for adolescents of minority cultures (Erikson, 1968).

Erikson (1968) is well known for his research on the eight psychosocial stages of development that entails individuals' need to encounter certain conflicts throughout their lifespan and successfully overcome them. According to his theory, essentially,

individuals' ability or inability to resolve the conflicts, determine whether or not they will experience barriers to psychosocial adjustment throughout their lives.

Erikson's (1968) theoretical foundation on racial identity development is important to consider in social work practice, because the majority of African-American adoptees, transracially adopted, have little contact or few relationships with other African-Americans (Crumbley, 1999; McRoy et al., 1984; Shireman & Johnson, 1986). Research suggests that when children are removed from their cultures or when their cultures are not acknowledged and appreciated, they experience emotional trauma, behavior problems, and adverse functioning (Crumbley, 1999; McRoy & Grape, 1999). Therefore, it is essential for cultural identity to be reinforced in transcultural homes.

Phinney (1989) conducted a study on the stages of adolescents' ethnic identity development. Her study adapted Marcia's (1980) ego identity development theory that is based on four stages of ethnic exploration and commitment or absence thereof (as cited in Frasch & Brooks, 2003; Phinney, 1989). In her study of 91 Asian-American, African-American, Hispanic, and European-American adolescents from integrated high schools, Phinney identified three stages of ethnic identity development for ethnic minorities. As delineated by Phinney (1989), adolescents of ethnic minority groups experience these stages: (1) *Diffusion/Foreclosure*: Little or no exploration of their identity and may or may not have a clear understanding of ethnic identity issue; (2) *Moratorium*: Evidence of exploration, but some confusion about the meaning of their own ethnicity; and (3) *Achieved*: Evidence of exploration, with a clear, secure understanding and acceptance of their own ethnicity (Phinney, 1989, p. 38).

In Phinney's (1989) study, the adolescent respondents were interviewed using 20 revised ego identity questions with a focus on ethnicity. Then they were administered four standardized measures (with good reliability) on child ego identity and psychological



adjustment. The measures were part of the Bronstein-Cruz Child/Adolescent Self-Concept and Adjustment Scale (Bronstein, Cruz, Cowles, D'Ari, Piendez, Franco, Duncan, & Frankowi, 1987) that measured adolescents' self-evaluation, social and peer relations, family relations, and sense of mastery (Phinney, 1989, p. 41).

Three distinct groups emerged according to their stage of ethnic identity, evidenced by the results of the assessment. Phinney (1989) found that approximately half of the minority respondents had not explored their ethnic identity; nearly a quarter of the respondents were in the process of exploration; and nearly a quarter of the respondents had explored their ethnicity and were committed to their ethnic identity. Moreover, those who had achieved their ethnic identity had higher scores on the ego identity and psychological adjustment measures. European-American respondents did not show any evidence of these stages of ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1989).

This study is important because it provides empirical support that ethnic identity development affects adolescents' psychological well-being and influences their feelings about themselves and their particular ethnic group. Further, Phinney (1989) found that particular minority statuses did not affect adjustment, as there were no differences among the scores of the Asian-American, African-American, and Hispanic adolescents. Rather, adjustment was influenced by their development of ethnic identity and a sense of belonging to their ethnic group.

Cultural identity, which includes *ethnicity*, pertains to the way in which people identify themselves with a particular cultural group. It includes the understanding and ability to distinguish between members and nonmembers of that group (McRoy, 1994; Semaj, 1981; Zuniga, 1991).

Although some researchers assert that empirical research on transracially adopted children fails to demonstrate that same-race placements are positively related to children's self-esteem or adjustment (Brooks et al., 1999; Simon & Alstein, 2002), there is some empirical research on culture in general that lends support to the hypothesis that children's self-esteem and pride are promoted when they are raised to maintain their own cultures as they are socialized into other cultures (i.e., acculturation) (Super & Harkness, 1986; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). Phinney (1989) examined the influence of ethnic identity development on adolescents' mental health. She also found that adolescents who do not develop their own racial identity and those who assume the majority culture were not well-adjusted. Moreover, according to Crumley (1999), McRoy (1994), Vonk (2001) and Zuniga (1991), it is crucial for children of minority cultures to learn survival skills to live in a society that can be intolerant, indifferent, or hostile towards cultural diversity.

According to McRoy, (1994) people develop a sense of belonging through the process of identifying with the group specific to their cultures. Phinney (1989) also reports that identifying with one's ethnic group promotes positive attitudes about one's ethnicity. This type of group identification is essential in helping people develop the needed behaviors to succeed in their cultures. Furthermore, understanding the uniqueness of one's culture enhances self perception and the perception of one's cultural status (McRoy, 1994). Some negative outcomes found in McRoy et al.'s (1984) and Schatz and Horejsi's (1996) studies of transracial placements included adoptive parents' not acknowledging children's cultures or using a color-blind approach in parenting children of different racial backgrounds. Folaron and Hess (1993) assert that such an approach contributes to continued racism and does not promote children's racial identity development.

There are several potential problems with people not identifying with their cultures. Curtis (1996) maintains that with adopted children, a lack of cultural identification leaves them unable to handle future instances of racism and prejudice compared to others who learn these needed behaviors early from their parents. Another harmful effect on minorities who assume others' cultures instead of their own is the disillusionment they experience upon realizing that the privileges of the majority culture are not extended to them as racial minorities (Baldwin, 1985; Curtis, 1996; Myers, Speight, Highlen, Cox, Reynolds, Adams, & Hanley, 1991).

Not identifying with one's own culture presents psychological issues as well (Baldwin, 1985; Curtis, 1996; Myers et al., 1991), such as anxiety or fear about cultural status (Semaj, 1981). Children's perception or view of self is directly related to cultural identity (Dillon, 1994; Zuniga, 1991). Children are influenced by others' attitudes (Dillon) and are in danger of internalizing racist values and adopting others' beliefs (Zuniga, 1991). Dillon (1994) asserts that it is important to look at issues of positive self-concept versus identity confusion when working with African-Americans.

Favorable conclusions about racial identity were consistently reached in similar studies using single measures with questionable validity evidence. The validity of the measures is of concern because researchers make grand leaps from the information regarding respondents' correct identification of their race to their having healthy racial identities or development.

For instance, Alstein and Simon (1977) conducted one of the earliest studies on foster children's racial identities. Their research was based on the widely known Clark and Clark (1958) Doll Test where African-American and European-American baby dolls were used as instruments to measure children's racial identities and preferences. In the original study, Clark and Clark used a sample of young African-American children from

the general population who attended segregated pre-schools or public schools. They found that African-American children demonstrated the ability to identify correctly their race by appropriately selecting the doll that looked like them. Their findings also indicated that African-American children demonstrated preference for the European-American doll and showed pejorative feelings towards the African-American doll. Clark and Clark concluded that African-American children viewed themselves negatively and had inferior feelings about their racial status. This assessment method poses methodological problems. First, the researchers did not report the reliability for this type of assessment with dolls. And, they do not provide sufficient validity evidence that doll preference is indicative of racial identity and racial perception.

Similarly, Alstein and Simon (1977) found that African-American children who live in transracial placements were not ambivalent about their racial identities, although they did not specify their methods of gathering data. However, contrary to other conclusions made by Clark and Clark (1958), Alstein and Simon's (1977) findings indicated that the African-American children had positive racial perceptions and did not show a preference for the European-American doll in the study. At the time this study was conducted, it made important contributions to the research area that basically had not been charted.

Along the same lines, Vroegh's (1997) findings from a 20-year longitudinal study indicate that transracially adopted African-American children had formed positive racial identities as measured by correctly stating their race. However, the majority of transracially adopted children did not have relationships with other African-American peers or adults or interact within African-American communities. Also, Vroegh does not address whether these adoptees express cultural pride or have knowledge about survival skills as a racial minority to deal with potential acts of racism.

Also, in the fifth stage of her 20-year longitudinal study, Vroegh (1997) examined 34 African-American adolescent adoptees in transracial families and 18 African-American adolescent adoptees from same-race families. She found that 33% of the transracial adoptees stated their race as African-American, 55% *mixed*, and 12% *undecided* compared to 83% of same-race adoptees who regarded themselves as African-American and 17% *mixed* or *undecided*. Although the results indicate that children in same-race adoptive families correctly identify their race more often than transracial adoptees, these findings are ambiguous as Vroegh did not provide a separate account of responses for the *mixed* and *undecided* as she did for transracially adoptees. It may be that only a very small percentage was undecided.

Simon and Alstein (1996, 2002) report that children adopted transracially are well adjusted and have positive racial identities. However, in their 1972 study they found that compared to 79% of adoptive parents of European-American children who stated that their children considered themselves European-Americans, only 38% of those parents who adopted African-American children reported that the children identified themselves as African-Americans (Simon & Alstein, 2002). In their 1979 follow-up study, Simon and Alstein (2002) later reported that 45% of parents believed that their adopted children correctly identified themselves as African-Americans.

However, on that note, researchers in this study do not provide sufficient evidence that parents can accurately report on children's self-concepts. Therefore, it is unknown whether children indeed identify with the particular races reported.

McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, and Anderson (1984) similarly reported that adopted children's racial self-perceptions were found to be positively related to their adoptive parents' perception of the children's attitude about their racial backgrounds. The McRoy et al. findings are significant because it is one of the first of few empirical

studies that used comparison groups to study the important aspects of transcultural parenting. The outcomes of three groups of European-American adoptive parents who adopted African-American children were compared based on the parents' perceptions of racial identity. The findings indicate that 60% of the parents did not acknowledge the children's cultures or they used a "color-blind" approach (McRoy et al., 1984, p. 38). In these types of families, the issue of race was not discussed. Children in these families did not identify with people of their own cultures (McRoy et al.).

In the McRoy et al. (1984) study, parents who promoted racial identity demonstrated it in such ways as providing children with African-American role models, integrated neighborhoods, and integrated schools. These parents had relationships with African-Americans and discussed racial issues with the children. McRoy et al. found that the children of these families identified socially with African-American peers.

McRoy et al. (1984) found that adoptive families with an interracial style of living positively affect children's cultural identities. Transracially adopted children who were raised to "emphasize their black heritage" (p. 38) identified with both African-American and European-American friends. These children attended integrated schools and the adoptive parents had regular discussions on race with the children. Other researchers' empirical findings concur that children who were raised in families that maintain and promote cultural identities better identify with their community and cultures (for instance, Deberry et al., 1996).

*Unsuccessful placement experience.* Research supports that there is a relationship between matching the cultural backgrounds of children and foster parents and children's successful adjustments in out-of home placements. Schatz and Horejsi (1996) support religious matching between children and prospective foster parents. Folaron and Hess (1993) purport that neglecting to address pre-placement issues

regarding social and cultural environment could cause negative effects on placement experience. However, some empirical research supports the position that differences in cultures between adoptive parents and children are not an impetus for placement disruption (Barth, Berry, Yoshikami, Goodfield, & Carson, 1996; McRoy, 1994; Thoburn et al., 2000). Moreover, Feigelman and Silverman (1983) report that negative outcomes arise when transracial placements are delayed rather than secured. They point out that transracial placements is a better alternative to long-term foster care and institutions where most likely African-American children would be placed.

As with the child welfare agency training material that was discussed earlier, the social work, psychology, counseling, child development, and health care literature do not adequately address transcultural parenting. Surprisingly, there are very few empirical studies regarding culturally appropriate fostering that might influence outcomes for children of different cultural backgrounds.

The predominant focus of all aspects of the transcultural parenting literature is centered on race. Researchers have begun to broach the issue of outcomes for transracial adoptions, which are those adoptions in which the adoptive parents and children do not share the same race (Bausch & Serpe, 1997; Hollingsworth, 1998).

Since the 1980's there have been numerous conceptual references and a few research-based references published regarding transracial placements of African-American foster children. This could be due in part to the disproportionate numbers of African-American children in foster care (see DHHS, 2002). It might also be a result of the National Association of Black Social Workers' effort to ensure that African-American children are placed with African-American adoptive parents (Hollingsworth, 1998). However, there is limited research on other aspects of culture. Transcultural placement

outcomes for Hispanic children, Asian children born in America, and children with different religions and sexual orientations are not examined sufficiently.

It should be obvious that in order to ensure successful transcultural foster parenting, parents and caregivers must be both culturally receptive and culturally competent. Without these elements, appropriate transcultural foster parenting would seem unlikely. This dissertation will, therefore, devote some time to discussing these two critical factors: cultural competence and cultural receptivity.

### *Cultural Competence*

Cultural competence is examined here because the concept is related closely to cultural receptivity in fostering. Cultural receptivity, which is discussed below in more detail, is thought to be a precursor to cultural competence.

Many researchers address cultural competence as it relates to the practice of human services workers (Mitchell, 1999; see also McPhatter, 1997). These types of cultural competence studies focus on knowledge and skill areas that human services workers should possess to work successfully with diverse groups. There is only one empirical reference that addresses culturally competent parenting (see Vonk & Angaran, 2001). The following demonstrates how researchers address cultural competence in service delivery and parenting.

*Cultural competence defined.* Cultural competence is defined as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that have come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables those behaviors, attitudes, and policies to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (Hernandez & Isaacs, 1998, p. 7). Similarly, it "requires that practitioners shift their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in response to others whose life experiences differ from their own (cited Grant & Hayes, 1996)" (Greene & Watkins, 1998, p.32). Another definition that is relevant to cultural competence in



human services is provided by Mitchell (1999). It entails “a set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups” (Mitchell, 1999, p.8). Generally, self-awareness, knowledge, and skills are the three main areas that researchers believe are essential to human services workers' cultural competence (McPhatter, 1997; Mitchell, 1999). Other researchers' cultural competence definitions vary slightly, including additional attributes needed such as attitudes, behavior, knowledge, and skills (McRoy, 1994; Weaver, 1998) or knowledge, skills, and values that are necessary in working with people of diverse cultures (Dillon, 1994). Also, effective practice with culturally diverse people includes knowledge, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity to cultural diversity (Chau, 1992).

*Origins of cultural competence.* The concept of "cultural competence" has its origins in multicultural research. According to Mitchell, (1999) there was a surge of interest in the human services field in the 1980's to begin serving diverse groups of people who had been inadequately and inappropriately served. This has led to an interdisciplinary focus in cultural competence research. The issue of working effectively with people of diverse backgrounds has been addressed in several settings (i.e., social welfare, medical, educational, corporate institutions).

*Human services workers.* Although program-specific outcomes vary in studies about particular human services agencies and programs, cultural competence researchers conclude overwhelmingly that culturally competent practices are more effective at serving people from diverse cultures than color-blind service delivery that does not account for cultural differences (see Chau, 1992; McPhatter, 1997; Mitchell, 1999; Montalvo et al., 1982; Weaver, 1998). Human services workers need to possess the ability to evaluate their attitudes and interpersonal experiences in order to work

effectively with persons from diverse cultures, taking into account the impact that racism, oppression, and social and economic injustices have on programs and services (Chau, 1992; McPhatter, 1997; NASW, 2001; Weaver, 1998). Furthermore, they must integrate and incorporate “knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services” (Davis, 1997, p.1).

Cultural competence also has been extended to health care interventions (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989; Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991), school-based interventions, and supports for children (King, Sims, Osher, 2002). These extensions, although not strictly belonging to the domains of fostering, nevertheless have important significance for foster parenting, as foster children need health care, schools, and so on.

This literature search yielded only one study that addresses the cultural competence of child welfare workers who work with Hispanic clients (Montalvo et al., 1982). The focus is on a training module used to educate workers about the culture of Mexican-Americans who lived in one specific community (see Table 5). Workers learned from the module about how to work effectively with Mexican-American members of that community who had limited acculturation. After the training was administered, workers were assessed on their knowledge about that particular culture. The results showed an increase in knowledge about the particular culture as well as knowledge about how to work effectively with people of the particular culture (Montalvo et al., 1982). Although this study was confined to a particular cultural group who lived in a particular community, it contributes to the body of knowledge with its conclusion that cultural awareness and specialized skills are needed to work effectively with diverse groups. The limitation of this study is that it is uncertain whether this knowledge translates to actual improved

practices with Mexican-Americans. The authors did not specify how this knowledge would be measured in terms of effective practice.

*Transcultural parents.* Vonk's (2001) research is especially important to the theoretical framework of cultural competence and cultural receptivity because it is the only research that provides a definition of cultural competence related to transracial adoptions. In her 2001 reference, Vonk provided a definition for culturally competent parents for the first time. Vonk suggested that this definition is useful in guiding the training for transracial adoptive parents.

Cultural competence in transracial parenting connotes the level of expertise of an individual with respect to cultural knowledge, awareness, survival skills, and multicultural planning (Vonk, 2001). Vonk asserted that cultural competence for parents who adopt children across race or ethnicity must... "transform a particular set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills into the ability to meet their children's unique racial and cultural needs" (Vonk, 2001, p.248).

Although Mitchell's (1999) study on human services professionals' ability to work effectively with diverse people made an important contribution to cultural competence research, Vonk and Angaran's (2001) study addressed more precisely the relationships among cultural competence, adoptive parents, and training. To my knowledge, only Vonk and Angaran (2001) studied foster parents' need to be competent in raising children of different cultures.

Vonk and Angaran (2001) piloted a cultural competence training study for transracial adoptive parents. The Adoption Questionnaire was the instrument used in their study, designed to measure parents' racial awareness, multicultural planning, and survival skills. This instrument also served the purpose of evaluating the adoption agency's training effectiveness. Vonk and Angaran (2001) found that adoptive parents

who received cultural competence training were more prepared to adopt culturally different children as evidenced by their higher scores on the Adoption Questionnaire, discussed in further detail below (Vonk & Angaran, 2001). The findings suggest that foster and adoptive parents experienced a transition in their attitudes, knowledge, behavior and skills in order to parent effectively children of different cultures.

### *Cultural Receptivity*

*Theoretical framework for cultural receptivity.* There is an absence of empirical evidence that proposes the need to study cultural receptivity in fostering. There are no theories heretofore that exist to explain foster parents' openness to participate in cultural activities that are conducive to effective transcultural parenting. Although there are theoretical frameworks such as multicultural and intercultural competence (see Mitchell, 1999) that address people in general learning about and interacting with other cultures, they do not address transcultural fostering in particular.

Due to the absence of theories on cultural receptivity coupled with the lack of empirical support to use as a basis of this research, it is necessary to parallel this type of research with similar theoretical perspectives that address changes in people's behavior due to the need to work effectively, interact, or have interpersonal relationships with others of different cultures. This dissertation proposes that cultural receptivity can be properly incorporated into theory as a precursor to cultural competence for transcultural fostering.

In the context of transcultural fostering, cultural competence can be conceptualized as valuing diverse cultures, changing one's views about diverse cultures, learning about different cultures, and understanding the social interaction between foster parents and children of different cultures. Cultural competence is the most relevant theoretical base to use for cultural receptivity research in order to examine foster

parents' openness to participate in cultural activities. Additionally, cultural competence relates to foster parents' ability to parent effectively children of different cultures. Consequently, this research on cultural receptivity presents cultural competence as a theoretical framework.

When applying the cultural competence theoretical framework to cultural receptivity research, the following logical relationship is proposed (see Figure 1)<sup>2</sup>. Foster parents who are culturally receptive are open to cultural activities necessary in transcultural fostering. Foster parents' knowledge about cultural activities is reinforced through cultural training, services, and support which, in turn, increase their transcultural parenting abilities to enhance children's cultural development. This leads to transcultural foster parents' being more willing to make positive changes in their views about diverse cultures, value and learn about different cultures, and interact socially with the foster children within their community and in society. In other words, they become more culturally competent.

Furthermore, culturally competent foster parents will be receptive to continually participating in those activities that are culturally stimulating to children. Thus, they would also be receptive to devoting the time to participate in ongoing training, support, and services to facilitate their competence in fostering children of different cultural backgrounds. This circularly interrelated set of propositions translates to culturally receptive foster parents' being more willing and better able to parent transculturally compared to those who are not culturally receptive.

*Cultural receptivity conceptualized.* Cultural receptivity incorporates important aspects of research on cultural competence, cultural development, and transcultural parenting as addressed earlier in this dissertation. This proposed construct entails foster

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<sup>2</sup> All figures are located in Appendix N.

parents' openness to appreciate and understand different cultures (e.g., knowledge about racism and discrimination as well as how societal racism affects children); willingness to become aware of children's needs for their own cultural identities; and efforts to learn about resources to support children's cultures (e.g. same-culture adult role models and same-culture peer relationships).

As discussed earlier, parents of minority children must be knowledgeable about the impact of societal racism and oppression on children from different cultures (Semaj, 1981). This includes understanding how the children are perceived and treated by others (Crumbley, 1999). Also, foster parents need to possess an understanding about how children experience potential barriers to resources due to their cultural backgrounds (Crumbley).

Foster parents who are culturally receptive also need to demonstrate several qualities delineated by Crumbley (1999) regarding culturally appropriate parenting. Particularly, culturally receptive foster parents must possess a connectedness to the community resources and people that reflect the children's cultures (Crumbley). They should be willing to support and enhance children's cultural identities despite negative stereotypes about people in that culture (Crumbley). Advocating for equal rights and opportunities for the foster children is an expected aspect of culturally appropriate parenting (Crumbley). Finally, it is important for foster parents of culturally different children to teach survival skills that enable the children to cope with instances of racism or discrimination that they will encounter (Crumbley, 1999; Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991). Incidentally, it is worth noting that Crumbley's (1999) theoretical assertions are validated by conclusions drawn from other empirical studies (see McRoy et al., 1984, McRoy & Grape, 1999; Shireman & Johnson, 1986).

Culturally receptive activities also include finding out about important aspects of children's cultures such as skin, hair, clothing, food, language expressions, holidays, special events, books, and toys. Additionally, culturally receptive behaviors entail helping children learn about and cope with prejudice and racism, helping the children maintain their cultures, and learning how beliefs and values affect aspects of foster children's cultures. Foster parents encounter changes in their families' structure and environment with the addition of children of different cultures. They must undergo a transformation into an interracial style of living (McRoy, 1994) that essentially entails forming relationships and being integrated with other races.

#### *Cultural Assessment Tools*

*Standardized assessments.* There is a need for research to address the assessment of prospective foster parents' ability to meet children's cultural needs (Brooks et al., 1999; Zuniga, 1991). To my knowledge, there is only one standardized assessment tool that addresses foster parents' ability to parent effectively children of different cultures (Vonk, 2001).

The Adoption Questionnaire is designed to measure the cultural competence levels of prospective transracial adoptive parents (Vonk & Angaran, 2001). The instrument's three subscales consist of 37 Likert-type items that assess the knowledge areas of multicultural planning, racial awareness, and survival skills. Items are rated on a 7-point scale from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*.

The Adoption Questionnaire is administered to applicants by their social workers. This is a retrospective pre-test assessment that reportedly is useful when measuring change in the respondent when it is likely that response shift bias could occur (Vonk & Angaran, 2001). Response shift bias refers to the respondents' exposure to interventions that have the goal of affecting their understanding or awareness (Howard & Dailey,

1979; Robinson & Doueck, 1994). The question "*How would you have responded to this item before the training?*" followed each item. Based on unpublished data, the Adoption Questionnaire has an alpha reliability of .87 to .89 (Vonk & Angaran).

This instrument raises validity concerns regarding reliance on information based on the past nature of respondents' reports of attitudes they *might* have expressed in the past. More specifically, predictive correlations as measured with other validated instruments with similar constructs (i.e., cultural competence) would shed some light on whether or not retrospective reports of intent are indeed related to change in the respondent.

The Cultural Competence Scale (CCS) measures one's cultural biases and communication skills. The CCS is a 27-item scale that measures overall cultural competency and three underlying constructs: Cultural Self-Awareness, Multicultural Openness to Knowledge, and Cross-Cultural Communication Skill (Mitchell, 1999). Each item is rated on a five-point scale: never true (1), rarely true (2), sometimes true (3), usually true (4), and always true (5).

Item scores are summed to compute a total cultural competency score and three subscale scores. The total cultural competence score has a potential range from 27 through 135 (Mitchell, 1999). Higher scores indicate greater cultural competency. The Overall CCS score has an alpha reliability of .90 and test-retest reliability of .73 after nearly 1 month. The scale's 3-factor analysis yields good alpha reliabilities (e.g., *Cultural Self-Awareness* [ $r = .76$ ], *Multicultural Openness to Knowledge* [ $r = .88$ ] and *Cross-cultural Communication* [ $r = .86$ ]) (Mitchell, 1999).

*Untested assessments.* The following are the few available instruments that focus on assessment of potential foster and adoptive parents. The intent of these tools is to determine parents' "current readiness" (Crumbly, 1999, p.26) to parent



transculturally. The instruments also allow the social worker to identify additional skills, knowledge, or resources that are needed to support transcultural placements. There is no reported reliability or validity evidence associated with these tools.

Untested instruments cannot be utilized in empirical studies that generalize findings to other foster parents outside the realms of that particular study. Nevertheless, these instruments could be useful because they take steps to improving culturally appropriate parenting by evaluating prospective foster parents' knowledge, skills, tasks, capabilities, and resources needed to parent transculturally (Crumbley, 1999). Crumbley reported on several assessment tools that are useful in this way.

The Self Awareness Tool, developed by the North American Council on Adoptable Children's Transracial Parenting Project, provides applicants an opportunity to conduct self evaluations privately as a family to ascertain whether transcultural parenting is right for them (Bower, 1998). A strength of this tool is that it allows foster and adoptive parents to explore their feelings about what they will encounter if they choose to foster or adopt transracially.

The Multiethnic Parenting Assessment Guide for Families Adopting Transracially/Transculturally (Closs, Frazier, Hudson, Lee, Le Roi, & Valazquez, 1995) is a guide that is completed by workers to assess their perceptions of the appropriateness of transracial and transcultural parenting for applicants. The guide addresses issues related to: heritage, motivation to adopt, adoptive parents' support systems, community opportunities for the children to have same-culture relationships, lifestyle, parenting competence, ability to handle racial issues, and ability to promote cultural identities. It also assesses knowledge about the diet, hair, and skin care needs of transculturally placed children (Crumbley, 1999). The tool includes open and closed-ended questions (see Closs et. al, 1995) and the responses receive low to high ratings.

The Worker's Assessment Guide for Families Adopting Transracially/Transculturally (Minnesota Department of Human Services [MDHS], 1990) also is a guide that is completed by workers to assess workers' perceptions of whether applicants are capable of adopting children from different cultures. The worker administers the Worker's Assessment Guide for Families Adopting Transracially/Transculturally by asking open and closed-ended questions. Categories assessed are: (1) experiences and understanding of the role of race and heritage; (2) motivation and support (3) interacting with community to provide opportunities for same-race role models and peer relationships and (4) lifestyle and parenting abilities (Crumbley, 1999).

Applicants also are assigned cultural tasks that entail attending transcultural social or community events so that they experience the feelings of being singled-out as being different. After this experience, applicants participate in discussions with their workers about their experiences (Crumbley, 1999). Next is a discussion on the differentiation between measuring foster parent applicants' cultural receptivity and cultural competence.

#### *Measuring Cultural Receptivity vs. Cultural Competence*

*Cultural receptivity* (a construct developed by the present author) is concerned with measuring foster parent applicants' openness towards culturally appropriate fostering whereas the construct *cultural competence* entails measuring human service workers' competency areas in working with people of diverse backgrounds. Cultural competence emphasizes human service workers' willingness and ability to incorporate cultural resources when working with people in the community (Mitchell).

This differentiation is important because foster parents' expressed openness (not competence level) to foster children with particular characteristics is positively related to future commitments of providing foster care placements to those children and other

types of children (e.g. children with emotional problems) (Cox et al., 2002). Additionally, cultural competence research is limited in that it does not sufficiently address parenting children of different cultural backgrounds. Cultural receptivity facilitates an integration of the foster families' and children's cultural heritage, traditions, beliefs, and spirituality, and other aspects of their lives.

These two constructs are related in the sense that cultural receptivity may be considered a precursor to cultural competence. Cultural receptivity and cultural competence can be fused in the understanding that foster parents must first be receptive to parenting (or working with) children of different cultures before they develop the necessary behaviors and skills to work effectively with them.

Building on the limitations of cultural competence, cultural receptivity is a construct developed to examine areas in which foster parents need to be assessed before having culturally different children placed in their homes. Because prospective foster parents do not go into the fostering process knowing exactly which children will be placed with them, they are unaware of the specific cultural backgrounds of the children. Therefore, knowledge and skill assessments such as cultural competence measures would not be appropriate to measure the dimensions present in culturally receptive fostering. It simply would be too much to expect prospective foster parents to know all that is needed about all of the different types of children that might be placed.

Cultural competence measures do not assess the openness or willingness to participate in activities necessary for children's cultural development. Instead most measures are designed to assess human services workers' skills in working with diverse cultures. Cultural competence is a separate concept that is relevant to human services workers and foster parents. In the regard that prospective foster parents will need to work with diverse cultures in settings such as human services agencies, the community,

and homes (Mitchell, 1999), the CCS (Mitchell, 1999) might be useful in the applicant assessment process.

Further, most cultural competence instruments are inappropriate for assessing levels of cultural receptivity in fostering because they neglect to address elements that pertain to parenting. Specifically, information on parenting children of different cultures is essential to the research on cultural receptivity. However, it is not emphasized in the research on cultural competence. Assessments on transcultural fostering need to measure pertinent dimensions present in the cultural receptivity construct such as: openness to understand different cultures; the willingness to become aware of children's needs for their own cultural identities; the effort to learn about resources to support cultures; and an appreciation of other cultures.

According to Mitchell, culturally competent workers need to possess cultural awareness, knowledge, and communication skills. The CCS was designed to assess cultural competence in mental health professionals who work with people of diverse cultures, particularly those working with abused children and their families. The intent of the CCS is to empower professionals to become more aware of their own cultural identifications; to be open to the expansion of their culture-specific knowledge; and to increase their cross-cultural communication skills. Unlike the cultural receptivity research, cultural competence scales that are designed for workers do not address one's openness to participate in culturally conducive activities; nor does it address aspects of fostering children of different cultures. In summary, cultural competence and cultural receptivity are distinct, but related constructs.

## Methodological Issues, Research Gaps, and Directions for Future Research

### *Methodological Strengths*

*Definitions.* Overall, the numerous definitions and domains of cultural competence are consistent across studies, although they vary slightly (see Table 7). These variations pose a potential problem of inconsistently measuring the construct. However, other researchers have taken steps to reduce this potential problem. For instance, Vonk (2001) and Mitchell (1999) reported how they operationalized the construct of *cultural competence* as it relates to human services workers and parents, respectively. Conclusions that were made about cultural competence are further supported, because the researchers defined clearly and sufficiently how cultural competence would be measured in concrete terms. Therefore, it is more likely that they are measuring the construct as they had intended.

*Longitudinal studies.* There were few prospective studies in this body of literature that provided insight regarding the impact of transcultural placement over a given time (Deberry et al., 1996; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Shireman, 1988; Simon & Alstein, 2002; Vroegh, 1997). Although some studies did not provide insight into the essentials and importance of children's cultural development, the findings regarding particular aspects of transracial adoption coincide with the collective results of other studies that used different research designs.

For instance, Simon and Alstein's (2002) 20-year study on the racial identity and other outcomes of transracially placed children found that children between the ages of 3 and 8 years often reported themselves as being of the same race as their adoptive parents' race. At the second stage of the study it was established that the children, ages 10-15 years, reported more accurately their race and reported having pride in their heritage. However, the transracially adopted children did not identify socially with people

of their own race, as they preferred to date and have friendships with European-Americans rather than others of the same race. They also found positive outcomes for the overall adjustment of transracially placed children (Simon & Alstein, 1996, 2002).

McRoy and Zurcher (1983) and Silverman (1993) reported similar results during those same developmental stages of children in transracial placements. McRoy and Zurcher (1983) examined 30 European-American families in two comparison groups and Shireman and Johnson (1986) conducted a longitudinal study with 118 families in three comparison groups, and Vroegh (1997) conducted a longitudinal study with 42 African-American and 45 European-American families adopting African-American children. The different researchers found that regardless of the perceptions about their particular cultural group, by age eight they identified clearly as being from their own cultural group (see also Deberry et al., 1996). Further, by the time they reached adolescence, these children understood their cultural status but did not identify socially with people in their cultures (Deberry et al., 1996; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Silverman, 1993). The majority of transracially adopted African-American adolescents reported that most of their closest friends and people they dated were European-American (Deberry et al., 1996; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Silverman, 1993; Vroegh, 1997). This might be strongly attributed to their exposure to neighborhoods and schools that were overwhelmingly European-American which is where friendships are developed. Therefore, culturally receptive adoptive parents will seek out opportunities for their children to be friends with same-culture children.

#### *Methodological Limitations*

*Empirical studies.* Most cultural research is based on theories in child development, psychology, and social work. Only two empirical studies of cultural competence are closely related to cultural receptivity (see Mitchell, 1999; Vonk &

Angaran, 2001). A major limitation in the literature is that the majority of research on culturally appropriate parenting is conceptual. This is problematic, in that the researchers do not progress towards operationalizing and measuring the concept. There is a need for stronger emphases on empirical studies regarding cultural competence, transcultural parenting, and cultural receptivity.

*Sampling method.* There is a pattern of weaknesses across studies regarding sampling methods. Several studies do not specify in detail the sampling methods used in their research on transracial placements, whereas others use nonrandom or unrepresentative samples (e.g., Deberry et al., 1996; McRoy et al., 1984; Shireman & Johnson, 1986). However, most researchers reach similar conclusions about children's outcomes for transcultural placements.

The problem with the studies that contain nonrandom samples is that the results cannot be generalized beyond the constraints of the study to the population of foster parents. Nonrandom samples increase the chances for sample bias, thus the method of selection from the population of interest does not allow each participant from the pool an equal chance of being selected for the study (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). This leads to an underrepresentation or overrepresentation of a particular group, such as very dedicated foster parents, who are more likely to volunteer to participate in research. Moreover, the method in which the sample is chosen might lead to a systematic bias and the results of the study (such as, reports on attitudes, perceptions, or behaviors) will not accurately reflect the population as intended. For instance, foster parents with busier schedules or more stressful parenting responsibilities might not have the time or desire to participate in a foster parent association from which a particular sample is drawn. In this case, important aspects of their unique experiences are excluded, thus the study's findings are not representative of the foster parent population.

The literature reviewed suggests that various methods in conducting research regarding children in transcultural placements yield similar results. However, there is a need for more studies that use probability sampling methods in order to increase the generalization of findings to the large population of children in transcultural placements.

In the reviewed studies where random samples were used, participants were selected from the general population and therefore were not representative of the foster and adoptive parent population, in the sense many of them were not foster parents at all. Obtaining random samples pose problems with the confidentiality of adoptions and children's rights to privacy. Therefore, additional nonprobability studies that replicate previous studies with minimal methodological limitations should be conducted. Generalizing the results is important because placing children in culturally different foster homes is a national issue (DHHS, 2002).

*Comparison groups.* Few studies compare cultural identity levels of children who were in transracial placements versus the children in same-culture placements (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Shireman & Johnson, 1986). The findings of the few studies that have used comparison groups, however, are similar to the results from other studies without comparisons groups. Researchers conclude that the children's levels of cultural identity increase in homes where the parents demonstrate an interracial style of living. Vroegh (1997) also used comparison groups, but concluded that African-American adoptees' successful racial identity was not contingent upon African-American relationships.

*Data collection.* There is a pattern of flaws regarding data collection in several studies. For instance, Simon and Alstein's (1996) use of telephone and mail surveys to collect data is susceptible to bias due to the following reasons. First, unlike other phases in their study, only parents responded to the survey in the second of the four phases. The parents provided information about the adoptive experience, and the children's



identity and relationships with friends and community (Simon & Alstein, 1996). This method of data collection is problematic because accurate accounts of the children's experience during this critical phase of development (i.e., adolescence) (Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1989) might have been omitted because the children did not have the opportunity to respond. Coincidentally, this happened to be the phase that the researchers were made aware of the "stress and tension" in the transracially adoptive families. Reportedly, some adoptive adolescents were involved in stealing, drinking, drugs, truancy, and running away. Additionally, some adoptive mothers and fathers were divorced (Simon & Alstein, 1996, p. 19).

The response rate for that particular phase of the study was 71%. Although not reported to have happened in this study, the response rate could have been affected by the possibility that some parents' telephone numbers might not have been made public, perhaps to protect their privacy in particular cases such as adoptions.

The researchers reported that their attempts to contact the original participants in this manner resulted in undelivered return mail. Therefore, it is unknown how the missing respondent would have answered. The limitations in Simon and Alstein's (1996) data collection methods might affect findings if there were a substantial proportion of people absent from the sample who have pertinent information relevant to the transcultural adoption study. Further, the respondents might not represent those who did not return the surveys, a possible result of response bias (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing this from the information provided.

### Summary

A great deal of research has been conducted to assess the relationship between the effectiveness of social services and culture, and there also is some degree of research specific to the outcomes for transcultural child placement. However, due to

methodological shortcomings in the research, particularly limitations related to sampling and measurement issues, there are still important gaps in knowledge.

The research is insufficient to determine definitively the outcomes of transcultural placements. There should be consistent variables measured using valid and reliable tools. Research on cultural receptivity should include studies with standardized measures to assess levels of cultural receptivity. Standardized measures are useful in obtaining quantitative data and will add to the scarcity of empirical research on transcultural fostering. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to design and test the psychometric properties of a standardized measure that assesses foster parents' levels of cultural receptivity. This is addressed in the following chapters.

Additionally, there are important transcultural parenting outcomes that warrant examinations such as how foster parents' cultural receptivity is related to their willingness to foster, cultural competence, and ability to foster. These variables, as well as other antecedent and outcome variables are addressed in this study in order to validate the interpretation of the test scores for the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS), which is discussed.

### **Chapter 3: Development of the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS)**

This cultural receptivity in fostering study is part of a larger study of the Casey Home Assessment Protocol (CHAP). This chapter presents the procedures used to develop the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale.

#### **Process and Rationale of the CRFS Development**

The following are processes involved in the development of the CRFS and the rationale behind development decisions. The American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education standards [AERA, APA, NCME, 1999] and DeVellis (1991) were used as guides to these processes.

The processes are divided into various phases that occurred during the development of the CRFS. Phases I - III refer to the initial periods of scale development for the Cultural Competence in Fostering Scale (CCFS), when the focus was on measuring cultural competence in fostering. Phases IV - VI pertain to the developmental stages of the actual CRFS, as it was discovered that this new construct was needed to fully assess appropriate transcultural fostering. The phases represent periods in which major revisions were made regarding scale structure or changes in items due to the influence of newly reviewed literature pertinent to the construct.

#### *Exploration of Relevant Theories and Practice Standards*

*Cultural competence theory.* In order to address certain aspects of the transcultural foster placements phenomenon, in Phase I it was originally planned to develop and test a measure that assessed foster parents' level of cultural competence. As stated in Chapter 2, cultural competence involves the development of interpersonal skills and behaviors to work effectively with people of diverse cultures (Hernandez & Isaacs, 1998; Mitchell, 1999; O'Hagan, 2001). This theoretical framework was initially

examined in order to relate and expand the philosophy of the provision of culturally competent services to the idea of providing culturally appropriate foster care. However, because it is expected that prospective foster parents have the opportunity to develop from training, support, and services, it was decided in a later phase (i.e., Phase IV) that it would be more useful to assess foster parents' intentions or openness to provide culturally appropriate care instead of measuring their current competence level.

Additionally, it would not be reasonable to expect foster parent applicants to be competent in parenting all of the different cultures of children in foster care. Therefore, it was necessary to develop and test a measure that assesses foster parents' level of cultural receptivity, because although cultural competence is closely related to cultural receptivity, the two are distinct and separate constructs. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth examination of the theoretical framework.

In developing the CRFS, it was determined that relevant conceptualizations of cultural receptivity needed to be established. This was accomplished through a search and an examination of general foster family research and practice literature, cultural competence and cultural diversity literature, foster parent training manuals, existing measures of cultural competence, and feedback from individuals with expert and relevant knowledge pertaining to culturally appropriate parenting strategies. These conceptualizations of cultural competence and cultural receptivity are delineated in chapter 2.

From this search for a theoretical basis, cultural competence theory was selected as a guide to which the content of the CRFS attempts to address and explain the construct, cultural receptivity (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999; DeVellis, 1991). Cultural competence was used as a theoretical framework because it is closely related to cultural receptivity and no theories exist on cultural receptivity. However, the literature did not

sufficiently address cultural competence for fostering or adoption. As stated earlier, Vonk and Angaran (2001) provided the only empirical research on cultural competence and transracial adoption.

*Practice standards.* After deciding to develop a measure that assesses openness to culturally appropriate fostering, the next step was to identify agency normative expectations. It was thought that this would provide valuable information as to which areas are important to human services agencies working with or evaluating foster parent applicants.

Through a national review of professional norms, standards, and training manuals (i.e., CWLA, 1995b, CWLA, 2000; IDCFS, 1993; PATH, 1997; Rhodes, et al., unpublished), it was discovered that social work and child welfare organizations and agencies asserted a commitment to promoting culturally competent services (i.e., CWLA, 1995b; IDCFS, 1993; NASW, 2001). As stated in Chapter 1, the CWLA cites the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994, (Pub. L. No. 103-382) and the Interethnic Adoption Provision of 1996, (Pub. L. No. 104-188) in its explication of the CWLA's policy for approving and facilitating transcultural adoption and fostering (CWLA, 1995a). Chapter 1 also provides a thorough examination of the major training manuals that broach cultural issues in fostering. These standards and training publications were reviewed because they serve as guides to transcultural foster parents.

#### *Development of Scale Purpose and Construct*

The initial goal was to develop a scale that would aid in assessing prospective foster parents in order to match them successfully with children of different cultural backgrounds. Tentatively, the name of the scale was the Cultural Competence in Fostering Scale (CCFS). The purpose of the CCFS was to ascertain foster parent applicants' ability to foster effectively a child with a different culture by measuring the

level of cultural competence in fostering. However, nearly all of the reviewed literature that pertained to cultural competence was training-specific for human services employees (i.e., mental health, social services) and did not address aspects of fostering.

In order to develop an instrument for foster parent applicants, the cultural competence ideals had to be modified within the context of fostering. For instance, cultural competence in fostering would need to pertain to: the use of knowledge and interpersonal skills that enhance understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities of foster children and foster parents in order to develop, maintain or strengthen cultural identity, and support appropriate parenting.

Later, it was decided to use an adaptation of cultural competence, because the construct implies the expectation that foster parents know about various cultures when the focus should be on their intentions or willingness to learn appropriate transcultural fostering. Cultural receptivity or foster parents' level of intended effort to participate in cultural activities to promote children's cultural development became the focus of the scale. The purpose of the scale was soon modified to reflect foster parents' *openness* to participating in cultural activities to promote children's cultural development. The name of the scale was then changed from the CCFS to the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale.

#### *Domain Development*

*Phases I & II.* The early CCFS domains reflected the premise of Mitchell's (1999) cultural competence research regarding working effectively with people of different cultures through acquiring knowledge and skills about diverse cultures. The 2 domains entailed: 1) *awareness of child's need for cultural identity*; and 2) *availability of resources*.

*Phase III.* In a later developmental phase, additional literature was reviewed on culture and cultural competence (Hernandez, 1998; IDCFS, 1993; Mitchell, 1999; O'Hagan, 2001). As new information was discovered, the 2 domains were slightly modified to include these pertinent areas of cultural competence. The CCFS domains included: 1) awareness of child's need for cultural identity and acceptance; and 2) availability of resources to support a child's cultural identity including formal knowledge and skills training.

*Phase IV.* After additional literature was reviewed regarding expectations for transcultural foster parents (e.g., CWLA, 1995b), it was decided that the cultural competence domains did not include the necessary elements that represented cultural receptivity. Therefore, domains were modified based on this dissertation's definition of cultural receptivity. This modification was necessary because the scale items would need to come directly from the domains of cultural receptivity. So in order to reflect the new construct, the domains were modified to: 1) tolerance of different cultures; 2) willingness to become aware of children's need for cultural identity; 3) effort to learn about availability of resources to support a child's cultural identity; 4) appreciation of other cultures.

*Phase V.* Finally, it was decided that *tolerance* appeared to be an archaic term used during the Civil Rights era and had taken on a different and perhaps a pejorative meaning in the 21st century. Therefore, the domain's wording was changed from *tolerance* to *understanding*, which conveyed the need to be accepting and supportive. The final CRFS domains included: 1) understanding of different cultures; 2) willingness to become aware of a child's need for cultural identity; 3) effort to learn about availability of resources to support a child's cultural identity; 4) appreciation of other cultures.

## Development of Test Specifications

### *Scale Format*

*Explanation of culture.* At the top portion of the scale, respondents are informed that foster children have different cultures; and that "culture tells us how groups of people are different, whether they are from a different race, ethnicity, religion, spirituality, gender, sexual orientation, social class, or in other ways that influence values, beliefs, views, and behavior." This is an adaptation of a combination of definitions of culture offered by Hernandez and Isaacs (1998), Mitchell (2000), and O'Hagan (2001). This explanation of culture in relation to foster children is provided so that the respondent is clear about the meaning of culture and the various characteristics a foster child might possess.

*Instructions.* Before instructions for completing the CRFS are offered, respondents are informed that the scale consists of a list of statements that encompass the role culture plays when fostering children of different cultural backgrounds. It was necessary to point out to respondents that these are the specific types of activities in which they would need to participate in order to foster a child from a culture different than their own. The respondents are then instructed to select a response option to each of the cultural receptivity statements that best explains the level of effort they are willing to give to the various activities involved in transcultural placements. The rationale behind this is to encourage respondents to begin evaluating their attitudes, beliefs, and values that influence the degree to which they are open to participating in those transcultural parenting activities. This is common in most foster parent training modules. According to Baum et al. (2001), mutual assessment between the agencies and the foster parents should take place to determine whether fostering is right for the foster parents.



*Item response format.* The initial design of the scale was held constant for Phases I - III. The design consisted of a stem of declarative statements regarding willingness to participate in various types of cultural activities that involved learning about cultures, supporting children's cultural identity, and so forth.

Phase IV involved changing the scale's format. The item response format was divided into two sections- an upper portion and a lower portion. The upper portion of the form consisted of 9 items that began with the leading statement: *I can accept the fact that...* and the last 30 items lead with the statement: *I can put this amount of effort into the following activities.* The purpose of this change was due to the idea that the four domains could be subsumed under these prompts that would have a personalizing effect on respondents. These prompting statements would serve the purpose of assisting respondents to begin thinking about their level of openness.

Finally, in Phase V of the CRFS development, both sections of items were combined to create a single stem (i.e., a list of declarative statements) (DeVellis, 1990). This design remained constant for all other subsequent modifications to items. This change in the scale's design was done so that the scale would appear simple and the flow of the instrument would not be interrupted with new directions and explanations. It was hoped that this revision would increase the readability of the CRFS and reduce the chances of confusing respondents and causing them to make mistakes when completing the scale (DeVellis, 1990).

#### *Type of Scoring Procedures*

*Five-point scale.* The CCFS was originally developed with 4-point Likert scale response options: none (1), little (2), some (3), a lot (4), which indicate the degree to which foster parents are open to various activities that promote cultural development.

In subsequent designs of the CRFS, the response option format was modified to a 5-point Likert scale that included the option: *whatever it takes* (5).

The additional response option has several benefits. First, increasing the number of response options also increases the variability in the scale, which allows it to correlate with other related measures (DeVellis, 1991). Additionally, the increase in response options gives the respondents the ability to better differentiate among the different levels of the construct (DeVellis, 1991, p. 65). Finally, an odd number of options placed on a continuum from the least to the most receptive towards participation in cultural activities encourages the respondent to commit to making a choice among responses, thus eliminating the result of an ambivalent or neutral response (DeVellis, 1991).

In Phase IV, the scale was divided into two portions. The top portion of the scale was rated on a 5-point Likert scale that solicited the amount of agreement with the statements: *strongly disagree* (1), *somewhat disagree* (2), *neither agree or disagree* (3), *somewhat agree* (4), *strongly agree* (5). The bottom portion of the scale was designed to coincide with the top for scoring purposes: *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4), *whatever it takes* (5). Having both portions of the scale consist of a 5-point Likert scale made scoring simpler.

In the final phases (i.e., Phases V and VI) the CRFS was revised to only include a stem of items and a series of responses. The final design of the CRFS consisted of a 5-point Likert scale: *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4), *whatever it takes* (5).

*Proposed interpretation of item scores.* Initially, CCFS items were scored in the following manner: *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4). In subsequent phases, items were scored in these ways: (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4), *whatever it takes* (5). There are certain presumptions about the item scores that pertain to all versions of CCFS and CRFS. First, the order and respective scores (e.g., 1, 2, 3,

etc.) of these options imply for instance, that *some* is more than a *little* and a *lot* is more than *some* (DeVellis, 1991). Furthermore, choosing an option that is higher on the continuum translates to a higher score that indicates that the respondent possesses greater cultural receptivity in that particular activity.

#### *Intended Population of Test-Takers*

The CRFS was designed for foster parent applicants. As, stated in chapter 1, it is important to assess this population for a number of reasons that include: (1) identifying their strengths and needs as potential foster parents; (2) identifying service needs of applicants; (3) matching children and families, and (4) stimulating useful discussions between workers and applicants. Assessing foster parents' levels of cultural receptivity has implications for outcomes for foster parents (e.g., foster parent retention, satisfaction with parenting, and willingness to foster) and foster children (e.g., well-being). It also has important implications for recruitment, selection, and training of foster parents and the placement of foster children.

#### *Procedures for Administration*

The CRFS was developed as a self-report measure that would be administered by social workers and personnel responsible for assessing foster parent applicants. The CRFS takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It should be administered prior to transcultural placement of children to ensure that foster parents are informed about and committed to appropriate transcultural fostering.

Administrators of this measure should first assure the respondents of confidentiality of the completed assessment. Then they should ask that respondents be honest in selecting their responses. Respondents also should be informed that the best strategy for completing the CRFS is to follow their first impulse and not try to "second guess" themselves or to figure out what the "best" answer is. This procedure would

reduce the effects of social desirability and increase validity. Because we are interested in understanding how each parent of every foster family applicant feels individually, respondents should be asked to complete the measures on their own, without the assistance or influence of spouses or others.

Some questions in the CRFS ask that respondents think about their beliefs and values, therefore respondents should be instructed to complete the measure in a quiet place at a time they would not be disturbed. Additionally, they should be instructed to complete questions in the order in which they are presented and should not skip around and answer questions in a different order. Administrators also should inform the respondents not to skip any questions, and if they have trouble answering, to pick the answer that best fits their beliefs. Furthermore, if they do not understand something then they should contact the test administrator. Finally, respondents should be informed that if they want to explain their answer they may do so in the margin provided.

Scores on the CRFS should not be used to discourage or exclude applicants from becoming transcultural foster parents. It also does not substitute for foster care workers' judgments about applicants' qualifications and potential. Rather, information from the CRFS serves as a roadmap for how agencies can best support foster parents as resources. More details about the appropriate uses of the CRFS are discussed in Chapter 6.

#### *Establishment of Item Pool*

*Phase I of scale development.* After the purpose of the original CCFS was established as a starting point, potential items were selected from Mitchell's (1999) Cultural Competence Scale and modified to reflect what the CCFS intended. The modification was necessary because the CCS that was designed for human services workers did not capture the essence of cultural competence in the regard of assessing

foster parents. Therefore, the wording of the CCS was adapted to include terms such as *foster child* and *parenting*. At the initial phase of scale development, the CCFS had a total of 35 items that were adapted from the CCS (Mitchell, 1999) to reflect aspects of parenting and fostering.

*Phase II of scale development.* The CCFS consisted of only 12 items after the addition, deletion, and modification of items. This process was based on reviewers' expert opinions regarding the relevance of the item content or because they did not specifically pertain to important aspects of fostering.

*Phase III of scale development.* As more literature was reviewed (e.g., Crumbley, 1999) and a new definition of culture was established, additional items were included or deleted which brought the CCFS total to 37 items. Including additional items was considered an improvement to the scale, because more items potentially increase the reliability and validity of the scale. Also, increasing items aids in helping the scale discriminate differences in the underlying construct and allows it to correlate with other measures (DeVellis, 1991, p. 64).

*Phase IV of scale development.* As stated earlier, the focus of the scale was modified to encompass the cultural receptivity construct and the name of the scale was changed to the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS). Four new CRFS domains were established from which a new universe of 25 items was generated to reflect the cultural receptivity construct.

Next, items were added to and others deleted from the CRFS pool on the basis of which items best represented the construct *cultural receptivity*. It was ensured that all items were included that represented a domain. However, some items were deleted to prevent excessive redundancy (DeVellis, 1991). Items also were deleted because they did not fit within the content domain. Others were deleted in order to increase readability.

During this phase of development, the CRFS became a 39-item scale. This version of the CRFS consisted of two parts. The first nine items began with a leading statement: *I can accept the fact that...* and the last 30 items were lead with: *I can put this amount of effort into the following activities.*

*Phase V of scale development.* After additional modifications, a total of 25 items were included in the CRFS. The decision for inclusion was based on test specifications and appropriateness of items for foster parent respondents. The format of the scale at this point of development consisted of a stem of 25 items, all of which represented the four domains in no particular order. This was designed in this manner so that the positions of items from all domains could be alternated to allow relief from responding to the same types of statements.

*Phase VI of scale development.* In the final CRFS revision, attention was given to the wording of scale items and what it implies. Therefore, it was important to steer away from leading statements such as *I know...* and *I understand...*, because the scale is more concerned with the foster parents' openness to learn. Further, foster parents could not possibly know all that is necessary about each and every culture. Additionally, items were changed from *my foster child* to *a foster child*, because the term *my* connotes ownership or possessiveness. The final CRFS consisted of four domains and 25 equally weighted items.

#### *Expert Review of Scale*

*First stage of scale review.* The CCFS and CRFS were evaluated using a two-stage participatory approach in order to substantiate evidence for validity of their content (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). It was important to have the feedback from reviewers of different cultural backgrounds because culture is the basis of the CRFS. Diverse perspectives add to the relevancy of the scale's content.

First, the CCFS and later, the CRFS were reviewed by one African-American, female social work Ph.D. student and research assistant; one European-American, male social work Ph.D. student and research assistant; one European-American, female social work Ph.D. researcher; one European-American, female Ph.D. clinical social work practitioner; one European-American, female child and family studies professor and senior researcher; one European-American, male social work Ph.D. professor and senior researcher; and several child welfare administrators and policy makers of various demographics. The reviews occurred at several different phases of the scale development in order to establish validity evidence that support the content of the scale. At this stage of review, feedback was provided regarding the clarity, relevancy, and representation of items intended to measure the construct, cultural receptivity.

*Relevance.* It was necessary to have the reviewers provide feedback regarding the relevance of the CRFS items. The purpose of this feedback was so that they could confirm the definition created for the construct *cultural receptivity* (DeVellis, 1991, p.75). The reviewers were asked to evaluate items with respect to their relevance to the construct as it was defined. Scale items were revised based on the reviewers' expert opinions.

*Clarity.* Reviewers were instructed to give attention to the wording of items, as it might be confusing, ambiguous, or awkward. Wording affects reliability because an unclear item might reflect factors that are extraneous to the construct (DeVellis, 1991). Reviewers were asked to provide suggestions to improve clarity.

Reviewers commented on confusing items such as double negatives (e.g., *I disagree that there are some cultures which I cannot accept*), loaded words (e.g., those influential terms or phrases), "double-barreled" items (e.g., items that include two different activities in one statement, making it difficult for the respondent to commit to one part

answer when the other does not apply) (Rubin & Babbie, 2001; Schutt, 2001). Their feedback was instrumental in the modification or deletion of various confusing items, all of which might interject bias into the scale, because it forces respondents to inaccurately answer such items or systematically not answer them at all (Rubin & Babbie, 2001; Schutt, 2001).

To increase the readability, the CRFS's instructions, items, and response options were all put through a word processor that identified the reading difficulty based on grade-level. Some words that were identified to be greater than a 6th grade reading level were changed to words with simpler structures. Some words were not changed due to the need to include constructs essential to this study (e.g., receptivity).

*Representation.* Reviewers provided feedback regarding the completeness of the set of items. They were asked to comment on the extent to which it represented the universe of cultural receptivity items. The CRFS was modified to include more items for domains that are heavily covered in the literature and fewer items for domains with less coverage. The following are how the final set of CRFS items were represented in each domain: *acceptance and understanding of different cultures* (3 items); *willingness to become aware of a child's need for cultural identity* (4 items); *effort to learn about availability of resources to support a child's cultural identity* (13 items); and *appreciation of other cultures* (5 items).

*Second stage of scale review.* Once the content was established for the final CRFS, 10 foster mothers and 10 public and private foster care workers from various cultural backgrounds evaluated the CRFS using an evaluation form. Again, the perspectives from people of diverse backgrounds are valued because their experiences contribute greatly towards the development of cultural measures (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999; DeVellis, 1991).



First, reviewers were informed that their participation would help determine the usefulness of the scale and that the CRFS is not solely used to make decisions about foster parent approval. Then, reviewers were asked to read the instructions provided before reviewing and evaluating the CRFS. The instructions asked reviewers to choose the response that best fit their judgment about the CRFS based on the 5-point Likert scale. The choices were: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *neither agree or disagree* (3), *agree* (4), *strongly agree* (5).

The statements that they rated are as follows: (1) Instructions are clear; (2) Items are free from gender and cultural bias; (3) Applicants have enough information about fostering to complete this scale; (4) Scale is useful for assessing applicants' strengths; (5) Scale is useful for assessing resources needed to foster. Reviewers also were invited to provide suggestions for the usefulness of the CRFS during the paper evaluation and during a telephone conference call with reviewers and the researcher. Interpretations of the test scores are addressed in Chapter 6.

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

This chapter describes the sample, research design, and measures used to test the CRFS. Following this description, this chapter concludes by detailing the research questions examined in this study and the propositions tested in examining the validity of the CRFS scores.

### **Sample and Design**

Data were collected from October, 2002, through September, 2003. Using a cross-sectional design, a total of 304 approved, certified, or licensed non-kinship and kinship foster mothers were recruited nationally to participate voluntarily in the study (see Figure 2). Foster mothers were sampled because foster mothers are usually the ones who initiate fostering and who play the primary role in fostering (Rhodes, Orme, & McSurdy, 2003). Also, foster mothers head most single-parent foster families.

Foster mothers were recruited through state and local foster parent associations. The list of these associations was obtained from the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) website ([www.nfpainc.org](http://www.nfpainc.org)). The NFPA endorsed this study. Recruitment information packets were sent to State and local foster parent associations by mail and email. Recruitment packets included information about the study and tools for distributing information to foster parents. These packets included: cover letters describing the study (Appendix A); endorsement letters from Karen Jorgenson, president of the National Foster Parent Association (Appendix B); flyers about the study that could be reproduced and distributed to foster mothers (Appendix C); and information about the study that could be placed in association newsletters or websites (Appendices D and E).

Associations were asked to distribute flyers to members, place announcements in newsletters, and place announcements on their state association websites and message boards.

All advertisements included an email address and a toll-free project telephone number. Foster mothers were asked to use one of these means to contact the research team secretary to participate. Those willing to participate were asked to provide their names, mailing addresses and, if available, email addresses. When a person requested additional information about the study, this was sent so that the mother could make an informed decision about participation.

Initially, recruitment packets were mailed only to State foster parent associations (Appendix F). About three months into the project when requests from foster mothers had diminished, recruitment materials were resent to state foster parent associations from states from which completed questionnaires were not received. Also at this time, recruitment materials were sent to local foster parent associations from those states (Appendix G).

Each foster mother who was willing to participate was mailed: a cover letter (Appendix H); two consent forms (Appendix I); a flyer about the study (Appendix C); two self-administered questionnaires described below; a *Best times to call* form (Appendix J); a checklist for returning materials (Appendix K); and a pre-paid addressed envelope in which to return the completed materials.

Participants were asked to sign and return the informed consent forms with their completed questionnaires. An extra consent form was included that the participants were asked to retain for their records. Also, an email address and a toll-free project number were provided on the consent forms, and potential participants were told that they could call the toll-free number or email if they had any questions about the study. Flyers about the project were included and participants were asked to share them with other interested foster mothers. In addition, foster mothers were asked on the forms to indicate what times were best to contact them for telephone interviews described below.

Participants were mailed two questionnaires, the Casey Home Assessment Protocol-Self-Report (CHAP-SR) questionnaire and a questionnaire containing, among other measures, the applicant version of the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory (CFAI-A). Each of these questionnaires contained multiple scales, subscales, and other questions, as described below. Computer scannable forms were used, and these are available at <http://utcmhsrsrc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject/>. To counterbalance the effects of fatigue, respondents were asked to complete the CHAP-SR first and the CFAI-A second for odd-numbered questionnaires, and *vice versa* for even-numbered questionnaires.

Upon receipt of a completed set of questionnaires, one of the six interviewers called each foster mother to conduct a telephone interview (see Appendix L). During this telephone interview the foster mother was asked how she would handle six different commonly occurring challenging fostering situations, described below (seven for married or otherwise partnered foster mothers). This telephone interview took approximately 20 minutes. At the end of this interview the interviewer asked the foster mother if she would be willing to provide missing information from her returned questionnaires, if the questionnaires contained missing information. Upon completion of the telephone interview each participant was mailed a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate.

#### Casey Home Assessment Protocol-Self-Report (CHAP-SR) Questionnaire

The CHAP-SR questionnaire contains new self-report scales developed for the larger study of which the present study is a part. These new self-report scales were developed to measure important and relatively unique aspects of foster parenting. It also contains self-report scales designed and tested by other researchers that, for the most part, measure aspects of parenting and individual and family functioning not necessarily unique to foster parenting. These new and existing measures provide a useful basis for examining the validity of the new CHAP measures. Detailed information about the

psychometric properties of these measures is contained in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of the CHAP Technical Manual (Orme, Cox, Rhodes, Coakley, Cuddeback, & Buehler, 2003).

The concepts measured by the CHAP-SR, and the measures used to assess these concepts, were developed or selected based on an extensive review of existing family foster care research, assessment, and training materials, existing parenting research relevant to family foster care, standards for family foster care, and extensive input from foster parents, family foster care workers and, to some extent, former foster children. This process is described in detail in the first two chapters of the CHAP Technical Manual.

Existing standardized self-report measures were selected for inclusion in the CHAP-SR after a search of relevant research and recent collections of measures (e.g., Corcoran & Fischer, 2000, a, b; Hersen & Bellack, 1988; Magura & Moses, 1986; McCubbin, Thompson, & McCubbin, 1996; McDowell & Newell, 1996; Thompson, 1989; Touliatos, Perlmutter, & Straus, 1990; van Riezen & Segal, 1988). Criteria included: adequate reliability, evidence of validity that would fit our intended purpose, availability of normative data (especially criterion scores that could be used to determine the presence of problems), ease of use (time for completion, reading level), relevance to foster parent applicants (e.g., measures not assuming children already in the home), and accessibility (availability for use without charge).

Best practice in and research on foster care highlights the importance of numerous aspects of parenting and individual and family functioning that are not unique to foster parenting (Orme & Buehler, 2001). Consequently, a number of measures were used that were developed, tested, and found to have good psychometric properties with populations of parents other than foster parents, but for the most part have never been tested with foster parents. Before turning to a description of the new and existing

measures used in this study, an overview of procedures used to score these measures is provided.

### *Scoring*

*Missing item responses.* A total or subscale score was computed for an individual only if at least 80% of the items used to compute that particular score were completed. This rule was used in scoring all of the scales and subscales described below.

*Computing raw scores.* There are different ways to compute raw scale scores. For existing measures used in this study, the scoring methods used by the scales' authors are used to compute total scale and subscale raw scores. Typically this involves either summing item scores (i.e., a *summative* score) or summing item scores and dividing the sum by the number of items summed (i.e., a *mean* score). There are a few exceptions to this rule, and these are described in more detail below in the context of the particular measure.

Seven self-report scales were developed for the present study:

- Reasons for Fostering (RF);
- Available Time Scale (ATS);
- Willingness to Foster Scale (WFS);
- Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS);
- Personal Dedication to Fostering Scale (PDFS);
- Receptivity to Birth Family Connections Scale (RBFCS); and
- Help with Fostering Inventory (HFI).

For the ATS, WFS, CRFS, PDFS and RBFCS the following formula was used to compute raw scale scores:

$$S = \frac{(M - 1)(100)}{K - 1}$$

where: S = the scale score

M = the mean item score

K = the largest possible value for an item response

This formula results in a potential range of values from 0 through 100, and it was used for several reasons. First, a potential score range from 0 through 100 is relatively easy to understand and remember, and it is familiar to most people. Second, the fact that all of these scales have the same potential range of values makes it easier to compare distributions of different measures (e.g., compare the means and variances of different measures) no matter how the items on a particular measure are scored. Finally, unlike mean scores, differences among individuals can be represented without using more than two decimal places, which also simplifies interpretations of the scores.

For the HFI, a slightly revised version of the above formula was used because the lowest mean score possible on the HFI is 0. This formula is as follows, and it also results in a potential range of values from 0 through 100:

$$S = \frac{(M)(100)}{K}$$

where: S = the scale score

M = the mean item score

K = the largest possible value for an item response

Although the raw scores for all of the new measures developed for the present study have a potential range of values from 0 through 100 (except for the RF for reasons

discussed below), for the most part the same score does not necessarily have the same meaning for all of these different measures. For example, a score of 50 does not mean the same thing on the Available Time Scale as it does on the Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale because the scores for different measures have different distributions.

### *Order of Scales*

Following is a list of the CHAP-SR measures presented in the order in which they were administered in the larger study:

- Reasons for Fostering
- Available Time Scale
- Willingness to Foster Scale
- Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale
- Foster Parent Role Performance Scale
- Personal Dedication to Fostering Scale
- Receptivity to Birth Family Connections Scale
- Parental Bonding Instrument
- Barnett Liking of Children Scale
- Duke Health Profile
- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test
- Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depressed Mood
- Short Hardiness Scale
- Social Readjustment Rating Scale
- Duke Social Support and Stress Scale
- Family Resource Scale
- Support Function Scale



- Help with Fostering Inventory
- Cultural Competence Scale
- Foster Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Family Functioning Scale
- Parental Psychological Control Scale
- Parental Acceptance Scale
- Parental Inconsistency Scale
- Kansas Parenting Satisfaction Scale
- Overt Interparental Hostility Scale
- Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale

This order was selected to move the participant through the questionnaire completion experience in an engaging and logical fashion. Scales related to fostering were placed in the beginning to engage participants by allowing them to think about and report on their fostering experience. Scales that asked about the respondents' care for and liking of children were included next. This was done to help the participant focus on his or her feelings about children and perhaps some motivations for fostering. The next set of scales addressed individual physical and mental health, experienced change and stress, and sources and functions of available support. The Cultural Competence Scale was included next because it should be completed before moving to the scales that addressed dyadic and family functioning. The scales that addressed dyadic and family functioning were included last, with the questions about marital functioning ending the survey so that participants who were not married or otherwise partnered could finish at a logical ending place.

### *Descriptions of Self-Report Scales*

Next are descriptions of CHAP-SR measures used in the present study, organized by areas as described in Chapter 1 of the CHAP User's Manual (Rhodes, Cox, Orme, Coakley, Buehler, & Cuddeback, 2003). Additional information about these and other measures used in the larger study can be obtained from the CHAP Technical Manual.

#### *Physical and Mental Health*

*Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS).* The SRRS is an existing 43-item scale designed to measure social readjustment, the intensity and length of time necessary to accommodate to a life event irrespective of the desirability of this event. (Holmes & Rahe, 1967). The SRRS is based on the premise that good and bad life events can make a person more susceptible to illness and mental health problems. Participants are asked whether or not each of 43 life events occurred within the last 12 months (*no* = 0, *yes* = 1). Each of the 43 life events has an associated weight (ranging from 5 to 100) that represents the relative degree of readjustment necessary for each particular life event. The total scale score is computed as the sum of the weights for the life events that occurred within the last 12 months (potential range from 0 through 1330). Higher scores on this scale indicate a greater need for social readjustment. The following guidelines typically are used to interpret SRRS scores:

- 0 - 149: Very little life change
- 150 – 199: Mild life change—30% probability of illness in two years
- 200 – 299: Moderate life change—51% probability of illness in two years
- 300: Major life change—79% probability of illness in two years

### *Family Functioning*

*Parental Acceptance Scale (PAS).* The PAS is an existing 10-item scale designed to measure behaviors and feelings indicating acceptance of a child by a parent (Schaefer, 1965; Schludermann & Schludermann, 1970). Parental acceptance is defined as parenting behaviors that convey love, warmth, support, affirmation, and value to the child (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Low parental acceptance is characterized by low responsiveness, disinterest, and emotional unavailability. Each item is rated on a 3-point scale: *not like me* (1), *somewhat like me* (2), and *a lot like me* (3). The total scale score is the mean of the 10 item scores (potential range from 1 through 3). Higher scores indicate greater parental acceptance. This scale is only for respondents who have children.

*Kansas Parental Satisfaction Scale (KPS).* The KPS is an existing 3-item scale designed to measure satisfaction with oneself as a parent, the behavior of one's children, and one's relationship with one's children (Schumm & Hall, 1985). Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: very dissatisfied (1), somewhat dissatisfied (2), mixed (3), somewhat satisfied (4), and very satisfied (5). The total scale score is the sum of the three item scores (potential range from 3 through 15). Higher scores indicate greater parental satisfaction. This scale is only for respondents who have children.

### *Family Resources*

*Family Resource Scale (FRS).* The FRS is an existing 31-item scale designed to measure the adequacy of a family's physical, personal and interpersonal resources when caring for young children (Dunst & Leet; 1985, 1987). Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *not at all adequate* (1), *seldom adequate* (2), *sometimes adequate* (3), *usually adequate* (4), and *almost always adequate* (5). There also is a *does not apply* option and this was coded as missing. The total scale score is the sum of the 31 item

scores (potential range from 31 through 155). Higher scores indicate greater resources.

*Available Time Scale (ATS).* The ATS is a new 20-item scale designed to measure the time a person anticipates that she or he will have available to complete tasks that are typical of foster parent responsibilities. Scale items were adapted from Erkut (1991). Respondents are presented with 20 tasks that typically are completed by foster parents. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *never* (1), *once in a while* (2), *sometimes* (3), *quite often* (4), and *very often* (5). Results indicated that this is a unidimensional measure, and that all 20 items should be used to compute a total score (Orme et al., 2003). Higher scores indicate more time available for fostering (potential range from 0 through 100).

#### *Social Support*

*Support Functions Scale (SFS).* The SFS is an existing 20-item scale designed to measure parents' need for different types of help and assistance (Dunst & Trivette, 1988). The SFS was developed to assess the level of support needed by parents of school-aged children. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *never* (1), *once in a while* (2), *sometimes* (3), *often* (4), and *quite often* (5). The total scale score is the sum of the 20 item scores (potential range from 20 through 100). Higher scores indicate a greater need for support.

*Help with Fostering Inventory (HFI).* The HFI is a new 28-item scale designed to measure the level of help with fostering that applicants anticipate they will receive from members of their social network. Each item is rated on a 4-point scale: *no help* (1), *a little help* (2), *some help* (3), and *a lot of help* (4). If respondents do not have relationships with the persons or groups described in particular items, or the person or group does not exist, respondents are asked to rate the items *not applicable* (0). Results indicated that this scale measures three dimensions of help with fostering: (1) *Worship*

*Groups* (4 items); (2) *Professionals* (11 items); and (3) *Extended Kin* (4 items) (Orme et al., 2003). Subscales were computed for each of these dimensions, and for each subscale higher scores indicate more anticipated help with fostering (potential range from 0 through 100).

### *Cultural Competency*

*Cultural Competence Scale (CCS)*. The CCS is an existing 27-item scale designed to measure cultural competence (Mitchell, 1999). Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *never true* (1), *rarely true* (2), *sometimes true* (3), *usually true* (4), and *always true* (5). Three subscale scores are computed, each by summing the requisite item scores: (1) *cultural self-awareness* (3 items) (potential range from 3 through 15); (2) *multicultural openness to knowledge* (12 items) (potential range from 12 through 60); and (3) *cross-cultural communication skill* (10 items) (potential range from 10 through 50). Also, all of the item scores are summed to create a total score (potential range from 27 through 135). For the total scale and subscales, higher scores indicate greater cultural competence. Only the total score was used in the present study.

*Cultural Receptivity in Fostering Scale (CRFS)*. The CRFS is a new 25-item scale designed to measure the level of openness respondents have toward activities that support children's cultural growth and development. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4), and *whatever it takes* (5). The factorial structure, internal consistency reliability, and validity of this scale is the focus of the present study and is examined in the next chapter.

### *Fostering Readiness*

*Foster Parent Role Performance Scale (FPRPS)*. The FPRPS is an existing 40-item scale designed to measure the degree of perceived responsibility for different aspects of the foster parent role. (Le Prohn, 1993, 1994; Pecora, Le Prohn, & Nasuti,

1999; Rhodes, Orme, & McSurdy, 2003). Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: *no responsibility* (1), *some responsibility* (2), *about half responsibility* (3), *about mostly responsible* (4), and *complete responsibility* (5). Two subscale scores are computed using the same formula described above that was used for new scales designed for the present study (potential range from 0 through 100): (1) *perceived degree of responsibility for parenting* (23 items); and (2) *perceived degree of responsibility for working with the foster care agency* (17 items). For both subscales higher scores indicate greater perceived role responsibility.

*Willingness to Foster Scale (WFS)*. The WFS is a new 70-item scale designed to measure willingness to foster different types of children. Each item is rated on a 4-point scale: *not willing to foster this child under any circumstances* (1), *might be willing to foster this child with a lot of help and support* (2), *probably willing to foster this child with a little extra help and support* (3), and *willing to foster this child without any extra help or support* (4). Five subscale scores are computed measuring willingness to foster: (1) children with emotional and behavioral problems; (2) children with special needs (19 items); (3) children 5 and under (3 items); (4) children 6 and over (4 items); and (5) children of a different race, religion, culture, or sexual orientation (4 items). For each subscale, higher scores indicate a greater willingness to foster (potential range from 0 through 100).

*Barnett Liking of Children Scale (BLOCS)*. The BLOCS is an existing 14-item scale designed to measure a person's general tendency to like children (Barnett & Sinisi, 1990). Each item is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). Items 3, 6, 10, and 13 are reverse-scored before computing the scale score. After reverse-scoring these items, all of the item scores are summed to create the

total scale score (potential range from 14 through 98). Higher scores indicate a greater tendency to like children.

*Personal Dedication to Fostering Scale (PDFS).* The PDFS is a new 18-item scale designed to measure professional commitment, moral/ethical consciousness, receptivity, and responsivity to foster children. Items were modified from the Human Caring Inventory for Social Workers (Ellett, 1995). Each item is rated on a 4-point scale: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), and *strongly agree* (4). Item 5 is reverse-scored before computing the scale score. Higher scores indicate a greater professional commitment, moral/ethical consciousness, receptivity, and responsivity to foster children (potential range from 0 through 100).

*Receptivity to Birth Family Connections Scale (RBFCS).* The RBFCS is a new 14-item scale designed to measure professional commitment, moral/ethical consciousness, receptivity, and responsivity to birth parents. To create this scale items were modified from the Human Caring Inventory for Social Workers (Ellett, 1995) (3 items), and others were taken from the CFAI-A (11 items). Each item is rated on a 4-point scale: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), and *strongly agree* (4). Higher scores indicate a greater professional commitment, moral/ethical consciousness, receptivity, and responsivity to birth parents (potential range from 0 through 100).

#### Casey Foster Applicant Inventory-Applicant (CFAI-A) Questionnaire

In addition to the CFAI-A itself, the CFAI-A questionnaire administered in the present study contains numerous additional scales, subscales, and other questions (described below) that were administered to describe the sample and to test the validity of various measures in the larger study.

## CFAI-A

The CFAI-A as administered in the present study is a 185-item measure:

- 157 core items are completed by all foster mothers;
- 11 items are completed only by foster mothers who are married or otherwise partnered;
- 9 items are completed only by foster mothers who have birth or adopted children; and
- 7 items are completed only by foster mothers who provide kinship care.

Each item is rated using a 4-point response format: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), and *strongly agree* (4).

Results reported in the CHAP Technical Manual indicated that the core items measure three domains of fostering potential: *potential to promote foster child development (Foster Child Development) (30 items)*; *potential to foster challenging children (Challenging Children) (13 items)*; and *potential to manage challenging relationships with foster care workers and agencies (Worker/Agency Challenges) (9 items)*.

The CFAI-A contains three additional subscales, each of which is completed only for relevant special groups as described above, and these subscales measure three domains of fostering potential: *potential of two-parent couples to parent foster children together (Coparenting) (10 items)*; *potential to integrate a foster child into a foster family with birth or adopted children (Integrating Foster Children) (6 items)*; and *potential to provide care to a child of a relative (Kinship Care) (6 items)*.

Each subscale score is computed as the mean of the item responses (potential range 1 through 4). Higher scores indicate greater potential.



### *Demographic and Background Characteristics*

*Age.* The date the CFAI-A was completed and the birth date of the applicant were obtained and used to compute each applicant's age.

*Current employment status.* Foster mothers were asked if they were currently: employed full-time (30 hours or more per week) (1); employed part-time (less than 30 hours per week) (2); unemployed and looking for work (3); homemaker, not employed outside of the home (4); disabled or retired, not employed outside of the home (5); or other (*specify*) (6). This question was taken from the National Survey of Current and Former Foster Parents (Cuddeback & Orme, 2002; DHHS, 1993; Rhodes, Orme, & Buehler, 2001).

*Highest degree or level of school completed.* Foster mothers were asked the highest degree or level of school completed. This question and the response categories were taken from the 2000 United States census.

*Marital status.* Foster mothers were asked if they were currently: married, no stepchildren; married, stepchildren; domestic partnership; single, never married; widowed; divorced or separated; or other (*specify*). This classification system was used to assess simultaneously marital status and family structure.

*Race/ethnic background.* These questions and the response categories were taken from the 2000 United States Census.

*Children.* Foster mothers were asked to report the total number of children living in their homes and the age and gender of each of these children. Foster mothers also were asked to report the number of birth and adopted children not living in their homes and the age and gender of each of these children. The following variables were created based on these data: number of children living in the home; age of youngest child living in the home; number of children under the age of 6 living in the home.

*Income.* Foster mothers were asked to report total family income in the past year from all sources, before taxes. This question and the response categories were taken from the 2000 United States Census.

*Religion.* Foster mothers were asked to report the frequency of attendance at church or religious meetings using a 6-point scale: *never* (0), *once a year or less* (1), *a few times a year* (2), *a few times a month* (3), *once a week* (4), *more than once a week* (5) (Koenig, Parkerson, & Meador, 1997).

*Neighborhood.* Foster mothers were asked to rate their neighborhoods as places to raise children using a 5-point scale: *very poor* (1), *poor* (2), *fair* (3), *good* (4), *excellent* (5) (Berrick, n.d.).

*Family Life.* Foster mothers were asked to respond *no* (0) or *yes* (1) to seven statements concerning family life in the past few months (e.g., Relaxed and easygoing?) (Zill, Peterson, Moore, & Furstenberg, 1981). Item responses are summed to create a total scale score, and higher scores indicate a better family life (potential range from 0 through 7).

*Previous experience with children.* Foster mothers were asked five questions concerning their previous experience with children (Lekies, Yates, Stockdale, & Crase, 1994), and they were asked to rate their level of experience on a 4-point scale: *no experience* (1), *a little experience* (2), *moderate experience* (3), *a great deal of experience* (4). Item responses are summed to create a total scale score, and higher scores indicate more experience with children (potential range from 5 through 20).

*Physical/mental health.* Foster mothers were asked to rate their physical health, relative to other people their age using a 5-point scale: *very poor* (1), *poor* (2), *fair* (3), *good* (4), *excellent* (5). A similar question also was asked concerning overall mental health. Both questions were taken from Berrick (n.d.).

### *Fostering Experiences*

Foster mothers were asked a number of questions about foster parenting *per se*. These include the following.

*Recruitment.* Foster mothers were provided with a list of 20 avenues through which potential foster parents become knowledgeable about fostering (e.g., another foster parent, television), and they also were allowed to specify other avenues not listed. From this list foster mothers were asked to select: (1) how they first became aware of the need for foster parents; (2) all avenues that had a positive influence on their decision to foster; and (3) which avenue influenced them the most to become foster parents.

*Pre-service training.* Foster mothers were asked whether or not they completed pre-service training prior to licensure. They also were asked the type of pre-service training completed prior to licensure: MAPP, Pride, other (*specify*). Foster mothers were asked to provide overall ratings of how well the information they received during pre-service training prepared them for becoming foster parents using a 4-point scale: *very unprepared* (1), *somewhat unprepared* (2), *somewhat prepared* (3), *very well prepared* (4).

*Interest.* Foster mothers were asked whether they were interested in fostering, adoption, fostering and adoption, or other (*specify*).

*Agency/worker experience.* Foster mothers were asked to report the: (1) number of agencies they have fostered with since they started fostering; (2) length of time their current worker has been assigned to them; and (3) whether they provided family foster care for public, private, or public and private agencies.

*Mentoring.* Foster mothers were asked if they had other foster parents who served as buddies or mentors for them (i.e., experienced foster parents who provide

one-on-one assistance, support, information about resources, etc.). Foster mothers also were asked if they served as buddies or mentors for other foster parents.

*Foster family utilization.* Foster mothers were asked to report: (1) the number of children their homes are licensed to accept at one time; (2) the number of foster children currently in their homes; (3) the total number of children they have cared for since they began fostering; and (4) their number of years of foster parent experience. Foster mothers also were asked to report whether they were licensed to provide the following types of care, checking all that applied: foster family home; emergency care home; specialized foster family home; relative foster home; group home; or other (*specify*).

*Information about fostering.* Foster mothers were asked whether they had received *no information*, (0) *some information, but not enough*, (1) or *enough information* (2) in 23 different areas of fostering (e.g., role of the foster care worker) and *other*. This inventory was adapted from the National Survey of Current and Former Foster Parents (DHHS, 1993). In addition to using information on individual topics, a variable was computed indicating the total number of areas in which enough information was provided (enough information = 1, all else = 0) (Cuddeback & Orme, 2002; Rhodes et al., 2001). This has a potential range of values from 0 through 24, and higher scores indicate a larger number of areas in which enough information was provided.

*Needed services.* Foster mothers were asked to report whether or not they thought that they would need each of 13 different services as well as *other* in order to care for foster children, and were asked to select the most important service from this list. For each service, foster mothers were asked to answer *no* (0) or *yes* (1). This inventory was adapted from the National Survey of Current and Former Foster Parents (DHHS, 1993). In addition to using information on individual services, a variable was computed indicating the total number of needed services (Cuddeback & Orme, 2002;

Rhodes et al., 2001). This has a potential range of values from 0 through 14, and higher scores indicate a greater number of needed services.

*Intention to continue fostering.* Foster mothers were asked three questions about their intentions to continue fostering. They were asked if over the next three years, the next year, and the next six months they intended to continue fostering for any agency (*no* = 0, *yes* = 1).

#### *Safety, Stability, and Well-Being of Foster Children*

*Fostering ability.* Foster mothers were asked five general questions designed to measure their assessments of the abilities of their families to care for foster children. Specifically, foster mothers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each of the following statements using a 4-point rating scale: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), *strongly agree* (4):

- *My family is able to provide a very safe home for a foster child.*
- *My family is able to take care of a foster child as long as needed by the child.*
- *My family is able to greatly improve the well-being of a foster child.*
- *My family is able to provide the best possible care to a foster child.*
- *My family is able to provide highly successful family foster care.*

The mean of the five items is the total scale score (potential range from 1 through 4).

Higher scores indicate greater self-assessed fostering ability.

*Adoption.* Foster mothers also were asked *How many children have you fostered who were adopted by your family?* This is one indicator of the extent to which a foster family is willing and able to provide a stable placement for foster children.

*Placement changes.* Foster mothers also were asked how many children they have fostered who:

- *Returned to live with birth parents.*
- *Were adopted by a family other than yours*
- *Were placed somewhere else at your request*
- *Were placed somewhere else at the agency's request*

The number of children placed somewhere else at the request of the foster mother is one indicator of the extent to which a foster family is willing and able to provide a stable placement for foster children. The remaining three questions are used to describe foster mothers' experience with other types of placement changes.

#### Research Questions

The following research questions are examined.

##### *Research Question 1*

*What is the factorial structure of the CRFS?*

##### *Research Question 2*

*What is the internal consistency reliability of the CRFS factor(s)?*

##### *Research Question 3*

*What is the validity of the CRFS towards its intended interpretation and use?*

The following sets of propositions are tested to validate the interpretations of the CRFS scores based on relationships to other variables external to the scale.

*1. Demographic characteristics will not account for an appreciable amount of variance in CRFS scores*

*2. Greater cultural receptivity will follow from the following factors.*

*a. Foster mothers who are more accepting of children will be more culturally receptive.*

*b. Foster mothers who are more experienced caring for children will be more culturally receptive.*

*c. Foster mothers who have less need for social readjustment will be more culturally receptive.*

*d. Foster mothers who are more satisfied as parents will be more culturally receptive.*

*e. Foster mothers who have more family resources will be more culturally receptive.*

*f. Foster mothers who have more time available to foster will be more culturally receptive.*

*g. Foster mothers who have greater perceived responsibility to parent and work with foster care agencies will be more culturally receptive.*

*h. Foster mothers who have greater tendency to like children will be more culturally receptive.*

*i. Foster mothers who have greater personal dedication to fostering will be more culturally receptive.*

*j. Foster mothers who have more anticipated help with fostering from worship groups, professionals, and kin will be more culturally receptive.*

*k. Foster mothers who receive more information about fostering culturally different children will be more culturally receptive.*

*l. Foster mothers who have more social supports will be more culturally receptive.*

*3. Greater cultural receptivity will lead to the following outcomes.*

*a. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have greater cultural competence.*

*b. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have greater receptivity to foster children's connections with birth families.*

*c. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have greater willingness to foster children with behavioral or emotional problems, children with special needs, and children of a different race, religion, culture, or sexual orientation.*

*d. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have greater potential to foster in general and to promote foster child development in particular.*

*e. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have greater intention to continue fostering (i.e., 6 months, 1 year, 3 years).*

*f. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a longer duration of fostering.*

*g. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a greater number of children licensed to foster at one time.*

*h. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a greater number of foster children currently fostered.*

*i. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a larger total number of children fostered.*

*j. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a larger number of foster children adopted.*

*k. Foster mothers who are more culturally receptive will have a smaller number of foster children placed somewhere else at the request of foster mothers.*



## Chapter 5: Results

This chapter first describes the characteristics of the sample used to test the CRFS. Next, before examining the psychometric properties of the CRFS, the extent to which data are missing for the CRFS is examined. Following the examination of missing data, this chapter examines the factorial structure of the CRFS. Next, this chapter examines the reliability of the CRFS. Finally, this chapter examines empirical evidence concerning the validity of the CRFS.

### Demographic Characteristics of Foster Mothers

The 304 foster mothers lived in 35 different states. Table 8 shows the demographic characteristics of these foster mothers. Most foster mothers were married, European-American, had one or more birth or adopted children, and had a high school education or some college. About one-third of foster mothers worked full-time outside of the home, and about one-third were homemakers, not employed outside the home. Finally, the mean age of foster mothers was 44.31 ( $N = 299$ ,  $SD = 9.95$ ,  $Mdn = 43.64$ ,  $Range = 25$  to  $70$ ).

As shown in Table 9, the vast majority of homes in which these foster mothers lived were licensed as foster family homes. Of the 24 not licensed as foster family homes, most ( $N = 19$ , 79.2%) were licensed as specialized foster family homes, and the remaining five homes were licensed either as emergency care homes ( $N = 4$ , 16.7%), relative foster homes ( $N = 1$ , 4.2%), or other ( $N = 6$ , 25.0%). Moreover, as shown in Table 9, over 70% of foster mothers had fostered at least three years.

Table 10 shows the demographic characteristics of foster mothers' families. Almost all families had one or more children living in the home; the median number of children living in the home was 3; most had one or more birth or adopted children living in the home; and most had at least one child six years old or younger living in the home.

About 25% of foster mothers lived in families with yearly family incomes below \$32,499; and about 25% lived in families with yearly family incomes above \$67,499.

#### Missing Data for the CRFS

There was almost no missing data for the CRFS. Only one of the 25 items was missing for one foster mother. This exception was for item number 17, "Considering how my stereotypes about cultures affect a foster child." This missing item value was replaced with the item mean and rounded to the nearest whole number for analyses.

#### Factorial Structure of the CRFS

##### *Research Question 1: What is the Factorial Structure of the CRFS?*

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the CRFS was conducted to explore whether one or more dimensions underlie the item scores. EFA was used because the CRFS is a new measure of a new concept and there is not enough information to specify the underlying factor structure of the item scores (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, Strahan, 1999; Gorsuch, 1983; Loehlin, 1998).

In conducting the factor analyses, Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy were used to examine the suitability of the items for factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the null hypothesis that a correlation matrix is an identity matrix (i.e., the variables are unrelated and therefore unsuitable for factor analysis). The KMO indicates the proportion of variance in a set of variables that might be caused by underlying factors; values close to 1.0 generally indicate that a factor analysis may be useful, and values less than .50 suggest that a factor analysis probably will not be useful. Bartlett's test of sphericity [ $\chi^2(190, N = 303) = 6095.15, p < .001$ ] and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (.96) strongly supported the suitability of the 25 CRFS items for factor analysis.

After determining the suitability of the items for factor analyses, the scree test was used to get a preliminary idea of how many factors to extract. Unweighted least squares rotation was used to extract factors because this method leads to a consistent estimation of model parameters without the assumption that the observed variables have a particular distribution (Bollen, 1989). The scree test clearly indicated a one-factor solution (see Figure 3). All of the factor loadings in the structure matrix were above .61.

### Reliability of the CRFS

*Research Question 2: What is the Internal Consistency Reliability of the CRFS*

*Factor(s)?*

Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was used to quantify the internal consistency reliability of the CRFS (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Internal consistency reliability refers to the consistency with which individuals respond to items within a scale. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of the mean intercorrelation among items weighted by variances, stepped up for the number of items. All else being equal, the larger the number of items in a scale, the higher Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha will be higher when there is homogeneity of variances among items than when there is not. Also, the more consistent within-subject responses are, and the greater the variability among subjects, the higher Cronbach's alpha.

The widely-accepted social science convention is that alpha should be equal to .70 or higher to be considered adequate, but some use .75 or .80 whereas others use .60. However, there does seem to be agreement that alpha greater .90 indicates excellent internal consistency reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Given the factors that contribute to coefficient alpha, a careful item analysis was conducted prior to computing coefficient alpha. This included an examination of item

means and standard deviations, inter-item correlations, and corrected item-total correlations.

*Item means.* Foster mothers' average score across item means was 4.26, with a range from 3.91( $SD = .86$ ) to 4.94( $SD = .90$ ) on the 5-point scale. It is favorable to have an average score across item means that is near mid-range of possible scores ( DeVellis, 1990, p.83). For instance, a 3 would be a desirable mean for the CRFS with response options ranging from 1 (*none*) to 5 (*whatever it takes*). Extreme means or those means close to the lowest or highest response option values indicate that the items were not designed to effectively detect all levels of the construct. Also, mid-range means demonstrate that the item was worded properly as to allow respondents to give the item a low rating (i.e., *none*). Items with means that are close to the extreme range value are indicative of low variances (DeVellis) (see Table 11).

*Item variances.* It is important that a scale be able to discriminate among various types of individuals. In other words, it should have high item variances. There should be a good distribution of different responses from the sample that indicates the respondents' varied levels of the construct being measured. Table 12 shows the distribution of the CRFS responses. There are five levels of cultural receptivity: *none* (1), *little* (2), *some* (3), *a lot* (4), *whatever it takes* (5). Higher scores indicate greater levels of cultural receptivity.

In this study, the CRFS mean item variance is .67 and the range is .38 (see Table 13). This moderate value suggests that the CRFS is capable of efficiently discriminating among different individuals.

*Mean inter-item correlation.* Table 14 shows that the CRFS items have a mean inter-item correlation of .54 and the range is .43. The minimum mean inter-item

correlation is .35 and the maximum is .78. These inter-item correlations are typical of a good scale (DeVellis, 1990, p.82).

*Corrected item-total correlations.* Each scale item should be positively and relatively highly correlated with the total of the remaining items, and this can be examined through a computation of its item-scale correlation. There are two types of item-scale correlation; the corrected and uncorrected item-scale correlation (DeVellis, 1990, p. 82).

The corrected item-scale correlation correlates the item that is being evaluated with all the scale items, with the exclusion of itself. For instance, on a 25-item scale such as the CRFS, the corrected scale item for any one of the scale items would consist of its correlation with a composite of the other 24 items, whereas the uncorrected correlation would consist of its correlation with a composite of all 25 items including itself. The theoretical explanation is that the uncorrected correlation value tells us how representative the item is relative to the whole scale. It generally is acceptable to examine the corrected item-correlation instead of the uncorrected item-correlation (DeVellis, 1990). Therefore, the CRFS was evaluated using the corrected item-correlation. All corrected item-total correlations were positive and greater than .60, and the vast majority were greater than .69. The large, positive correlations (i.e., range of .60 to .84) suggest that all of the CRFS items measure the same underlying construct and that the items have good discrimination (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) (see Table 11).

*Coefficient alpha.* The CRFS has an alpha of .97. This indicates that the CRFS is a unidimensional scale, with excellent internal consistency reliability.

*SEM.* The standard error of measurement (SEM) also was used to quantify the reliability of the CRFS (Gregory, 2000; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This is an estimate of the standard deviation of an individual's observed scores from repeated independent

administrations of a measure under identical conditions. As such, it is an index of measurement error, and these errors in measurement are assumed to be normally distributed. Unlike Cronbach's alpha and other measures of reliability, the SEM is scale dependent, and so there is no standard for the magnitude of the SEM.

The SEM is useful primarily in the interpretation of an individual's score on a measure. That is, the SEM can be used to compute confidence intervals for an individual indicating the likely range for his or her true score. So, for example, if a prospective foster mother obtains a score of 75 on the CRFS, and the SEM is 2.64 for this measure, her true score probably falls between 69.83 and 80.17 ( $75 \pm [1.96 \times 2.64] = 75 \pm 5.17$ ). Thus, an increase or decrease of more than 5.17 in the score on CRFS (e.g., before and after cultural training and support efforts) suggests genuine, non-measurement error change in her level of cultural receptivity. A discussion about the distribution of CRFS total scores follows.

#### *Distribution of Scores*

Figure 4 shows the frequency distribution of the CRFS total scores. Table 15 shows the measures of central tendency for the CRFS. The mean total score was 80.42 ( $SD = 15.25$ ). The median is 82 and the range is from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating greater cultural receptivity in fostering. The mean, median, and lower boundary of the interquartile range indicate, on average, relatively high cultural receptivity (see Tables 15 and 16). It is notable that almost two-thirds of foster mothers (61.8%) scored at or above 75 on this scale, and one-third (33.2%) scored 90 or above. More about the interpretation of the scale scores follows in the next chapter. In addition to measures of central tendency and variability, it is important to examine the shape of the distribution of the CRFS scores.

Skew and kurtosis are reported for the CRFS because these two statistics are useful for identifying markedly non-normal distributions (see Table 15). Skew is a measure of the asymmetry of a distribution. The normal distribution is symmetric, and skew equals 0. A distribution with a significant positive skew has a long right tail. A distribution with a significant negative skew has a long left tail. As a rough guide, a skewness value more than twice its standard error indicates a departure from symmetry (Norusis, 2002).

Kurtosis is a measure of the extent to which observations cluster around a central point. For a normal distribution kurtosis is 0. A distribution with positive kurtosis has a spiky center and fat tails. A distribution with a negative kurtosis has a flat center and thin tails (Norusis, 2002).

The CRFS skewness is  $-.95$  ( $\sigma = .14$ ) and the CRFS kurtosis is  $2.03$  ( $\sigma = .28$ ). This indicates that in comparison to a normal distribution, the distribution of the CRFS total scores is negatively skewed with a long left tail. Because the skewness value is more than twice its standard error ( $.14$ ) it is not considered symmetric. Also, it is positively kurtotic, therefore the scores tend to cluster more so than they would in a normal distribution. The validation of the CRFS is discussed next.

### Validity of the CRFS

#### *Validity Defined*

Validity refers to the degree to which accumulated evidence and theory support specific interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of a test (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999, p. 9). A test, in this context, refers to an evaluative device or procedure in which a sample of an examinee's behavior in a specified domain is obtained and subsequently evaluated and scored using a standardized process (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999, p. 183). For example, if a person scores above a certain point on the CRFS the

score may be interpreted as indicating potential to appropriately foster children of different cultures, and used as one basis for a decision to place such children with the applicant, or to provide additional training or extra support services upon placement of such children. However, it is essential that there be sufficient evidence to support this interpretation and use.

Validation is the process by which the validity of the proposed interpretations and uses of test scores are investigated (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). Validation involves formulating propositions that support the proposed interpretations and uses of scores, and then accumulating evidence for the intended interpretations and uses of test scores.

To some extent, evidence concerning the validity of the CRFS has already been presented in Chapter 3, which details the procedures that were used to specify, construct, and select items for the CRFS. Essentially, Chapter 3 details efforts to define content relevant to the CRFS and ensure adequate coverage of that content, which is to build validity evidence into the CRFS from the outset. The following sets of propositions are tested to validate the interpretations of the CRFS scores based on relationships to other variables external to the scale.

In this section, for the most part, validity evidence is examined based on the relationship of CRFS to the variables external to it. To do this, research, theory, logic, and professional judgment were used to formulate multiple propositions to test proposed interpretations and uses of the CRFS. Then, these propositions were tested empirically. It should be noted that these propositions are relatively tentative given that the CRFS is a new measure of a new concept and so there is very little research and theory directly relevant to this concept. However, to some extent these propositions also were drawn from theory and research concerning cultural competence.



### *Types of Evidence and Propositions*

Different types of evidence may be examined in the course of validation, but current conceptualizations of validity eschew the distinct types of validity delineated in the past (e.g., content, criterion, construct) (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). These past explications of validity are considered fragmented and incomplete. Rather, validity is conceptualized as a unitary concept that can be supported by different lines of evidence. Such evidence might include, for example, evidence based on an analysis of the content of a measure and the intended construct measured; this includes evidence similar to but broader than that encompassed by what typically is referred to as *content validity*. This entails evidentiary support from empirical or logical investigations. It must adequately contain all relevant content domains. Such evidence was detailed in Chapter 3. Finally, evidence based on the relationship of test scores to other variables external to the measure is a key element of validity; this includes evidence similar to but broader than that encompassed by the ideas of *criterion* and *construct validity*.

### *Research Question 3: What is the Validity of the CRFS towards its Intended Interpretation and Use?*

The following three sets of propositions were formulated to investigate the relationship between cultural receptivity and a broad range of external variables. Support for these propositions implies that interpretations of the CRFS scores based on theory and empirical evidence is validated.

### *Overview of Propositions and Statistical Methods*

First, the extent, if any, to which demographic characteristics predict CRFS scores was examined. If demographic characteristics account for an appreciable amount of variance in CRFS scores it would raise questions about the validity of the CRFS.

Second, antecedents thought to lead to cultural receptivity were examined. Finally, outcomes thought related to cultural receptivity were examined.

In testing propositions concerning the effect of demographic characteristics on the CRFS the following demographic characteristics were examined: highest degree or level of education completed, race/ethnic background (0 = African-American/other, 1 = European-American), marital status (0 = not married or otherwise partnered, 1 = married or otherwise partnered), and total family income in the past year. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was used to test these propositions (Cohen, Cohen, West, Aiken, 2003).

For the most part, bivariate correlations were used to test propositions concerning the CRFS antecedents. OLS regression was used to test such propositions involving antecedents measured by multidimensional scales (e.g., Foster Parent Role Performance Scale).

Bivariate correlations also were used to test some propositions involving outcomes thought to follow from cultural receptivity. Multivariate regression (using the general linear model) was used to test propositions involving multivariate continuous outcomes (CFAI-A core subscales) (Cohen et al., 2003). Binary logistic regression was used to test propositions involving binary outcomes (intention to continue fostering) (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). Poisson regression, negative binomial regression, or zero-altered negative binomial regression was used to test propositions involving outcomes that are counts (number of years fostered, number of children licensed to foster at one time, number of foster children currently fostered, number of total children fostered) (Greene, 2000; Long, 1997; Orme & Buehler, 2001). More specifically, Poisson regression was used when *overdispersion* was not present. Negative binomial regression was used when overdispersion was present. Zero-inflated negative binomial

regression was used when overdispersion was present and when results suggested a mix of two processes in the count variable, one that generates only zero counts, and another that generates both zero and positive counts. Negative binomial regression was used to test Propositions 3.f, 3.h, 3.i, and 3.k. Poisson regression was used to test Proposition 3.g. Zero-altered negative binomial regression was used to test Proposition 3.j.

For all analyses below, non-directional hypotheses with  $\alpha = .05$  were tested, because results in either direction would be important. Following Cohen (1988), the amount of variance accounted for in a dependent variable in a regression analysis is categorized as follows: small (2%), medium (13%); and large (26%). Also, again following Cohen (1988), correlations of .10, .30, and .50 are considered small, medium, and large, respectively.

### *Findings*

1. Demographic characteristics will not account for an appreciable amount of variance in CRFS scores.

Table 17 shows the results from the linear multiple regression analysis used to examine this proposition. The findings indicate that demographic characteristics do not influence CRFS scores.

A review of the histogram of the residuals revealed that the residuals were approximately distributed normally with three outliers (Cases: 178, 209, and 261). The studentized residuals has a range of -5.09 to 1.54,  $M(301) = .00$  ( $SD = 1.00$ ).

A scatterplot was used to examine the severity of the outliers. Only one outlier (Case 178) was considered a leverage point. Cook's distance (Cook's D) was used to measure the influence of this particular case on the regression fit. A rule of thumb is that an observation is influential if its Cook's D is greater than 1.00 (Norusis, 2002). The results

indicated that Case 178 is not influential enough ( $D_{178} = .06$ ) to require further investigation. Additionally, an examination of the studentized residuals and the predicted values revealed that the variances were not constant. A violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance affects the regression coefficient (Neter, Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Wasserman, 1996; Norusis, 2002). The limitations of these results will be discussed in Chapter 6.

2. Table 18 shows bivariate correlations between the CRFS and selected variables measuring hypothesized antecedents of cultural receptivity. Following is an enumeration of the overall results concerning the relationship between the CRFS and its antecedents:

- a. more parental acceptance of children ( $r(304) = .29, p = .000$ );
- b. more experience caring for children ( $r(303) = .15, p = .010$ );
- c. less need for social readjustment ( $r(304) = .12, p = .036$ );
- d. more satisfaction with parenting ( $r(303) = .04, p = .461$ );
- e. more family resources ( $r(293) = .06, p = .318$ );
- f. more time available to foster ( $r(304) = .42, p = .000$ );
- g. greater perceived responsibility to parent ( $r(304) = .32, p = .000$ ) and work with foster care agencies ( $r(304) = .26, p = .000$ ) ( $R = .34, R^2 = .12, F(2,301) = 20.02, p = .000$ );

A review of the histogram of the residuals revealed that the residuals were approximately distributed normally with two outliers (Cases: 178 and 209). The studentized residuals has a range of -5.49 to 2.07,  $M(304) = .00$  ( $SD = 1.00$ ). A scatterplot was used to examine the severity of the outliers. Only one outlier (Case 178) was considered a leverage point. Cook's D was used to measure the influence of this particular case on the regression fit. The results indicated that Case 178 is not influential

enough ( $D_{178} = .04$ ) to require further investigation. Additionally, an examination of the studentized residuals and the predicted values revealed that the variances were not constant, thus a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance. (Neter, Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Wasserman, 1996; Norusis, 2002).

- h. greater tendency to like children ( $r(303) = .23, p = .000$ );
- i. greater personal dedication to fostering ( $r(304) = .38, p = .000$ );
- j. more anticipated help with fostering from worship groups ( $r(304) = .07, p = .218$ ), professionals ( $r(304) = .15, p = .009$ ), and kin ( $r(304) = .09, p = .112$ ) ( $R = .16, R^2 = .03, F(3,300) = 2.75, p = .043$ );

A review of the histogram of the residuals revealed that the residuals were approximately distributed normally with three outliers (Cases: 178, 209, and 261). The studentized residuals has a range of -5.07 to 1.55,  $M(304) = .00$  ( $SD = .995$ ). A scatterplot was used to examine the severity of the outliers. Only one outlier (Case 178) was considered a leverage point. Cook's D was used to measure the influence of this particular case on the regression fit. The results indicated that Case 178 is not influential enough ( $D_{178} = .07$ ) to require further investigation. Additionally, an examination of the studentized residuals and the predicted values revealed that the variances were not constant, thus constituting a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance (Neter, Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Wasserman, 1996; Norusis, 2002).

- k. more information received about working with culturally different children ( $r(304) = .12, p = .032$ );
- l. more social support ( $r(303) = .06, p = .326$ ).

3. Table 18 shows bivariate correlations between the CRFS and selected variables measuring hypothesized outcomes of cultural receptivity. Following is an enumeration of the overall results concerning the relationship between the CRFS and its outcomes:

- a. greater cultural competence ( $r(304) = .35, p = .000$ );
- b. greater receptivity to foster children's connections with birth families ( $r(304) = .32, p = .000$ );
- c. greater willingness to foster children with behavioral or emotional problems ( $r(297) = .25, p = .000$ ), children with special needs ( $r(290) = .23, p = .000$ ), and children of a different race, religion, culture, or sexual orientation ( $r(293) = .27, p = .000$ ), ( $R = .32, R^2 = .10$ ) ( $F(3,285) = 10.75, p = .000$ );
- d. greater potential to foster in general, and in particular greater potential to promote foster child development ( $r(304) = .39, p = .001, B = .007, t = 7.14, p = .000, R = .39, R^2 = .15$ ) and to foster challenging children ( $r(304) = .36, p = .000, B = .009, t = 6.66, p = .000, R = .36, R^2 = .13$ ), ( $F(3,300) = 29.13, p = .000$ );
- e. greater intention to continue fostering at *6 months* ( $B(304) = .03, X^2 = 4.35, OR = 1.03, p = .037$ ); over the next year ( $B = .02, X^2 = 3.18, OR = 1.02, p = .074$ ); and over the next 3 years ( $B = .01, X^2 = .48, OR = 1.01, p = .486$ );
- f. longer duration of fostering ( $B(304) = -.002, z = -.55, p = .585$ );
- g. greater number of children licensed to foster at one time ( $B(303) = .000, z = -.07, p = .947$ );
- h. greater number of foster children currently fostered ( $B(304) = .002, z = -.72, p = .469$ );
- i. larger total number of children fostered ( $B(304) = .000, z = .09, p = .926$ );
- j. larger number of foster children adopted ( $B(296) = .004, z = .931, p = .352$ ) controlling for number of years fostered ( $B = .037, z = 3.67, p = .000$ ) and number of children fostered ( $B = .001, z = 1.07, p = .285$ );
- k. smaller number of foster children placed somewhere else at the request of foster mothers ( $B(295) = -.005, z = -1.32, p = .186$ ) controlling for number of

years fostered ( $B = -.023$ ,  $z = 1.95$ ,  $p = .052$ ) and number of children fostered ( $B = .008$ ,  $z = 4.81$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

### *Summary*

*Demographic characteristics.* Foster mothers' demographic characteristics had no effect on cultural receptivity. There was not a statistically significant relationship between cultural receptivity and the multidimensional model of race, educational level, marital status, and income.

*Antecedents.* The results indicate that foster mothers with greater cultural receptivity have more parental acceptance of children; more experience caring for children; less need for social readjustment; more time available to foster; greater perceived responsibility to parent and work with foster care agencies; greater tendency to like children; greater personal dedication to fostering; more anticipated help with fostering from professionals; and more information received about working with culturally different children. However, foster mothers' level of cultural receptivity was not affected by their anticipated help with fostering from either worship groups or their kin; although overall, foster mothers' reported anticipated help from all three sources (i.e., professionals, worship groups, and kin) leads to greater cultural receptivity. Finally, there was not a statistically significant relationship between CRFS scores and satisfaction with parenting, family resources, or social support.

*Outcomes.* Foster mothers with greater cultural receptivity have greater cultural competence; greater receptivity to foster children's connections with birth families; greater willingness to foster children with behavioral or emotional problems, children with special needs, and children of a different race, religion, culture, or sexual orientation, and, overall, more willingness to foster these different types of children. Additionally, foster mothers with greater cultural receptivity possess greater potential to foster in

general and, in particular, greater potential to promote foster child development and foster challenging children. Finally, results indicate that foster mothers with greater cultural receptivity are more likely to intend to continue fostering 6 months after the time they were surveyed for this study.

There was not a statistically significant relationship between cultural receptivity and potential to manage challenging relationships with foster care workers and agencies; intention to continue fostering over the next year or three years; indicators of foster family utilization; or indicators of placement stability.

In sum, the results of this study provide relatively strong evidence that the CRFS is a unidimensional assessment tool that consistently measures the construct *cultural receptivity*. Further, as demonstrated in this dissertation, cultural receptivity is related to a number of different characteristics of overall fostering quality.



## **Chapter 6: Discussion**

Currently, there is a shortage of foster parents of minority cultures and an overrepresentation of children of minority cultures in the foster care system. This disparity has resulted in the practice of placing these children in transcultural foster homes. Children who are raised by transcultural foster parents are potentially at risk for various developmental and psychosocial problems due to their cultural needs not being met (Deberry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; McRoy, 1994; Thoburn, Norford, & Rashid, 2000; Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991). Therefore, it is necessary to assess foster parents' cultural receptivity in order to promote culturally appropriate fostering.

This study is important because it was found that foster mothers' cultural receptivity is related to other foster parent characteristics that are considered to be indicators of quality fostering. Additionally, this study is significant because of the following reasons: it identified a new and potentially very useful concept; it developed a practical standardized measure of this new concept; and it demonstrated relatively strong empirical support for the reliability and validity of this measure.

This dissertation is an examination of the psychometric properties of the CRFS, a measure that assesses foster parents' level of openness towards participating in activities that are conducive to children's cultural identities and development. First, in this section, there is a discussion on the findings that substantiate that the CRFS scores are reliable and valid towards their intended interpretation and use. This includes an examination of the study's research questions and an explanation of the study's limitations in terms of the design and sample. All of these issues are parts of evidence that collectively support the interpretation and use of the CRFS. Finally, a discussion about the implications of this study for social work practice, policy and future research concludes.

## Research Questions

The following section concerns three research questions that were posed to demonstrate that the CRFS is a reliable and valid instrument with which to assess foster parent applicants' cultural receptivity. Sufficient answers to these research questions serve as evidence that support the theory and intended use of the CRFS. The factorial structure of the CRFS is discussed first.

### *Factorial Structure of the CRFS*

An extensive review of the literature revealed four domains of culturally appropriate fostering that were used in the development of the CRFS. However, results from the factor analysis suggest that empirically, there was one central factor. This could be interpreted as foster mothers' viewing cultural receptivity in the broad sense of participating in transcultural fostering. The internal consistency reliability of the CRFS is discussed next.

### *Internal Consistency Reliability of the CRFS*

Social workers who assess foster parent applicants must have assurance that the changes in applicants' CRFS scores are not due to problems with the actual scale. It is important for them to know that the CRFS consistently measures foster parent applicants' levels of cultural receptivity when administered properly. For instance, social workers need to be sure that as they assess various foster parent applicants, increased scores indicate that applicants possess more cultural receptivity; and lower scores indicate that they possess less cultural receptivity. Therefore, social workers need be confident in their recommendations regarding provisions for foster parents to address their strengths and needs and their ability to tailor those provisions for applicants based on the changes in scores over time.

The CRFS had excellent internal consistency reliability. Therefore, this finding provides evidentiary support that the CRFS is a reliable tool that social workers can use to assess foster parent applicants' openness towards participating in activities that are conducive to children's cultural development.

However, the alpha coefficient was actually high enough that some items could be omitted, because some items may be correlated highly with other items, thus causing redundancy. Future research could test the internal consistency reliability of a revised CRFS with fewer items. The validity of the CRFS is discussed next.

#### *Validity of the CRFS*

Cultural training, services, and support are intended to help foster parents learn appropriate cultural fostering strategies. These provisions are contingent upon the interpretation of CRFS scores and professional judgment through dialogue, observation, and other information about the foster parent applicant. Social workers need to be assured that the CRFS actually measures cultural receptivity so that they can decide how to best meet the applicants' needs. In turn, foster parents will be better able to foster children of minority cultures.

The results from this cultural receptivity study substantiated empirically the proposed interrelated set of propositions that fill in some of the gaps in foster care and cultural competence literature regarding raising children of different cultures, thus supporting the theoretical basis of cultural receptivity.

The promising results translate into the need for foster children of different cultural backgrounds to be matched with foster parents who are culturally receptive, since the CRFS has been shown empirically to be related to several fostering variables that are related to appropriate transcultural fostering and fostering quality. Following is a

discussion about cultural competence in particular, since it is an important variable, essential to the theoretical framework of cultural receptivity.

*Cultural competence.* Foster mothers who were more culturally receptive also were more culturally competent. This was an important finding because there are no theories that specifically address cultural receptivity, so cultural competence theory was employed in order to fill gaps in the literature that links transcultural fostering, cultural competence, and culturally appropriate fostering. The convergent validation of the CRFS and the CCS provides empirical support that cultural competence is an appropriate construct to use as a theoretical framework for cultural receptivity research.

Within the confines of the cultural receptivity theoretical framework, culturally receptive foster parents are willing to seek training, support and services that increase their transcultural parenting abilities. The increased ability to parent children of different cultures translates to their becoming more culturally competent as well as receptive to ongoing participation in culturally stimulating activities.

Chau (1992), Dillon (1994), McRoy (1994), and Weaver (1998) are a few of the researchers who addressed changes in attitude, behavior, knowledge, and skills or knowledge, skills, and values, which are all efforts that are needed in order to work with people of diverse cultures. Vonk (2001) demonstrated how cultural competence was extended to transracial parenting, wherein adoptive parents need to possess certain knowledge, behaviors, and skills to appropriately parent children of different cultures than their own. Cultural receptivity is directly related to this because it examines how open foster parents are to being involved in cultural parenting strategies that involve acquiring culturally specific knowledge, behaviors and skills. Therefore, it is important to demonstrate how openness to certain cultural parenting activities predicts cultural competence.

In 1998, about 15% of the adoptions of foster children were transracial or transcultural (DHHS, 2000). Approximately 45% of foster parents report caring for children from more than one racial background (Rhodes, Cox, Orme, & Coakley, 2003). It is thus important that foster parents be willing and able to promote the development of foster children's cultural and racial identity (McRoy, 1994; Vonk, 2001). This requires that foster parents be open and receptive to the role that culture and race play in a child's development. Next is a discussion about additional variables examined that were related to effective fostering.

*Indicators of effective fostering.* Other qualities and characteristics that are considered indicators of effective fostering entail: reasons for fostering, time available to foster, personal dedication to fostering, family background that may influence current family functioning, physical and mental health, parenting style, family resources, social supports, ability to foster children of different cultural backgrounds, readiness to foster, and capacity to meet the challenges of fostering. The findings support that these foster parent characteristics also may lead to the provision of training, support, and services, which are conducive to the permanence, safety and well-being of children of minority cultures. Additionally, the findings revealed that cultural receptivity is strongly related to these indicators of effective fostering.

There also were a few key validity propositions that were not supported by the study's findings. These additional indicators of effective fostering that were found to be unrelated to cultural receptivity included: potential to manage challenging relationships with foster care workers and agencies; intention to continue fostering over the next year or three years; indicators of foster family utilization; and indicators of placement stability. Speculations about the reasons they were not related are addressed later in respective

sections for implications for social work practice. Limitations of the cultural receptivity study are discussed next.

### Limitations

#### *Research Design*

A cross-sectional design was used in this study, therefore cause and effect relationships between the CRFS and other variables cannot be determined. The use of a prospective study would have strengthened the findings. Ideally, the CRFS should be administered to new foster parent applicants during the assessment stage. Then, after they are exposed to transcultural training, services and support, foster parents should be reassessed on cultural competence. A prospective design would provide better support that cultural receptivity leads to or follows from various other foster parent characteristics.

#### *Data Collection*

Matching foster parents and foster children was discussed above as one of the potential uses of the CRFS. However, whether or not foster parents with greater cultural receptivity provide culturally appropriate fostering to children of different cultures is unknown. The limitations of the data collected did not allow this substantive question to be answered. Because data were not collected regarding foster children's races, it is unknown whether foster mothers who were more culturally receptive had previously fostered transculturally. Additionally, questions regarding intentions to continue fostering children of different cultures, specifically, could not be examined. It is unknown whether the foster mothers currently fostered children of different cultures. Next is a discussion concerning the study's sample.

### *Sample*

The use of a convenience sample poses two potential problems. First, the CRFS was intended to measure prospective foster parents' openness to participate in cultural activities for the cultural development of children. However, this study utilized a sample of current foster mothers; it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of current foster fathers or foster parent applicants.

Second, a possible disadvantage to using experienced foster mothers as the reference population that should be considered in interpreting the scores of applicants is that the bar might be set too high for foster parent applicants by comparing them to approved foster parents instead of to other applicants. However, because at this time no sample was obtained of foster parent applicants on which to norm the CRFS, this is not known to be a fact. The interpretation of the CRFS scores for foster parent applicants should be performed with some caution because the normative scores do not include prospective foster mothers and foster fathers for whom the scale was developed. Additionally, plans are underway for future research involving data on foster fathers.

A review of the demographics of this sample revealed that the foster mothers in this study were closely representative of foster mothers in the United States. The majority of foster mothers in this study are European-American, which is desirable because they are most likely to foster children of different cultures than their own. The sample is diverse in that the foster mothers represent 35 states and their socio-economic statuses, employment statuses, and education levels vary.

This study's sample size of 304 foster mothers is an adequate number to examine the CRFS, and it is approximate to other studies that examined related constructs (e.g., Mitchell, 1999). Further, the cultural receptivity study's sample of 304 foster mothers, comprised of European-Americans (87.2%), African-Americans (10.5%),

Hispanics (3%), American Indians or Native Alaskans (2%), and Other (2.3%), approximates distributions in the literature (see Cox, Orme, & Rhodes, in press; Cox, Orme, & Rhodes, 2002).

For instance, in their study on willingness to foster children with emotional and behavior problems, Cox, Orme and Rhodes (in press) used a sample from a population of foster parent applicants in three large demographically diverse counties in a southeastern state. Their sample consisted of 142 total families. For the 140 foster mothers, approximately 71% were European-Americans, 27% were African-Americans, and 2.1% were Other. For the 90 foster fathers, approximately 84% were European-Americans, 14% were African-Americans, and 2% were Other.

Also, in their study on willingness to foster special needs children and foster family utilization Cox, Orme, and Rhodes (2002) used data from the National Survey of Current and Former Foster Parents (NSC&FFP) (1991). A "multistage stratified sampling design" was used with "probability sampling at each stage" of the design (Cox, Orme, and Rhodes, 2002, p. 296). Their sample of current and former foster mothers (weighted  $n = 107,033$ ) consisted of European-Americans (70%), African-Americans (22%), and Other 8.2%. The sample of foster fathers ( $n = 83,541$ ) consisted of European-Americans (77.9%), African-Americans (12.9%), and Other (9.2%) (Cox, Orme, & Rhodes, 2002).

Although the racial representativeness of foster mothers in this sample is somewhat promising, caution is still warranted for generalizing the findings from this study to the foster parent population. Particularly, it is possible that the sample is not representative due to bias, which is discussed next.

#### *Response Bias*

A number of variables (e.g., available time, dedication to fostering, race, education, etc.) related to foster mothers' decisions to participate in this study explain



why particular foster mothers wanted to participate in this study and whether or not they represent the population of foster mothers.

Response bias might occur if certain foster mothers have enthusiasm for a particular topic that drives them to volunteer to participate in a study. These foster mothers might not represent the population of foster mothers. It needs to be noted that foster parents who join the NFPA also might possess characteristics that are not found in those who are not members, thus not representing foster parents, in general. For example, the NFPA foster mothers might be more enthusiastic, vocal in their viewpoints, or involved in fostering.

According to this study's findings, the vast majority of foster mothers reported that they intended to continue fostering over the next six months (95.4%, N = 304), the next year (93.7%, N = 303), and the next three years (89.8%, N = 304). Additionally, over 80% of the foster mothers reported that they needed services for testing for school, health, or mental health problems, respite care, and child or family counseling. These findings provide information about the types of foster mothers who agreed to participate in this study.

It can be concluded that the foster mothers in this study, who are mostly European-American (87.2%), are committed to fostering and have a need for particular services to foster. Their race, commitment, and needs could have motivated them to participate in this study, just as those who do not share these attributes might not have been motivated to participate. Therefore, caution should be used in generalizing the results to all approved foster mothers.

#### *Statistical Tests*

An examination of the residuals for the propositions where OLS Regression Analysis was used revealed a few outliers. The outliers appear to be very large as they

lie beyond three standard deviations. This is indicative of potentially problematic outliers, however only one leverage point was identified that might reduce the slope of the regression line. A degree of caution should be used when interpreting these results.

### *Summary*

The above discussion reveals the relationship between cultural receptivity and cultural competence and indicators of quality fostering, taking into account limitations of the CRFS. The results of this cultural receptivity study support the importance of the use of the CRFS by social workers in order to assess foster parent applicants' strengths and needed areas for development, thus assuring positive outcomes for foster children of minority cultures. The findings have implications for social work practice, policy, and future research. Following is a discussion concerning those implications.

### *Implications for Social Work*

#### *Social Work Practice*

*Interpretation and use of the CRFS.* Cultural receptivity is an important concept to measure in fostering because it is likely that foster parents will have children of different cultures placed in their homes, as there is a need to place the disproportionate number of children of minority cultures in foster care. Therefore, transcultural foster parents must be open to participating in cultural activities that promote cultural development in children.

As with the CHAP measure as a whole, the CRFS is applicable for specialized, emergency foster families as well as regular foster care providers. The CRFS is intended to aid in identifying applicants' fostering strengths and development needs. Collecting standardized information about families when they are licensed can give valuable feedback to applicants about how they compare with other foster parents. This

information can help them make realistic decisions about fostering. It also provides a baseline for charting growth in applicants' abilities as they gain experience over time.

Information obtained with the CRFS can be used to: identify competencies for foster families; plan training, support, and services for foster parents; stimulate and focus discussions concerning successful fostering between foster care workers and foster parent applicants; identify areas where foster families require more comprehensive, in-depth assessment; prepare families for placement; increase awareness of potential problem areas and the services required to minimize these problems when a less than ideal match is made between a foster family and child; promote the well-being and retention of foster families by individualizing training and support; coordinate information between foster family workers and child workers; and set a baseline to monitor ongoing development. Next is a discussion of various methods for scoring the CRFS.

*Methods for scoring the CRFS.* There are different ways to score and interpret the CRFS scores for a particular person. Both raw scores and normative scores can be used, but for use with individuals the primary focus is on normative scores because raw scores are difficult to interpret without reference to others who have completed a measure (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999; Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

Different types of scores are computed, reported, and used in the interpretation of the CRFS because they provide unique but complementary information. For all scores higher scores indicate that the applicant has greater cultural receptivity. It is necessary to understand how to interpret and use the scores appropriately, and how to avoid misinterpreting and misusing them. Raw scores are discussed next.

*Raw scores.* Usually raw scores are computed by adding up item responses for a scale, or by computing the mean of item responses. Raw scores are most appropriate for use in research. The CRFS raw scores were computed using the following formula:

$[(M - 1) (100)] / (K - 1)$ , where: M = the mean item score, K = the largest possible value for an item response. This formula results in a potential range of values from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating more of the construct, cultural receptivity.

This method of scoring was used because a potential score range from 0 to 100 is relatively easy to understand and familiar to most people. Additionally, unlike mean scores, differences among individuals can be represented without using more than two decimal places. Following is a discussion on normative scores.

*Normative score references.* Valuable information can be obtained by comparing how an individual's score compares to those of others in a sample of people from a *reference* population, such as the approved foster mothers in this study. This comparison helps us determine if an individual's score is, for example, below average, average, or above average. A sample from a reference population is a *normative* sample, and data from a normative sample form *normative scores* (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999; Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

An applicant's raw score can be compared to the scores from a normative sample in various ways, but in general these different methods provide information about an individual's standing on a measure relative to those in the normative sample. Normative scores are like grades assigned on a curve, although CRFS scores are not grades. This kind of interpretation of a score is referred to as a *norm referenced interpretation*. One type of normative score is computed and reported for the CRFS: percentile ranks, discussed in the following section.

*Percentile ranks.* A percentile rank indicates the percentage of people in the normative sample who are at or below a particular raw score (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999; Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). A higher percentile rank suggests greater cultural receptivity, relative to those in the normative sample. For example, a foster parent applicant with a

raw score corresponding to a percentile rank of 75 scored higher than 75% of the people in the normative sample; an applicant with a raw score corresponding to a percentile rank of 25 scored higher than only 25% of those in the normative sample.

Percentile ranks are easy to understand, widely applicable, and often used for selection and placement (Aiken, 2003). In making decisions about strengths and areas for development and support it is suggested that the social worker consider an applicant with a percentile rank greater than 75 as having a special strength in cultural receptivity, and an applicant with a percentile rank below 25 as needing further development of cultural receptivity, as well as a need for additional support in culturally appropriate fostering. However, the probability of misclassification is high for applicants with scores close to the margins of each category (e.g., applicant with a percentile rank from 23 to 27 or from 73 to 77) (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). When this happens social workers should be very cautious about classifying that applicant in one category or the other or should not classify the applicant at all.

Percentile ranks have limitations. Differences among percentile ranks generally do not provide a good indication of differences in cultural receptivity, or in any characteristic, because they are ranks (Allen & Yen, 1979; Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). Ranks simply tell us whether a particular applicant is higher or lower than another applicant, but not by how much. Small differences in cultural receptivity can lead to large differences in percentile ranks and *vice versa*. Typically a change over time or a difference between people with percentile ranks of 5 and 10 is much greater than a difference of 50 and 55. So, percentile ranks should not be used to determine the amount of change over time, differences among people, or differences among scales for a particular person.

The CRFS does not substitute for foster care workers' judgments about applicants' qualifications. Scores on the CRFS should not be used alone to discourage or exclude applicants from becoming transcultural foster parents. Rather, information from the measure serves as a roadmap for how agencies can best support foster parents as resources. Social workers' professional judgment of CRFS scores is addressed next.

*Professional judgment of test scores.* This section discusses the CRFS as an objective tool, used in conjunction with the social worker's professional judgment. Social workers who assess prospective foster parents are encouraged to use their professional judgment regarding relative scores. For instance, foster parents with high CRFS scores, relative to the normative reference, might need minimal additional support, training or services to support foster children's cultural identities and development. Additionally, those with moderate CRFS scores might benefit from moderate assistance in the areas of supports, services, and training to appropriately parent foster children of different cultures. Finally, low CRFS scores are indicative of the need for intensive support, training, and services in order to appropriately foster a child of a different cultural background. Foster parents in this category might have had little or no contact with other cultures and might not know the basics of interacting professionally or having interpersonal relationships with people from other cultures. Therefore, foster parents with low CRFS scores would need to improve their attitudes, skills, and knowledge about cultural diversity in order to provide appropriate transcultural foster care.

Additionally, low CRFS scores could be interpreted as foster parent applicants' unwillingness to support foster children's cultures or perhaps their unwillingness to have children of different cultural backgrounds placed with them. In such instances, further investigation by the social worker is warranted in order to ascertain the appropriateness

of transcultural fostering for the applicants. These interpretations of CRFS scores by social workers are based on the proposition that cultural receptivity leads to cultural competence and ability to deliver culturally appropriate fostering.

Although scoring procedures are consistent with the purposes of the CRFS and provide a sufficient interpretation of the scores (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999, p. 39), the CRFS was not meant to be used as a sole measure to approve or disapprove foster parent applicants. Following is an in-depth discussion on standardized tools.

*Standardized assessment tools.* Professional judgment is central to the licensing process. Moreover, social workers' judgment, coupled with information provided by good standardized tools, produce useful and balanced assessments of foster parent applicants' care potential.

By structuring and guiding this difficult decision-making process, standardized tools highlight relevant information that can be used to determine needed support and training, focus and ease communication between workers and applicants, and increase accountability by providing quantitative information that can be incorporated easily into reports documenting the assessment process. Standardized tools save money and professional time, especially when these tools require relatively little training or effort to employ.

Assessment requires sound information and good professional judgment to accurately synthesize and interpret what is learned about applicants. Professional judgments based on information gathered with standardized assessment tools produce useful and balanced recommendations. Standardized tools highlight relevant information, focus communication between workers and applicants, and increase accountability by providing quantitative information that can be incorporated easily into reports.

Standardized tools for assessing foster family applicants also facilitate knowledge and program development. They can be used to evaluate pre-service and in-service training programs. Having standardized methods for data-gathering improves knowledge about successful foster care and important outcomes for children such as safety, well-being, and permanence. Finally, standardized methods can be used to better understand family qualities and characteristics and important outcomes for foster families, such as retention, satisfaction, and well-being. Next is a discussion on foster parent recruitment.

*Recruitment.* Child welfare administrators and social workers could use the CRFS to recruit foster parents who are culturally receptive. Various information received about foster parents with high levels of cultural receptivity could be used in recruitment efforts. Agencies can target others with similar attributes who might be interested in fostering.

Additionally, recruitment efforts can be directed in the following manner. According to Cox (2003), foster mothers are less willing to foster children of minority cultures. The issue of children of minority cultures being hard to place may be due to lack of understanding of different cultures. If this is the case, then recruitment efforts could be directed by informing foster parents about training and ongoing support in raising children of different cultural backgrounds. Social workers can clarify any misconceptions about different cultures and ease concerns by informing foster parents about the partnership among agency, community and foster parents to ensure successful fostering.

Moreover, training, support and services are directly related to the retention of culturally receptive foster parents, especially given the fact that more than 95% of foster mothers in this study reported that they plan on fostering short-term (i.e., 6 months). On



the other hand, long-term fostering is not related to cultural receptivity. One possible reason for these findings is that there is a need to educate foster parent applicants about the training, services, and support available to assist them in providing culturally appropriate fostering. Foster parent training, support, and services are discussed next.

*Training, support, and services.* Specialized training, support, and services with a focus on children's cultural development are necessary. Child welfare agencies need to provide foster parents with specialized training to parent appropriately children of different cultures. Specialized training for transcultural foster parents needs to be emphasized due to the fact that culture is not covered sufficiently in standard foster parent preservice training. The purpose of preservice training entails facilitating 1) foster parent applicants' knowledge of child welfare issues; 2) effective foster parenting skills and; 3) appropriate values (see Illinois Department of Children and Family Services [IDCFS]; Jackson & Wasserman, *Parents as Tender Healers* [PATH], 1997); Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education [PRIDE], 1993; Pasztor & Child Welfare Institute & Center for Foster and Residential Care [CWICFRC], *Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting* [MAPP Program Guidebook], 1990).

Asking applicants to consider future training needs clarifies the expectation that fostering is a developmental process. Foster parents should demonstrate abilities to self-assess, accept supervision, and be actively involved in their development by seeking training opportunities. Actively identifying future training needs reflects the applicants' realistic expectations of themselves as foster parents and demonstrates an interest in growing as foster parents. Information provided by applicants keeps agencies up to date on foster parents' training needs so that continuing education is relevant and useful for the current pool of foster parents. It also helps agencies minimize barriers and reduce resistance that limits participation in training.

Additionally, foster parent training is an important issue to discuss because it seems that foster parents who receive preservice training that addresses culturally appropriate fostering would have more cultural receptivity. However, as discussed in Chapter I, all training modules do not adequately address the role of culture and its effects on fostering. Consequently, training that is specific to transcultural fostering would be an important area to consider when examining the study of cultural receptivity. Following are examples of how other researchers have used training to examine aspects of cultural competence.

In their pre-experimental study that involves pre-test post-test of pre-adoptive transracial adoptive parents, Vonk and Angaran (2001) found that the cultural competence training administered to the pre-transracial adoptive parents improved their perception of the importance for children's cultural development. Vonk and Angaran used training that entailed components of culture, racial awareness, multicultural planning, and survival skills, as well as watching a video about the experiences of transracially adopted adolescents (p.13).

Unfortunately, examining preservice training went beyond the scope of the data. The standard preservice training modules to which the foster mothers in this cultural receptivity study were exposed were not specifically developed to address appropriate transcultural parenting strategies.

Foster parents' personal dedication and time available to foster is discussed here because it is necessary for them to commit to spending time needed in numerous agency-related activities to support children's cultural needs. There was support for the notion that having more available time to foster leads to foster mothers' having greater cultural receptivity. Additionally, foster mothers with greater personal dedication to foster have more cultural receptivity.

Having time for fostering is an important resource that is essential to the provision of adequate support services. Providing quality care for a child with multiple needs can be time-consuming and exhausting. New foster parents often are surprised by the amount of time involved in fostering (Buehler, Cox, & Cuddeback, in press; Cautley, 1980; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996). Parenting any child is time-consuming, of course, but fostering involves added time because the children often have multiple problems and unique situations that require frequent services and meetings with workers and other supportive professionals. CWLA (1995) encourages families to consider if they have time available to devote to caring for children.

Mitchell (1999) examined the relationship between time and cultural competence. However, he examined age as an indicator of time. He found that younger human services workers (age 22-29 years) were more culturally competent than the older workers (age 40-49 years), accounting for 3% of the variance in *Overall Cultural Competence*. More research is needed to examine how foster parents are committed to fostering, which might entail their willingness to make time available to dedicate to fostering activities for children of different cultures. Foster parent retention is addressed next.

*Retention.* As discussed above, there is support that greater cultural receptivity leads to foster mothers' planning to foster short-term. However, cultural receptivity is not related to long-term foster parent retention (i.e., plan to foster 1 year and 3 years). A possible reason given earlier in this discussion concerned the need to provide applicants information about the availability of ongoing cultural training and support in order to ease their fears and increase their understanding about transcultural fostering. This might, in turn, increase their commitment to transcultural fostering.

Another possible reason could be due to the very low percentage of foster mothers who planned to discontinue fostering. The fact that the CRFS was tested on approved foster mothers and not applicants might have influenced the results as well. For instance, it could be expected that applicants' responses would differ from current foster mothers at the time of assessment.

Foster parent retention is an important aspect to investigate because social workers need to know something about foster parent applicants' intentions to continue fostering. Their intentions might also be influenced by the need to participate in culturally appropriate parenting strategies.

McPhatter (1997) and Greene and Watkins (1998) assert that cultural competence is "a developmental process that requires long-term commitment" (Vonk, 2001, p. 247). Also, Cox et al. (2002) report that foster parents who are willing to foster certain types of children (i.e., special needs) foster longer than those who are not willing. It seems that foster parents would foster longer because they are more open to fostering the various kinds of children likely to be placed in their care. Foster parents might also be committed to fostering these children because they have invested additional time and effort in learning how to support their cultural development. However, because data were not collected regarding the children's cultures, there is no way of knowing whether more foster mothers who fostered culturally different children would have intended to foster long-term compared to those who did not.

Social workers can assist transcultural foster parents by supporting them in working with the child welfare agency, community organizations, and birth parents in order to improve the quality of foster care. Though their ability to utilize these resources increases their ability to foster children from different cultures (Cox, 2000), the findings

from the cultural receptivity study did not support a relationship between cultural receptivity and dealing with worker and agency challenges.

Perhaps this could be because the CRFS items in the scale pertain more to promoting positive outcomes for children whereas the WAC subscale's main focus is on relationships with the social worker and agency. Foster mothers might not have connected the specific items in dealing with the agency and social worker to working with foster children.

*Utilization.* Foster mothers' cultural receptivity did not greatly influence fostering utilization. Due to the fact that information on their foster children's cultures is not known, this issue cannot be addressed fully. It would be important to know if greater cultural receptivity leads to utilization outcomes for children of different cultures. It is possible that a very small number of transcultural foster mothers participated in this study, which could have affected the results.

Another possibility is that certain utilization variables are more influenced by the agency's needs rather than the foster mothers' needs. Therefore, a survey of foster mothers' fostering utilization would be inappropriate for studying cultural receptivity. For instance, there were several unfounded hypothesized relationships between cultural receptivity and utilization variables such as: number of children licensed to foster at one time; number of foster children currently fostered; total number of children fostered; number of foster children adopted, controlling for number of children fostered. This could suggest that these variables are not largely influenced by cultural receptivity.

On the other hand, the utilization variables related to cultural receptivity such as: number of foster children placed somewhere else at the request of foster mothers, controlling for number of children fostered; and number of foster children adopted, controlling for number of years fostered, seem to be influenced principally by the foster

mothers' family functioning and lifestyle, long-term. However, this explanation does not explain why there is not a statistically significant relationship between cultural receptivity and the number of foster children placed somewhere else at the request of foster mothers, controlling for number of years fostered. More research is needed regarding fostering utilization outcomes. A discussion on social work policy follows.

### *Social Work Policy*

This cultural receptivity research has implications for policies, such as the MEPA (1994) and IEAP (1996), as well as the CWLA's position on transcultural placements, which was discussed in-depth in Chapter 1. Currently, the policies on transcultural placements support the principle that decisions about children's permanence will not be based solely on culture. Further, policies state that children's placements will not be hindered due to the inability to secure same-culture foster homes. The protocol for social work practice is unclear regarding handling situations where birth parents' requests to have their children adopted by same-race parents conflict with current Federal and agency policies. The following solution is offered.

The results of this study could supplement the transcultural laws by requiring that the fostering of culturally different children be contingent upon foster parents' willingness to commit to appropriate cultural fostering strategies as evaluated by the CRFS at the time of application. Further, ongoing transcultural fostering and consequent transcultural adoption could be evaluated using cultural receptivity and other cultural competence assessments concerning foster parents' openness and ability to parent and work with people of diverse cultures. The outcomes should show continued growth in the areas of openness towards becoming active participants in promoting the cultural identities and growth of children of minority cultural backgrounds. This can be achieved through the

use of the CRFS for continuous evaluation of foster parents' development in the following way.

For instance, first, foster parent applicants can be assessed at the time of interest in transcultural fostering. If they are interested in transcultural fostering, then a contract regarding their commitment can be completed at that time. The social worker can provide the foster parents with initial training before having children placed in their home. And then shortly after the children are placed in their home, foster parents can participate in ongoing training and receive various methods of support and services to enhance children's cultural development. Finally, social workers can monitor and evaluate foster parents during foster home visits to ensure quality care and appropriate cultural fostering. Next, a discussion about future cultural receptivity research follows.

#### *Future Research*

As addressed earlier, there are some areas that were beyond the scope of these data and research design that need to be addressed in future studies. For example, research on prospective foster mothers' and fathers' levels of cultural receptivity has not yet been investigated, as this study examined only current foster mothers. Also, more emphasis needs to be placed on foster parents' commitment to parenting transculturally, which can be studied in a couple of ways. For example, it would be important to know whether prospective foster parents' levels of cultural receptivity predict their decision to foster children of different cultural backgrounds. Further, it would be important to know if cultural receptivity predicts foster parent retention for those who foster children of different cultures. Research also needs to address how foster parents' level of cultural receptivity is related to outcomes for children of different cultures (e.g., placement disruption, cultural identity, etc.). Additional variables for future research are discussed next.

*Other cultural variables.* Appropriately, the primary concern of transcultural research is with race, particularly the transracial placements of African-American children. However, there are several other aspects of culture that have received minimal attention or have not been considered in previous studies or in this current study. For instance, there is very little research available on the experiences of Hispanic foster children, who comprise over 10% of the children in foster care. And with the increasing numbers of Hispanic immigrants in the United States, it can be expected that the number of Hispanic foster children will increase as well due to economic stressors and different child-rearing strategies. Also, researchers have not examined adequately transcultural placements of children of different religions and sexual orientations. And, although there are distinct demographic differences that are expected to affect parenting, such as socioeconomic status and geographical location, same-culture or intracultural differences in placements are not addressed. The need to revise the CRFS is addressed next.

*Revised measure.* The high alpha coefficient of the CRFS indicates that possibly some items could be eliminated without diminishing its effectiveness as a reliable tool for practical uses by the social worker to assess foster parents' levels of cultural receptivity. The CRFS with fewer items might be preferable because it would take even less time to complete, thus freeing up additional time for other tasks. Therefore, it might be useful to construct and test a short-form of the CRFS. Finally, a conclusion about the cultural receptivity study follows.

### Conclusion

Presumably, children of minority cultures would most likely have appropriate cultural development as a result of being raised by their parents and being exposed to others who share their culture. Therefore, since the State assumes custody of these



foster children, it has an obligation to prepare them for success using culturally appropriate fostering strategies. One way of assuring that foster children will be successful is through the careful assessment of foster parent applicants to ascertain whether they are willing to employ culturally stimulating parenting strategies when raising foster children of different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, in light of this study's collective validity evidence and theoretical support, the CRFS is recommended as a reliable and valid standardized measure that should be used in the assessment of prospective foster parents who will foster children of different cultures.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A. National Foster Parent Association Endorsement Letter**National Foster Parent Association, Inc.**

7512 Stanich Avenue #6  
Gig Harbor, WA 98335  
(800) 557-5238 • fax (253) 853-4001  
www.nfpainc.org • info@NFPAINC.org

August 28, 2002

John G. Orme, Ph.D.  
The University of Tennessee  
College of Social Work, Henson Hall  
Knoxville, TN 37996-3333

Dear Dr. Orme:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Foster Parent Association, we are pleased to provide a letter of support for your proposal of the project, "Examination of the Psychometric Properties of the Casey Home Assessment Protocol and the Casey Foster Parent Applicant Inventory."

For some time we have realized that the ability to provide quality family foster care is an attribute that we would like to measure. However, we have been unable to identify an instrument that had the capability of assessing this ability, especially one which would provide validity and be reliable. The home assessment and applicant inventory to be investigated through this project will be a valuable resource for child welfare agencies.

The National Foster Parent Association is committed to providing access to foster mother contact information for the purposes of this project. We look forward to working with you and the investigators from The University of Tennessee.

Sincerely,

Karen Jorgenson  
NFPA Administrator

## Appendix B. Cover Letter to Foster Parent Associations

October 1, 2002

Contact's name  
Foster Parent Association name  
Street address  
City, State Zip code

Dear (Contact's Name):

The Family Foster Care Project team at the University of Tennessee in collaboration with Casey Family Programs is starting a nationwide study to test two new tools for assessing foster parent applicants. The National Foster Parent Association has endorsed this study and agreed to help recruit participants from its members. Would you let mothers in the [insert name of FPA] Foster Parent Association know about our study?

We have put together this information packet to tell you about the University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project team and our projects. It has examples of ways you can share information about our study through your association's newsletter, website, and meetings.

The information packet contains:

- ✓ A copy of a letter from Karen Jorgenson, Administrator, National Foster Parent Association endorsing our study;
- ✓ Flyers to distribute at Foster Parent Association meetings that give details about the study, what participants will do, and the benefits of participating;
- ✓ An article about our study for your Foster Parent Association newsletter and instructions about how to download the article text from our website;
- ✓ An announcement about our study to place in your newsletter and on your website;
- ✓ A copy of our team newsletter the "Foster Family Forum" that has information about our team and projects we are doing to promote effective foster care; and
- ✓ Information about Casey Family Programs.

Please call us toll free at 1-877-447-0011 or email [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu) if you would like more information about our project.

Sincerely,

John Orme, Ph.D.  
Project Coordinator  
[jorme@utk.edu](mailto:jorme@utk.edu)

Katie Rhodes, Ph.D.  
Research Associate  
[kwrhodes@utk.edu](mailto:kwrhodes@utk.edu)

Appendix C. Study Flyer to Distribute to Foster Mothers (front)**FOSTER MOMS NEEDED**

WE INVITE NON-KINSHIP FOSTER MOTHERS  
TO JOIN IN A NATIONWIDE STUDY OF  
FOSTER FAMILIES

**WHAT YOU WOULD DO:**

- Fill out and return questionnaires about you and your family
- Discuss challenging fostering situations in a telephone interview

**BENEFITS FOR FOSTER KIDS:**

- Facilitate placement success
- Enhance foster parent satisfaction
- Increase foster parent retention

**BENEFITS FOR YOU:**

- Help develop foster parent assessment measures
- Be on our mailing list (optional)
- Receive a \$50 gift certificate

Want to be part of this project? Call 1-877-447-0011 toll free or email [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu) to sign up or to find out more.

We will ask for volunteers until we have information from 300 foster mothers.



This project is being conducted by the University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project in collaboration with Casey Family Programs.

Endorsed by the NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION



(see back for more information)

## Appendix C. Study Flyer to Distribute to Foster Mothers (back)

### What is this project about?

Foster parents are special people. They share themselves and their lives with children in need. We are developing foster parent assessment tools for agencies to use during the certification process. This project will help us find out how "on target" these tools are.

### What are assessment tools?

The Casey Home Assessment Protocol (CHAP) and the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory (CFAI) measure foster parents' strengths and resources that enable parents to care for children and work with agencies. Information from the CHAP and the CFAI can help foster parents and agencies see foster parents' strengths and know what agencies can do to support foster parents. When this project is completed, both tools will be available to agencies at no cost.

### What will I do if I agree to help with this project?

- We will send you a packet of questionnaires to complete. The questionnaires ask about you and your family. Complete the questionnaires and return them in the envelope provided. This should take about two hours. All information you provide will be kept private. Your information will be combined with information from other foster parents across the country. In this way, we can get a total picture of how these tools work with foster families.
- When we receive your completed questionnaires, we will contact you for a telephone interview. During the interview we will discuss challenging fostering situations. This interview will take about 30 minutes. As with the written information you provide, information you give during the telephone interview will be kept private. We may ask to tape record your interview, but it is entirely up to you whether or not we record this telephone interview.

### How will my participation in this project benefit children and foster families?

Information you provide will help us see how useful these measures are for foster parents. Careful assessment of foster parents helps:

- Facilitate placement success for children and foster families
- Enhance foster parent satisfaction
- Increase foster parent retention

### What is in it for me?

- You will be helping to develop new foster parent assessment tools.
- At your request, we will put you on our mailing list to receive updates about foster family research.
- You will receive a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate for participating in the project.

### Who is conducting this project?

We are the Family Foster Care Project at the University of Tennessee College of Social Work. This project is a joint collaboration between the University of Tennessee and Casey Family Programs. The National Foster Parent Association endorses this study. For more information about us and what we are doing to help foster families and children in care, please visit our website at <http://utcmhsrc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject/> or visit Casey Family Programs at <http://www.casey.org/research/ffa/index.htm>.

### How do I sign up?

- Call our toll free number 1-877-447-0011 or email us at [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu) and provide us with your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

Appendix D. Article about Study and Download Instructions

***Article about our study for your Foster Parent Association newsletter and how to download the article text from our website***

**Foster Mom Study Launched**

The Family Foster Care Project team at the University of Tennessee in collaboration with Casey Family Programs is conducting a nationwide study to evaluate new tools for assessing foster parent applicants. Foster families are a critical national resource. They provide love and care for over three-fourths of children and youth in foster care.

Karen Jorgenson, National Foster Parent Association Administrator notes that, "For some time we have realized the importance of measuring the ability to provide quality foster care. We have been unable to identify an instrument that had the capability of assessing this ability..." The Family Foster Care Project team has developed the Casey Home Assessment Protocol (CHAP) and the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory (CFAI) to fill this gap.

The CHAP and the CFAI complement each other. Together they identify a broad range of foster families strengths and service needs, in order to improve the outcomes for youth receiving family foster care services (e.g., safety, stability, well being) and the outcomes for families who provide those services (e.g., satisfaction, recruitment, retention). When testing is complete, the CHAP and CFAI will be available for agencies to use at no cost.

The CHAP has two parts: (1) a set of questionnaires completed by applicants, and (2) a set of challenging situations that oftentimes occur during fostering which workers present and discuss. The CFAI is a multidimensional questionnaire with applicant (CFAI-A) and worker (CFAI-W) versions of the questionnaire. This study tests the applicant questionnaire.

Research is ongoing to test the CHAP and the CFAI. The newest phase of this research involves having certified foster mothers complete and return questionnaires, and discuss the challenging fostering situations in a brief telephone call.

If you or your agency would like more information about this project or would like to participate in testing the CHAP and the CFAI, contact the Family Foster Care Team at 1-877-447-0011 or [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu). For more information about the project or these tools, visit the project websites at: <http://utcmhsrsc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject/> and <http://www.casey.org/research/ffa/index.htm>.

How to download the article text from our website

Go to article text at the following web page:

**<http://utcmhsrsc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject/Documents/Foster%20mom%20article.doc>**

Two methods to obtain article text:

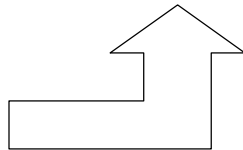
- 1) Copy and paste: i) From "**Edit**" pulldown in browser window, select "**Select All**", then "**Copy**"  
ii) From "**Edit**" pulldown in your document, select "**Paste**"
- 2) From "**File**" pulldown in browser window, select "**Save As**", then assign file name and type (e.g., Word Document, Text Only)

Appendix E. Study Announcement for Web Pages and Newsletters

Announcement for association web page

**Foster mothers needed for a nationwide study of foster families.**

Help foster children and other foster families by sharing your views. Receive a \$50 gift certificate for your time. The study is being conducted by the University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project in collaboration with Casey Family Programs. The National Foster Parent Association has endorsed this study. Learn more about this important study and how you can help (click here).



**Link under “click here”**

<http://utcmhsrc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject/Foster%20Mom%20Study.htm>

Announcement to insert in association newsletter or other written materials

**Foster mothers needed for a nationwide study of foster families.**

Help foster children and other foster families by sharing your views. Receive a \$50 gift certificate for your time. The study is being conducted by the University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project in collaboration with Casey Family Programs. The National Foster Parent Association has endorsed this study.

Learn more about this important study at <http://utcmhsrc.csw.utk.edu/caseyproject> or send an email to [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu) and request more information about the study.



Appendix F. State Foster Parent Associations (as of 8/02)

Contact	FPA Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Johnna Breland	Alabama Foster Parent Association	1309 Terrehaute Ave. SW	Decatur	AL	35601
Michael Keech	Foster Care Providers of Alaska	P.O. Box 211962	Anchorage	AK	99521-1962
Evelyn Carson		4117 E. Maldonado Rd.	Phoenix	AZ	85040
	Treatment Homes Inc.	PO Box 726	Little Rock	AR	72203
Nina Coake	California Foster Parents Association	17405 Baseline	Fontana	CA	92336
Sherry Bethurum	Colorado Foster Parent Association	7651 W. 41st ave., Ste. 90	Wheatridge	CO	80033-4559
Jean Fiorito	CAFAP	2189 Silas Deane Hwy.	Rocky Hill	CT	06067
	Delaware State FPA	P.O. Box 1527	Wilmington	DE	19899-1527
Suzanne Stevens	FSFAPA	P.O. Box 34	Mt. Dora	FL	32756
Verdell Daniels		12216 Apache Ave.	Savannah	GA	31419
Sarah T. Casken	Hawaii State Foster Parent Association	PMB #261, 111 Hekili Street, Suite A	Kailua	HI	96734
Karen Ledbetter	Idaho Foster & Adoptive Parents Coalition	2164 Brookcliff	Idaho Falls	ID	83402-3840
Tim Russell	Illinois Foster Parent Association	310 E. Adams	Springfield	IL	62701
Christina Morrison	Indiana Foster/Adopt. Assoc.	3901 N. Meridian St. #24	Indianapolis	IN	46208
Lynhon Stout - Director	IFAPA	6864 N.E. 14th St., Suite 5	Ankeny	IA	50021
Jene Hillyer	Kansas Foster and Adoptive Families, Inc.	2201 SW Gage Blvd., Suite 3	Topeka	KS	66614-1156
Phyllis Hurley	KFCA	2110 Clay St.	Paducah	KY	42001
Brenda G. Valteau		10139 Seawood St.	New Orleans	LA	70127
Joyce Pringle		138 Webster Road	Farmington	ME	04938
Deborah Greene	Maryland Lge. of Foster/Adopt Parents	11 E. Mt Royal Ave., Suite 2B	Baltimore	MD	21202
William LaPierre	Massachusetts Alliance for Families	399 Boylston Street	Boston	MA	02116
Myrn McNitt	Michigan Foster/Adopt Parent Assn.	2450 Delhi Commerce Dr., Suite 13	Holt	MI	48842
Ralph Willenbring	Minnesota Foster Care Assoc.	P.O. Box 48716	Minneapolis	MN	55448-0716
Becky Watkins	Mississippi Foster/Adoptive Parent Assoc.	P.O. Box 3451	Meridian	MS	39303
Jim McKenna		P. O. box 277	Cape Fair	MO	65624



Contact	FPA Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Janine Burrows-Alberda	Montana Foster/Adoptive Parent Association	P.O. Box 8265	Bozeman	MT	59773
Mary Burt		2125 Stockwell	Lincoln	NE	68500
Elaine Brooks	Foster Care & Adoption Association of Nevada	9401 Empire Rock	Las Vegas	NV	89143
Michael J. Sielicki	NH Foster and Adoptive Parent Association	6 Main Street	Hancock	NH	03449
Mary Jane Awrachow	Foster and Adoptive Family Services	4301 Rt.1 S., P.O. Box 518	Monmouth Junction	NJ	08852
David Shaheen		407 W. Cielo	Hobbs	NM	88240
Daisy Boyd	New York Foster/Adopt Parent Assoc.	92-31 Union Hall, PO Box 120-151	Jamaica	NY	11412
Randy Delling	North Carolina Foster Parent Association	411 Andrews Rd, Ste. 230	Durham	NC	27705
Rich Holm		6855 177 Ave. SE	Wahpeton	ND	58075
Robert & Dot Erickson	Ohio Family Care Assoc.	P.O. Box 82185	Columbus	OH	43202
Kim Green	Foster Care Association of Oklahoma, Inc.	Rt. 2 Box 204	Wellston	OK	74881
Karl Howell	Oregon Foster Parent Assoc.	707 13th St. SE, Suite 275	Salem	OR	97301
Pat Feaster	Pennsylvania Foster Parent Assoc.	5137 Devonshire Rd Suite A	Harrisburg	PA	17112
Margaret Alves	Rhode Island FPA	250 Centerville Rd.	Warwick	RI	02886
Carl Brown		P.O. Box 39	Elgin	SC	29045
Jean Anderson		Box 565	Reliance	SD	57569
Betty Hastings	TFCA	40 Foust Lane	Hollow Rock	TN	38342
Roy Block	TSFPI	13242 Trentwood	San Antonio	TX	78231
Cindy Gates	Utah Foster/Adoptive Family Assn.	P. O. Box 13297	Ogden	UT	84412
Jim Bulger		417 Vermont Route 25	West Topsham	VT	05086
Aileen Edwards	Virginia Foster Care Association	9290 Moonlight Rd.	Smithfield	VA	23430
Darlene Flowers	Foster Parent Assn. of Washington State	451 SW 10th, Suite 103	Renton	WA	98055-2981
Sharon Senopole		150 Brook Lane	Daniels	WV	25832
Sherry Benson	WI Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Inc.	N1068 Shore Drive	Marinette	WI	54143
Pat Hans		26 Calypso	Casper	WY	82604

Appendix G. Local Foster Parent Associations Used in Study

Contact	Organization Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Denise Odom	Foster & Adoptive Family Development Team	800 N. Eckhoff St.	Orange	CA	92868
	Sacramento Foster Parent Assn	P. O. Box 1015	Rancho Cordova	CA	95741
	Utah Foster Care Foundation	136 E. South Temple Ste 960	Salt Lake City	UT	84111-1156
Ralph Hauser	Alameda Co. Foster Parent Assoc.	14967 Norton St.	San Leandro	CA	94579
Carl Christman	Marion Polk Foster Parent Assoc.	P.O. Box 13875	Salem	OR	97309
	Grayson Co. Foster and Adoptive Parent Assoc.	100 W. Houston, 3rd Floor	Sherman	TX	75090
	Foster Parents for Foster Children of Tarrant Co.	P.O. Box 60157	Fort Worth	TX	76115-8157
	Boulder Co. Foster Parent Assoc.	24 Princeton Circle	Longmont	CO	80503
Todd and Allison Goin	Larimer Co. Foster Parent Assoc.	4709 Rosewood Dr.	Loveland	CO	80537-8805
Deborah Fortune	Peninsula Foster Parent Network	219 Springdale Way	Hampton	VA	23666-2260
	Wichita Co. Foster Parent Assoc.	P.O. Box 3423	Wichita Falls	TX	76301-0423
	Northland Foster Parents	208 NW 53rd. Terrace	Gladstone	MO	64118
	Stanislaus Co. Foster Parent Assn.	3900 Morgan Rd., Ste. B	Ceres	CA	95307
	Dillon Co. Foster Parent Assn.	P. O. box 1135	Lake View	SC	29563
Patrice Culclager	Jackson Co. Adoption & Foster Care, Plus	2918 Victor	Kansas City	MO	64128-1170
Darlene Murphy	Rowan Co. Foster/Adoptive Parents Assn.	55 Rogers Dr.	Salisbury	NC	28147
	San Gabriel Foster Care Assn.	P. O. Box 509	Round Rock	TX	78680
	Washington Parish Foster & Adoptive Care Assoc.	31298 Jerry Moses Rd.	Angie	LA	70426
Attn: Adriene D. Gardner	The Master's House	3015 East 32nd	Kansas City	MO	64128
	Orange County Foster Care Auxiliary	333 S. Brookhurst St.	Anaheim	CA	92804
	Inland Valley of Riverside Cty. FPA	PO Box 8632	Moreno Valley	CA	92552
	Monadnock Area FP Assoc.	PO Box 693	West Swanzey	NH	3469
Attn: Carl Simmons	Institute for Black Parenting	15424 S. Butler Ave.	E. Rancho Dominguez	CA	90221
	Clarendon County Foster Parents	311 Collins St.	Manning	SC	29102

Contact	Organization Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Brian Nunn	Northern Region V.P.	P.O. Box 7031	Eureka	CA	95502
Velma Moore	Central Region V.P.	3900 Morgan Road #B	Ceres	CA	95307
I'Dell Smith	Valley Region V.P.	123 East Hawes Avenue	Fresno	CA	93706
Eloise Evans	South Coastal Region V.P.	3590 Magnolia Avenue	Lynwood	CA	90262
Patricia Negus	Southern Region V.P.	12419 Oaks Avenue	Chino	CA	91710
Ron De Vries	South Border Region V.P.	1051 Suite Drive, Sp. 174	Brea	CA	92821
Toby David Tripp		#7 Briercroft (MC 2172)	Lubbock	TX	79424
Bill Hill		600 Scott St.	Wichita Falls	TX	76301
Barbara Wells		150 Texas Dr.	Weatherford	TX	76086
Cindy Hodges		324 Yapaco	Gilmer	TX	75644
Kim West		285 Liberty, 17th floor	Beaumont	TX	77701
Gloria Batiste-Roberts		2525 Murworth	Houston	TX	77054
Staci Love		801 Austin Ave.	Waco	TX	76703
Angie Blackmond		PO Box 23990 081-11 (MC 278-5)	San Antonio	TX	78223
Ann L. Bailey		622 S. Oakes	San Angelo	TX	76903
Larry Menchaca		119 N. Stanton	El Paso	TX	79901
Elsa V. Reyna		2411 N. Texas Blvd.	Weslaco	TX	78596

## Appendix H. Sample Cover Letter

[Scan w/ Center's letterhead]

[insert date]

Dear Ms. Jones:

Thanks for helping with our project. The enclosed packet contains two consent forms, two questionnaire forms, a "best times to call" form, and a postage-paid return envelope. We also have included a flyer about the study, in case you know other foster moms who would like to participate in this study.

***This is what to do ...***

- Enclosed are two copies of the Informed Consent Form. After reading the form, if you agree, sign the form and keep a copy of the form for yourself.
- The form on top is the Casey Home Assessment Protocol (CHAP). We ask that you fill out this questionnaire first. This should take about an hour.
- The second form is the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory (CFAI). We ask that you fill it out next. This also should take about an hour.
- Please fill out the "Best Times to Call" form to tell us the best times to try and contact you to setup the telephone interview.
- Put the signed consent form, the "Best times to call" form, and both completed questionnaires in the postage paid return envelope and drop it in the mail.

***Here are some tips for filling out the CHAP and the CFAI ...***

- Take your time. The items cause people to think about fostering.
- If you don't know about an answer, use your best judgment. Most of the time what people think of first is the best answer.
- You might want to fill out the CHAP and the CFAI over several sittings. It is best to stop at the end of a section.
- Do your best to answer all of the items. If you have questions or ideas about an item, please write those comments on the last page of each questionnaire form. Please note the measure and/or item number along with any comment. You also may include general comments on the notes pages, which are not specific to any item or measure. Other than on the notes pages, please do not write any comments in the questionnaire forms. If you need more room for comments, please include a separate sheet of paper with additional comments on it.
- Take a minute to look over your completed questionnaires to make sure you did not miss a section. Most of the pages have questions on the front and back, so make sure you fill out both sides of each page.

After we receive your completed questionnaires, we will call you for a telephone interview. The interview should take about 30 minutes. To thank you for your time, we will send you a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate after the telephone interview.

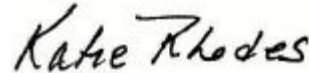
The study is being conducted by The University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project in collaboration with Casey Family Programs. If you have questions at any time about this study, you may call our toll free number 1-877-447-0011 or email us at [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research at the University of Tennessee, (865) 974-3466.

Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John G. Orme". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line to the right of the name.

John Orme, Ph.D.  
Project Coordinator  
[jorme@utk.edu](mailto:jorme@utk.edu)  
865-974-7503

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Rhodes". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Katie Rhodes, Ph.D  
Research Associate  
[kwrhodes@utk.edu](mailto:kwrhodes@utk.edu)  
423-855-4091

## Appendix I. Study Consent Form

### Informed Consent Form

We are inviting you to participate in a study of a set of measures of important aspects of foster parenting. These measures are designed to assist family foster care workers and foster parents to identify the strengths and service needs of foster parents. The purpose of this study is to test these measures with foster parents.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete the enclosed questionnaires. This will take about two hours. You will be asked to return your completed materials in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

If you agree to participate you also will be asked to complete a 30-minute telephone interview. In this interview you will be asked to describe how you would handle situations that frequently occur in foster care. We plan to tape record a random sample of these telephone interviews, and so we may ask your permission to tape record this interview; it is your choice whether or not we tape record our interview with you.

If you agree to participate, the information you provide will be kept completely confidential. Completed questionnaires and tape recordings will be stored in a locked file cabinet in one of the investigator's office, the data will be stored on computer without your name or other identifying information, and only research team members will have access to your data. Each member of the research team has signed a statement agreeing to keep all study information completely confidential. All reports of this research will be based on aggregate data, and no information about you as an individual will be provided to anyone. No publications or presentations of the data will include any information that could be used to identify you.

There is minimal risk to you from participating in this study. The benefit is the opportunity to participate in the development of measures of important aspects of foster parenting, which we hope can be used in the future to improve the quality of services provided to foster parents and children. To thank you for your participation, you will receive a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate for completing the questionnaires and the telephone interview.

This study is being conducted by the University of Tennessee Children's Mental Health Services Research Center in collaboration with Casey Family Programs. If you have questions at any time about this study, you may contact Dr. John Orme, 1-877-447-0011, [fosterproject@utk.edu](mailto:fosterproject@utk.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research, University of Tennessee (865) 974-3466.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate without penalty of any kind, or refuse to answer any of the questions. If you decide to participate, you can quit at any time without penalty or negative effects.

### CONSENT

I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix J. "Best Times to Call" Form**BEST TIMES TO CALL  
FOR PHONE INTERVIEW**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Time zone (circle one): Eastern, Central, Mountain, Pacific

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check days and times that you most likely will be available for a 30-minute telephone interview.**MONDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**TUESDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**WEDNESDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**THURSDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**FRIDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**SATURDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

**SUNDAY**

- ☐ MORNING  
☐ AFTERNOON  
☐ EVENING

Other comments about when and when not to call:  
(put additional comments or instructions on the back of this form)

Appendix K. Checklist for Returning Materials**FOSTER MOMS,**

BEFORE YOU RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRES,

DID YOU.....

- ☐ SIGN THE CONSENT FORM AND KEEP A COPY?
- ☐ INCLUDE THE COMPLETED CFAI QUESTIONNAIRE?
- ☐ INCLUDE THE COMPLETED CHAP QUESTIONNAIRE?
- ☐ FILL OUT AND RETURN THE “BEST TIMES TO CALL”  
FORM



## Appendix L. Telephone Guide for the Fostering Challenges Vignettes Interview

### ***Telephone Interview***

#### **Introduction:**

Hi, I'm <interviewer's name> from the University of Tennessee Family Foster Care Project. [PAUSE - let them greet you]

Thanks so much for being part of this project.

Today we are going to talk about some situations that foster parents might experience while caring for foster children. This will take 20-30 minutes.

I want to remind you everything you tell me is confidential. This isn't a test. We are just interested in your thoughts and opinions

**<If the interview is randomly selected to be audio taped>**

I'd like to tape this conversation so another person who is interviewing foster parents can check my work. The only people who will listen to the tape are members of our research team. Is it ok if I tape this? (circle one)

No

Yes

#### **Ok, let's get started <Instructions for responding to vignettes>**

Fostering presents many challenging situations. I'm going to read <6 if the applicant is not married/partnered, 7 if applicant is married/partnered> situations that are typical of what you might experience fostering a child. Please respond to each situation by telling me what you would do if you were faced with the situation. If you haven't had a similar experience, just let me know what you think you would do.

I'll be jotting down a few notes while we talk, if you hear a pause. I will also be pausing to give you time to answer. If you are ready to go on to the next situation, let me know.

**<Insert Set of Vignettes Here>**

[WAIT 10-15 SECONDS] When participant completes her answer, say:

Is there anything else you want to add before we move on to the next situation? Ok.

**<If questionnaire(s) have missing data>**

Thanks again for completing your questionnaire. In reviewing your packet, I noticed ..... (insert items with missing data, clarify comments).

AT END OF INTERVIEW:

We really appreciate your help with this study. We'll send you a \$50.00 Wal-Mart gift certificate to thank you for your time and help. Tell me your address and the name you want on the gift certificate. (write information on the vignette cover sheet)

Appendix M. Tables

Table 1. Foster Children by Race/Ethnicity

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>African-American</b>	300,382	37
European-American	368,691	45.4
Hispanic	115,342	14.9
Asian	8,603	1.1
Native American/ Native Alaskan	20,774	2.6
Hawaiian/Pacific Island	3,236	.4
Unknown	90,104	11.1

Source: DHHS (2000).

Table 2. African-American Children's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Foster Caretakers

<b>Foster Caretaker Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Foster Caretaker Total</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Foster Caretaker Total</b>
<b>African-American</b>	98,722	33,483
<b>Asian</b>	430	174
<b>European-American</b>	21,057	14,041
<b>Hispanic</b>	2,543	1,509
<b>Native American/ Alaska Native</b>	542	250
<b>Hawaiian/Pacific Island</b>	75	56
<b>Unknown</b>	82,733	36,382

*Note: Report based on 300,282 African-American foster children.  
Source: DHHS (2000).*

Table 3. Contextual Variables and Ethnic and Minority Parenting

<b>Variables Specific to Ethnic and Minority Parenting</b>	<b>Variables Relevant to all Parents but might have Differential Effects on Minority, and Non-Minority Parenting</b>
Race, ethnicity	Social class
Racism, prejudice, and discrimination	Proximal environments
Migration	Cultural traditions and histories
Acculturation	Family factors Child factors

*Source: Bornstein (2002).*

Table 4. Literature Review

<b>Author &amp; Date</b>	<b>Research Topic</b>	<b>Reference Type</b>
Alstein & Simon, 1977	Transracial Adoption	Empirical
Baldwin, 1985	Racial Identity	Theoretical
Barth, Berry, Yoshikami, Goodfield & Carson, 1996	Adoption Disruption	Empirical
Baum, Crase, Crase, 2001	Motivation to Foster, Foster Parent Training	Theoretical
Bausch & Serpe, 1997	Transracial Adoption Attitudes, Hispanics	Empirical
Brooks, Barth, Bussiere, Patterson, 1999	Transracial Adoption Laws	Theoretical
Chau, 1992	Multicultural Education	Theoretical
Courtney, 1997	Transracial Adoption, Matching	Theoretical
Crumbley, 1999	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Curtis, 1996	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Deberry, Scarr & Weinberg, 1996	Transracial Adoption	Empirical
Dillon, 1994	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Erikson, 1968	Identity Development	Theoretical
Feigelman & Silverman, 1983	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Folaron & Hess, 1993	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Grow & Shapiro, 1974	Transracial Adoption	Empirical
Hollingsworth, 1998	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Hollingsworth, 1999	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Hollingsworth, 2000	Transracial Adoption Attitudes	Empirical
Lynch & Hanson, 1988	Culture	Theoretical
Mallon, 1997	Sexual Orientation	Theoretical
McPhatter, 1997	Cultural Competence in Child Welfare	Theoretical
McRoy, 1994	Cult Development	Theoretical
McRoy & Grape, 1999	Transracial Adoption, Skin Color	Empirical
McRoy, Oglesby, Grape, 1997	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
McRoy & Zurcher, 1983	Transracial Adoption	Empirical
McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale & Anderson, 1984	Transracial Adoption, Racial Identity	Empirical
Mitchell, 1999	Cultural Competence	Empirical
Montalvo, Lassater, & Valdez, 1982	Cultural Competence with Hispanics	Theoretical
Moore, 1986	IQ	Empirical
Phinney, 1989	Ethnic identity	Empirical
Scarr & Weinberg, 1983	IQ	Empirical
Schatz & Horejsi, 1996	Religion	Theoretical
Semaj, 1981	Racial Identity	Theoretical
Shireman & Johnson, 1986	Cultural Identity	Empirical
Silverman, 1993	Transracial Adoption	Theoretical
Simon & Alstein, 2002	Relationships, Identity and Attitudes	Empirical

Table 4. Continued

<b>Author &amp; Date</b>	<b>Research Topic</b>	<b>Reference Type</b>
Super & Harkness, 1986, 2002	Cultural Development	Theoretical
Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993	Social Ecology	Theoretical
Thoburn, Norford, & Rashid, 2000	Transracial Adoptions	Empirical
Valdez & McNamara, 1994	Transracial Adoption, Matching	Theoretical
Vonk, 2001	Cultural Development	Theoretical
Vonk & Angaran, 2001	Cultural Competence in Transracial Adoption	Empirical
Vroegh, 1997	Transracial Adoptions, Racial Identity	Empirical
Weaver, 1998	Cultural Competence with Native Americans	Empirical
Zuniga, 1991	Cultural Development	Theoretical

Table 5. Research Methods

<b>Author(s), Date</b>	<b>Sampling Method</b>	<b>Design and Data Collection</b>
Alstein & Simon, 1977	Nonrandom sample of 204 European-American families who adopted trans-racially.	Interviewed parents. Observed and interviewed children. Used Doll Test and puzzles to measure children's racial awareness and identity.
Barth, Berry, Yoshikami, Goodfield, & Carson, 1996	Sample of 1155 children's State adoption records in 13 California counties from 1980 to 1984. Children adopted before 3 years old.	Reviewed demographics and placement data. Family, worker, or adoption supervisor verified outcomes based on operationalized definition of disruption.
Bausch & Serpe, 1997	Random sample of 861 adults with Hispanic surnames from general population. 58% response rate.	Telephone survey.
Deberry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996	1 <sup>st</sup> phase: Nonrandom sample of 130 African-American or bi-racial 4 year old children who were mostly adopted before 1 year old. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase: Follow-up with 88 children from initial sample. Recruited by sending letters from adoption agencies for trans-racial adoptive parents.	Prospective study. 1 <sup>st</sup> phase- assessed between 1974-1979 structured interviews: Parents: demographics, lifestyle, adoption experience, child progress, special problems for TRA. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase- Parents and children assessed between 1983 and 1986: effect of environment on child development at end of adolescence. Psychological assessments (e.g., intelligence, cognitive, personality, attitude tests). Administered 83-item scale (Reliability Range from .70 to .94).
Feigelman & Silverman, 1983	Secondary analysis	Collected data through a review of various research literature on TRA.
Grow & Shapiro, 1974	Sample of 125 children who were 6 years-old at the time of study. 43% adopted before 1 year old.	Administered California Test of Personality to children. Conducted interviews and administered questionnaires to parents and teachers regarding adjustment, parental satisfaction, peer relations, children's attitudes toward race. Combined scores from 15 measures to determine overall success.



Table 5. Continued

<b>Author(s), Date</b>	<b>Sampling Method</b>	<b>Design and Data Collection</b>
Hollingsworth, 2000	Random sample of 916 U.S. adults with telephones. Random dialing stratified by geographic region and area code.	Telephone survey One Likert-type question.
McRoy & Grape, 1999	Random sample from list of 20 adults (adopted as children) provided by social Workers (10 of whom were African-American).	Face-to-face interviews about life experiences and particular issues that adoptees wanted to share.
McRoy & Zurcher, 1983	Sample of 60 families (30 European-American and 30 African-American) who adopted African-American children. Selected from adoption agencies and adoptive family groups in north-west, midwest, and southwest U.S. regions. Adoptees were at least 10 years old with at least one African-American parent, in an adoptive home for at least one year, and both adoptive parents were the same race.	Conducted interviews (90-item questionnaire) with parents. Administered Tennessee Adaptability and Cohesiveness Scale to parents. Children were administered a 95-item questionnaire, the Self-concept Scale, and the Twenty Statements Test [who Am I?].
McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984	Nonprobability sample of 30 families from 3 geographical areas who adopted children 10 years old or older. Recruited through adoption agencies and adoption groups. 83% of the families adopted the child at age 3. Children had at least one African-American parent.	Parents were interviewed and administered an adaptability and cohesiveness scale. Children were interviewed and administered a self-concept and identity scale.
Mitchell, 1999	Convenience sample of 348 human service workers from cultural competence training workshop.	Administered (face-to face) the Cultural Competence Scale (Subscale alphas range from .76 to .88).

Table 5. Continued

Author(s), Date	Sampling Method	Design and Data Collection
Moore, 1986	Sample of 46 African-American children between 7 and 10 years old and adopted before age 2. 23 adopted by African-American families and 23 adopted by European-American families.	Children were administered the WISC which measures behaviors and verbalizations of children to determine intelligence (Interrater reliability range from .94 to .78).
Phinney, 1989	Sample of 91 Asian-American, African-American, Hispanic, and European-American adolescents randomly selected from a total 500 volunteers from driver education classes.	Face-to-face interviews. Bronstein-Cruz Child/Adolescent Self-Concept and Adjustment Scale (Subscale reliabilities range from .69 to .90).
Scarr & Weinberg, 1983	Sample of 176 adoptees 130 of them African-American Who were adopted before and after age 1. -143 biological children of adopted parents	Children were administered the WAIS IQ Test.
Sharma, McGue, & Benson, 1996	Random sample of 4682 self-reported adolescent adoptees who attended rural schools and 4682 self-reported non-adoptees in school within more than 350 communities in 35 states. European-American (81%), American Indians (5%), Asian-Americans (6%), African-Americans (6%), and Hispanics (2%). Also selected students (who answered "yes" to the survey question, "Are you adopted?") in a few, larger communities.	Comparison groups. Adoptees compared to matched control group of nonadoptees on nine factors of emotional and behavioral adjustment and three factors of family functioning. Staff administered the 152 item-Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behavior Survey (Alpha reliabilities for all scales are .75 or higher) to children within public schools.

Table 5. Continued

Author(s), Date	Sampling Method	Design and Data Collection
Shireman & Johnson, 1986	Sample of 118 African-American, European-American, and single parents who adopted African-American children under 3 years old. Adoptive placements occurred between 1970 and 1972 by 2 Chicago adoption agencies.	Comparison groups. Longitudinal, 4-year study. Family interviews. Clark Doll Test.
Simon & Alstein, 1996	Nonprobability sample. 1 <sup>st</sup> phase: 204 parents and 336 children. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase: 7 years later 71% of original sample was located and 93% of them participated. 3 <sup>rd</sup> phase: 4 years later, of the 133 families in 1979, only 88 participated in 1984 (also 8 families from the 1 <sup>st</sup> phase but not the 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase participated in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> phase. Total of 96 families, 218 interviewed. 4 <sup>th</sup> phase: In 1991 mostly adults adopted as children participated.	Prospective 20-year study. Selective comparisons of birth, African-American, and adopted children. 1 <sup>st</sup> phase: Face-to-face interviews with parents and children. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase: Telephone or mail interviews with parents only. 3 <sup>rd</sup> phase: Personal interviews with parents and children. 4 <sup>th</sup> phase: Telephone interviews with parents and personal face-to-face contact with adults who were adopted as children.
Thoburn, Norford, & Rashid, 2000	Secondary data of 274 records on minority children. placed with at least one minority parent; multi-racial children placed with at least one minority parent; minority children placed with European-American families; children with one European-American parent placed with families where both parents are European-American.	Comparison of 4 groups. 1 <sup>st</sup> phase: Survey. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase: Conducted interviews 10 to 15 years after adoption.

Table 5. Continued

Author(s), Date	Sampling Method	Design and Data Collection
Vonk & Angaran, 2001	Convenience sample of prospective adoptive Parents selected from cultural competence training sessions for transracial adoptive parents.	Pre-experimental design. Post-test with a retrospective pre-test. Adoption Questionnaire (Subscales: Multicultural Planning, Racial Awareness, Survival Skills alphas range from .87 to .89) given at the end of training sessions. Data collected over 10 months during revision of the questionnaire. Administered "Initial" 105-item questionnaire to 20 participants (25% failed to complete the racial awareness section. Administered the "Later" Revised (37-items) questionnaire to 22 prospective TRA parents (21 of those completed entire revised instrument).
Vroegh, 1997	Sample of 42 African-American and 45 European-American adoptive families selected from child welfare agencies from 1970 to 1972. 18 African-American adolescents from same-race families and 34 African-American adolescent adoptees from European-American families.	17 <sup>th</sup> year (1997) of a 20-year longitudinal study. Five women (4 European-American and 1 African-American) conducted 90-minute individual interviews of adoptees in their own home. Administered questionnaires developed by author to explore adoption, race, identity, adjustment, and relationships with peers, siblings, and family. Administered the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to children. 15 respondents who lived out-of-state were interviewed by telephone using the same interview protocol. Responses were coded numerically by 2 coders who were not interviewers.

Table 6. Children's Outcomes for Transcultural Placements

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Author(s), Date</b>
Contact/relationships with others from the same culture	McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984; Shireman & Johnson, 1986
Cultural development	Super & Harkness, 1986, 2002
Cultural identity and participation in one's own culture	Baldwin, 1985; Bausch & Serpe, 1997; Vonk, 2001; Zuniga, 1991
Cultural identity and perception	Dillon, 1994; Semaj, 1985; Vroegh, 1997
Intelligence quotient	Moore, 1986; Scarr & Weinberg, 1983
Placement disruptions	Barth, Berry, Yoshikami, Goodfield, & Carson, 1998; Valdez & McNamara, 1994
Psychosocial development	Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Grow & Shapiro, 1974; McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984; Super & Harkness, 1986
Psychological functioning, adjustment, self-esteem, and academics	McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Sharma, McGue, & Benson, 1996; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Silverman, 1993; Simon & Alstein, 1996
Racial attitudes, awareness, identity, and adjustment	Alstein & Simon, 1977; Bausch & Serpe, 1997; Simon & Alstein, 1996
Self-esteem and cultural pride	Super & Harkness, 1986; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993
Social development of values, attitudes, and self-concept	Deberry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; Hollingsworth, 1999; McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984
Social interaction and relationships	McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984; Simon & Alstein, 1996
Transracial adoptions, identity, self-esteem, and adjustment	Vroegh, 1997

Table 7. Cultural Competence Definitions and Domains

<b>Definitions &amp; Domains</b>	<b>Author(s), Date</b>
"...a set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that have come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables those behaviors, attitudes, and policies to work effectively in cross-cultural situations."	(Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989; Greene & Watkins, 1998; Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991; Hernandez & Isaacs, 1998; King, Sims, & Osher, 2002)
"...the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes."	(Davis, 1997)
An ongoing evaluation of their attitudes and interpersonal experiences with people of "different genders, social classes, religious and spiritual beliefs, sexual orientations, ages, mental and physical abilities." Culturally competent practices enable social workers to work "effectively, knowledgeably, sensitively and skillfully" with culturally diverse people.	(National Association of Social Workers, 2001)
"...a set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups."	(Mitchell, 1999)
"...transform a particular set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills into the ability to meet children's unique racial and cultural needs," incorporating multicultural planning.	(Vonk, 2001)
Self-awareness, knowledge, and skills are essential to human services workers' cultural competence.	(McPhatter, 1997; Mitchell, 1999)
Additional attributes are needed such as attitudes, behavior, knowledge, and skills to work with people of different cultures.	(McRoy, 1994; Weaver, 1998)
Changing one's attitudes, behavior, knowledge, skills, and values are necessary in working with people of diverse cultures.	(Dillon, 1994)
Increasing knowledge, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity to cultural diversity are necessary in working with people of different cultures.	(Chau, 1992)

Table 8. Foster Mother Demographic Characteristics

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married, no stepchildren	57.1
Married, stepchildren	17.5
Domestic partnership	4.0
Single, never married	6.3
Widowed	3.0
Divorced or separated	12.2
<b>Race</b>	
European-American	87.2
African-American	10.5
Hispanic	3.0
American Indian	2.0
<b>Highest Degree</b>	
<HS	2.2
HS/GED	21.7
College, No Degree	29.9
Two-Year Degree	16.8
Bachelor's Degree	18.8
Advanced Degree	10.5
<b>Employment status</b>	
Full-time	32.6
Part-Time	17.1
Unemployed, looking for work	1.0
Homemaker, not employed outside home	34.9
Disabled or retired, not employed outside home	7.2
Other	7.2

*Note. For marital status data were missing for one mother (.3%).*

*Race percentages do not add up to 100% because foster mother were asked to select all races that applied.*

*Note. For income data were missing for two mothers (.7%).*

Table 9. Foster Family Utilization

Utilization	%
<b>Type of Home</b>	
Foster family (N = 303)	92.1
Emergency care (N = 301)	25.2
Specialized (N = 301)	18.6
Relative (N = 300)	2.0
Group (N = 300)	2.3
Other (N = 301)	11.6
<b>Number of years fostered (N = 304, M = 7.26, SD = 7.21, Mdn = 5.00, Range = 0 - 34)</b>	
Less than a year	3.6
1-2 years	24.4
3-5 years	27.6
6-10 years	21.3
11-20 years	14.7
> 20 years	8.3
<b>Number of foster children in home (N = 304, M = 1.79, SD = 1.54, Mdn = 2.00, Range = 0 - 9)</b>	
0	19.1
1	30.3
2	25.7
3	13.5
4	6.3
5	2.3
≥ 6	2.9
<b>Number of foster children licensed to accept at one time (N = 303, M = 3.41, SD = 1.69, Mdn = 3.00, Range = 0 - 12)</b>	
0	.3
1	5.6
2	28.7
3	24.1
4	21.1
5	8.3
6	9.2
≥ 7	2.7
<b>Total number of children fostered (N = 304, M = 32.93, SD = 67.56, Mdn = 11.00, Range = 0 - 748)</b>	
0-5	32.2
6-10	17.1
11-25	23.1
26-50	10.4
≥ 51	16.5

*Note. For type of home the percentages do not sum to 100 because foster mothers were instructed to select all that apply. Note that although few homes were licensed specifically as relative homes, 65 homes provided kinship care.*



Table 10. Foster Family Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	%
<b>Number of children living in the home (N = 304, M = 3.34, SD = 1.95, Mdn = 3.00, Range = 0 - 9)</b>	
0	3.6
1	12.8
2	22.7
3	18.4
4	17.8
≥ 5	24.6
<b>Number of birth and adopted children living in the home (N = 304, M = 3.34, SD = 1.95, Mdn = 3.00, Range = 0 - 9)</b>	
0	30.1
1	23.4
2	22.7
3	12.7
4	5.7
≥ 5	5.3
<b>Number of children &lt; 6 living in the home (N = 293, M = 1.03, SD = 1.20, Mdn = 1.00, Range = 0 - 5)</b>	
0	44.7
1	25.3
2	18.1
3	7.5
4	2.7
≥ 5	1.7
<b>Yearly Family Income</b>	
<10,000	1.3
10,000 – 19,999	6.3
20,000 – 29,999	10.6
30,000 – 39,999	20.2
40,000 – 49,999	11.5
50,000 – 59,999	15.2
60,000 – 69,999	11.3
70,000 – 79,999	7.0
80,000 – 89,999	6.3
90,000 – 99,999	3.9
≥ 100,000	6.3

*Note. For income data were missing for two mothers (.7%).*

Table 11. Reliability Analysis of the CRFS

<b>Item No.</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b>Corrected Item- Total Correlation</b>
1	4.18	.86	.67
2	4.59	.70	.60
3	4.46	.73	.63
4	4.23	.80	.74
5	4.30	.83	.73
6	4.40	.79	.69
7	4.26	.82	.71
8	4.56	.69	.71
9	4.24	.80	.69
10	4.01	.92	.69
11	4.56	.69	.70
12	3.95	.84	.69
13	4.37	.80	.69
14	4.29	.78	.80
15	4.05	.85	.75
16	3.91	.86	.73
17	4.08	.89	.67
18	4.17	.82	.84
19	4.26	.79	.82
20	4.02	.84	.83
21	4.21	.81	.77
22	4.08	.83	.76
23	4.28	.81	.78
24	4.08	.84	.79
25	4.94	.90	.73

Table 12. CRFS Distribution

<b>Item</b>	<b>None %</b>	<b>Little %</b>	<b>Some %</b>	<b>A lot %</b>	<b>Whatever it Takes %</b>
1. Seeking help from people who share his/her culture.	1.0	2.0	19.4	35.2	42.4
2. Finding out about the skin and hair care that are best for a foster child.	.7	1.3	3.9	26.6	67.4
3. Learning how to tell if others are unkind or unfair to a foster child because of his/her culture.	.7	1.0	6.6	34.2	57.6
4. Finding places where a foster child can go to get his/her cultural needs met.	.3	2.6	12.8	41.4	42.8
5. Celebrating holidays and events important to a foster child.	1.0	2.0	12.2	36.2	48.7
6. Buying toys, books, and dolls that are like a foster child's culture.	1.3	1.0	7.9	36.2	53.6
7. Showing interest in the art of a foster child's culture.	.7	2.3	13.8	37.5	45.7
8. Learning how to lessen the effects of racism or discrimination on a child.	.7	0	7.2	27.0	65.1
9. Sharing helpful ideas with others who have raised children of different cultures.	.7	1.6	13.8	41.1	42.8
10. Trying recipes from a foster child's culture.	1.6	2.3	24.3	36.2	35.5
11. Learning how to help a foster child effectively cope with acts of prejudice and racism.	.7	.7	4.9	29.3	64.5
12. Appreciating clothing styles that are important to a foster child's culture.	1.0	3.0	24.0	45.1	27.0
13. Finding out about the health issues that are common in a foster child's culture.	1.0	1.3	9.9	35.2	52.6
14. Becoming more aware of how racism or discrimination affects people from different cultures.	.7	.7	14.8	36.8	47.0

Table 12. Continued

Item	None %	Little %	Some %	A lot %	Whatever it Takes %
15. Learning about how parenting practices of a foster child's culture differ from my own.	.7	3.3	21.7	40.1	34.2
16. Appreciating the music of a foster child's culture.	.7	3.9	27.6	40.5	27.3
17. Considering how my stereotypes about cultures affect a foster child.	1.6	3.9	16.4	41.1	36.8
18. Learning how children benefit from interacting with other children from different cultures.	.3	3.0	16.1	41.1	39.5
19. Learning how I can help a foster child maintain his/her culture.	.7	2.0	11.5	42.4	43.4
20. Learning about how a foster child may have different views about the community than I do.	.3	3.3	23.0	41.1	32.2
21. Finding ways a foster child can fit into my family without changing things about his/her culture.	.3	2.6	14.5	40.8	41.8
22. Examining how my beliefs and values affect aspects of a foster child's culture.	.7	2.6	20.1	42.1	34.5
23. Learning to teach a foster child about racism and discrimination.	.3	1.6	15.5	34.9	47.7
24. Learning about language expressions of a foster child's culture.	.7	2.6	19.4	42.4	34.9
25. Taking a foster child to cultural places and events.	1.0	2.6	30.3	33.9	32.2

Table 13. CRFS Item Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
<b>Item Means</b>	4.22	3.90	4.59	.68	1.17	.04
<b>Item Variances</b>	.67	.46	.84	.38	1.81	.01

Table 14. CRFS Inter-Item Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Mean Correlation</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Inter-Item	.54	.43	.35	.78

Table 15. Descriptive Statistics for the CRFS

<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean (SE)</b>	<b>Mdn</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Skew (SE)</b>	<b>Kurtosis (SE)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Missing</b>
80.42	15.25	.87	82.00	100	-.95(.14)	2.03(.28)	304	0

Table 16. Percentiles of the CRFS

<b>CRFS Total Score</b>		
<b>N</b>	<b>Valid</b>	304
	<b>Missing</b>	0
<b>Percentiles</b>	25	72.0000
	50	82.0000
	75	93.0000
	99	100.0000



Table 17. CRFS Regressed on Demographic Characteristics

Variable	CRFS (N = 301)		
	<i>B</i>	<i>β</i>	<i>t</i>
Education	-1.44	-.15	-2.28*
European-American	1.68	.04	.63
Married/partnered	-6.03	-.16	-2.49*
Income	.20	.13	1.89
$R^2 = .03$ $F(4,296) = 2.25,$ $p = .064$			

Note. \* $p < .05$ , two-tailed, \*\*  $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

Table 18. Fostering Variables in Relation to the CRFS

<b>Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>r</b>
Cultural Competence (CCS)	.35	.35	6.44**	.35
Receptivity to Work with Birth Families	.50	.32	5.90**	.32
Willingness to Foster (EB)	.20	.26	4.51 **	.26(297)
Willingness to Foster (SN)	.19	.23	4.01 **	.23(285)
Willingness to Foster (DRRCS)	.21	.27	4.84**	.27(293)
Fostering Ability	7.29	.21	3.74**	.21
Child Development	.60	.39	7.41**	.39
Challenging Children	.55	.36	6.66**	.36
Parent Acceptance Scale (PAS)	20.26	.29	5.34**	.29
Experience caring for Children	.77	.15	2.59*	.15(303)
Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS)	.02	.12	2.11*	.12
Satisfaction with Parenting (KPS)	.35	.04	.74	.04(303)
Family Resources Scale (FRS)	.06	.06	1.00	.06(293)
Available Time Scale (ATS)	.50	.42	8.04**	.42
Perceived Responsibility to Parent	.44	.32	5.91**	.32
Perceived Responsibility to Work W/Foster Care Agency	.26	.26	4.61**	.26
Tendency to like children (BLOCS)	.42	.23	4.08**	.23(303)
Personal Dedication to Fostering	.63	.38	7.10**	.38
Help w/Fostering - Worship	.03	.07	1.24	.07
Help w/Fostering - Professionals	.12	.15	2.63 *	.15
Help w/Fostering - Kin	.05	.09	1.60	.09
Receiving information on working with culturally different children	3.74	.12	2.10*	.12
Support Functions Scale (SFS)	.05	.06	.98	.06

Note. Based on N=304, unless otherwise noted in parentheses.

Note .Correlations significant at \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed, \*\*  $p < .001$ , two-tailed.

Table 19. Foster Parent Comments about the CRFS

<b>Respondent No.</b>	<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1	17	<i>"Not a well defined question. Are you asking do I have stereotypes? I probably do, but I am open-minded and would obviously learn quickly if I was harboring misconceptions."</i>
2	17	<i>"I don't have preconceived stereotypes."</i>
2	22	<i>"My beliefs wouldn't affect a child's culture. I don't have preconceived ideas."</i>
3	24	<i>"Not good with any languages."</i>

Appendix N. Figures

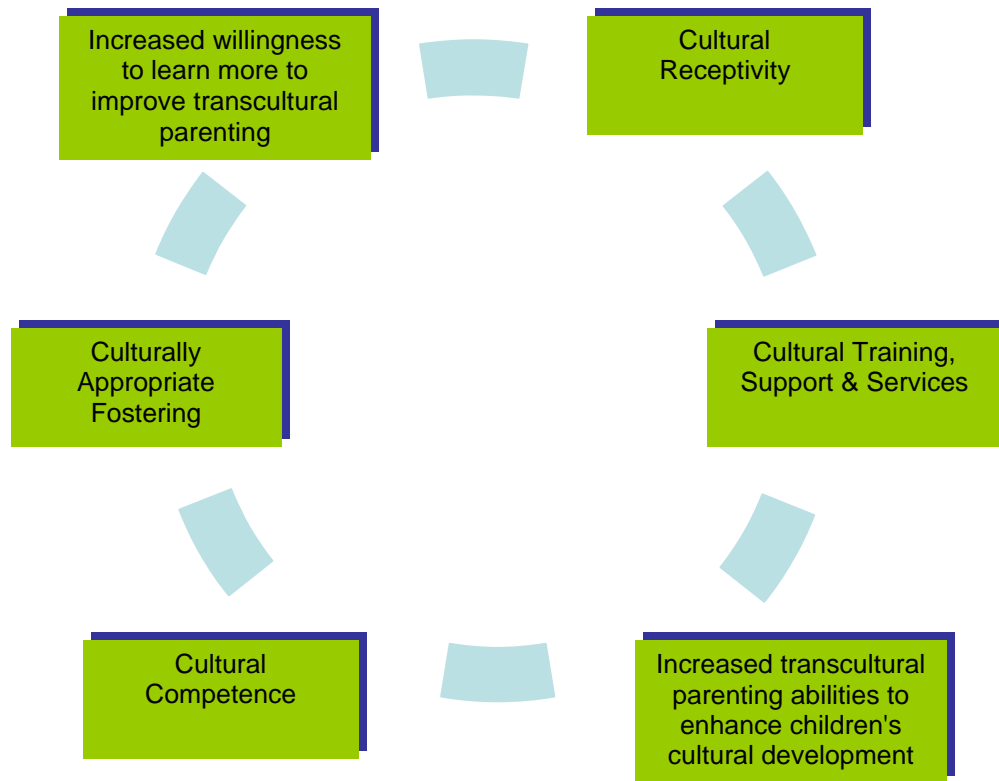


Figure 1. Cultural Receptivity Process

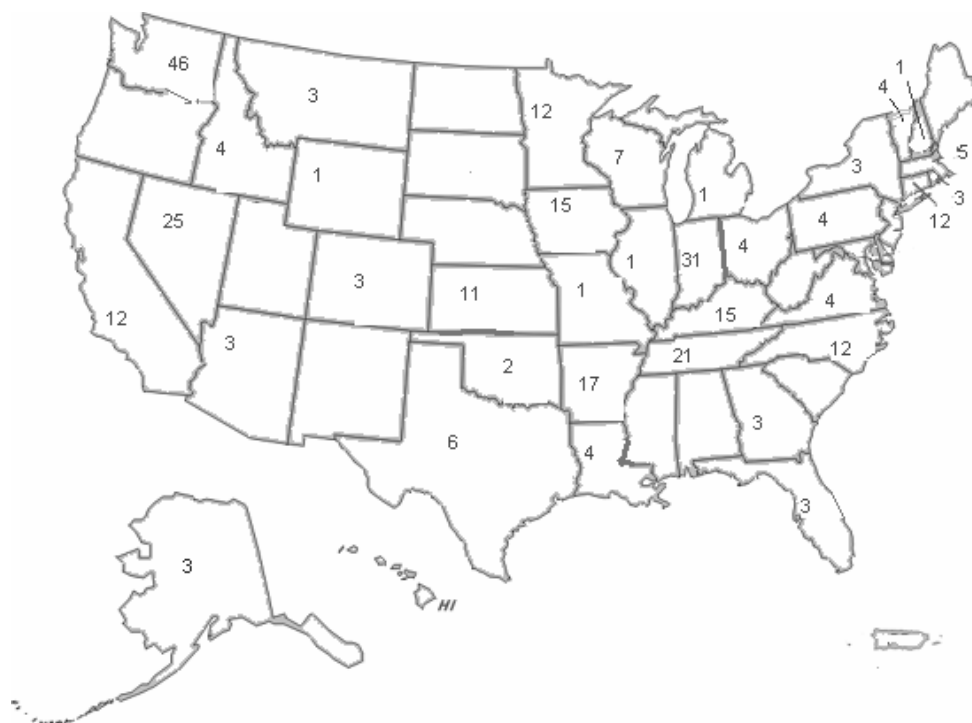


Figure 2. Total Participants by State (n=304)

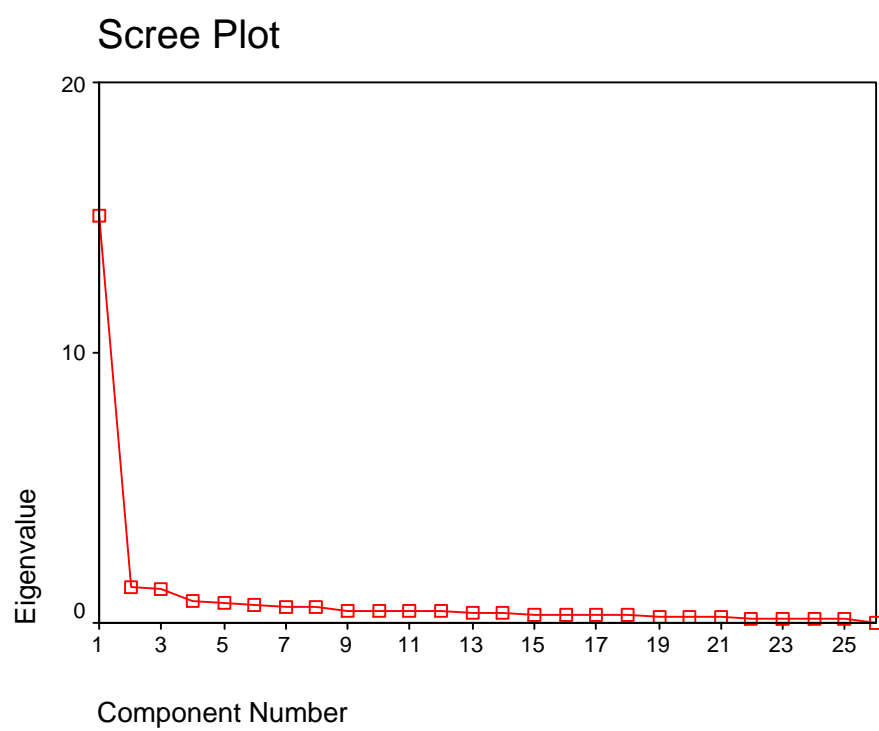


Figure 3. CRFS Scree Plot

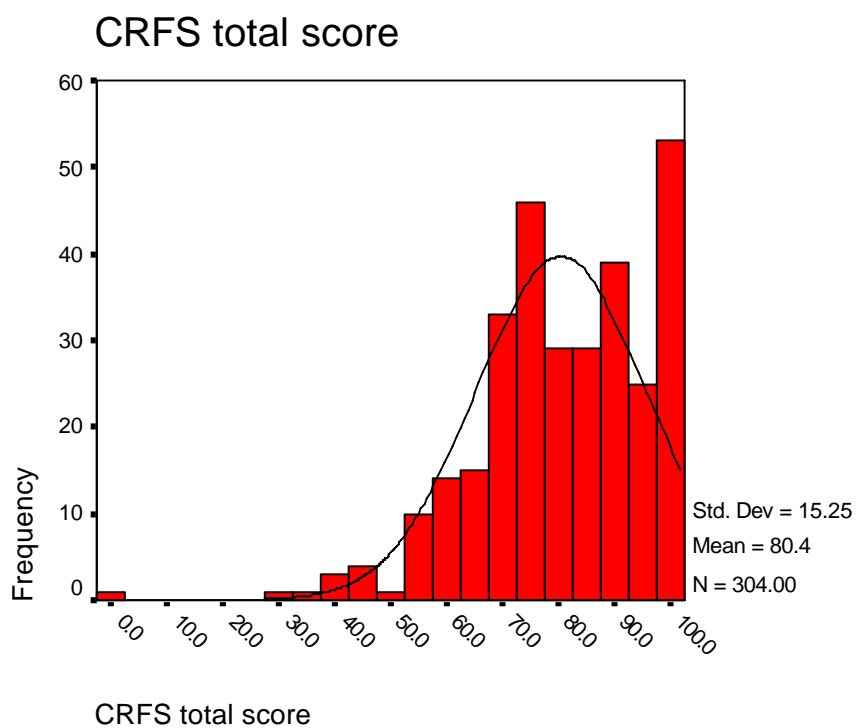


Figure 4. CRFS Score Distribution



### Vita

Tanya M. Coakley earned a Bachelor's in Social Work at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (1996) and a Master's in Social Work from The University of South Carolina (1997). Her post-master's practice experience includes working in mental health and social services fields. In a rural North Carolina county, she provided intensive case management services to individuals with dual diagnoses to promote successful community living. She also facilitated foster care and adoption services for children and families in Greensboro, North Carolina. She received her Ph.D. in Social Work and a Minor in Statistics in August, 2004 from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She is an Assistant Professor at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her research interests include child and family welfare, family foster care assessment, and cultural competence.